

**SPECIALIST REPORT
FOR PROPOSED BUILDING SITES ON THE FARM
MOOILAND 294 JT, (FALLS FISH FARM) SCHOEMANSKLOOF**

MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

**REPORT COMPILED FOR
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An archaeological scoping assessment was conducted on the farm Mooiland 294 JT, Schoemanskloof (Falls Fish Farm), Mpumalanga. Sections on the farm were earmarked for residential development. The proposed project entails the construction of residential units on ten separate 1 hectare stands.

A Phase 1 Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) was conducted in September 2010 (Falls Fish Farm, Schoemanskloof, by Tobias Coetzee, See **Appendix 10**). A review comment by SAHRA, was issued on 3 January 2011. The specialist, Mr. Coetzee, suggested in his preferred option, that the development must proceed on areas devoid of heritage resources, and it was in principal supported by SAHRA (See **Review comment, Appendix 11**):

- “None of the archaeological sites identified must be disturbed during and after development;
- If any of the identified archaeological resources will be disturbed then appropriate Phase 2 Mitigation Impact Assessment must be conducted...”
- Since it was indicated that none of the archaeological resources will be impacted and that the land owner wishes to conserve the sites, a Conservation Management Plan must be compiled and submitted to the APM Unit for approval. This document must indicate what measures will be undertaken to secure the future conservation of the archaeological sites.”¹

Adansonia Heritage Consultants were asked to assist in choosing areas on the 10 stands, that are suitable for the proposed development, situated on the farm Mooiland 294JT, Schoemanskloof. The study area is situated on topographical map 1:50 000, 2530BC, which is in the Mpumalanga Province.

The National Heritage Resources Act, no 25 (1999) (NHRA), protects all heritage resources, which are classified as national estate. The NHRA stipulates that any person who intends to undertake a development, is subjected to the provisions of the Act.

The area for the proposed development is currently vacant, and zoned as agricultural. The area is mountainous and has Late Iron Age (LIA) stone and terrace walls scattered throughout the area. The LIA resources might possibly be connected to the history of the nearby Sudwala caves, some 6 km away. The owners are extremely aware and sensitive towards the archaeological history on the farm and wish to conserve all the heritage sites identified on the property. (See **Appendix 12**)

Recommendations were made on the various options for building sites on the farm Mooiland. Where the options were too close to archaeological or heritage features, a preferred option was recommended.

¹ SAHRA Review comment, 03-01-2011, pp. 2-3.

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A. BACKGROUND INFORMATION TO THE PROJECT

The owners of Falls Fish Farm, Mr. M. Cort and Ms. D. Malcomess, requested Adansonia Heritage Consultants to assist in the identification of suitable building sites for the proposed development of ten stands on the farm Mooiland 294JT.

A Phase 1 Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) was conducted in September 2010 (Falls Fish Farm, Schoemanskloof, by Tobias Coetzee, See **Appendix 10**).

The farm is situated on the side of a hill, and extensive Late Iron Age (LIA) stone and terrace walls were identified on the extent of the farm. An investigation was conducted specifically to demarcate sections for the proposed development which were clear of visible archaeological remains. The owners went to great lengths to clear the proposed areas for the investigation.

The aims for this report are to source all relevant information on archaeological and heritage resources in the study area, and to advise the client as where it is viable for the development to take place in terms of the specifications as set out in the National Heritage Resources Act no., 25 of 1999 (NHRA). The study area is indicated in **Appendix 1 & 2**. Photographic evidence is in **Appendix 9**.

- This study is a follow-up on the HIA that was conducted in September 2010 (See **Appendix 10**).
- Type of development: Ten one hectare stands were selected for residential development, on the farm Mooiland 294JT, Schoemanskloof, Mpumalanga Province. Only a suitable section devoid of archaeological resources, will be used for building of the houses.
- Rezoning for the proposed development is in the process, as it is currently zoned as agricultural.
- Location of Province, Magisterial district / Local Authority and Property (farms): The area

falls within the Mpumalanga Province under the jurisdiction of the Ehlanzeni District municipality.

- Land owners: Mr. M. Cort and Ms D. Malcomess.

- **Terms of reference:** As specified by section 38 (3) of the NHRA, the following information is provided in this report.
 - a) The identification and mapping of heritage resources where applicable;
 - b) Assessment and identification of the possible building sites;

- **Legal requirements:**

The legal context of the report is grounded in the National Heritage Resources Act no. 25, 1999, as well as the National Environmental Management Act (1998) (NEMA).

- **National Heritage Resources Act**

The National Heritage Resources Act no. 25, 1999 (NHRA) aims to promote good management of the national estate, and to enable and encourage communities to conserve their legacy so that it may be bequeathed to future generations. Heritage is unique and it cannot be renewed, and contributes to redressing past inequities.² It promotes previously neglected research areas.

