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Attention: Mr Justin Bowers (Ecoleges Environmental Consultants)

Dear Justin

**RE:** *E&T Abattoir and Feedlot, Portions 8 & 10 of the farm Potgietershoop 151 HT, Piet Retief, Mpumalanga Province.*

### **Background**

The project comprises a Water Use License and Waste Management License application in accordance with the Regulations as stipulated in the Water Use License Regulations of the National Water Act (Act 36 of 1998), for the proposed construction of four Mortality Pits on an existing abattoir and feedlot facility on the farm Potgietershoop 151 HT near the town Piet Retief, Mpumalanga. The Mortality Pits consists of a concrete structure each of which is 3,5 m high. An area of approximately 2 500 square metres will be impacted upon in the construction of the mortality pits and a composting facility. The application is being facilitated by Ecoleges Environmental Consultants who, through SAHRA, requested heritage input to identify potential impacts pertaining to this project. Palaeontology was exempted by SAHRA for this project.

### **The Study area**

The proposed project is located on Portions 8 and 10 of the farm Potgietershoop 151 HT, situated a short distance south of the town Piet Retief in Mpumalanga Province. The current land use of the site is feedlot and abattoir facilities. The current developments would have destroyed any surface indicators of archaeological resources.



**Fig. 1.** General site conditions. Grazing and a modified landscape.



**Fig. 2.** General site conditions. The established feedlot area.



**Fig. 3.** General site conditions. Plant and equipment on the abattoir site



**Fig. 4.** General site conditions. The feedlot.



**Fig. 5.** General site conditions. Existing facilities and buildings.



**Fig. 6.** General site conditions. Existing infrastructure on site including offices, ablutions and kitchens.

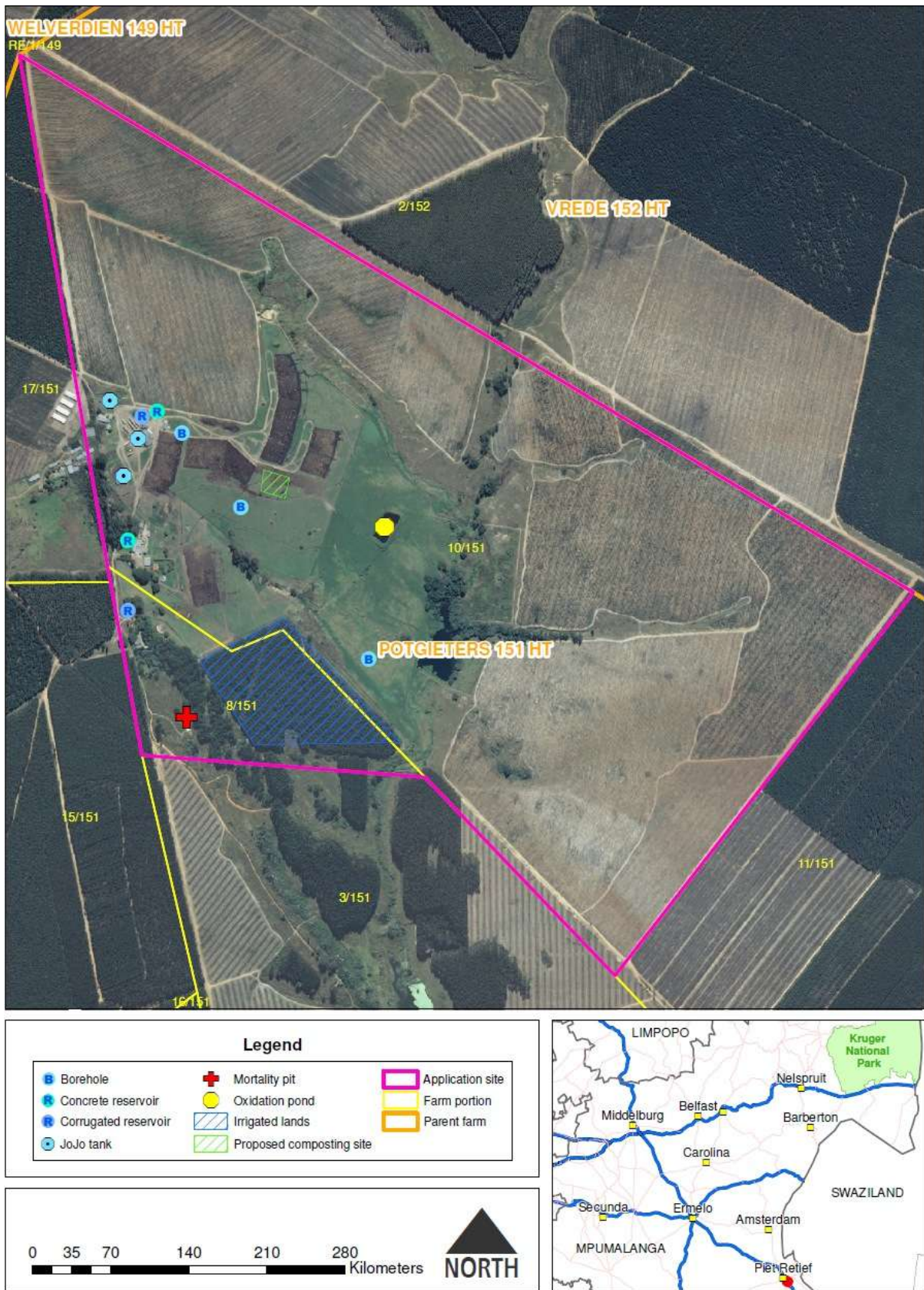


Fig. 7. The layout plan of the proposed structures on the existing abattoir and feedlot site.

