



Archaeos Culture & Cultural
Resource Consultants
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**FINAL REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION
OF A LATE IRON AGE STONE WALLED SITE AND
POSSIBLE BURIALS IMPACTED ON BY THE FAIRVIEW TAILINGS
FACILITY REWORKING PROGRAM AT THE FAIRVIEW MINE NEAR
BARBERTON, MPUMALANGA**

For:

***Synergistics Environmental Services
64 Wessels Road
RIVONIA
2128***

REPORT: AE01254P

***A.J. Pelser
Accredited member of ASAPA
Professional Member of SASCH***

Field Work conducted: ***September 2012*** Date of final report: ***October 2012***

P.O.Box 55
GROENKLOOF
0027
Tel: **083 459 3091**
Fax: **086 695 7247**
Email: **pelseranton@gmail.com**

Members: AC van Vollenhoven BA, BA (Hons), DTO, NDM, MA (Archaeology) [UP], MA (Culture History) [US], DPhil (Archaeology) [UP], Man Dip [TUT], DPhil (History)[US]
AJ Pelser BA (UNISA), BA (Hons) (Archaeology), MA (Archaeology) [WITS]

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Weber'.

SUMMARY

During March 2012 Archaeos cc was requested by Synergistics Environmental Services, on behalf of Pan African Resources (Pty) Ltd, to provide a 2nd opinion on archaeological sites and features recorded by Dr. J. van Schalkwyk in November 2011 at the Fairview Mine in Barberton. The sites were to be impacted on by the Fairview Mine Tailings Facility Reworking Project, and the main aim of this 2nd field session was to investigate the possibility of a number of unknown stone cairns being the location of burials.

The resultant report (AE01219P – April 2012) indicated that it was possibly graves, but that it was not possible to conclude this beyond any doubt. The recommendations were therefore that the stone walled site be archaeologically investigated (mapping and excavation), while the stone cairns be tested to see if these are indeed burials. SAHRA (July 2012) concurred with these findings and recommendations and indicated that two permits should be issued. These permits (one for the archaeological excavations and one for the Test Excavation of the cairns) were duly issued in August 2012 (**Permits ID90 & 91; Reference 9/2/203/0005**). Fieldwork was conducted during September 2012, and this report is the result of the investigations carried out.

We believe that the work conducted, and the data retrieved through this work, was sufficient enough to enable us to make the necessary deductions. It is in line with the recommendations made during the initial HIA in 2011 and the 2nd Opinion Report in 2012, as well as the requirements of the permits issued by SAHRA. Therefore it is recommended that the development can continue, taking cognizance of the final conclusions and recommendations at the end of this report. Finally, it is our recommendation that a Destruction Permit for the site that will be developed be issued so that the development can continue.

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INTRODUCTION

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The archaeological investigations of the stone walled site and features comprised the mapping and plotting of walls and other features associated with the settlement, as well as the excavation of one of the stone walled enclosures. The test excavations of the stone cairns (possible burials) focused on one of the largest of these features, while the other were also measured and documented. Surface sampling (of cultural material) was also undertaken.

AIMS

The aims of the Archaeological Phase 2 Investigation of the LIA stone walled site and possible graves that will be impacted on by the Fairview Mine Tailings Facility Reworking Project were as follows:

- (a) to conduct mapping and recording of the stone walled site and features found on it in order to determine settlement layout if possible;
- (b) to conduct archaeological excavations on the site in order to retrieve any cultural material that could assist with the interpretation of the cultural identity of its occupants, the time-frame of settlement and social economy;
- (c) to test excavate the stone cairns located in the area to see if these indeed represent burials or not;

- (d) and finally, the proper curation of the material in a recognized institution. In this case the Ditsong Museum of Cultural History in Pretoria was identified and will be responsible for curating the archaeological sample;

LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

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 Permit was issued under the provisions of the National Heritage Act.

1.1 The National Heritage Resources Act

According to the above-mentioned act the following is protected as cultural heritage resources:

- a. Archaeological artifacts, 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
- i. Objects, structures and sites or 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
- i. Movable objects (e.g. archaeological, palaeontological, meteorites, geological specimens, military, ethnographic, books etc.)**

Archaeology, palaeontology and meteorites

Section 35(4) of this Act deals with archaeology, palaeontology and meteorites. The Act states that no person may, without a permit issued by the responsible heritage resources authority (National or Provincial):

- a. destroy, damage, excavate, alter, deface or otherwise disturb any archaeological or palaeontological site or any meteorite;**

- b. **destroy, damage, excavate, remove from its original position, collect or own any archaeological or palaeontological material or object or any meteorite;**
- c. trade in, sell for private gain, export or attempt to export from the Republic any category of archaeological or palaeontological material or object, or any meteorite; or
- d. bring onto or use at an archaeological or palaeontological site any excavation equipment or any equipment that assists in the detection or recovery of metals or archaeological and palaeontological material or objects, or use such equipment for the recovery of meteorites.
- e. alter or demolish any structure or part of a structure which is older than 60 years as protected.

The above mentioned may only be disturbed or moved by an archaeologist, after receiving a permit from the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA). In order to demolish such a site or structure, a destruction permit from SAHRA will also be needed.

1.2 The National Environmental Management Act

This act states that a survey and evaluation of cultural resources must be done in areas where development projects, that will change the face of the environment, will be undertaken. The impact of the development on these resources should be determined and proposals for the mitigation thereof are made.

