

**CULTURAL HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSED CULTIVATION OF LESS THAN 99 HA OF VIRGIN VELD, ON LEYDENBURG 45 AND MIDDEL VALLEY 46, NEAR SWARTBERG, KWAZULU-NATAL.**



**ACTIVE HERITAGE CC.**

**FOR: GREEN DOOR ENVIRONMENTAL**

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

EIA	Early Iron Age
ESA	Early Stone Age
HISTORIC PERIOD	Since the arrival of the white settlers - c. AD 1836 in this part of the country
IRON AGE	Early Iron Age AD 200 - AD 1000 Late Iron Age AD 1000 - AD 1830
LIA	Late Iron Age
LSA	Late Stone Age
MSA	Middle Stone Age
NEIMA	National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998 and associated regulations (2006).
NHRA	National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act No. 25 of 1999) and associated regulations (2000)
SAHRA	South African Heritage Resources Agency
STONE AGE	Early Stone Age 2 000 000 - 250 000 BP Middle Stone Age 250 000 - 25 000 BP Late Stone Age 30 000 - until c. AD 200

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A cultural heritage survey of the proposed cultivation of less than 99 ha of Virgin Veld, on Leydenburg 45 and Middel Valley 46, near Swartberg, KwaZulu-Natal identified no heritage sites. The area is also not part of any known cultural landscape. There is no archaeological reason why the proposed development may not proceed on the remainder of the footprint as planned. However, attention is drawn to the South African National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act No. 25 of 1999) (NHRA) and the KwaZulu-Natal Heritage Act (Act No. 4 of 2008) which requires that operations that expose archaeological or historical remains should cease immediately, pending evaluation by the provincial heritage agency.

### 1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE PROJECT

The consultant was approached by Green Door Environmental to conduct a heritage impact assessment (HIA) of the proposed development on the farms Leydenburg 45 and Middel Valley 46, near Swartberg, KwaZulu-Natal.

According to the National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (NHRA) (Act No. 25 of 1999), the heritage resources of South Africa include:

- 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 natural features of cultural significance;
- e. geological sites of scientific or cultural importance;
- f. archaeological and palaeontological sites;
- g. graves and burial grounds, including-
  - i. ancestral graves;
  - ii. royal graves and graves of traditional leaders;
  - iii. graves of victims of conflict;
  - iv. graves of individuals designated by the Minister by notice in the Gazette;
  - v. historical graves and cemeteries; and
  - vi. other human remains which are not covered in terms of the Human Tissue Act, 1983 (Act No. 65 of 1983);
- h. sites of significance relating to the history of slavery in South Africa;

- i. movable objects, including-
- i. objects recovered from the soil or waters of South Africa, including archaeological and palaeontological objects and material, meteorites and rare geological specimens;
- ii. objects to which oral traditions are attached or which are associated with living heritage;
- iii. ethnographic art and objects;
- iv. military objects;
- v. objects of decorative or fine art;
- vi. objects of scientific or technological interest; and
- vii. books, records, documents, photographic positives and negatives, graphic, film or video material or sound recordings, excluding those that are public records as defined in section 1(xiv) of the National Archives of South Africa Act, 1996 (Act No. 43 of 1996).

The newly promulgated KwaZulu-Natal Heritage Act (Act No. 4 of 2008) also makes specific mention to rock art and archaeological sites.

It is furthermore stated that:

- (1) No person may destroy, damage, excavate, alter, write or draw upon, or otherwise disturb any battlefield site, archaeological site, rock art site, palaeontological site, historic fortification, meteorite or meteorite impact site without the prior written approval of the Council having been obtained on written application to the KwaZulu-Natal Heritage Council.
- (2) Upon discovery of archaeological or palaeontological material or a meteorite by any person, all activity or operations in the general vicinity of such material or meteorite must cease forthwith and a person who made the discovery must submit a written report to the Council without delay.
- (3) The Council may, after consultation with an owner or controlling authority, by way of written notice served on the owner or controlling authority, prohibit any activity considered by the Council to be inappropriate within 50 metres of a rock art site.
- (4) No person may exhume, remove from its original position or otherwise disturb, damage, destroy, own or collect any object or material associated with any battlefield site, archaeological site, rock art site, palaeontological site, historic fortification, meteorite or meteorite impact site without the prior written approval of the Council having been obtained on written application to the Council.

