

Proposed new cattle feedlot development on farm Klipplaatdrift 214, Ventersdorp, North West Province: Exemption from further Phase 1 Heritage Impact Assessment

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Site: Farm Klipplaatdrift 214, Ventersdorp, North West Province

Map Ref.: 1:50 000 scale topographic map 2626BD_Ventersdorp

1:250 000 geological map 2626 West Rand

Site Coordinates:

- A) 26°25'15.38"S 26°46'50.42"E
- B) 26°25'17.38"S 26°46'56.93"E
- C) 26°25'26.52"S 26°46'55.65"E
- D) 26°25'25.05"S 26°46'49.41"E

The assessment pertains to development of a proposed new cattle feedlot covering ~ 5.7 ha parcel of farmland on farm Klipplaatdrift 214 near Ventersdorp, North West Province (**Fig. 1 & 2**). The extent of the affected areas (over 5000 m²) falls within the requirements for a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) as required by Section 38 (Heritage Resources Management) of the South African National Heritage Resources Act (Act No. 25 of 1999).

The proposed development area is underlain by West Rand Group (*Rh*) rocks and older undifferentiated granites and gneiss (*Zg*) of the Witwatersrand Supergroup, considered to be of low to no palaeontological significance (**Fig. 3**). Proposed activities will also impact previously degraded topsoils (farmland), not considered palaeontologically vulnerable. As far as the palaeontological heritage is concerned, the proposed development may proceed with no additional heritage assessments necessary.

The development footprint is located about 13 m above the present level of the Schoonspruit and within range of 10 - 13 m gravel terraces north of Klerksdorp, known to have yielded several ESA artefacts in the past. However the current landscape has been severely degraded by previous and ongoing farming activities. Likelihood of severe impact on *in situ*, Quaternary fluvial deposits are considered very low.

The area between Klerksdorp and Ventersdorp is relatively rich in Late Iron Age stonewalled complexes associated with early Sotho-Tswana speakers, which also includes the ancient Rolong capital of Thabeng (Buisfontein). The architecture of these Iron Age sites has many of the traits of the Type Z bilobial hut settlement pattern found in neighbouring parts of the Free State Province, and is attributed to ancestral Tswana people, who settled in the region from the 17th century to the early 19th century. Major stonewalled settlements between Klerksdorp and Ventersdorp include sites at Platberg,

Hartbeesfontein and Palmietfontein, the latter located about 35 km southwest of Klipplaatdrift 214 (**Fig. 4**).

Potential archaeological impact resulting from the proposed development will be non-existent due to the disturbed condition of the footprint. A farm graveyard situated near the southwestern boundary of the proposed footprint should be avoided, fenced off and protected by a minimum 25 m, no-go buffer zone during the construction phase of the development (**Fig. 5**).

Graveyard coordinates:

- 1) 26°25'23.72"S 26°46'49.83"E
- 2) 26°25'23.73"S 26°46'50.60"E
- 3) 26°25'24.72"S 26°46'50.46"E
- 4) 26°25'24.71"S 26°46'49.73"E

The graveyard is assigned a heritage rating of Local Significance Grade 3A (Conservation; mitigation not advised). The rest of the affected area is assigned a site rating of Low Significance (Generally Protected C). As far as the archaeological heritage is concerned, the proposed development may proceed with no additional heritage assessments necessary.

References

Maggs, T.M.O'C. 1976. *Iron Age Communities of the southern Highveld*. Occasional Papers of the Natal Museum, 2. pp. 1 – 326.

Wells, L.H. 1933. A report on the stone structures of the Platberg near Klerksdorp. *South African Journal of Science* 30:582-584.

White, D.A. 1977. The excavation of an Iron Age site at Palmietfontein near Klerksdorp. *South African Archaeological Bulletin* 32(125): 89-92.

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

Paleo Field Services act as an independent specialist consultant and do not have or will not have any financial interest in the undertaking of the activity other than stipulated in the terms of reference.



08 / 08 / 2023

Table 1. Field rating categories as prescribed by SAHRA.