Environmental management should also take the cultural and social needs of people into account. Any disturbance of landscapes and sites that constitute the nation's cultural heritage should be avoided as far as possible and where this is not possible the disturbance should be minimized and remedied.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology comprised the following:

Photographic - Photo's of the site and area were taken, while individual features and objects were also photographed for recording purposes.

Mapping & Excavation

The site and features located on it was mapped by using a handheld GPS device (Garmin 550). The cleared and open-section underneath the ESKOM pylons (servitude) were concentrated on mainly. The extent of the area covered by the settlement was determined and although there might be sections covered by thick vegetation that was not recorded the main part of the site was mapped and recorded.

With only two distinct circular stone walled enclosures present on the site an excavation (Excavation 1) was measured out on one of these in order to determine the function of these enclosures and to obtain a cultural material sample. Very little material was visible on the

surface of the site. The 2nd excavation was a Test Excavation on one of the stone cairns to see if these features do represent burials.

Surface Sampling

After the excavations and mapping was completed a limited survey in the area was conducted to see if there is any cultural material visible on the surface of the area. Mostly scatters of individual stone tools and a few pieces of Iron Age pottery was identified and recorded.

Analysis & Documentation/Curation of cultural material

The analysis of the material was undertaken by the archaeologist on the project (author of this report). The curation of the material will be handled by a recognized cultural institution, in this case the Ditsong Museum of Cultural History in Pretoria, who agreed to undertake this required activity.

DESCRIPTION OF THE AREA AND SITE

The development area and site is located near the existing Fairview Gold Mine, near the town of Barberton in Mpumalanga. The farms Bramber South 349 JU, Bramber Central 348 JU, Portion 4 of Bramber 313 JU and Bramber 314 JU are affected. The expansion of the mines' Tailings Facilities are being undertaken and a number of heritage sites (including LIA stone walled settlement remains and possible graves) were recorded during a November 2011 HIA conducted by Dr. J. van Schalkwyk.

The area has been extensively disturbed in the recent past (farming, ESKOM powerlines & servitude and mining), and as a result a lot of evidence of earlier human settlement and utilization has been disturbed. However, the sites that had been recorded are relatively well preserved and it was recommended that mitigation measures be implemented before any development can continue. The area around the ESKOM servitude is fairly open and visibility is good, although bordering sections are densely vegetated. The main portion of the site that was archaeologically investigated had been impacted on in the past by the ESKOM servitude and line that cuts through it.

The stone walled site consists of at least two distinct circular stone walled enclosures (livestock/cattle kraal), various sections of stone walling, some other less visible and distinct enclosures, at least 3 areas with concentrations of stone cairns of varying sizes and other features such as possible granary stands. It was these features that were mapped and recorded and on which the archaeological investigations focused.



Figure 1: Topographic location of site and area (Map Source 2010).