## **Historic background and Maps**

A concise overview of the archaeology and later history of the area, including the town Piet Retief and some historic maps are presented in order to place the site in historic context.

## **Archaeological background of the greater study area**

### **Stone Age**

The Stone Age is divided into Early, Middle and Late Stone Age and refers to the earliest people of South Africa who mainly relied on stone for their tools.

**Early Stone Age:** The period from  $\pm 2.5$  million yrs. -  $\pm 250\ 000$  yrs. ago. Acheulean stone tools are dominant. No Acheulean sites are on record near the project area, but isolated finds may be possible. However, isolated finds have little value. Therefore, the project is unlikely to disturb a significant site.

**Middle Stone Age:** The Middle Stone Age includes various lithic industries in South Africa dating from  $\pm 250\ 000$  yrs. – 25 000 yrs. before present. This period is first associated with archaic Homo sapiens and later Homo sapiens sapiens (modern man). Material culture includes stone tools with prepared platforms and stone tools attached to handles. Isolated MSA artefacts especially around pans can be expected but it is not anticipated that these finds will have conservation value.

**Late Stone Age:** The period from  $\pm 25\ 000$ -yrs before present to the period of contact with either Iron Age farmers or European colonists. This period is associated with Homo sapiens sapiens. Material culture from this period includes: microlithic stone tools; ostrich eggshell beads and rock art. Sites in the open are usually poorly preserved and therefore have less value than sites in caves or rock shelters. The Mpumalanga Stone Age sequence is visible during this period at the farm Honingklip near Badplaas in the Carolina district (Korsman, S. & Plug, I. 1994, Esterhuizen & Smith in Delius, 2007; Bergh, 1998). At this location, two LSA sites were located on opposite sides of the Nhlazatshe River, about one kilometre west of its confluence with the Teespruit. These two sites are located on the foothills of the Drakensberg, where the climate is warmer than the Highveld but also cooler than the Lowveld (Esterhuizen & Smith in Delius, 2007; Bergh, 1998). Chances of finding this type of deposit on the study area are very slim and not anticipated.

### **Iron Age**

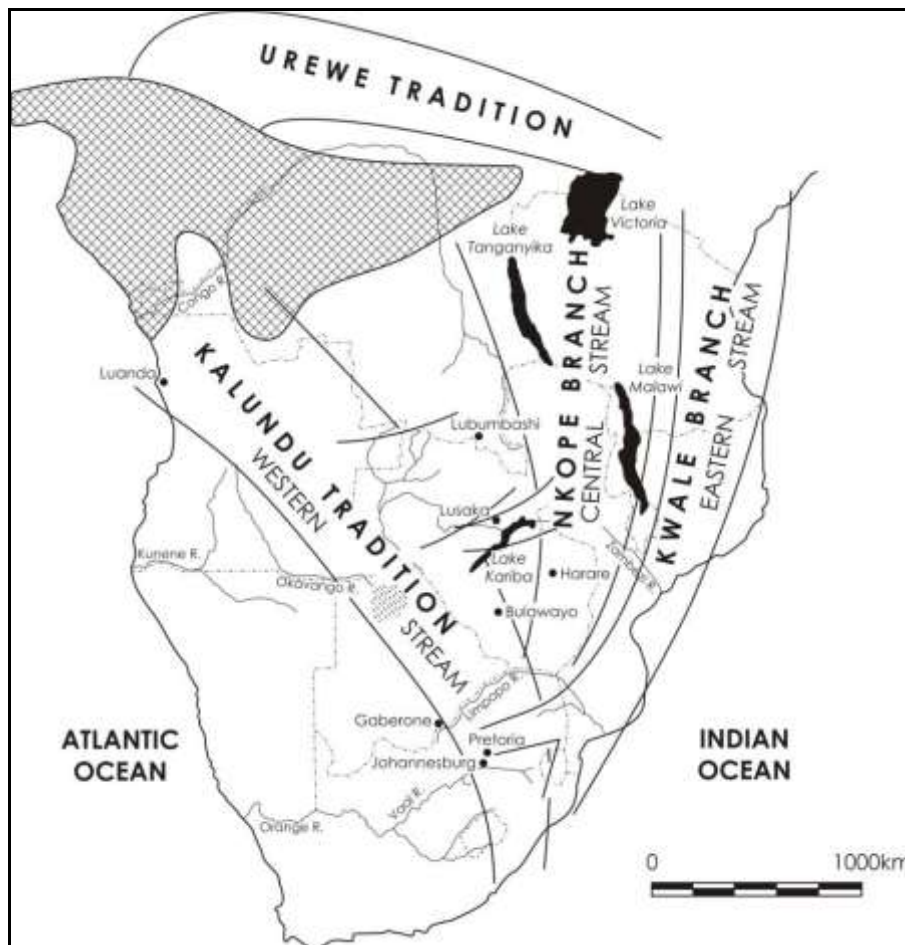
The Iron Age as a whole represents the spread of Bantu speaking people and includes both the pre-Historic and Historic periods. It can be divided into three distinct periods:

The Early Iron Age: Most of the first millennium AD.

