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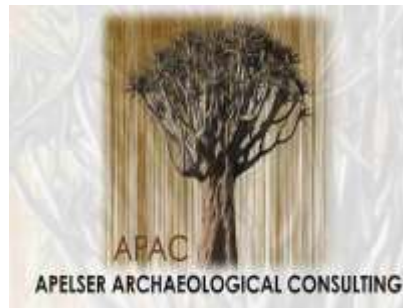
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Comprehensive and Professional Solutions for all Heritage Related Matters
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APAC022/76

2022-08-16

To: Mr. Andrew Salomon
South African Heritage Resource Agency
P O Box 4637
Cape Town
8000

RE: MOTIVATION FOR EXEMPTION FROM A FULL PHASE 1 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT - ERVEN 116 TO 118, PORTION 1 AND REMAINDER OF ERF 119, AND ERF 120, MELROSE

APelser Archaeological Consulting cc (APAC cc) was appointed by Craft Homes to provide a motivation for Exemption from a Full Phase 1 HIA for Erven 116-120 in Melrose, City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality, Gauteng. The assessment relates to an application for rezoning of the Erven, as well as the consolidation of the component Erven.

Background to the Project

An application has been made for the rezoning of Erven 116 to 118, Portion 1 and the Remainder of Erf 119, and Erf 120, Melrose from:

Erf 116 "Residential 1"

Erf 117 "Residential 3"

Erf 118, RE/119, 1/119 & Erf 120 "Special" for offices, restaurants and specialized retail

To: "Residential 3" including public open space and a clubhouse and related recreational facilities for residents only, with a density of 220 units (inclusive of inclusionary housing) on the combined site. An application for the consolidation of the component erven was also made.

"In terms of the National Heritage Resources Act, no 25 of 1999, heritage resources, including archaeological or palaeontological sites over 100 years old, graves older than 60 years, structures older than 60 years are protected. They may not be disturbed without a permit from the relevant heritage resources authority. This means that prior to development it is incumbent on the developer to ensure that a Heritage Impact Assessment is done. This must include the archaeological component (Phase 1) and any other applicable heritage components. Appropriate (Phase 2) mitigation, which involves recording, sampling and dating sites that are to be destroyed, must be done as required.

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The quickest process to follow for the archaeological component is to contract an accredited specialist (see the web site of the Association of Southern African Professional Archaeologists www.asapa.org.za) to provide a Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment Report. This must be done before any large development takes place. The Phase 1 Impact Assessment Report will identify the archaeological sites and assess their significance. It should also make recommendations (as indicated in section 38) about the process to be followed. For example, there may need to be a mitigation phase (Phase 2) where the specialist will collect or excavate material and date the site. At the end of the process the heritage authority may give permission for destruction of the sites.

Where bedrock is to be affected, or where there are coastal sediments, or marine or river terraces and in potentially fossiliferous superficial deposits, a Palaeontological Desk Top study must be undertaken to assess whether or not the development will impact upon palaeontological resources - or at least a letter of exemption from a Palaeontologist is needed to indicate that this is unnecessary. If the area is deemed sensitive, a full Phase 1 Palaeontological Impact Assessment will be required and if necessary a Phase 2 rescue operation might be necessary. Please note that a nationwide fossil sensitivity map is available on SAHRIS to assist applicants with determining the fossil sensitivity of a study area.

If the property is very small or disturbed and there is no significant site the heritage specialist may choose to send a letter to the heritage authority motivating for exemption from having to undertake further heritage assessments. Any other heritage resources that may be impacted such as built structures over 60 years old, sites of cultural significance associated with oral histories, burial grounds and graves, graves of victims of conflict, and cultural landscapes or viewsapes must also be assessed”.

Last mentioned option was decided on for this project which entailed desktop research as part of the assessment.

Relevant Legalisation

Aspects concerning the conservation of cultural resources are dealt with mainly in two Acts. These are the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999) and the National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998).

The National Heritage Resources Act

According to the Act the following is protected as cultural heritage resources:

- a. Archaeological artefacts, structures and sites older than 100 years;
- b. Ethnographic art objects (e.g. prehistoric rock art) and ethnography;
- c. Objects of decorative and visual arts;
- d. Military objects, structures and sites older than 75 years;
- e. Historical objects, structures and sites older than 60 years;
- f. Proclaimed heritage sites;
- g. Grave yards and graves older than 60 years;
- h. Meteorites and fossils; and
- i. Objects, structures and sites of scientific or technological value.