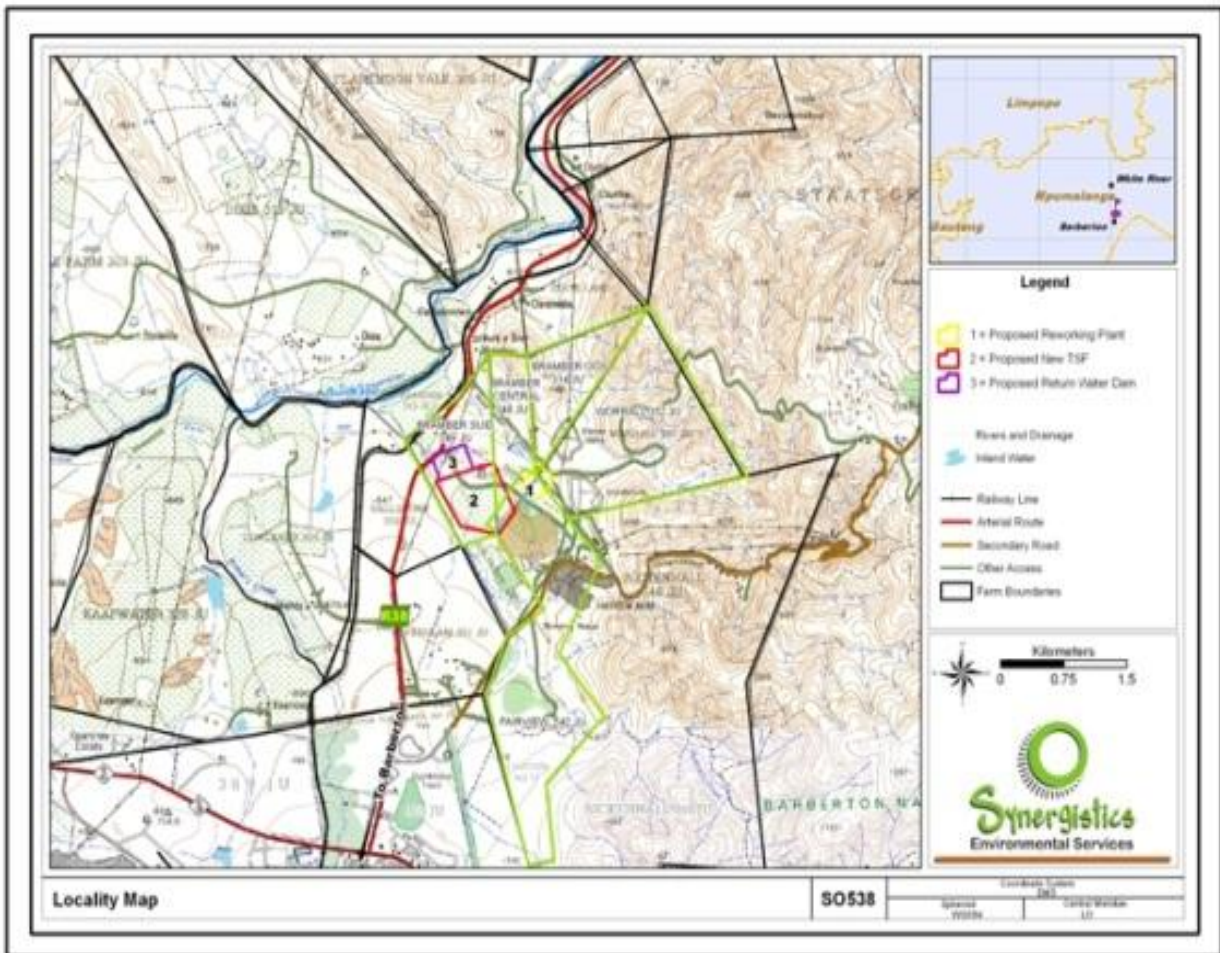


Figure 2: Map of area and layout of development – The new Tailings dam area is marked No's 2 and 3 (Synergistics Environmental Services).



Figure 3: Location of sites investigated (Google Earth 2012 – Image date 2010/03/07).



Figure 4: View of area towards mine (below mountain line).



Figure 5: Some stone walling visible, with servitude road cutting through the site.



Figure 6: One of the circular enclosures on the site.



**Figure 7: Stone cairn area after cleaning.
There are at least 3 similar concentrations in the area.**

DISCUSSIONS

Historical Background

The history of the area, mine and the farms impacted will not be discussed here, but it is contained in a report commissioned from Past Matters, a Heritage & Historical Research Consultancy (See Appendix I).

Archaeological Excavations

Excavation 1 – Circular stone walled feature

Very little cultural material is visible on the surface of the site, and with the site clearly having been impacted in the past by the Powerlines (pylons and servitude road through it) there is only a small number of discernible features on the site. This includes two circular stone walled enclosures next to each other and it was decided to measure out an excavation in one of these features in order to see if there is any cultural deposit present, to recover as much material as possible for interpretative purposes and to try and determine the function of the feature.

A 2m x 2m square was measured out from the edge of the features' wall towards the inside. The feature has a diameter of approximately 7m, and was originally much higher than the less than 0.50m it is now. Stones had collapsed outward and inward and it is possible that the wall was in excess of 1.00m. The base of the wall is around 0.70m wide. The construction method was to use large stones, in-filled with smaller stones (dry-stone walling).

The excavation was conducted in the following manner. All visibly loose rocks (from the wall collapse) in the square were removed and then we dug up to the level of rocks underneath that and documented the results. Most of the first 10-15cm consisted of loose soil and roots, as well as the fallen stones from the wall. More stones were found underneath this

first level, while at a depth of around 0.30m a layer of the original bedrock was encountered. A 0.50m x 0.50m section in the excavation was then taken down further, but the results were the same and bedrock was found to be continuing.

It is more than likely that this and the other circular feature next to it were used as livestock enclosures (cattle kraals). Very little cultural material was recovered from the excavation, but included a number of undecorated potsherds (ceramics), a broken upper grinding stone and some pieces of metal. The details on these finds will be given later in this section.



Figure 8: Location of Excavation prior to investigation.



Figure 9: Excavation 1 after removal of loose stones & grass. The stone seen here are part of the collapse of the stone wall of the enclosure.



Figure 10: Excavation 1 complete. Many of the stones are part of the wall's collapse although some are part of the natural rock base.



Figure 11: Upper grinding stone found in between the loose stones in Excavation 1.



Figure 12: A 0.50m x 0.50m section was taken down to sterile original rock base levels. Very little cultural material was found throughout the excavation.

The only artefacts found in the excavation were 12 pieces of undecorated potsherds, the upper grinder and 3 pieces of a brass object. No pieces of pottery had any rims, and it is not possible to determine the shape or function of the vessels the pieces are representing. It could be remnants of a storage vessel and possibly a cooking pot. The grinder is of course evidence of agriculture and the growing and using of crops such as maize, millet or sorghum. No lower grinding stones were identified on the site, although a number of other upper grinders were recorded. The brass object represented by the three pieces is not really identifiable, but could possibly be part of an oil lamp (the section where the wick of the lamp is located). This is evidence of a possible late 19th/early 20th century date for the settlement, although the object could have ended up on the site many years after its abandonment.



Figure 13: Undecorated pieces of pottery from Excavation 1.



Figure 14: Upper grinder from the excavation.



**Figure 15: Metal object from Excavation 1.
Possibly part of oil lamp.**

Archaeological research in the area has not been done extensively in the past, although some Stone Age work has been done. There are no known Early, Middle or Later Stone Age sites (including rock art sites) in close proximity to Fairview Mine. The closest Stone Age rock art sites to the area under investigation are located a short distance to the north and southwest of Barberton. (Bergh 1999: 4-5). Historians agree that the earliest Africans to inhabit in the Lowveld in Mpumalanga were of Sotho, or more particularly Koni-origin. (Packard 2001: 594) According to Bergh there are no prominent Iron Age sites situated in close proximity to the area under investigation. (Bergh 1999: 6-8).