The Middle Iron Age: 10th to 13th centuries AD

The Late Iron Age: 14th century to colonial period.

The Iron Age is characterised by the ability of these early farming and herding people to manipulate and work Iron ore into implements that assisted them in creating a favourable environment to make a better living.



**Fig. 8:** Movement of Bantu speaking farmers (Huffman 2007)

No sites dating to the Early or Middle Iron Age periods have been recorded for the general Piet Retief area. The same applies for Late Iron Age remains. There is however many examples of Late Iron Age settlement and population density north-eastwards in the region of Komati Gorge and further towards the east in the region of Machadodorp and Lydenburg. These settlements, consisting of large concentrations of circular stone-walled enclosures were built and occupied during the period 1650-1820 by the BaKoni people. There is a low likelihood of finding sites dating to this period in the study area, and it is not anticipated that such sites here will have conservation value.

### **Piet Retief history**

Piet Retief is a town situated about 15 kilometres from the border of Swaziland in South Africa. It was laid out on the farms Asloop and Geluk (alias Metselklip) by the surveyor G.R. Von Wielligh in 1884 and became a municipality in 1932. The old Piet Retief district (proclaimed in 1887) included the 100 square kilometres of the "Little Free State" which was a very small independent state that existed between 1886 and 1891. It had 72 inhabitants and had its own elected president. In May 1891 this state was incorporated into the Piet Retief District as Ward One (Raper 2014: 367; Mpumalanga Happenings N/d).

The Piet Retief Dutch Reformed Church was built by the famous South African architect Gerard Moerdijk in 1921. Piet Retief was almost completely destroyed by the British during the Anglo Boer War (1899-1902). Some historical sites in Piet Retief include the Zulu War Memorial, the Heinrich Filter and Nils Larsen Monument and the monument and gravesites of the British soldiers who died at the Battle of Intombe Drift on 12 March 1879, during the Anglo Zulu War (Mpumalanga Happenings N/d).

The town was named after the Voortrekker leader Piet Retief (1780-1838). Retief is known for being executed by the Zulu King Dingane on 6 February 1838. Dingane and Retief had signed a treaty, whereby land would be ceded by the Zulu to the Voortrekkers, in exchange for cattle that Retief's party had recovered from Chief Sekonvela. After the signing of the treaty, Retief and his party were invited to a farewell dance by the Zulu *Impis* (warriors) at UMgungundlovu. Once inside, Dingane ordered his men to kill the Voortrekkers. They were dragged to the hill called kwaMatiwane and clubbed to death. Some speculate that Retief and his men were killed for withholding some of the cattle, but it is more generally believed that Dingane did not wish to yield the land, and mistrusted the presence of the Voortrekkers (Raper 2014: 367; South African History Online 2018).

According to the national census of 2011, the Piet Retief district was 66 square kilometres in extent and the total population was 57 428. This area was made up of the following: Ethandakukhanya, Harmony Park, Kempville, Makaba Stand, Nafred, Old Location, Piet Retief Ext 7, Piet Retief SP1, Piet Retief SP2, Retiefville, Sgodiphola, St John's, Thokozani and Welverdiend. On 2 February 2010, the South African Arts and Culture Minister approved a state decision for Piet Retief to be renamed eMkhondo (Census 2011 2011; Mail & Guardian 2010).

### **Historic maps**

Since the mid-1800s up until the present, South Africa has been divided and re-divided into various districts. Since 1845, the property under investigation would have formed part of the Lydenburg district. As of 1859, the study area formed part of the newly proclaimed Wakkerstroom district. In 1887 the Piet Retief district was proclaimed, and the property fell under its jurisdiction for many years. By 1994 the farm Potgietershoop was still located within this district (Geschiedenisatlas van Suid-Afrika 1999: 17, 20-27)

The farm was first known as farm number 1467 of the Lydenburg district, and subsequently as Potgietershoop 422, Piet Retief district. By 1934 the property was known as Potgietershoop 49, and was finally renamed Potgieters Hoop 151 HT in 1950.





**Fig. 8.** Major Jackson Map of the Piet Retief district dated 1902. The farm Potgietershoop 49 can be seen to the south east of Piet Retief. The area of interest for this report is located in the north eastern part of the farm. A road went through the eastern corner of the property, and two buildings are visible near the study area (currently known as Portion 8 and Portion 10 of Potgieters hoop). It seems that the buildings belonged to T. P. and B. W. Potgieter (Major Jackson 1902).