(5) No person may bring any equipment which assists in the detection of metals and archaeological and palaeontological objects and material, or excavation equipment onto any battlefield site, archaeological site, rock art site, palaeontological site, historic fortification, or meteorite impact site, or use similar detection or excavation equipment for the recovery of meteorites, without the prior written approval of the Council having been obtained on written application to the Council.

(6) (a) The ownership of any object or material associated with any battlefield site, archaeological site, rock art site, palaeontological site, historic fortification, meteorite or meteorite impact site, on discovery, vest in the Provincial Government and the Council is regarded as the custodian on behalf of the Provincial Government.

(b) The Council may establish and maintain a provincial repository or repositories for the safekeeping or display of—

- (i) archaeological objects;
  - (ii) palaeontological material;
  - (iii) ecofacts;
  - (iv) objects related to battlefield sites;
  - (v) material cultural artefacts; or
  - (vi) meteorites.
- (7) The Council may, subject to such conditions as the Council may determine, loan any object or material referred to in subsection (6) to a national or provincial museum or institution.
- (8) No person may, without the prior written approval of the Council having been obtained on written application to the Council, trade in, export or attempt to export from the Province—
- (a) any category of archaeological object;
  - (b) any palaeontological material;
  - (c) any ecofact;

- (d) any object which may reasonably be regarded as having been recovered from a battlefield site;
- (e) any material cultural artefact; or
- (f) any meteorite.
- (9) (a) A person or institution in possession of an object or material referred to in paragraphs (a) – (f) of subsection (8), must submit full particulars of such object or material, including such information as may be prescribed, to the Council.
- (b) An object or material referred to in paragraph (a) must, subject to paragraph (c) and the directives of the Council, remain under the control of the person or institution submitting the particulars thereof.
- (c) The ownership of any object or material referred to in paragraph (a) vest in the Provincial Government and the Council is regarded as the custodian on behalf of the Provincial Government.
- This study aims to identify and assess the significance of any heritage and archaeological resources occurring on the site. Based on the significance, the impact of the development on the heritage resources would be determined. Then appropriate actions to reduce the impact on the heritage resources would be put forward. In terms of the NHRA, a place or object is to be considered part of the national estate if it has cultural significance or other special value because of:

- a. its importance in the community, or pattern of South Africa's history;
- b. its possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage;
- c. its potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage;
- d. its importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class of South Africa's natural or cultural places or objects;
- e. its importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by a community or cultural group;
- f. its importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period;

- 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; and
- i. sites of significance relating to the history of slavery in South Africa.

Table 1. Background information

Consultants:	Active Heritage cc for Green Door Environmental
Type of development:	It is proposed that approximately 99 ha of virgin veld on Leydenburg 45 and Middell Valley 46, be broken for agricultural purposes: GNR 544 - Part 9: The construction of facilities or infrastructure exceeding 1000 metres in length for the bulk transportation of water, sewage or storm water – i. with an internal diameter of 0.36 metres or more; or ii. with a peak throughput of 120 litres per second or more. GNR 544 - Part 11: The construction of: xi. infrastructure or structures covering 50 square metres or more where such construction occurs within a watercourse or within 32 metres of a watercourse, measured from the edge of the watercourse, excluding where such construction will occur behind the development setback line. GNR 546 - Part 14: The clearance of an area of 5 hectares or more of vegetation where 75% or more of the vegetative cover constitutes indigenous vegetation, except where such removal of vegetation is required for: i. Purposes of agriculture or afforestation inside areas identified in spatial instruments adopted by the competent authority for agriculture or afforestation purposes; ii. The undertaking of a linear activity falling below the thresholds in Notice 544 of 2010; In KwaZulu-Natal: All areas outside urban areas.. (Fig 1).
Rezoning or subdivision:	Rezoning
Terms of reference	To carry out a Heritage Impact Assessment
Legislative requirements:	The Heritage Impact Assessment was carried out in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998) (NEMA) and following the requirements of the National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act No. 25 of 1999) (NHRA) and the

KwaZulu Natal Heritage Act (Act No. 4 of 2008)

### 1.1. Details of the area surveyed:

**Footprint:** The proposed development is situated in the greater Swartberg area that is situated between Underberg and Kokstad in southern KwaZulu-Natal. The footprint is to the south of Underberg approximately 2 km to the south west of St Bernards Peak Hotel (Figs 1 - 3). The GPS coordinates for the footprint is: S 30° 03' 27.81" E 29° 07' 42.14". The study area consists of an existing commercial farm that includes grasslands as well as virgin veld. The area earmarked for development covers less than 99 hectares of virgin veld (Figs 4 – 6).

