

# PHASE 1 HERITAGE RESOURCES SCOPING REPORT

## PROPOSED CROPLANDS FOR BERRY CULTIVATION NEAR TZANEEN, LIMPOPO

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### **Polygon Environmental Planning**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE**

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The application to develop croplands for the production of Blueberries on the farm Duplex 467 LT, near Tarentaalrand, Deerpark, near Tzaneen., constitutes an activity, which may potentially be harmful to heritage resources that may occur in the demarcated area. The National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA - Act No. 25 of 1999) protects all structures and features older than 60 years (section 34), archaeological sites and material (section 35) and graves and burial sites (section 36). In order to comply with the legislation, the Applicant requires information on the heritage resources, and their significance that may occur in the demarcated area. This will enable the Applicant to take pro-active measures to limit the adverse effects that the development could have on such heritage resources.

In terms of the National Heritage Resources Act (1999) the following is of relevance:

### **Historical remains**

**Section 34(1)** No person may alter or demolish any structure or part of a structure, which is older than 60 years without a permit issued by the relevant provincial heritage resources authority.

### **Archaeological remains**

**Section 35(4)** No person may, without a permit issued by the responsible heritage resources authority-

(a) destroy, damage, excavate, alter, deface, or otherwise disturb any archaeological or palaeontological site or any meteorite

### **Burial grounds and graves**

**Section 36 (3)(a)** No person may, without a permit issued by SAHRA or a provincial heritage resources authority-

(c) destroy, damage, alter, exhume, 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; or

(b) bring onto or use at a burial ground or grave referred to in paragraph (a) or (b) any excavation equipment, or any equipment which assists in detection or recovery of metals.

### **Culture resource management**

**Section 38(1)** Subject to the provisions of subsection (7), (8) and (9), any person who intends to undertake a development\* ...

must at the very earliest stages of initiating such development notify the responsible heritage resources authority and furnish it with details regarding the location, nature, and extent of the proposed development.

**\*‘development’** means any physical intervention, excavation, or action, other than those caused by natural forces, which may in the opinion of the heritage authority in any way result in a change to the nature, appearance or physical nature of a place, or influence its stability and future well-being, including-

- (a) construction, alteration, demolition, removal or change of use of a place or a structure at a place;
- (b) carry out any works on or over or under a place\*;
- (e) any change to the natural or existing condition or topography of land, and
- (f) any removal or destruction of trees, or removal of vegetation or topsoil;

\*"place means a site, area or region, a building or other structure\* ..."

\*"structure means any building, works, device or other facility made by people and which is fixed to the ground, ..."

The author was contracted to undertake a heritage scoping survey of the proposed berry croplands, near Tzaneen., Limpopo Province (Refer to map, South Africa 1:50 000 2330 CD). The aim was to determine the presence or not of heritage resources such as archaeological and historical sites and features, graves and places of religious and cultural significance, and to submit appropriate recommendations with regard to the cultural resources management measures that may be required at affected sites / features.

The report thus provides an overview of the heritage resources that may occur in the demarcated area where development is intended. The significance of the heritage resources was assessed in terms of criteria defined in the methodology section. The impact of the proposed development on these resources is indicated and the report recommends mitigation measures that should be implemented to minimize the adverse impact of the proposed development on these heritage resources.

## 2. METHOD

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### 2.1 Sources of information and methodology

The source of information was primarily the field reconnaissance and referenced literary sources.

A pedestrian survey of selected areas of the demarcated area was undertaken, during which standard methods of observation were applied. The area was traversed and special attention given to any areas displaying soil and or vegetative changes. As most archaeological material occur in single or multiple stratified layers beneath the soil surface, special attention was given to disturbances, both man-made such as roads and clearings, as well as those made by natural agents such as burrowing animals and erosion. Locations of heritage remains were recorded by means of a GPS (Garmin Etrex 10). Heritage material and the general conditions on the terrain were photographed with a Nikon Coolpix L25 Digital camera.

### 2.2 Limitations

The scoping survey was thorough, but limitations were experienced due to the fact that archaeological sites are subterranean and only visible when disturbed. Vegetation varied from low to extreme density with visibility being fair except in high density areas.