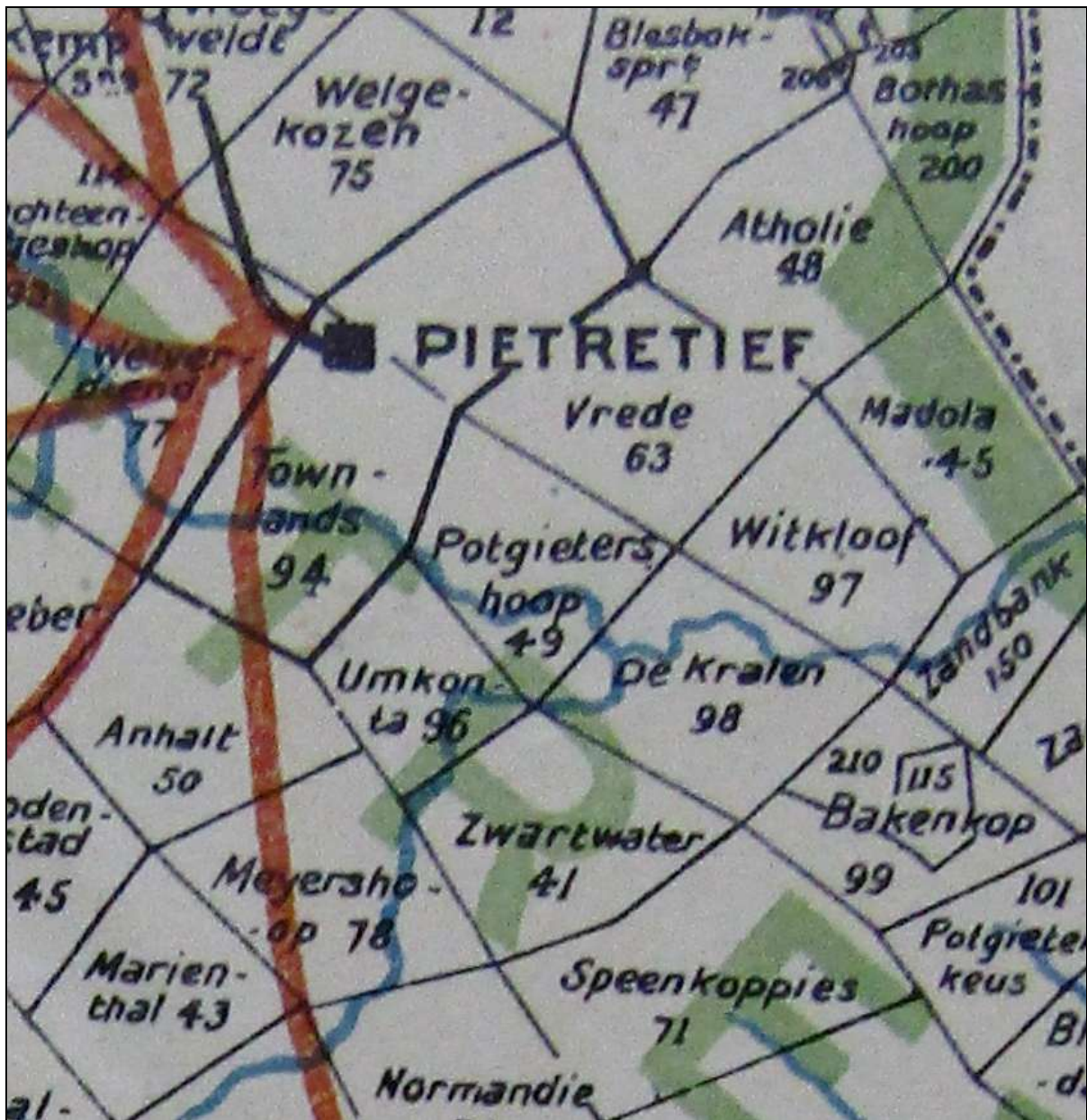
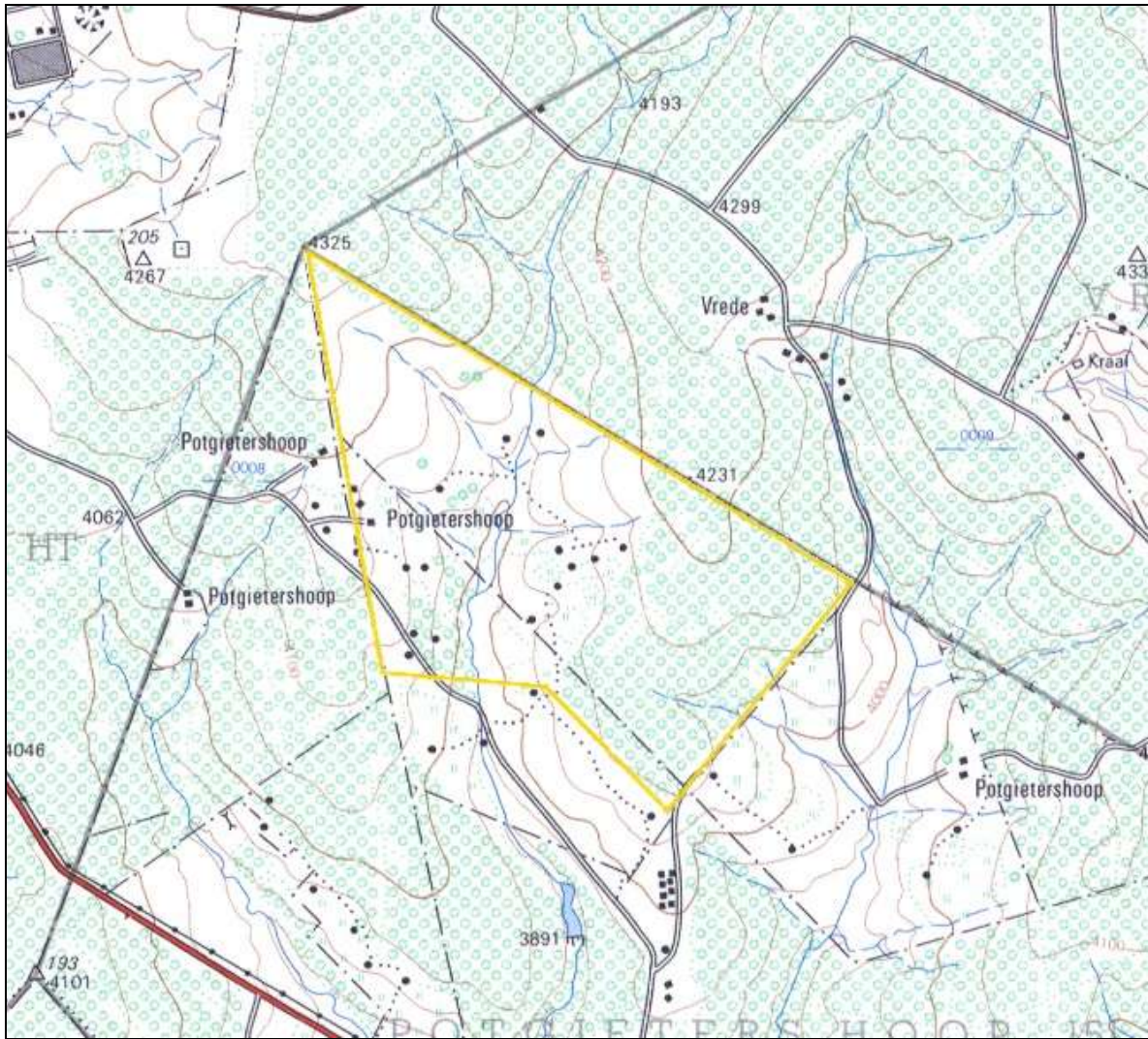
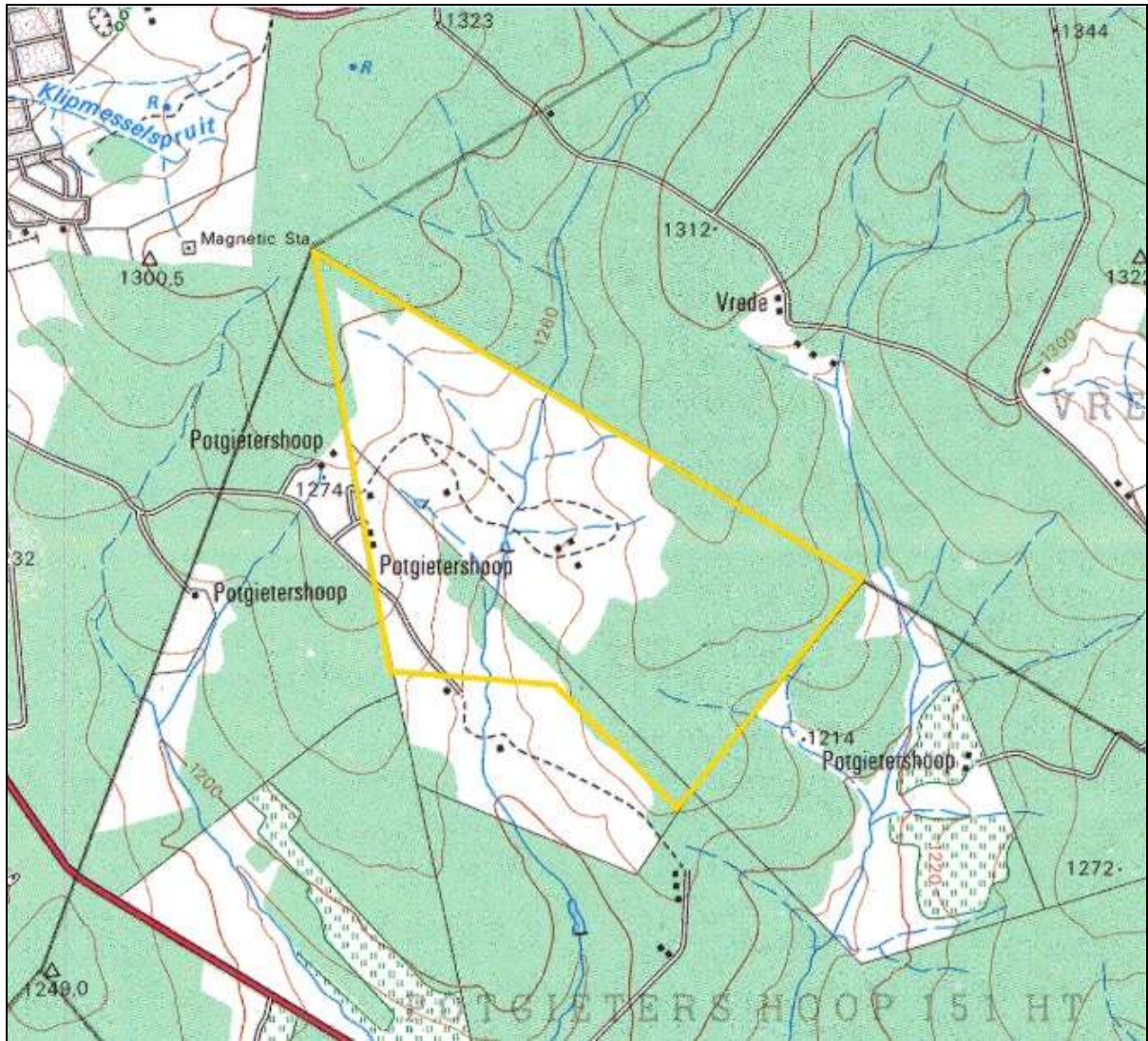