## 2 BACKGROUND TO ARCHAEOLOGICAL HISTORY OF AREA

The Swartberg area is situated in the foothills of the southern Drakensberg in KwaZulu-Natal. The greater Drakensberg area is well endowed with cultural heritage, including various wilderness areas within and outside the formal protected area network that includes the World Heritage Site. Although most literature refers to this heritage mainly in terms of San rock art, the region also contains other categories of cultural heritage features representative of various cultures and time-periods. The cultural heritage of the Drakensberg is diverse and highly fragile. Cultural heritage, unlike natural heritage, is non-renewable and irreplaceable. Once damaged, it is gone forever. San rock paintings and associated Later Stone Age sites, as well as the palaeontology of the area, are unique and have global significance. The remaining categories, however, certainly have national, provincial, and regional significance. The area has had several different cultural groups associated with it, from the San to the southern Sotho, the Zulu-speaking and Xhosa-speaking groups, and, more recently, the Griqua and Anglo-Boer descendants. Each of these groups has its own unique cultural expressions and has related in various ways to the others. These differences are found in the building styles of homes, their way of life as they interact with their environment, traditional dress, and so on. In addition, there are a number of living heritage values associated with all of these groups, many of which are unknown or poorly recorded. The following section is a more detailed description of the various cultural heritage features.

### 2.1.1 The Early Stone Age

The occurrence of Early Stone Age tools such as hand axes in areas below the 1 800 m contour suggests that the first inhabitants of the area predated modern humans by at least 800 000 years. Sites belonging to this period in the Drakensberg are mostly characterised by a few surface scatters and individual stone tools – usually in the close vicinity of water. They were most probably manufactured by *Homo erectus*, a predecessor of modern humans. Early Stone Age sites have been recorded in the foothills of the southern Drakensberg but none are known from the study area.

### 2.1.2 The Middle Stone Age

Anatomically modern people (*Homo sapiens sapiens*) with a very different economic strategy and more sophisticated stone tool kits moved into the area about 200 000 years ago. Archaeological assemblages left behind by these people have been termed Middle Stone Age. Not only were these societies more effective hunters than their predecessors but Middle Stone Age sites elsewhere in southern Africa also provide convincing evidence for some of the earliest symbolic behaviour in the world. It was Middle Stone Age people from southern and eastern Africa who left the continent roughly between 80 000 – 60 000 years ago to populate the rest of the world. Middle Stone Age sites in the Drakensberg region occur in both Lesotho and South Africa. Sites occur as surface scatters as well as deep cave deposits. Prime archaeological deposits, however, occur in the Eastern Cape and Free State sections of the region. Archaeological excavations at Strathalan Cave in the Eastern Cape Province indicate that the Middle Stone Age persisted in the Eastern Cape Drakensberg until around 22 000 years ago (Mitchell 2002).

### 2.1.3. The Later Stone Age

The stone tool assemblages belonging to the immediate ancestors of the San or Bushmen have been termed Later Stone Age. Later Stone Age tools are generally much smaller but also more diversified than the earlier tool kits. It was during this period that the bow and arrow was used extensively, and societies exploited their environments distinctly more intensively and effectively. Literally hundreds of Later Stone Age sites prevail in the Drakensberg region. In addition, most of the rock art in the region was created by the San. The earliest evidence for Later Stone Age occupation of the Maloti Drakensberg comes from Sehonghong Cave in south eastern Lesotho and from Strathalan Cave in the Eastern Cape section of the region. Here a specific Later Stone Age period called the Robberg industry has been dated to

approximately 20 000 years ago. In contrast, evidence from Good Hope shelter 1 near the bottom of Sani Pass suggests that the earliest archaeological evidence for San people in the KwaZulu-Natal portion of the Drakensberg dates back to approximately 8 000 years ago. Whereas most parts of the Maloti Drakensberg were only seasonally occupied by San hunter gatherers for the larger part of the last 20 000 years, the situation started to change during the later part of the Holocene around 5 000 years ago. This was compounded by the arrival of immigrant black farmers in the region soon after 1600 AD and European colonialism around 1834 AD (Wright & Mazel 2007). During the historical period, the Maloti Drakensberg and adjacent mountainous areas became the last stronghold for various southern San groups such as the Baroa, //Xegwi !Galhe, //Kx'au, and //Ku//ke. Their Later Stone Age way of life finally came to an end during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. San descendants still live in the area but for all practical purposes have assimilated with their more powerful neighbours. Many place names within the region still retained their original San pronunciations such as the Inxu, Sehonghong, Qomoqomong and Qhoaseng rivers, and the Qeme, Qhuquhu, Qhalasi, and Qholahoe mountains. Approximately 1 300 Later Stone Age sites are known within the South African side of the Drakensberg.