### 2.3 Categories of significance

The significance of archaeological sites is ranked into the following categories.

|   |
|---|
| • No significance: sites that do not require mitigation.        |
| • Low significance: sites, which <i>may</i> require mitigation. |
| • Medium significance: sites, which require mitigation.         |

- High significance: sites, which must not be disturbed at all.

The significance of an archaeological site is based on the amount of deposit, the integrity of the context, the kind of deposit and the potential to help answer present research questions. Historical structures are defined by Section 34 of the National Heritage Resources Act, 1999, while other historical and cultural significant sites, places and features, are generally determined by community preferences.

*A crucial aspect in determining the significance and protection status of a heritage resource is often whether or not the sustainable social and economic benefits of a proposed development outweigh the conservation issues at stake. Many aspects must be taken into consideration when determining significance, such as rarity, national significance, scientific importance, cultural and religious significance, and not least, community preferences. When, for whatever reason the protection of a heritage site is not deemed necessary or practical, its research potential must be assessed and mitigated in order to gain data / information which would otherwise be lost. Such sites must be adequately recorded and sampled before being destroyed. These are generally sites graded as of low or medium significance.*

## 2.4 Terminology

- Early Stone Age:** Predominantly the Acheulean hand axe industry complex dating to + 1Myr yrs – 250 000 yrs. before present.
- Middle Stone Age:** Various lithic industries in SA dating from ± 250 000 yr. - 30 000 yrs. before present.
- Late Stone Age:** The period from ± 30 000-yr. to contact period with either Iron Age farmers or European colonists.
- Early Iron Age:** Most of the first millennium AD
- Middle Iron Age:** 10<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> centuries AD
- Late Iron Age:** 14<sup>th</sup> century to colonial period. *The entire Iron Age represents the spread of Bantu speaking peoples.*
- Historical:** Mainly cultural remains of western influence and settlement from AD1652 onwards – mostly structures older than 60 years in terms of Section 34 of the NHRA, though more recent remains can be termed historically significant should the remains hold social significance for the local community.
- Phase 1 assessment:** Scoping surveys to establish the presence of and to evaluate heritage resources in a given area
- Phase 2 assessments:** In depth culture resources management studies which could include major archaeological excavations, detailed site surveys and mapping / plans of sites, including historical / architectural structures and features. Alternatively, the sampling of sites by collecting material, small test pit excavations or auger sampling is required.
- Sensitive:** Often refers to graves and burial sites although not necessarily a heritage place, as well as ideologically significant sites such as ritual / religious

places. *Sensitive* may also refer to an entire landscape / area known for its significant heritage remains.

### 3. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND TERRAIN

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Vegetation: Granite Lowveld (SVI3)(Mucina & Rutherford 2006)

The proposed area is 100ha in size and consists of a portion of land on the left hand side of the road which is currently utilised for an orchard, a large section of ploughed land and natural vegetation. An existing dam and gravel road access are also found on the property. Additional gravel roads have been graded recently. Thus the area can be considered disturbed.

The area is characterised by low lying areas- mostly under dam and the ploughed areas. Toward the west, south-west is a hilly area with natural vegetation.



Fig 1. View of Orchard area



Fig 2. View of Ploughed area



Fig 3. View of natural vegetation area



Fig 4. View of natural vegetation area

### 4. RESULTS OF THE SCOPING SURVEY AND DISCUSSION

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#### 4.1 SOCIAL and/or RELIGIOUS INTANGIBLE HERITAGE

No areas designated for socio-religious activities were recorded on the site.

## 4.2 HISTORICAL PERIOD

No remains from the historical period were recorded.

## 4.3 GRAVES

No formal or informal graves were recorded.

## 4.4 IRON AGE REMAINS

No remains from the Iron age were recorded on site.

## 4.5 STONE AGE REMAINS

No Stone Age remains were recorded.