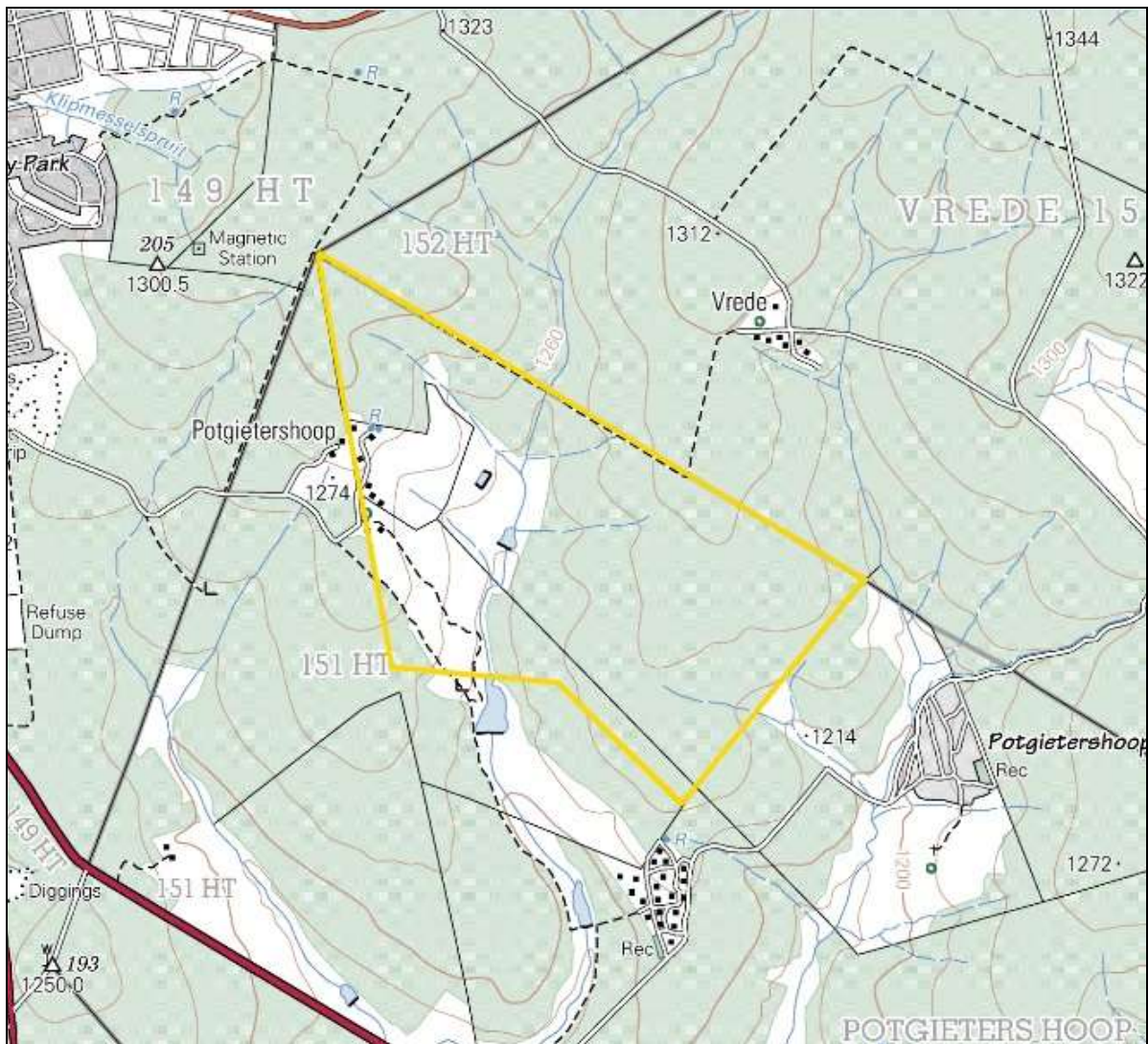
Fig. 9. Standard map of the Transvaal in the year 1920. The farm Potgieters Hoop 49 is located to the south east of the town of Piet Retief (Anon 1920s).