All archaeological and other cultural heritage resources are evaluated according to the NHRA, section 3(3). A place or object is considered to be part of the national estate if it has cultural significance or other special value in terms of:

- (a) its importance in the community, or pattern of South Africa's history;
- (c) its potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage;
- (g) its strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons;
- (h) its strong or special association with the life or work of a person, group or organisation of importance in the history of South Africa.³

²National Heritage Resources Act, no. 25 of 1999. p. 2.

³National Heritage Resources Act, no. 25 of 1999. pp. 12-14

- **Graves**

SAHRA Policy on burial grounds

The policy is that graves and cemeteries should be left undisturbed, no matter how inaccessible and difficult they are to maintain. It is our obligation to empower civil society to nurture and conserve our heritage. It is only when essential developments threaten a place of burial, that human remains should be disinterred to another cemetery or burial ground.

From a historical point of view and for research purposes, it is vital that burial sites are not disturbed. The location and marking of an individual's grave tells a life story, where he / she died possibly defending (or attacking) a particular place or situation and makes it easier to understand the circumstances of his / her death.⁴

- **Section 38 of the NHRA**

Please take note that the Heritage impact assessment has already been conducted in September 2010 (See Appendix 10). The proposed development is a listed activity in terms of Section 38 (1) of the NHRA. Section 38 (2) of the NHRA requires the submission of a HIA report for authorisation purposes to the responsible heritage resources agency, (SAHRA). **A review comment by SAHRA was issued on 3 January 2011 (See Appendix 11).** After evaluating the heritage scoping report, the heritage resources authority made the following comment:

- “None of the archaeological sites identified must be disturbed during and after development;
- If any of the identified archaeological resources will be disturbed then appropriate Phase 2 Mitigation Impact Assessment must be conducted...”
- Since it was indicated that none of the archaeological resources will be impacted and that the land owner wishes to conserve the sites, a Conservation Management Plan must be compiled and submitted to the APM Unit for approval. This document must indicate what measures will be undertaken to secure the future conservation of the archaeological sites.”⁵

⁴SAHRA, Burial sites, <http://www.sahra.org.za/burial.htm>, Access, 2008-10-16.

⁵ SAHRA Review comment, 03-01-2011, pp. 2-3.

- **Section 35 of the NHRA**

Section 35 (4) of the NHRA stipulates that no person may, without a permit issued by SAHRA, destroy, damage, excavate, alter or remove from its original position, or collect, any archaeological material or object. This section may apply to any significant archaeological sites that may be discovered. In the case of such chance finds, the heritage practitioner will assist in investigating the extent and significance of the finds and consult with an archaeologist about further action. This may entail removal of material after documenting the find or mapping of larger sections before destruction.

- **Section 36 of the NHRA**

Section 36 of the NHRA stipulates that no person may, without a permit issued by SAHRA, destroy, damage, alter, exhume or remove from its original position or otherwise disturb any grave or burial ground older than 60 years, which is situated outside a formal cemetery administered by a local authority. It is possible that chance burials might be discovered during construction work.

- **Section 34 of the NHRA**

Section 34 of the NHRA stipulates that no person may alter, damage, destroy, relocate etc, any building or structure older than 60 years, without a permit issued by SAHRA or a provincial heritage resources authority.

B. BACKGROUND TO ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY OF THE STUDY AREA

Very little historic information is available on the study area and there are no museums in Nelspruit (the closest town to Schoemanskloof), dealing the history of this area. The Lydenburg- and Pilgrim's Rest Museums had no information available on the history of Schoemanskloof.

The farm Mooiland 294JT, is situated on the side of a hill and extensive LIA stone and terrace walls were identified on the extent of the farm.

Some of the LIA stone walls are still in pristine condition and reach up to a height of 1500mm. The stone walls were utilized as settlements, cattle enclosures and terraces. The remains of upper and lower grinding stones suggest settlement over a length of time.

The LIA stone walls are possibly connected to the history of the nearby Sudwala caves in the Mankelekele hills, Houtbosloop (some 6km away). The caves together with its history are popular tourist destinations in Mpumamalga.

The caves were re-discovered by Somquba in the early 19th century, one of the sons of the Swazi king Sobhuza I, who was fleeing from his brother Mswati II. Somquba and his followers used the caves as a refuge, until Somquba was killed in an attack. Suvivors stayed on under the leadership of a headman named Sudwala (after whom the caves were named).⁶

Somquba had built a village near the entrance of the caves where they could hide during attacks.⁷

The ruins on Mooiland are most probably part of the LIA villages of the descendants of the Swazi (Somquba).

C. DESCRIPTION OF AREA TO BE AFFECTED BY THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed project will involve the following:

- Ten one ha stands are earmarked for residential development. Building will only take place on demarcated sections which were identified as areas devoid of archaeological resources.