#### 2.1.4. Rock Paintings

The Maloti Drakensberg region is particularly well known for the occurrence of some of the finest and most complex prehistoric rock paintings in the world. Depictions of humans dominate, although finely executed animals such as eland and rhebuck are common. Some of the art is executed in various colours and in detailed precision that almost renders it a three dimensional aspect. Most researchers support the theory developed by Professor David Lewis-Williams and his colleagues that the figures represent trance induced visions during San religious rites (Lewis-Williams 2003). According to some researchers, the celebrated Rosetta Panel at Game Pass shelter (RSA) holds the key to our understanding of all San rock art in the sub-Saharan region of Africa. However, this interpretation is not supported by all rock art researchers. Notable deviations from this approach have been developed by Anne Solomon, and more recently by Thomas Dowson. The Maloti Drakensberg is also one of the areas with the highest density of prehistoric rock art in the world and certainly contains the highest concentration of prehistoric art south of the Sahara in Africa. Although the scientific dating of these paintings is still under researched, recent research suggests that the oldest paintings may date to approximately 4000 years ago (Wright & Mazel 2007). This is much older than previously thought. The chronological uniqueness of the

art, however, is not so much in its antiquity as in the fact that the Maloti Drakensberg was the last area in Africa south of the Zambezi River where the San rock art tradition was still actively practised. Paintings at two sites in the southern portion of the region were created as recently as 1920 (Prins 2009). In a recent survey Penny Lettley located seventeen new rock art sites in the Mfelamandoda River catchment in the near vicinity of the St Bernards Peak Hotel not far from the study area (Lettley 2006). However, none of these sites occur in the immediate vicinity of the study area.

#### 2.1.5. Iron Age Sites

Around 2 000 years ago the southern African demographic landscape was transformed with the arrival of the first Bantu-speaking agriculturists in the sub-region. These subsistence farmers lived for the most part in the lower altitude, wooded areas of the eastern seaboard. Around 1250 AD certain agriculturists started occupying the higher altitude, grassland areas. Sites belonging to this period in KwaZulu-Natal are referred to as Moor Park settlements and they typically occupy hill tops with a low stone walling effect. Although none occur within the designated Maloti-Drakensberg project area, they can be found at the fringes, at an altitude of approximately 1 200-1 400 m. By 1600 AD, groups such as the amaZizi reached the foothills of the northern Drakensberg near Winterton (Wright and Mazel 2007). Various splinter groups of the amaZizi left KwaZulu Natal and also settled in parts of Lesotho where, over time, they adopted a Sotho identity. The baPhuti of south eastern Lesotho are perhaps the best known of these early immigrants. By the early 1700s various other Sotho and Nguni-speaking groups moved into the area and established chieftaincies in those areas below the 1 800 m contour. Impressive Iron Age sites belonging to this period and built in typical Sotho-style occur near Harrismith and Phuthaditjhaba in the Eastern Free State. Nguni-style sites of this period have also been found in KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape parts of the Drakensberg. The expansion of the Zulu kingdom around 1818 had a major impact on Iron Age settlement in the region. Various chieftaincies were attacked, and their routed remnants typically traversed the Maloti Drakensberg region in search of better settlement elsewhere. Bandits often hid out in the mountains, and a number allegedly practised cannibalism. Perhaps the most significant development during this period was the founding of the Southern Sotho nation under King Moshoeshoe I. Various sites in Lesotho belong to this period – some of them, like Thaba Bosiu, are typically mountain strongholds. Almost 2 000 Iron-Age sites have been identified in the Maloti Drakensberg region, and most occur in altitudes lower

than 1 800 m contour. However, none are known to occur in the greater Swartberg area.