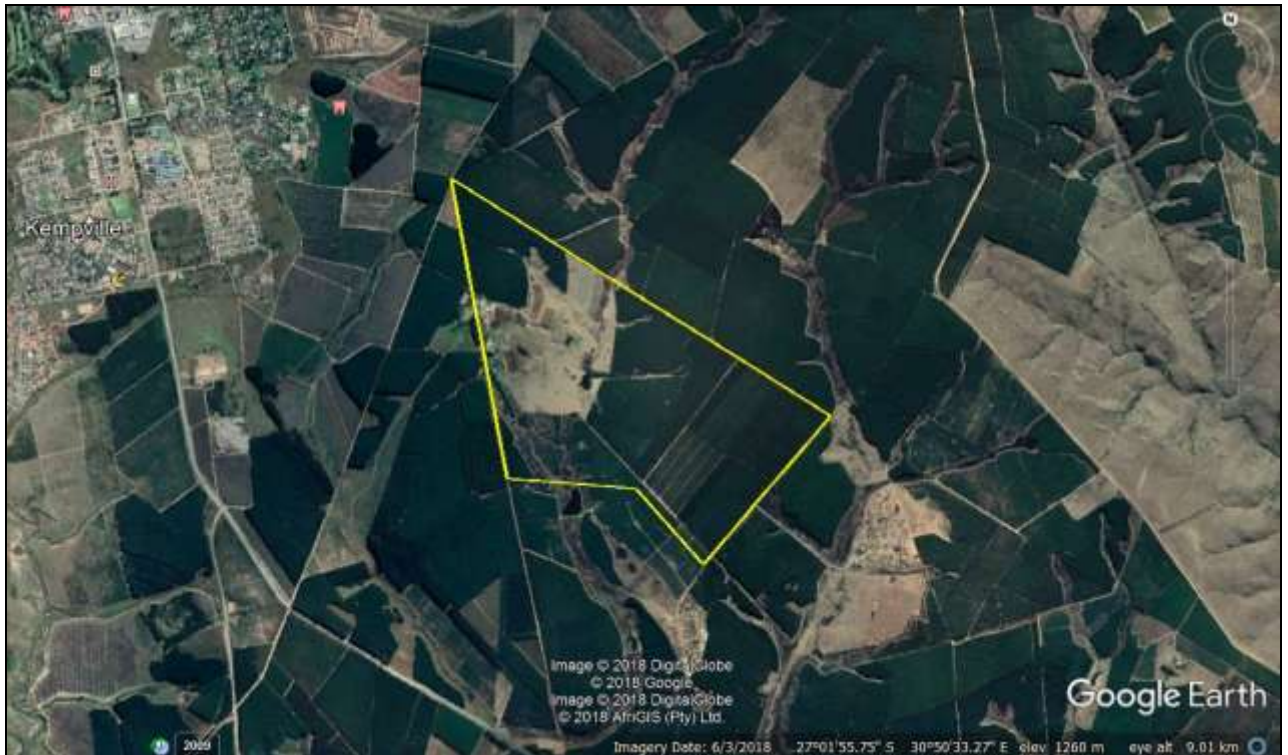
**Fig. 10.** Topographical map of the farm in the year 1965 (scale 1:50 000). The approximate location of the project area (Portions 8 and 10 of Potgieters Hoop 151 HT) is indicated with a yellow border. One can see that especially the south eastern third of the study area was covered in bush / woodland. Some small sections of cultivated land are visible around the central part of the project area. A number of streams, a few tracks / hiking trails and a minor road went through the area. About thirteen dots represent traditional huts, whereas three small squares near the western border of the property represent European buildings. More buildings can be seen on other parts of the property. The two houses indicated on the Major Jackson Map are not indicated (Topographical Map 1968).