The National Estate includes the following:

- a. Places, buildings, structures and equipment of cultural significance;
- b. Places to which oral traditions are attached or which are associated with living heritage;
- c. Historical settlements and townscapes;
- d. Landscapes and features of cultural significance;
- e. Geological sites of scientific or cultural importance;
- f. Sites of Archaeological and palaeontological importance;
- g. Graves and burial grounds;
- h. Sites of significance relating to the history of slavery; and

- i. Movable objects (e.g. archaeological, palaeontological, meteorites, geological specimens, military, ethnographic, books etc.).

A Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) is the process to be followed in order to determine whether any heritage resources are located within the area to be developed as well as the possible impact of the proposed development thereon. An Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) only looks at archaeological resources. According to Section 38 (1) of the Act an HIA must be done under the following circumstances:

- a. The construction of a linear development (road, wall, power line, canal etc.) exceeding 300m in length.
- b. The construction of a bridge or similar structure exceeding 50m in length.
- c. Any development or other activity that will change the character of a site and exceed 5 000m² or involve three or more existing erven or subdivisions thereof.
- d. Re-zoning of a site exceeding 10 000m².
- e. Any other category provided for in the regulations of SAHRA or a provincial heritage authority.

Results of Desktop Heritage Assessment

The study area is located on Erven 116-120 in the suburb of Melrose in the Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality of Gauteng. It is bordered by Jameson Avenue to the west, Oxford Street to the north-west, North Street to the north and Reform Avenue to the east. The study area is bordered by established urban residential and other related developments including offices, educational facilities, places of worship (religious facilities) and shops. As a result the larger geographical area has been extensively altered from its original natural and historical landscape. As a result any archaeological and/or historical sites, features or material that could have existed here in the past would have been heavily disturbed or destroyed as a result.

The study area itself has been relatively extensively disturbed in the recent past, mainly through urban residential and related developments. The site is currently developed with a dwelling/house on Erf 116, with the other Erven being vacant. Aerial images (Google Earth) from 2001 onwards show that there were dwellings/houses/other structures present on some of the other Erven, but that these (except for the existing one on Erf 116) was demolished somewhere in 2014. Further ground clearance work, evident on aerial images dating to 2021, has impacted on the study area as well.



Figure 1: General location of the study & application area in red polygon (Google Earth 2022).



Figure 2: Closer view of the study area & the footprint of Erven 116-120 (Google Earth 2022).