Field Rating	Grade	Significance	Mitigation
National Significance (NS)	Grade 1	-	Conservation; national site nomination
Provincial Significance (PS)	Grade 2	-	Conservation; provincial site nomination
Local Significance (LS)	Grade 3A	High significance	Conservation; mitigation not advised
Local Significance (LS)	Grade 3B	High significance	Mitigation (part of site should be retained)
Generally Protected A (GP.A)	-	High/medium significance	Mitigation before destruction
Generally Protected B (GP.B)	-	Medium significance	Recording before destruction
Generally Protected C (GP.C)	-	Low significance	Destruction

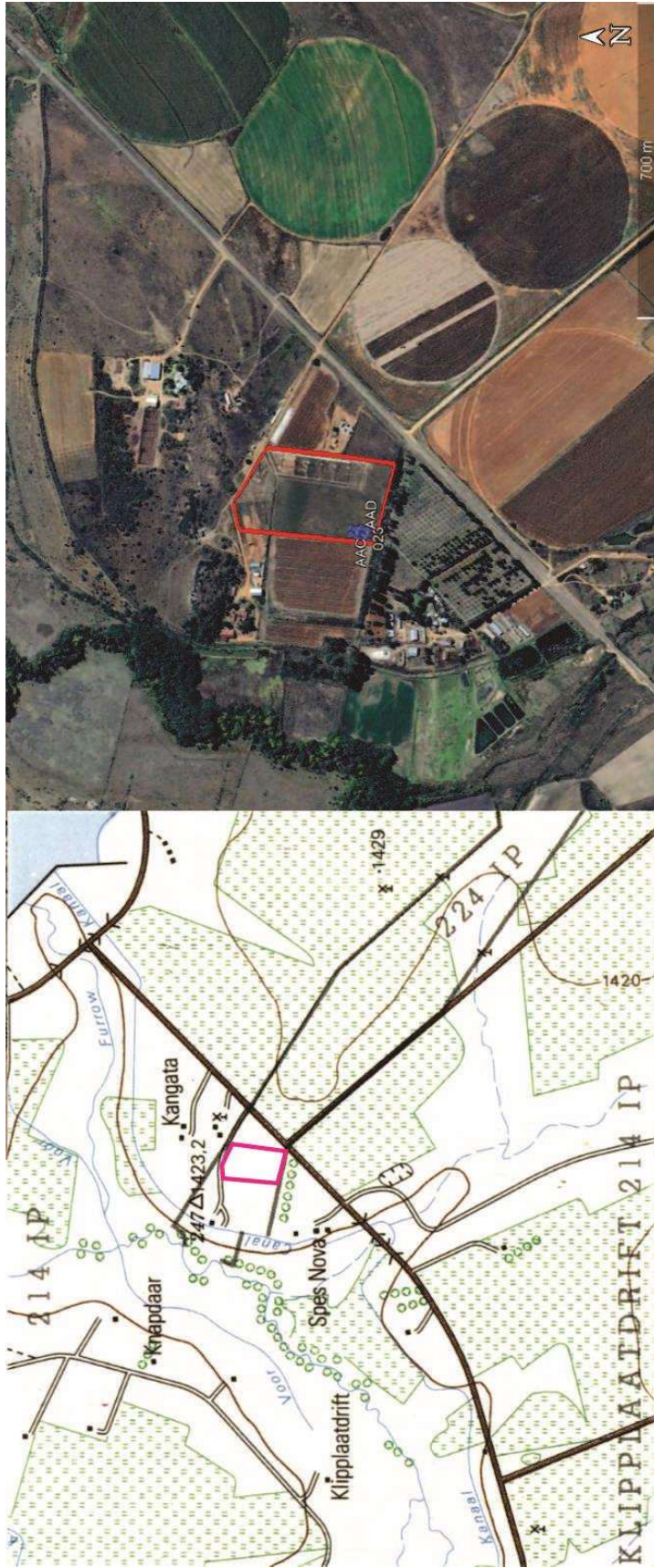


Figure 1. Footprint shown on portion of 1:50 000 scale topographic map 2626BD Ventersdorp.



Figure 2. Aerial view of study area.