## 5. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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According to the most recent archaeological cultural distribution sequences by Huffman (2007), this area falls within the distribution area of various cultural groupings originating out of both the Urewe Tradition (eastern stream of migration) and the Kalundu Tradition (western stream of migration). The facies that may be present are:

|                                |                             |                |                  |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Urewe Tradition: Kwale branch- | Silver Leaves <i>facies</i> | AD 280-450     | (Early Iron Age) |
|                                | <i>Mzonjani facies</i>      | AD 450 – 750   | (Early Iron Age) |
| Moloko branch-                 | <i>Icon facies</i>          | AD 1300 - 1500 | (Late Iron Age)  |

|  |                        |                |                  |
|--|------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Kalundu Tradition: Happy Rest sub-branch - | <i>Doornkop facies</i> | AD 750 - 1000  | (Early Iron Age) |
|  | <i>Letaba facies</i>   | AD 1600 - 1840 | (Late Iron Age)  |

*None of the above Iron Age materials were recorded on site.*

### Stone Age

Stone Age artifacts and materials dating to the Early, Middle and Late Stone Age are often recorded during survey near rivers and drainage lines in the Limpopo Province. However in the survey above no remains were recorded.

Historically the area falls with the Modjadji area of the Limpopo Province, traditionally the area under the control of the Rain Queen, who has the ability it is believed to make it rain. The throne is succession based with the last inauguration of the queen Rain Queen Modjadji VI in 2003 succeeding her grandmother Rain Queen Mokope Modjadji V.

Originally known as Tsaneng, Tzaneen's original inhabitants were of Sotho and Shangaan origin. Later in 1912 when the railway connected Pietersburg (Polokwane) to the gold rush towns of Leydsdorp and the old Eastern Transvaal, Tzaneen was recognised as a town. Main economic activity was to act as a staging post between the towns mentioned above. From this point the town developed into an agricultural hub, with farming becoming the predominant economic activity in the area.

## 6. DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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*From a heritage resources management point of view, we have no objection with regard to the development.*

*The discovery of previously undetected subterranean heritage remains on the terrain must be reported to the Limpopo Heritage Authority or the archaeologist, and may require further mitigation measures.*

## 7. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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**Huffman, T.N.** 2007. *Handbook to the Iron Age. The Archaeology of Pre-colonial Farming Societies in Southern Africa.* University of KwaZulu-Natal Press.

**Mucina, L and Rutherford, M.C.** 2006. *The Vegetation of South Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland.* South African National Biodiversity Institute, Pretoria.