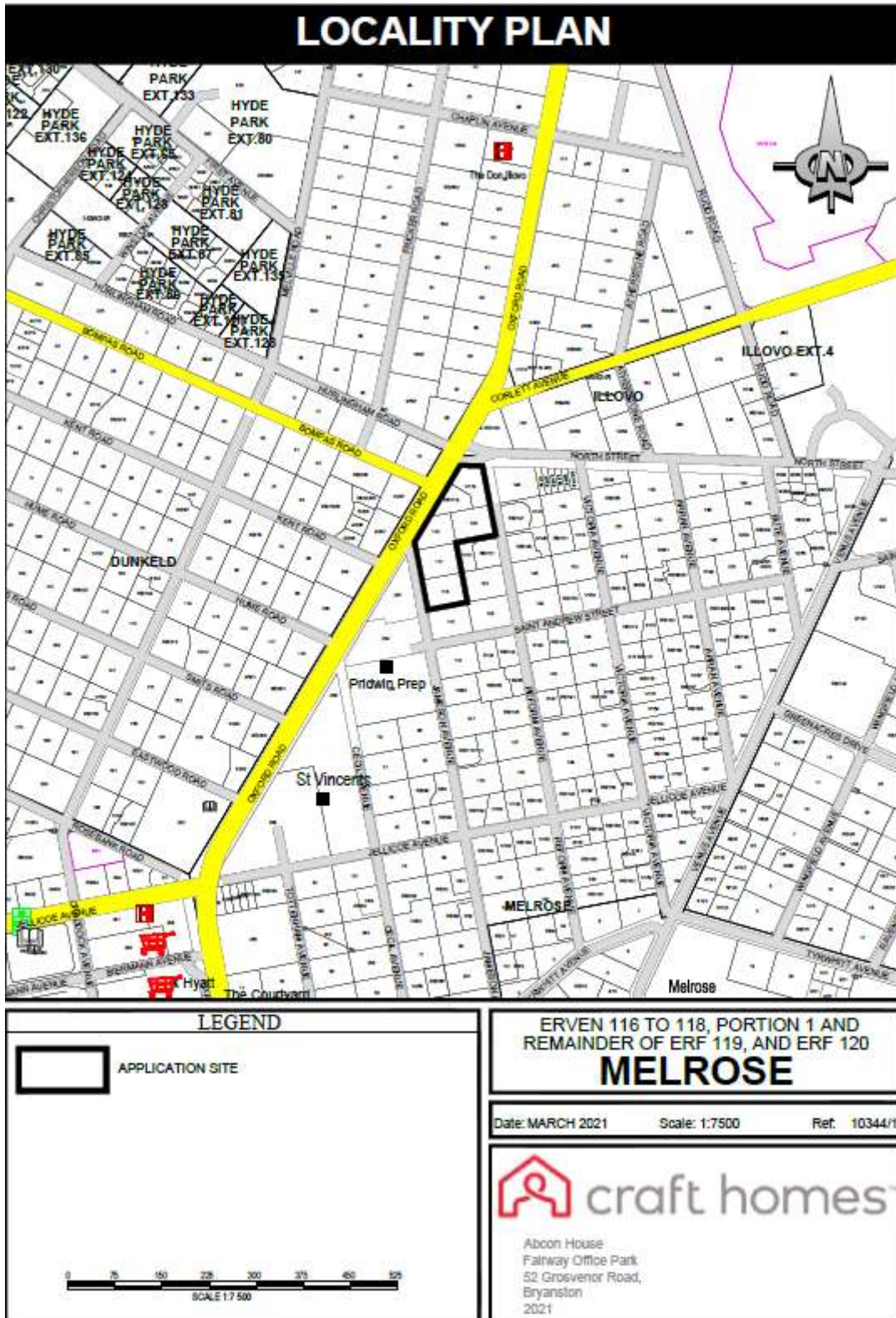


Figure 3: Locality Plan (courtesy Craft Homes).

The Stone Age is the period in human history when lithic (stone) material was mainly used to produce tools. In South Africa the Stone Age can be divided in basically into three periods. It is however important to note that dates are relative and only provide a broad framework for interpretation. A basic sequence for the South African Stone Age (Lombard et.al 2012) is as follows:

Earlier Stone Age (ESA) up to 2 million – more than 200 000 years ago

Middle Stone Age (MSA) less than 300 000 – 20 000 years ago

Later Stone Age (LSA) 40 000 years ago – 2000 years ago

It should also be noted that these dates are not a neat fit because of variability and overlapping ages between sites (Lombard et.al 2012: 125).

A number of MSA and Later Stone Age sites are known to occur in the larger geographical area, the closest ones including Stone Age sites at Melvillekoppies, Linksfield, Primrose, the Glenferness Stone Age site, a site called Pietkloof and a site on Zevenfontein (Berg 1999:4). There are no known Stone Age sites in the study area. If any Stone Age artefacts are to be found in the area then it would more than likely be single, out of context, stone tools. Urbanization over the last 150 years or so would have destroyed any evidence if indeed it did exist.

The Iron Age is the name given to the period of human history when metal was mainly used to produce metal artefacts. In South Africa it can be divided in two separate phases (Bergh 1999: 96-98), namely:

Early Iron Age (EIA) 200 – 1000 A.D.

Late Iron Age (LIA) 1000 – 1850 A.D.

Huffman (2007: xiii) however indicates that a Middle Iron Age should be included. His dates, which now seem to be widely accepted in archaeological circles, are:

Early Iron Age (EIA) 250 – 900 A.D.

Middle Iron Age (MIA) 900 – 1300 A.D.

Late Iron Age (LIA) 1300 – 1840 A.D.