#### 2.1.6. The Historical period

The historical period spans the era of colonialism that started around 1830 AD when the first missionaries and Dutch immigrants arrived from the Cape Colony in the Maloti Drakensberg region. Sites associated with Voortrekker settlement of the area occur in the eastern Free State and the northern portion of KwaZulu-Natal near Winterton and Bergville. For the most part, these were the places where laagers were formed (with very low archaeological visibility) and old farmsteads with associated grave yards. A particular site worth mentioning is Kerkenberg near Oliviershoek Pass, where Debora Retief painted the initials of her father on a rock before the trekkers descended into KwaZulu Natal. In Lesotho, the rebellion by Chief Moorosi and the resultant action by the Cape Colony government at the southern tip of the country left footprints of forts and associated graves at Moyeni Camp, Fort Hartley, Cutting Camp, and Mount Moorosi. The most important structure relating to the history of Bushman raids is most probably Forth Nottingham, in KwaZulu-Natal, which was built around 1852. Various historical mission stations founded in the mid to late 1800s such as those at Morija and St. James in Lesotho and Emmaus, Reichenau, and Mariazell in South Africa, are still in active use. The Reichenau Mission, which is situated approximately 5km from the footprint, was founded by Trappist missionaries around 1878. The Ongeluksnek Pass in the Eastern Cape is intimately associated with the epic trek of the Griqua people in 1861, led by Adam Kok. The area associated with the first native uprising against the British colonial government, by the celebrated Hlubi chief Langaibalele in 1873, is at Giants Castle Nature Reserve in the uKhahlamba Drakensberg Park World Heritage Site. Various battle sites associated with the Basotho Wars between the Boer Republic of the Orange Free State and the Sotho Kingdom of Moshoeshoe I are to be found in the eastern Free State and adjacent parts of Lesotho. Sites belonging to the period of the Anglo-Boer War (1898-1901) abound in the eastern Free State portion of the project area. These are typically areas where skirmishes took place or where ammunition was destroyed. A few rock engravings belonging to the Anglo-Boer War period have been documented from the Golden Gate Highland Park. However, thorough research is still required to ascertain the meaning and value of these engravings. Many historical sites can be categorised as belonging to the "built environment" as defined in heritage legislation. These are the physical remnants and

traces of historical settlements that underpin the cultural value and meaning of the surrounding communities.

One of the earliest European explorers in the Bulwer/Underberg area was Captain Allen Gardener. Gardener skirted the southern KwaZulu-Natal Drakensberg in 1835 seeking a route from Natal to the Cape Colony. Some Voortrekker farmers settled in the area, albeit briefly, around 1840 but it was only after 1850 when Natal became a British colony that more European, especially English-speaking, settlers arrived in the area. They were preceded and followed by French and German missionaries. The Trappist mission of Rheichenau became a prominent landmark in the Underberg District. The buildings associated with these early missionaries as well as farmsteads and associated graveyards, dating from approximately 1860, occur at various localities in the Underberg and Swartberg areas (McKenzie 1946). Another prominent historical building is the old jail of Himeville. This building was erected in the 1870's and was meant to act as a defensive fort for the inhabitants of Himeville during the Anglo-Zulu War. Fortunately the war never reached as far south in the colony and today the old building functions as a museum.

By the 1880's there was a shortage of vacant land for farming in the then colony of Natal and the children and grandchildren of the 1820 and 1840 settlers were looking for land of their own. The land along the Southern Drakensberg, a hitherto undeveloped area, provided vast tracts of unclaimed land. The area had been surveyed in 1880 by Dr Peter Sutherland, the Surveyor-General for Natal, and farms had been identified. The Underberg and Swartberg areas were settled by immigrant European farmers from the 1880's onwards.

#### 2.1.7. Graves

There are various grave sites belonging to different periods and cultural associations in the Drakensberg region. Perhaps the most famous sites are those belonging to the southern Sotho royalty at Botha Bothe in Lesotho; the grave of Nkosi Langaibalele at Giants Castle; KwaZulu Natal graves associated with the royalty of the amaZizi and amaNgwane near Bergville, KwaZulu-Natal; the grave of Adam Kok at Matatiele, Eastern Cape; and various graves in the Free State belonging to the Voortrekker and Anglo-Boer War periods. Interestingly, graves belonging to the prehistoric San

inhabitants of the area are markedly absent or, as yet, have not been identified by researchers.