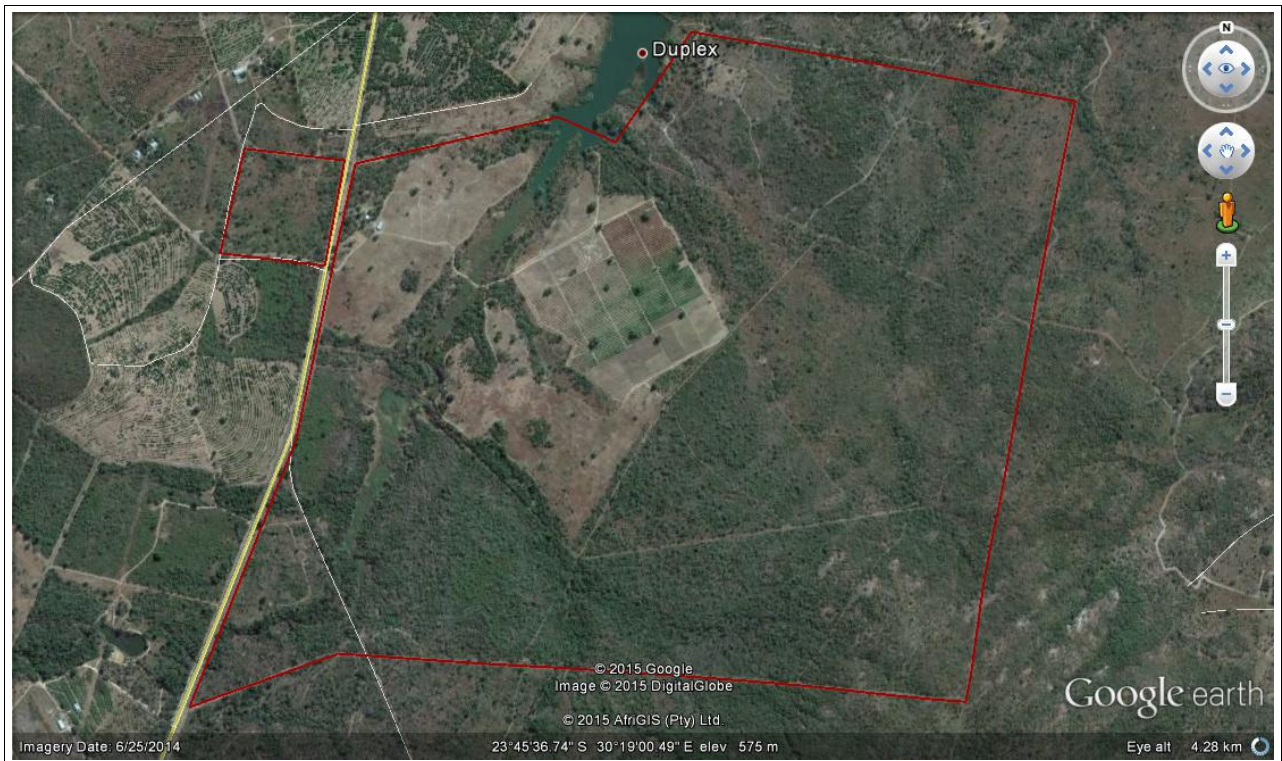
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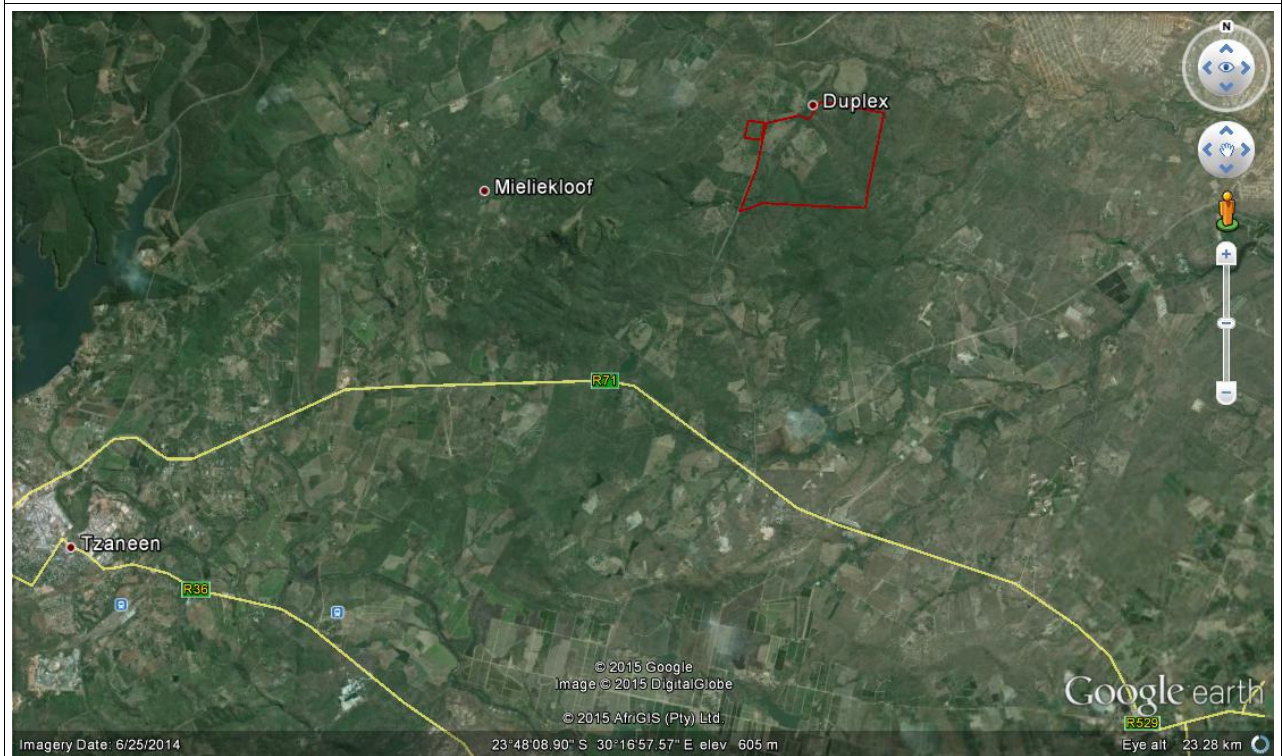


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Map 1: Google map indicating the position of the project area



Map 2. Google map indicating the position of the project area in relation to Tzaneen