The earliest African settlers in the eastern Lowveld were probably Sotho speakers. **The existence in the Kaap Valley area, and further east, of stone piles, associated in Sotho-speaking areas to the north with land-clearing and agriculture,** suggest that these early settlers practised agriculture. There is also some evidence that early African occupants engaged in the mining of gold, and thus presumably in regional trade. Toward the end of the 19th century, the Swazi began raiding and then moving northward into the area, either pushing the early inhabitants out or taking them up in their ranks. By the late 1890's, Swazi settlements extended north of the Swaziland border and westward along the Crocodile River. However, the lower parts of the region - the flats in the Komati Ward in particular - remained largely uninhabited due to the presence of tsetse flies and trypanosomiasis. Most of the major villages were located along the river valleys associated with the De Kaap, Queens, Crocodile, Komati and Lomati Rivers as there was access to water and alluvial soils along the rivers. The economy was subsistence agriculture and livestock based and crops included maize, jugo beans, cow peas, groundnuts and several varieties of squash. Most Africans in the region practised shifting cultivation. The inhabitants also collected wild plants like spinach and various greens. Many households maintained a range of domestic animals including goats, chickens and sheep, but cattle were by far the most important. The settlements of the poorer farmers without cattle were scattered over the flats (Packard 2001: 594-595).

The rinderpest epidemic hit the cattle population of the region in 1897 and killed off game as well as cattle. The loss of animal hosts eliminated trypanosomiasis from the flats and opened

it up to settlement by African farmers who possessed cattle. This, in combination with an expanding market for maize, led to an expansion of agricultural production in the area. The opening up of lowland pasture also hastened the rebuilding of Swazi herds. It is unclear what role, if any, malaria played in the development of African settlements in the Lowveld before the end of the nineteenth century. African informants claimed that the malaria epidemics in the region in the late 1890s represented a new disease. However, the reports of early European travellers and settlers from the middle of the nineteenth century indicate that malaria was present in the Lowveld. Africans may have adapted to the presence of malaria by siting their homesteads on higher ground away from breeding areas and abandoning locations that were hit by fever. This would have reduced the impact of the disease. Moreover, the long history of settlement in the region may have produced levels of acquired immunity, which further reduced the disease's impact. European medical observers described this immunity later in the following century (Packard 2001: 595).

The migration of Swazi tribes from Swaziland in northwestern and northeastern directions, passing close by to the current Barberton district took place during the so called “*difaqane*” period, which occurred roughly from the early 1820’s to the late 1830’s, when many tribes were displaced throughout South Africa (Bergh 1999: 11, 109-115).

In 1905, the British authorities in South Africa commissioned a book from its War Office, in which information on the black tribes in Transvaal would be recorded for military purposes. The bulk of the Swazi people found in the eastern administrative division lived in the district of Barberton, where they are said to have settled in about the year 1865. This settlement took place after the “wholesale killing-off” which took place on the death of the great Swazi chief Umswazi. According to this source, the British had found the area practically uninhabited, as the Swazis under *Sapusa* (more likely Sobhuza) had exterminated the Basuto tribe that used to live in the area some years before (Massie 1905: 14, 85).

Two major results of European settlement in the area what is today known as the Barberton district was, firstly, that only Europeans could own land, except in two released areas in the extreme east of the district. This left several tribes of note without any sufficient land where they could live undisturbed. The European farmers with cattle required few herdsmen, and were averse to large, permanent black populations on their farms. Vegetable farmers would also employ several workers, including mainly women and children. These people would stay in self-made shelters on the farms. There were also some permanently settled workers on farms. Those black workers with too much cattle were often asked to move from a farm if the farmer felt that his grazing area was under threat (Myburgh 1956: 9-10) The second result was the institution of a migrant labor system in the area and some workers flocked to the area from beyond the country’s borders (Myburgh 1956: 10).

From 1860 to 1881, the European population in the area was already fairly dense and their administration firmly in place. Many of the policies that would lead the apartheid laws later on had already been developed (Bergh 1999: 170). In November 1864, for example, the broad design of the guidelines concerning the pass-system for blacks, the provision of labour, the obligatory tax and the carrying of firearms, had been published in the Government Gazette (Bergh 1999: 171). In 1860, the Transvaal was once again divided into a number of districts, facilitating the administration of blacks through the instalment of a greater number of officers. While there were only seven districts in 1860, the Transvaal was divided into 15 districts by 1886. Blacks in isolated regions would especially feel the threat to their autonomy

as white control became increasingly rigid (Bergh 1999: 171). About half of the black population in the Transvaal was living on private land, owned by whites or companies, in 1904. According to the Squatters' Law of 1895, no more than five families of "natives" could live on any farm or divided portion of a farm, without special permission from the Government (Massie 1905: 97). This law was however not rigidly enforced in practice and large numbers of blacks still occupied certain areas.