### 2.1.8. The Living Heritage

The living heritage of the Drakensberg area is varied and as yet little understood. Yet preliminary investigations by the Maloti Drakensberg Project (Anderson 2007) indicate that certain areas, including sites in communal areas close to Underberg, are still frequented by local communities who afford them ritual or sacred significance. Such locales may include archaeological sites with a living heritage component or natural features such as mountains, forests, boulders, caves, pools, or waterfalls with cultural significance. Living heritage is not only site-specific but also relates to oral history, indigenous knowledge systems, and indigenous languages, practices, and beliefs. Oral history specifically is a rich resource that has been passed down the generations and provides diverse narratives and interpretations concerning places of historical significance. It also provides a window on community perspectives regarding heritage resources, including indigenous names for sites and plant and animal species – all of which are imbued with cultural meaning.

Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) constitute an integral component of local knowledge, at grass roots level, often associated with traditional methods of land management and use. In this regard, IKS can enhance conservation and sustainable management of cultural heritage to which communities may relate. Conservation should provide an enabling environment for communities to continue with the tradition of transmitting knowledge and skills and of safeguarding their cultural heritage. Traditional ceremonies still performed in the larger Drakensberg region include the *Bale* initiation schools among certain southern Sotho groups, the *amemulo* (coming of age) ceremonies among the amaNgwane, the *Nkubelwana* (planting of the first seed) among Zulu-speakers, rainmaking, and various ceremonies associated with the veneration of the ancestors. Six indigenous languages are still spoken in the area, including siBhaca, which was believed to be almost extinct.

Two broad categories of site-specific living heritage sites have been identified:

- Sites of national significance of which nine have been identified in the SA portion of the MDTFCA. These include rock art sites, sandstone shelters without any archaeological remains but used extensively as pilgrimage sites, two sacred forests,

and three sacred mountains. All of these sites are frequented by indigenous groups as part of an annual pilgrimage.

- Sites of local significance include various pools, waterfalls, hot springs, kaolin and red ochre deposits, and boulders afforded special significance by traditional healers and sectarian Christian groupings. Seventeen such sites have been identified in the larger Drakensberg area.

### Living Heritage—Wilderness

Areas least influenced by human activities are often said to be representative of a “pristine” landscape. Such areas are recognised by the IUCN. In the context of the Drakensberg, only the Ukhahlamba Drakensberg World Heritage Site has any proclaimed wilderness areas, making up about 48% of the Park. In this regard, a specific wilderness management plan has been produced for the World Heritage site, with the express aim of retaining the integrity of these wilderness areas. In terms of the South African National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act (no 57 of 2003), a wilderness area is defined as “an area designated .....for the purpose of retaining an intrinsically wild appearance and character, or capable of being restored to such and which is undeveloped and roadless, without permanent improvements or human habitation”.

In addition, wilderness can be considered as a value of a given area and in this regard can be defined as a “...largely undeveloped and intrinsically wild character of the area in vast wilderness areas that provide outstanding opportunities to experience solitude and for spiritual renewal” (EKZNW 2006). There are a number of stakeholders promoting the concept of wilderness, including the Wilderness Action Group and the Wilderness Foundation. From a cultural heritage perspective, the concept is more akin to a western inspired ideal than an academic reality. In this sense the concept of wilderness, as an area where visitors may experience and enjoy pristine nature removed from anthropogenic influence and pollution, is therefore a western expression of living heritage. The wilderness notion, however, finds expression also in the indigenous concepts of cultural landscapes which are usually natural areas with profound cultural significance.

### 2.1.9. Palaeontology

Given its nature, palaeontology should be a component of geology and biodiversity. Nevertheless, the present heritage legislation in South Africa also covers



palaeontology. In fact, the heritage management procedures relating to palaeontology are almost identical to those of archaeology. The palaeontological history of the Maloti Drakensberg area is fascinating as it tells the story of the super southern continent called Gondwanaland and its associated fauna and flora preserved today as fossils (McCarthy & Rubidge 2005). Fossils and footprints belonging to various periods from around 270 million years ago to around 180 million years ago have been recorded and collected in the geological layers beneath the basalts. These layers, amongst other interesting facts, provide evidence of the greatest mass extinction of species in the world around 251 million years ago towards the end of the Permian period. Some species survived this extinction as attested by abundant fossils of certain species such as *Lystronotus* found deep in the Triassic period layers. Whereas the majority of fossilized remains in the area are *therapsids* (mammal-like reptiles, ancestors of most mammal species today), the Maloti Drakensberg also harbours evidence of some of the earliest dinosaurs in the world. Footprints belonging to these early dinosaurs appear in various localities in the Molteno formations of both Lesotho and South Africa.