There are no known Iron Age sites in the study area and none were identified during the assessment. If any did exist here in the past it would most likely have been disturbed extensively or completely destroyed during the recent past through extensive urban developments. Late Iron Age sites are however known in the large geographical area at sites such as Melvillekoppies and Bruma (Berg 1999: 7). Huffman's research indicates that Later Iron Age occupation of the larger geographical area occurred in areas such as Klipriviersberg and Linksfield (Huffman 2007: 171).

No Iron Age sites, features or objects are known to exist in the study and application area. If any did exist the extensive disturbances of the recent past would have destroyed all evidence.

The historical age started with the first recorded oral histories in the area. It includes the moving into the area of people that were able to read and write. The first Europeans to move through and into the area were the groups of Cornwallis Harris (1836) and David Livingstone in 1847 (Bergh 1999: 13). These groups were closely followed by the Voortrekkers after 1844 (Bergh 1999: 14).

Melrose includes several suburbs of Johannesburg, South Africa. It is located in Region E of the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality. The suburb had its origins when Henry Brown Marshall purchased land in the north of Johannesburg in 1893. Prior to the discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand in 1886, the suburb lay on land on one of the original farms that make up Johannesburg, called Syferfontein. It was called the Melrose Estate of 713 acres and at the time was 9.7km north of the central business district. The suburb was laid out in 1902 (www.wikipedia.org).

Google Earth images of the study & application area provides evidence of the disturbed nature of the area as a result of urbanization and related developments in recent historical times. The site itself has been heavily disturbed in recent years as a result itself through urban development. The demolition of structures

on some of the erven in 2014, as well as later ground clearance activities in 2021, also impacted on the study area. If any archaeological and/or historical sites and features existed here in the past it would have been extensively disturbed or even destroyed. The current dwelling/house on Erf 116 is also not older than 60 years of age, while no other sites or features of cultural heritage origin or significance are visible in the study area based on site photographs provided by the client. The informal dumping of residential refuse and building rubble in the area is also evident.



Figure 4: Closer view of the study & application area dating to 2001. Note the structures on the northern erven & the existing dwelling on Erf 116 to the south (Google Earth 2022).