The black people living on white-owned properties paid an annual rent in labour or money, varying in amount. Those adult black cultivators living on Crown lands paid an annual rental of £1, in addition to poll tax. They were, however, not charged for water, wood or grazing, and they were not restricted as to the amount of land that they could cultivate (Massie 1905: 97). There are several indications that the Swazi people in the Transvaal had good relations with its European (Boer and British) inhabitants. In 1876, for example, when war broke out between the Republic and the BaPedi, Swazi forces assisted the burgher army (Ross 1995: 60). According to R. H. Massie, by 1904 the Swazis were ruled by two chieftainesses who were both widows of Umwazi. They were named Nomqisa of Nompete, and Nyanda (known as Mac-Mac) respectively. A number of petty chiefs in the region were subject to these two royal widows. The Swazi had not, up until 1904, taken part in any war against Europeans, but have rather proved themselves valuable allies to the Boers and British against other black tribes. It is noted that 4 473 Swazi people (including 1000 fighting men) lived in the Barberton region by 1904. These people fell under the jurisdiction of the Chieftainess Nomqisa or Nompete, and the locality of the Chief Kraal was the Msoli River near Nelspruit. The chiefs who fell under the authority of this chieftainess were Roleka, Muisi, Dantyo, Duma, Mhobobo, Mhwayi, Silikana and several lesser chiefs (Massie 1905: 85-86). Some of the blacks, who used to stay on farms during the first part of the twentieth century, were probably labour tenants. Through the system of labour tenancy, black people could live on farmers' land, whereas a large part of the black population was restricted to the Natives Reserves, as set out in the Natives Land Act of 1913, which established a clear legal distinction between the African Reserves and white farming areas. Though the Natives Land Committee saw labour tenancy as an evil, they acknowledged that it was the only system by means of which the average farmer could develop his land by 1918. Farmers were indeed opposed to any restriction of the system (Union of South Africa 1918: 10).

Myburgh describes the general confusion in the Barberton district by the early 20th century as follows: "*Certain tribes also were settled by the Boer Government in defined locations, but during the late war some of these took the opportunity of moving to more favourable localities, and now their places of residence are in some cases not settled even now, though the work of locating them is being actively pushed on by the present Administration. By these various disturbing agencies the tribes have become so much scattered, that it is scarcely possible to describe any one tribe as a whole, portions of several tribes being found in almost every district*" (Massie 1905: 20).

Based on the information above, as well as the fairly scant physical evidence gathered during the archaeological excavations at the site it is therefore possible that the site could date to the time of Swazi migration into the area during the difaqane of the 1820's/30's. However, it is also possible that it dates to around the period of the late 19th century after the moving into the region by Europeans when gold was discovered in the Barberton area, and during the later settlement of white farmers in the region. However, this is very difficult to determine without a doubt with the lack of information recovered. The pottery found is undecorated which

makes it nearly impossible to provide even a relative date of occupancy, while the cultural identity of the settlements' occupants can also not be determined really using the cultural material.

What is clear (based on the stone walling and material found) is that the inhabitants were agro-pastoralists. The stone walled features represent not only settlement, but also livestock enclosures (cattle), while grinding stones recorded indicate that they grew crops that could be utilised as food-source. Various stone heaps in the area could be further evidence of this, as these heaps could possibly be the result of the clearing of fields for ploughing.

Test Excavation 1 – Stone Cairn

There are at least 3 areas on the site with concentrations of stone heaps (cairns) of varying size on them. This is over and above the single stone heaps or platforms found scattered over the site. Last mentioned are more than likely the bases for grain bins or baskets. The concentrations of stone cairns consist in some instances of more than 30 in an area, and although it is possible that these features are just the result of the clearing of fields for ploughing purposes, it was felt that these had to be investigated for the possibility of it representing burial cairns. It seemed as if the cairns were not just random heaps of stones, but that they were carefully packed features that could represent typical Swazi graves (which are characteristically round stone and earth packed). It was therefore decided to investigate one of these features archaeologically.



Figure 16: One of the stone cairns in the area. This one was archaeologically investigated.



Figure 17: One of the possible grain bin or basket platforms on the site.

One of the largest stone cairns in one of these areas was investigated to see if it represented a burial or not. The excavation was termed Test Excavation 1. The feature measures 2.69m (N/S) x 2.30m (E/W) in diameter. The other cairns in the area vary between nearly 3m (for the largest) to less than 1m (for the smallest) in diameter.

The investigation was conducted in the following manner:

1. Feature photographically recorded in detail phase by phase
2. First removed large stones on the sides of the features, as well as smaller stone fill and earth on top
3. Found another layer of large stones on sides and at base
4. Removed this and then found layer of gravel (original surface level) and a hole (possibly caused by tree roots and animal burrowing). This hole was opened further to see if it represents evidence of a burial pit, but nothing was found

Although no evidence of a burial was found (no indication of a pit being dug into the original stratigraphy) and no Iron Age or more recent cultural material was retrieved, a fairly large amount of ESA-LSA stone tools were recovered from the gravel layer. These will be discussed a little further on in this section.

Even though it seems therefore that these stone cairns possibly do not represent burials, a word of caution should be given. The investigation of this one feature did reveal the fact that these are more than just random heaps of stone collected for the purposes of clearing of the fields for ploughing. The cairn has a base of large flat-packed stones, with similar sized stones packed along the sides. The feature was then filled with smaller stones and earth. It is roughly circular shaped and has a mean diameter of nearly 2.70m. Originally it was about 0.50m in height. All the other cairns – although they differ in size – seem to have been “constructed” in a similar fashion. The stratigraphy of the feature was as follows:

1. Stone heap
2. 05-10cm of loose top soil
3. Layer of large and small stones and gravel
4. Reddish, gritty, gravel layer at a depth of around 0.60m below the stone heap.