The most celebrated palaeontological site occurs in the Golden Gate Highlands National Park. Here the earliest known dinosaur eggs in the world and a near intact embryo of an average sized dinosaur, i.e. *Massospondylus*, were located by scientists some thirty years ago. These early eggs, dated to almost 200 million years ago, are almost 100 million years older than other known dinosaur nest egg sites in the world. In adjacent Lesotho the Comoqomong Dinosaur footprint and museum site has been developed for tourism purposes. The endemic turkey size dinosaur *Lesothosaurus* is known from various localities within Lesotho.

### Summary

The cultural heritage of the Drakensberg region is rich, diverse, and fragile. The area contains a high density of prehistoric rock art that parallels the well known Upper-Palaeolithic rock art of Western Europe in artistic execution and symbolism. In addition, it harbours a rich and diverse record of palaeontological fossils that, for the most part, pre-date the Jurassic period of popular imagination. The mountains are also the heartland of the *Difaqane* – a period of tribal turmoil that developed as a direct response to the expansion of the Zulu state of Shaka in the 1820s. Many Iron Age sites in the area belong to this period, including significant sites associated with the founding of the Basotho Kingdom under King Moshoeshoe I. It was also the area traversed by some of the most dramatic diasporas documented in southern African

history, including the Great Trek of the Voortrekkers, The Griqua trek via Ongeluksnek, the wanderings of the amaHlubi, amaNgwane, amaZizi, and amaBhaca tribal entities, and the lesser-known but equally dramatic trek of the //Xegwi San in 1879 – the last rock artists of the region. Sites related to these historical events abound in the Drakensberg and are windows into a significant period of the history and culture of southern Africa. That some of these cultural expressions are still alive is witnessed by the occurrence of significant living heritage sites in the region. Most of these are used as sites of pilgrimage by visitors from South Africa, Lesotho, and even further abroad.

## 3 BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF THE SURVEY

### 3.1 Methodology

A desktop study was conducted of the archaeological data base housed in the KwaZulu-Natal Museum. This data base indicated approximately 30 rock art sites within 4km from the study area. However, none of them occurred on the footprint. The SAHRIS website was also consulted in order to assess previous heritage surveys in the environs of the study area. A ground survey of the proposed developments following standard and accepted archaeological procedures was conducted.

### 3.2 Restrictions encountered during the survey

#### 3.2.1 Visibility

Visibility during the site visit was good.

#### 3.2.2 Disturbance.

No disturbance of any potential archaeological stratigraphy or heritage features has been noted.

### 3.3 Details of equipment used in the survey

GPS: Garmin Etrex

Digital cameras: Canon Powershot A460

All readings were taken using the GPS. Accuracy was to a level of 5 m.

#### 4 DESCRIPTION OF SITES AND MATERIAL OBSERVED

##### 4.1 Locational data

Province: KwaZulu-Natal  
Towns: Underberg and Swartberg

##### 4.2 Description of the general area surveyed

The area surveyed is situated to the west of the R617 road in a rural farm setting with spectacular views towards the high southern Berg. Cattle, sheep and dairy farming predominate in the area. Tourism has also become a major source of income in the region in recent years. The area has been well surveyed for archaeological sites in the past and more than 300 San rock art sites have been recorded in the greater Underberg and Swartberg areas in the past. However, none of these occur closer than 2km to the footprint (Fig 1) and they are therefore not endangered by the proposed development. Some of the farmsteads in the Swartberg area are older than 60 years and are therefore protected by heritage legislation. No prehistoric archaeological sites occur on the footprint. Although graves occur in the near environs of the study area none occur on the actual footprint in the proposed developmental zone.

##### 4.3 Description and distribution of archaeological material found

No archaeological sites occur on the footprint. The area is also not part of any known cultural landscape (Table 2)

Table 2. Evaluation and statement of significance.