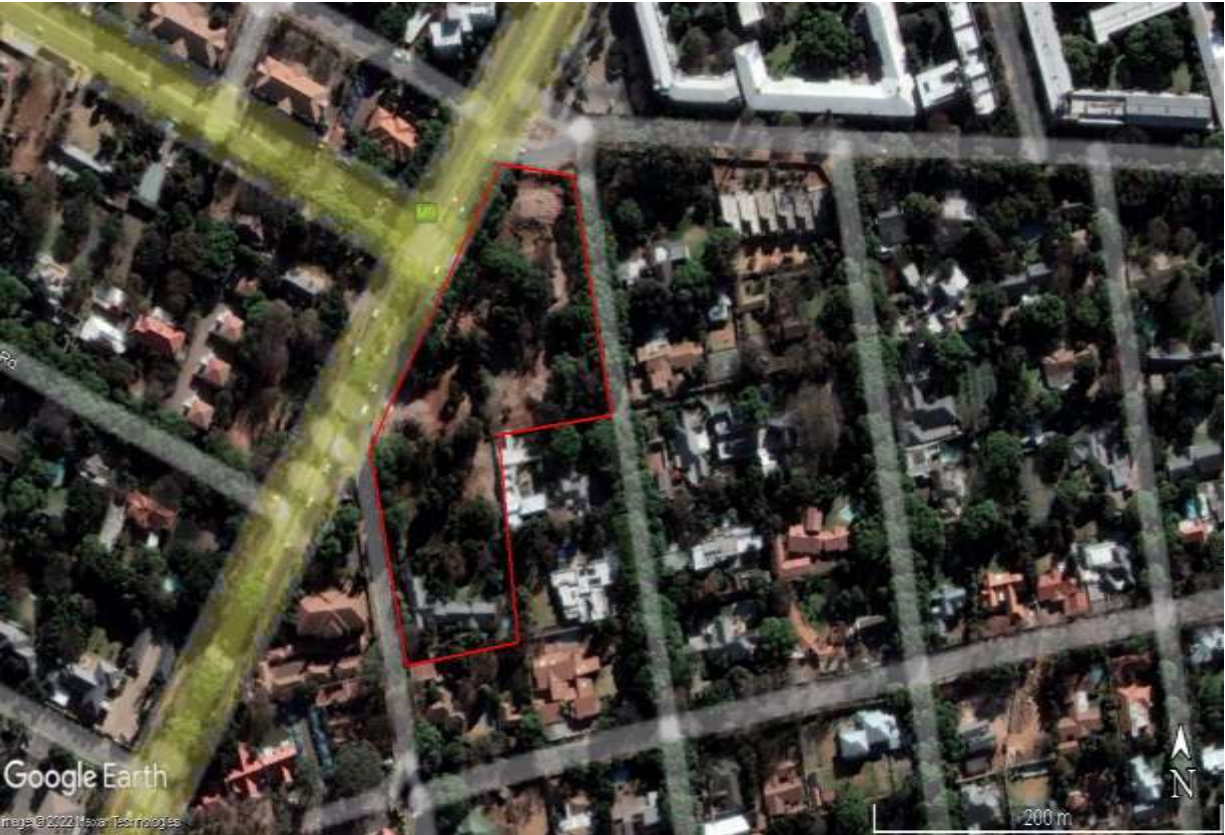


Figure 5: Closer view dating to 2014. The structures/dwellings on the northern erven had been demolished by this stage (Google Earth 2022).



Figure 6: Closer view of the area in 2021. Some ground clearance occurred in the northern section (Google Earth 2022).



Figure 7: A view from North Street (courtesy Craft Homes).



Figure 8: A view from Oxford Road (courtesy Craft Homes).



Figure 9: A view from Jameson Street (courtesy Craft Homes).



Figure 10: A view from Reform Avenue (courtesy Craft Homes).



Figure 11: A view of a section of the study area to the east (courtesy Craft Homes). Note the informal dumping.



Figure 12: Another section of the study area. Note the dense vegetation (courtesy Craft Homes).



Figure 13: A view of the existing dwelling on Erf 116 (courtesy Craft Homes).



Figure 14: General view of another section of the study area (courtesy Craft Homes).

To conclude, based on the aerial images of the area, and the heritage desktop study, it is therefore deemed unlikely that any significant sites, features or material of cultural heritage (archaeological and/or

historical) origin and/or significance will exist in the study area & application area. Recent historical activities (mainly urban settlement and other related developments) would have impacted on any if they did exist here in the past and would have disturbed or destroyed these to a large degree. Known archaeological and historical sites, features and material have been identified in the larger geographical area and this needs to be taken into consideration during any actions related to future developments in the study area.

It is therefore recommended that Exemption from a Full Phase 1 Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for the rezoning application related to Erven 116-120 in the suburb of Melrose in the Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality of Gauteng be granted to the applicants taking into consideration the following:

The subterranean nature of cultural heritage (archaeological and/or historical) resources must always be kept in mind. Should any previously unknown or invisible sites, features or material be uncovered during any future development actions here then an expert should be contacted to investigate and provide recommendations on the way forward. This could include previously unknown and unmarked graves and/or cemeteries.

Should there be any questions or comments on the contents of this document please contact the author as soon as possible.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anton Pelser', written in a cursive style.

Anton Pelser

References

1. General & Closer Views of Study Area location and application footprint: Google Earth 2022.
2. Locality Plan: Provided by Craft Homes.
3. Site photographs: Courtesy Craft Homes.
4. Bergh, J.S. (red.). 1999. **Geskiedenisatlas van Suid-Afrika. Die vier noordelike provinsies.** Pretoria: J.L. van Schaik.
5. Huffman, T.N. 2007. **Handbook to the Iron Age: The Archaeology of Pre-Colonial Farming Societies in Southern Africa.** Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press.
6. Lombard, M., L. Wadley, J. Deacon, S. Wurz, I. Parsons, M. Mohapi, J. Swart & P. Mitchell. 2012. South African and Lesotho Stone Age Sequence Updated (I). **South African Archaeological Bulletin 67 (195): 120–144, 2012.**
7. Republic of South Africa. 1999. National Heritage Resources Act (No 25 of 1999). Pretoria: the Government Printer.
8. Republic of South Africa. 1998. National Environmental Management Act (no 107 of 1998). Pretoria: The Government Printer.
9. www.wikipedia.org.