**Fig. 11.** Topographical map of the farm in the year 1987. The approximate location of the study area is indicated with a yellow border. The south eastern third of the study area was still covered in bush / woodland. A number of streams, a circular track / hiking trail and a minor road went through the area. About seven small squares represent buildings in the study area. More buildings can be seen on other parts of the property (Topographical Map 1987).



**Fig. 12.** Topographical map of the farm in 2009. The approximate location of the study area is indicated with a yellow border. The largest part of the property was covered in bush / woodland. A number of streams went through the area, and three tracks / hiking trails are visible, one of which ran along the north eastern boundary of the property. Two small dams and two reservoirs can be seen, and about seven small squares near the western border of the study area represent buildings. More buildings can be seen on other parts of the property, and a dam is visible to the south (Topographical Map 2009).



**Fig. 13.** Google Earth image showing the location of the study area indicated by a yellow border. Note that the project surface area is already quite disturbed or developed (Google Earth 2018).

### **An historic overview of the ownership and development of the farm and study area**

The farm Potgietershoop was first known as farm number 1467 of the Lydenburg district, and subsequently as Potgietershoop 422, Piet Retief district. The property previously formed part of an area known as Londina South. The farm was prospected by H. M. Anderson, and was originally 2892 morgen 382 square roods in extent. On 14 July 1882, Potgietershoop was sold by the executors of the estate of Alexander McCorkindale to Petronella Catharina Potgieter (born Steenkamp) for the sum of £1147.17.6. The property was registered in Potgieter's name on 24 July 1882. This is likely where the name of the farm has its origin (NASA TAB, RAK: 2958).

It is due to the influence of Alexander McCorkindale that an area known as "New Scotland", comprising of the districts Industria, Roburnia and Londina South, was temporarily established in the area south west of Swaziland. During the 1850s and 1860s, hundreds of Scottish immigrants arrived at the Cape Town and Port Elizabeth harbours. The Transvaal government saw an opportunity to settle the disputed and turbulent Swazi border with Scottish farmers capable of bearing arms. In this way a commando would be available to repulse Swazi inroads, and the republic could consolidate its hold on the region. McCorkindale however had more ambitious plans, proposing to the Transvaal government that he could make the River Usutu navigable and would provide an outlet for the Transvaal through Delagoa Bay. In addition, McCorkindale promised to found a commercial bank that could offer substantial loans to the struggling Transvaal. McCorkindale returned to Britain in 1865, but was barely successful in raising money or men. He did however convince about fifty Scottish families

to move to New Scotland. McCorkindale died of malaria at Delagoa Bay while conducting a survey for his harbor in 1871, and his schemes were repudiated by the Transvaal government not long after his death. The influence of Scottish settlers in the region is still apparent in the names of farms and other places in the area (Mackenzie & Dalziel 2007: 156, 159-160).