D. LOCALITY

The proposed project site is located close to the N4, past the Machadodorp Toll, via Schoemanskloof (eastern direction). The Falls Fish farm is approximately 40km from where the N4 splits to Schoemanskloof, to the east.

The general study area is mountainous and largely undisturbed by cultivated land and commercial plantations, of which large sections exist on adjacent farms. Small sections on the farm were previously used for agricultural purposes.

GPS co-ordinates were used to locate the locations of possible building sites.

⁶ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/sudwala_caves.

⁷ http://www.highlandmeander.co.za/html/sudwala_caves.html

- **Description of methodology:**

Google images of the site (**Appendix 1 & 2**), indicate the study area of the proposed development. In order to reach a comprehensive conclusion regarding the archaeological and other cultural heritage resources in the study area, the following methods were used:

- The Archaeological scoping report by Mr. T. Coetzee, September 2010, were studied;
- The fieldwork and survey was conducted extensively on foot and with a vehicle, with three people.
- The terrain is mountainous and undeveloped but sections were cleared to make the investigation easier.
- The relevant data was located with a GPS instrument (Garmin Etrex) datum WGS 84, and plotted. Co-ordinates were within 4-6 meters of identified sites.
- Evaluation of the resources which might be impacted upon by the footprint, was done within the framework provided by the National Heritage Resources Act, no. 25 (1999);
- Personal communication with relevant stakeholders on the specific study area, were held, Ms. Dee Malcomess, who also consulted with Dr. P. Delius (historian) and Dr. Alex Schoeman (archaeologist) of WITS University.

- **GPS: Co-ordinates of the perimeters of the study area** (Co-ordinates provided by Ms. D. Malcomess):

Erf Centre Point Co-ordinates		
Erf No:	Latitude	Longitude
1	S 25° 22' 49.351"	E 30° 36' 10.142"
2	S 25° 22' 51.472"	E 30° 36' 8.983"
3	S 25° 22' 54.881"	E 30° 36' 8.712"
4	S 25° 23' 1.167"	E 30° 36' 4.291"
5	S 25° 23' 4.428"	E 30° 36' 3.390"
6	S 25° 22' 52.240"	E 30° 36' 17.204"
7	S 25° 22' 56.707"	E 30° 36' 14.769"
8	S 25° 23' 1.651"	E 30° 36' 11.097"
9	S 25° 23' 10.332"	E 30° 36' 8.380"
10	S 25° 23' 15.501"	E 30° 36' 6.134"

E. DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED SITES

All comments should be studied in conjunction with the appendices, which indicate the areas, and which corresponds with the summary below. Photographs in **Appendix 9**, show the general view of the study area. Visibility was good.

Site location	Description/Comments	Proposed building location
Stand 1 Appendix 3	Option 1: Visibility was good and there are no visible archaeological features in this section. Fig. 1. Option 2: This section is situated in a Eucalyptus plantation, and there are no visible archaeological features in this section. Fig. 2.	S25° 22' 49.1" E30° 36' 11.6" S25° 22' 49.2" E30° 36' 10.5"
Stand 2 Appendix 3	LIA circular stone walls were observed in this section. Fig. 3. Option 1: The proposed building site is approximately 15m from the LIA stone wall. There are many Eucalyptus trees which disturb this section. Building can only take place towards the south (at least 15m from the circular walls). Fig. 4.	S25° 22' 50.7" E30° 36' 09.6" S25° 22' 51.5" E30° 36' 09.8"
Stand 3 Appendix 4	This is the site of an existing house, which will be kept as is. The house was expanded towards the north in the 1970's. No visible archaeological features were observed within the perimeters of stand 3. Fig. 5 & 6.	S25° 22' 54.5" E30° 36' 07.7"
Stand 4 Appendix 5	Option 1: There are no visible archaeological remains in this section and visibility was good. Part of the planned building site is situated in a previously disturbed area. Fig. 7 & 8. There is a circular stone wall towards the west, but this site is approximately 30m from the LIA feature.	S25° 23' 00.5" E30° 36' 04.3"
Stand 5 Appendix 5	Option 1: (Preferred option): There are no visible archaeological features in this area. Fig. 9. Option 2: There are too many stone walls in the direct vicinity of this option. No building can taken place in this area. Fig. 10. Historical ruins (square) are present which are connected to pioneer settlement. Fig. 11 & 12.	S25° 23' 05.9" E30° 36' 01.8" S25° 23' 04.2" E30° 36' 02.2" S25° 23' 03.5" E30° 36' 04.7"