What their function therefore was still remains a mystery. If they were indeed burials then it is possible that all evidence of such was destroyed, and that no human skeletal remains stayed intact. Then also only one of these features was archaeologically investigated. It is therefore always possible that another of these features – or some of the others – might contain burials. However, there are so many of these cairns together in one location here (in this case in excess of 30), and there are no distinct “rows” indicating a later historical burial site (during the earlier Iron Age people would have been buried in unmarked graves close to their homesteads or in the cattle enclosures). This, combined with the fact that there at least 3 such areas with these cairns in the area, seems therefore to indicate that these are actually not graves.

The other possible function could be for grain bin or grain basket stands. However, there are too many of these in one concentrated area. These types of feature are normally located close to the homesteads (at the back of the huts or near the stone walled enclosures, and it is therefore doubtful that these cairns are granary platforms or stands. Finally – it is possible that these cairns are the result of the clearing of fields for ploughing to plant crops. This is the most plausible explanation, but the somewhat formalised way in which these features were packed provides some doubt. It would be recommended therefore that when this area is demolished for the purposes of the Tailings Facility that an archaeologist is present to ensure that no possible human remains (if burials) or other cultural material is accidentally destroyed as a result. Final recommendations will be provided at the end of this report.



Figure 18: The stone cairn after the first level of cleaning.



Figure 19: Another view of the cairn after cleaning.



Figure 20: The cairn after the next level of cleaning.



**Figure 21: The hole left after all the stones were removed.
The cavity was caused mainly by tree roots and animal activity.**



**Figure 22: Gravel layer under the present surface level.
The stone cairn was packed on top of this level.
Most of the stone tools were found in this natural layer.**

The stone tools found in the excavation were found in the gravel layer and layer of natural rocks located beneath the stone cairn. The presence of the tools here seems to indicate that there must have been some water here at some point (possibly a river) where raw material was available to the Stone Age inhabitants of the area.

Detailed Stone Archaeological research in the area is lacking, although there are some studies available for comparing the material found during this investigation. Finding the stone tools under the stone cairn we investigated was certainly not expected, and the high number (37 in total) recovered from a relatively small area (around 6 square meters) indicates that this might not be a chance find

and that there might be more Stone Age material present in the area. Most of it would however be covered by layer of soil that washed over the original gravel layers associated with an old river in the area.

The stone age material (tools) recovered include cores, flakes, chunks and more formal tools, and seemingly date to between the Early Stone Age and Later Stone age. Two previous studies done in the Barberton area (on stone tools from many of the same sites) are applicable here. The first paper (1984) is notes on a study of stone implements from the Barberton area, and is basically a report on Stone Age material recovered from various sites in the larger Barberton, Carolina and Badplaas regions during the 1950's. The artefacts were collected from open dongas sites where material of all ages was mixed on the surface. Where artefacts were found in situ Earlier Stone Age implements were exposed at various depths in the deep dongas, Middle Stone Age material occurred in the ferricrete overlying the subsoil, and Later Stone Age artefacts were found where exposed by surface erosion (Van Niekerk 1984: 69).

Of interest is the occurrence of rubbed or polished cutting edges on a number of cleavers from some of the sites. In all the cases the polishing occurred fairly evenly on both faces along the cutting edge. The lighter colour of the patination on the polished surfaces suggested a long period of time between manufacture and polishing. The handaxes, cleavers, choppers, polyhedrals and some heavy flakes and blades are made of quartzite with a few exceptions made of chert. Most other tools were made of dark grey chert, and banded ironstone, quartz and indurated shale (Van Niekerk 1984: 70). This is similar to the sample recovered during the archaeological investigation at Fairview.

The second study – on polished stone implements from the Barberton area (many of these from the same sample and sites discussed in Van Niekerk's 1984 article) provides further comparative information on the material recovered at Fairview. This study (a microwear analysis of stone tools from these sites) revealed distinctly polished working edges with hide-working traces. It was clear that these implements were not specifically made for this purpose but that the sample included chunks, unmodified stones and re-used Earlier Stone Age handaxes and cleavers and that they were possibly used by Iron Age people much later. The tools were often found in close proximity to stone walled Iron Age sites and sometimes in association with pottery. The re-used tools, with their relatively freshly worked edges, suggest a relative late date for this activity (Binneman et.al 1986: 87-89).

What is of interest in terms of the Fairview sample is that the type of tools recovered is similar to those reported on in the above two studies. The Fairview sample includes large ESA cleavers, handaxes and choppers, as well as MSA/LSA flakes, cores, blades and scrapers. The ESA tools are mostly on quartzite, while the others include chert, quartzite and other material. Furthermore (especially on the ESA tools) it seems as if the edges on many of these have been re-worked at some stage. Also – as with the sites studied in the 1980's – a relatively high number of tools were recovered from a fairly small area. Finally the stone tools recovered at Fairview are also in association with an Iron Age site. It needs to be mentioned that the Fairview sample has not been studied in detail, as the focus of the investigation was on the Iron Age phase of utilization. However, with the fairly high number of tools found in the area, and with the possibility of finding more in situ material in the area it would be recommended that if any ground breaking (trenching/excavation) work related to the development of the Tailings Facility occurs in the specific area an archaeologist be present to recover any possible cultural material (Stone Age implements) and that this sample be studied in more detail.