Significance criteria in terms of Section 3(3) of the NHRA		
	Significance	Rating
1.	<b>Historic and political significance</b> - The importance of the cultural heritage in the community or pattern of South Africa's history.	None.
2.	<b>Scientific significance</b> – Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of South Africa's cultural heritage.	None.
3.	<b>Research/scientific significance</b> – Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage.	None.
4.	<b>Scientific significance</b> – Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class of South Africa's cultural places/objects.	None.
5.	<b>Aesthetic significance</b> – Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by a community or cultural group.	None.
6.	<b>Scientific significance</b> – Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.	None.
7.	<b>Social significance</b> – Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.	None.
8.	<b>Historic significance</b> – Strong or special association with the life and work of a person, group or organization of importance in the history of South Africa.	None.
9.	The significance of the site relating to the history of slavery in South Africa.	None.

**5 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (HERITAGE VALUE)**

**5.1 Field Rating**

Not applicable, as no archaeological sites occur on the footprint.

**Table 3. Field rating and recommended grading of sites (SAHRA 2005)**

Level	Details	Action
National (Grade I)	The site is considered to be of National Significance	Nominated to be declared by SAHRA
Provincial (Grade II)	This site is considered to be of Provincial significance	Nominated to be declared by Provincial Heritage Authority
Local Grade IIIA	This site is considered to be of HIGH significance locally	The site should be retained as a heritage site
Local Grade IIIB	This site is considered to be of HIGH significance locally	The site should be mitigated, and part retained as a heritage site
Generally Protected A	High to medium significance	Mitigation necessary before destruction
Generally Protected B	Medium significance	The site needs to be recorded before destruction
Generally Protected C	Low significance	No further recording is required before destruction

**6 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The proposed development may proceed on the footprint as planned.

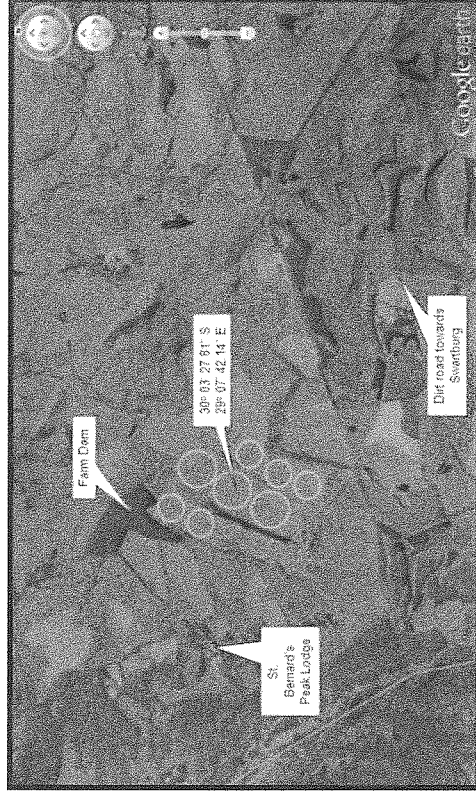
**7 RISK PREVENTATIVE MEASURES ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

Not applicable.

**8 MAPS AND FIGURES**



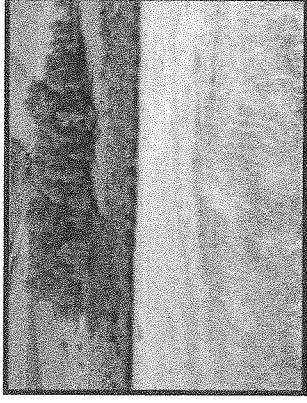
**Figure 1. Aerial Map showing the location of the property proposed for development near Swartberg in southern KwaZulu-Natal.**



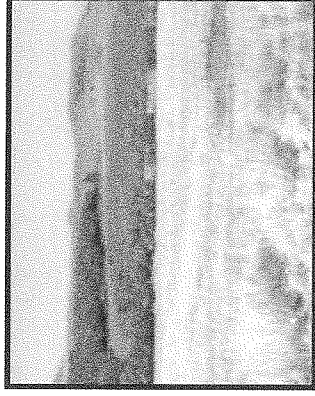
**Figure 2. Google aerial photograph showing the location of the study area to the immediate east of the St Bernards Peak Hotel.**



**Figure 3. Map of the study area showing the areas proposed for development (Source: Green Door Environmental).**



**Figure 4. Virgin veld earmarked for the proposed development. No heritage structures or features were observed during the survey.**



**Figure 5. Virgin veld earmarked for the proposed development. Some recent disturbance occur on the footprint.**



**Figure 6. Virgin veld earmarked for the proposed development. No heritage sites were observed.**

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