Stand 6 Appendix 6	<p>Option 1 & 2: There are terrace walls (not clearly defined) present in this section, and this will not be a preferred option to build. Fig. 13 & 14.</p> <p>Option 3: (Preferred option): This site is north of options 1 & 2 and no archaeological features were observed in the direct vicinity. This is the preferred option for building. Fig. 15.</p>	<p>S25° 22' 50.1" E30° 36' 15.7"</p> <p>S25° 22' 53.6" E30° 36' 16.0"</p>
Stand 7 Appendix 7	<p>Option 1: The proposed building site is close to a well preserved circular LIA stone wall. The proposed building area must stay clear of the dense bush where the archaeological features are, and only build in the disturbed area to the west, Fig. 19, (See Appendix 7). Upper grinder is present close to LIA walls. Fig. 16, 17 & 18.</p> <p>Option 2: (Preferred option) There are no visible archaeological features in this section. Fig. 20.</p> <p>Option 3: This option is approximately 20m south of terrace walls but is not a preferred option. Fig. 21.</p> <p>Archaeological features were observed in this section (terrace walls) Fig. 22.</p>	<p>S25° 22' 55.7" E30° 36' 12.9"</p> <p>S25° 22' 57.3" E30° 36' 12.2"</p> <p>S25° 22' 56.23" E30° 36' 15.85"</p> <p>S25° 22' 56.5" E30° 36' 15.6"</p>
Stand 8 Appendix 5	<p>Option 1 & 2: This section has previously been used for agricultural purposes and is disturbed. Building may take place in the open disturbed section. Fig: 23.</p> <p>Heritage feature: There are poorly defined LIA terrace walls in the dense vegetation to the east, and these features should be avoided . Fig. 24.</p>	<p>S25° 23' 01.6" E30° 36' 11.2"</p> <p>S25° 23' 01.7" E30° 36' 11.7"</p>
Stand 9 Appendix 8	<p>Option 1: Situated close to access road. Site is rocky but there are no visible archaeological or heritage features in this section. Fig. 25.</p> <p>Option 2: Area is rocky but there are no visible archaeological or heritage features in this section. Fig.26.</p>	<p>S25° 23' 15.1" E30° 36' 05.4"</p> <p>S25° 23' 15.8" E30° 36' 06.5"</p>
Stand 10 Appendix 8	<p>Option 1: There are no visible archaeological / heritage features on the proposed site on the edge of a krantz. Visibility was good. Fig. 27.</p>	<p>S25° 23' 17.61" E30° 36' 04.95"</p>

	Option 2: There are no visible archaeological / heritage features on the proposed site. Visibility was good. Fig. 28.	S25° 23' 17.6" E30° 36' 03.4"
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F. RECOMMENDATIONS

Please note that the recommendations are outlined in the section above (Section E). The descriptions in red are not preferred options, as there are archaeological features in the direct vicinity of the proposed building sites.

The descriptions in black are safer options in terms of possible building sites, as there are no archaeological features that are visible in the direct vicinity of the proposed sites.

G. CONCLUSION

There are many LIA stone walls on Falls Fish farm (Mooiland 294JT), Schoemanskloof. Some of these walls are still in excellent condition and reach a height of 1500mm. The stone walls were utilized as settlements, cattle enclosures and terrace walls.

The owners of this farm are extremely aware and sensitive towards the conservation of the LIA features, and the stipulations of the National Heritage Resources Act. However, most of the farm generates no income as it is situated on a steep mountain with virgin bush, a large wetland area and two steep gorges. The owners feel that the only viable way to preserve this heritage in a sustainable way is by developing a low impact residential area of only ten 1ha stands on the property, which are carefully placed so as not to impact on any of the LIA stone walls. In this way the income generated from sharing the units with other like-minded individuals will help to also fund the proper management of the ruins. Any commercial agricultural activity in this area will result in the complete destruction of the LIA stone walls.

The owners want to make it their mission to preserve, protect and cherish this heritage, and to make it available for educational, historical and archaeological purposes (See excerpts from constitution, Appendix 12).

Archaeological material or graves are not always visible during a field survey and therefore some significant material may only be revealed during construction activities of the proposed development. It is therefore recommended that the owners be made aware of this possibility

and when human remains, clay or ceramic pottery etc. are observed, a qualified archaeologist must be notified and an assessment be done. Further research might then be necessary in this regard for which the developer will be responsible.

Adansonia Heritage Consultants can not be held responsible for any archaeological material or graves which were not located during the survey.

H. SOURCES

NATIONAL LEGISLATION

- Republic of South Africa, *National Heritage Resources Act*, (Act No. 25 of 1999).

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OTHER SOURCES

- HIA: Falls Fish Farm, Schoemanskloof, by Tobias Coetzee, September 2010.
- SAHRA Review comment, 03-01-2011, pp. 2-3.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

- Mr. M. Cort, 21-04-2012.
- Ms. D. Malcomess, 21-04-2012.
- Dr. P. Delius (Personal information by Ms. D. Malcomess), April 2012.
- Dr. A. Schoeman (Personal information by Ms. D. Malcomess), April 2012.