In March 1885, Potgietershoop 422 was transported to the descendants of P. C. Potgieter, after she had passed away. They were Barend Willem Jacobus Potgieter, Jan Potgieter and Pieter Jacobus Johannes Potgieter (NASA TAB, RAK: 2958).

Unfortunately, no records could be found that indicate who the owners of Potgieters Hoop were for most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Major Jackson map shows that the property was still owned by members of the Potgieter family by 1902. By 1934, Petrus Jakobus Johannes Stephanus Potgieter owned a portion of Potgietershoop 49. In this year the landowner applied to the government for a grant to build a house on his farm for the use of a *bywoner*. Jan Petrus Spies, Potgieter's son in law, would farm on the property and construct a four room residence of bricks and wood, with a corrugated iron roof. This house would be constructed 60 foot from a fountain (Major Jackson 1902; NARSSA SAB, VWR: 112 B645/197/2).

The following information could be obtained regarding more recent landowners of Portion 8 of Potgieters Hoop 151 HT:

Date	Transported from	Transported to	Sale Price
1977	-	Anna Mona Thiele	Unknown
2010	A. M. Thiele	E & T Voerkrale Trust	

\* Note that this portion was previously known as Portion 3 of Potgieters Hoop (Windeed Search Engine 2018).

The following information was found regarding more recent landowners of Portion 10 of Potgieters Hoop 151 HT:

Date	Transported from	Transported to	Sale Price
1980	-	Potgieter	Unknown
1983	Potgieter	Marthinus Christoffel Johannes van Schalkwyk	Unknown

(Windeed Search Engine 2018)

Portion 8 and Portion 10 of Potgieters Hoop 151 HT are still owned by E & T Voerkrale Trust and Marthinus Christoffel Johannes van Schalkwyk, respectively (Windeed Search Engine 2018; Windeed Search Engine 2018).

## Heritage study Literature Review

The following CRM studies were conducted in the greater Piet Retief area:

Author	Year	Project	Findings
Van Schalkwyk, J.A.	1997	A survey of Cultural Resources on the farm Roodekraal 21 HT, West of Piet Retief.	No heritage resources were identified.
Pelser, A.J.	2011	A report on a Heritage Impact Assessment for the proposed establishment of the so-called Malayanini Township on Portion 30 of Vroegeveld 509 IT near Piet Retief, Mpumalanga.	Cemetary
Pelser, A.J.	2011	A report on a Heritage Impact Assessment for the proposed establishment of the so-called Maphepheni Township on Portion 27 & 31 of Vroegeveld 509 IT near Piet Retief, Mpumalanga.	Cemetery
Celliers, JP	2012	Report on Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment on the Remainder of Portion 1 of Piet Retief Town and Townlands 149 HT, Mpumalanga Province.	Cemetary
Kruger, N.	2015	Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) of Areas Demarcated for the establishment of 9 Mondi Agri-Villages, Greater Piet Retief area, Mpumalanga Province.	Graveyards, Historical Structures.

## Conclusion

The proposed project will impact on a very small part of Portions 8 and 10 of the farm Potgietershoop 151 HT where established infrastructure and farming activity has impacted on the area. From a heritage perspective due to the disturbed character of the site and as evidenced on historical maps the area has been utilised in the past by agricultural activities since at least 1965. Progression in development on the farm as evidenced by the sequence of historical maps, show that most structures and buildings have been either demolished or ruined over time. In light of the available information as presented, the study area does not warrant a full Phase 1 Heritage Impact study as it is anticipated that there are no archaeological sites, cultural heritage sites, historic structures, burial grounds or isolated artefacts likely to be present on the affected landscape. We support the recommendation that the project be exempted from any heritage further assessment. In the unlikely event that any sites might occur within the proposed site the following recommendations are to be included in the EMP and are the responsibility of the ECO of the project to implement these:

- If during construction any possible finds such as stone tool scatters, artefacts or bone and fossil remains are made, the operations must be stopped and a qualified archaeologist must be contacted for an assessment of the find.



If the above-mentioned recommendations are adhered by we support the application for exemption from a Phase 1 Heritage Impact Assessment and Palaeontological study.

Any further queries can be forwarded to Mr JP Celliers on Cell: +27 82 779 3748 or to

[kudzala@lantic.net](mailto:kudzala@lantic.net)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JP Celliers', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

JP Celliers

Archaeologist

## References:

1. Bergh, J.S. 1999. (ed.) *Geskiedenisatlas van Suid-Afrika. Die vier noordelike provinsies*. Pretoria: J. L. van Schaik Uitgewers.
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7. Mackenzie, J. M. And Dalziel N. R. 2007. *The Scots in South Africa: Ethnicity, identity, gender and race. 1772-1914*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
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## ARCHIVAL SOURCES (National Archive, Pretoria)

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## MAPS

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