Figure 23: The stone tool sample from Fairview.



Figure 24: Large ESA tool with edges worked.



Figure 25: MSA/LSA cores.



Figure 26: Possible LSA flakes.

Surface Sampling

Limited sampling of material from the site and area was undertaken to see if more cultural material can be recovered to help with the interpretation of the site. However, very little material was present, and only included some fragments of undecorated pottery (similar to those excavated), upper grinding stones and scatters of MSA/LSA stone tools.



Figure 27: Undecorated pottery on the surface of the site.



Figure 28: Upper grinding stone found in the area.



Figure 29: Some of the MSA/LSA stone tools found in the area.

Mapping and recording of site & features

As mentioned earlier the stone walled features and sections of walling and other features associated with the site was mapped using a handheld GPS device in order to see if it would be possible to determine settlement layout and organization. It has to be mentioned that as the site has been disturbed to some extent in the recent past by developments such as the Power line and its' servitude road this task was not easy, while only a section of the site could be mapped because of dense vegetation covering some parts of it.

Based on the map it seems as if the site had a number of stone walled enclosures (cattle kraals), as well as homestead enclosures and granary stands associated with these. A large number of stone cairns are present on the site. Although it is difficult to determine the exact layout/organization of the settlement, it was possibly typical of the Iron Age settlements of the time, with the livestock enclosure located roughly in the centre with the houses/huts situated around these. The fields would've been situated beyond that again. Based on the mapping it is also clear that they kept livestock (most probably cattle) and they practised agriculture. The possible granary stands are further evidence of this.

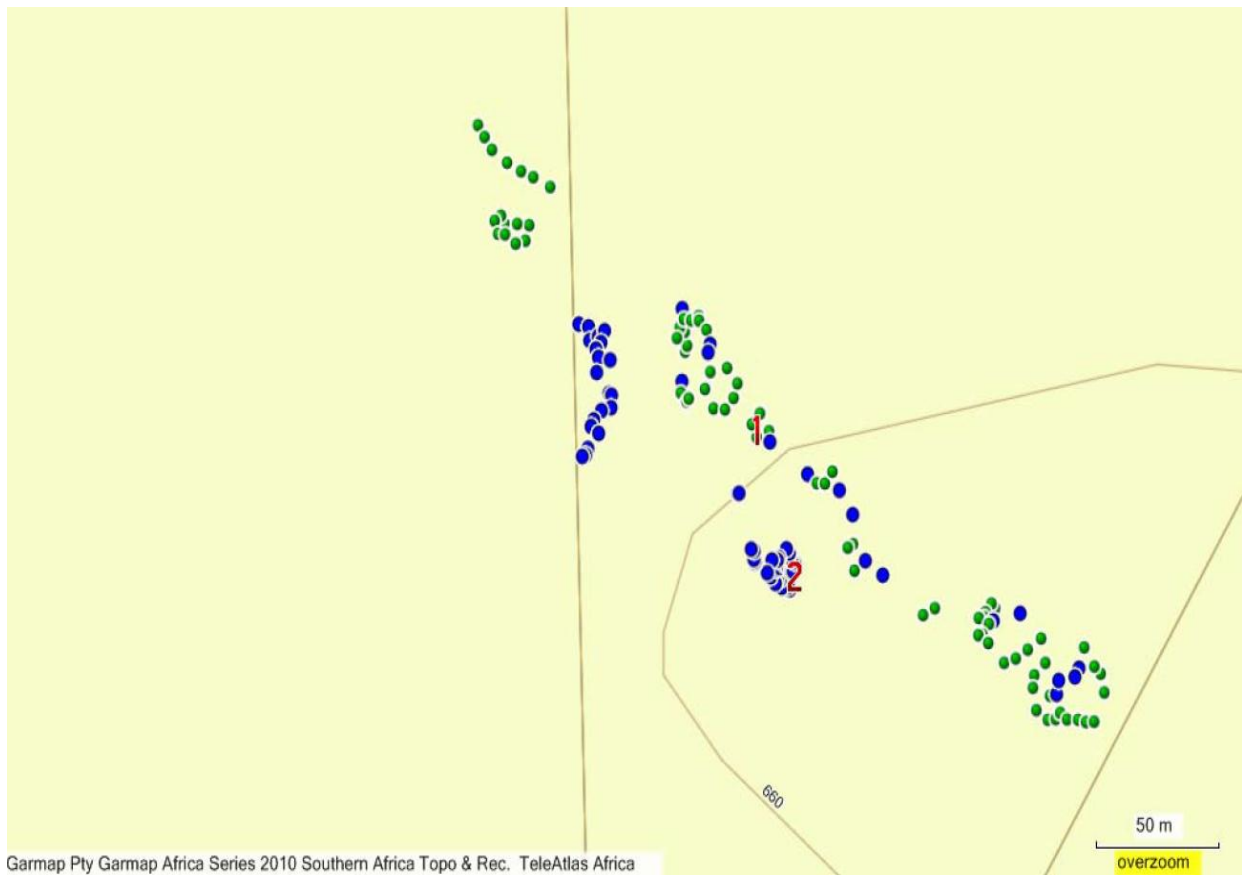


Figure 30: Basic map of site. Green dots are stone walling, while the blue ones are stone cairns. No.1 is Excavation 1 at one of the circular enclosures, while 2 is the Test Excavation of one of the stone cairns (Map Source 2010).

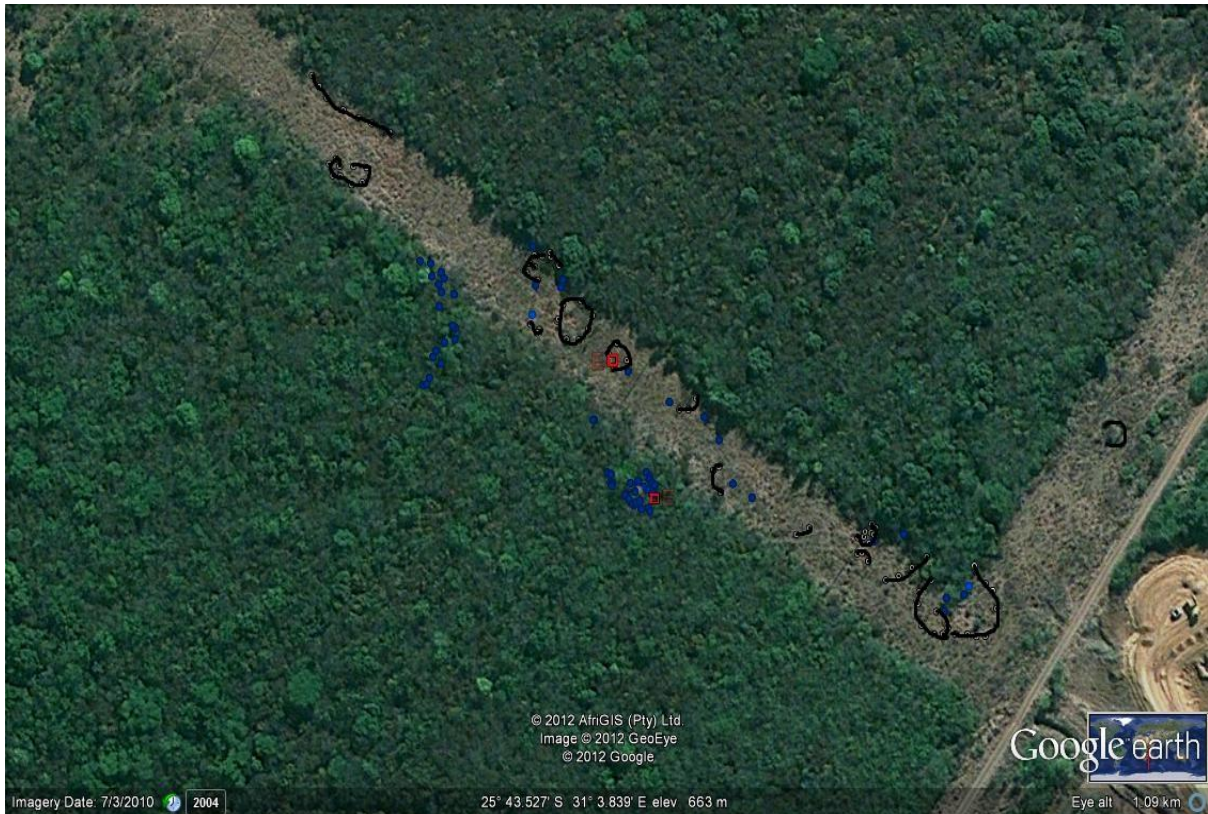


Figure 31: Aerial view of the site, with the results of the basic mapping shown. Note the circular enclosures and stretches of stone walling (in black). The stone cairns & possible granary stands are in blue. The two excavations are the red squares (Google Earth 2012).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion it is possible to say that the archaeological investigations of the stone walled site and features associated with it was completed successfully. The site will be impacted by the Fairview Mine Tailings Reworking Project. The archaeological work entailed basic mapping of the site and its features using a handheld GPS device, as well as excavations in two locations. The first excavation was in one of the identified circular enclosures, while the second one was on one of the stone cairns. The aim of this second excavation was to see if these cairns represent burials or not. The following can be concluded based on the results of the investigations:

1. that the site consisted of stone walled circular enclosures (probably cattle kraals), hut bays (houses) around it and agricultural fields. There are a number of stone platforms that indicate possible granary stands, while some upper grinding stone are further evidence of agriculture being practiced.
2. the site probably dates to the Late Iron Age, and most likely to between the early 19th and late 19th century after the Swazi moved into the area during the so-called difaqane and when the first Europeans (gold miners and farmers) moved into the area
3. the stone cairns (of which there are at least 3 large concentrations of) most likely do not represent burials, as no evidence of this was found during the excavations. However, the

function of these are not completely clear, as these cairns seem to have been constructed in a very formal fashion.

4. the stone tools found during the excavation of one of these cairns could have been (or at least some of them) re-used during the later Iron Age occupation of the area and more tools can be expected to be found during development work

The following is recommended when the development commences:

- a. that a destruction permit should be issued as soon as possible
- b. that when the development in the area commences and when trenching and excavation in the area where the stone cairns are located is undertaken, an archaeologist should be present to collect all possible cultural material that gets exposed. It is envisaged that more in situ Stone Age material will get exposed, and together with the sample recovered from Fairview during this investigation these should then be analyzed and reported on in more detail

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APPENDIX I – HISTORICAL REPORT

REPORT NOT ATTACHED HERE BUT WILL BE SENT AS A SEPARATE DOCUMENT TO THE CLIENT