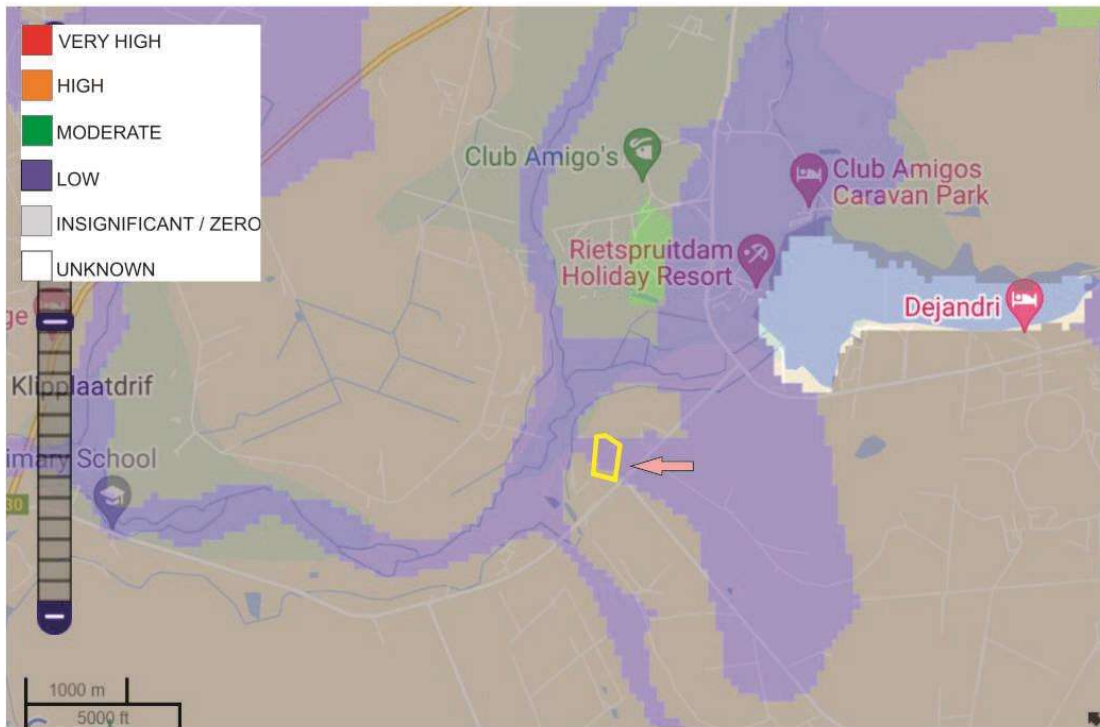
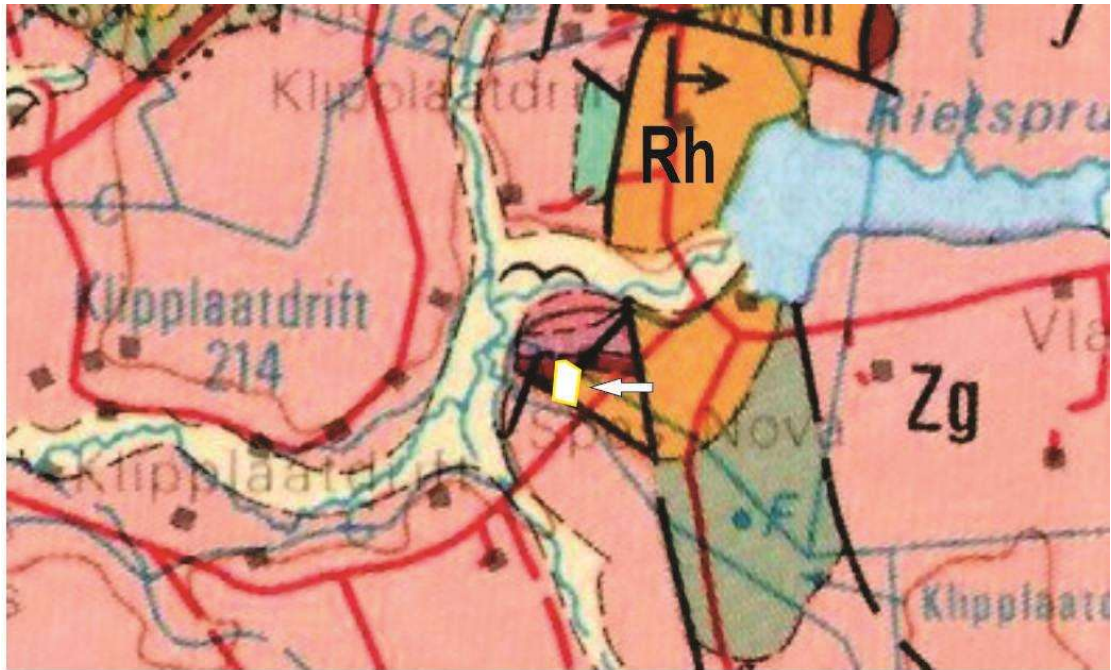


Figure 3. The proposed development area (marked on portion of 1:250 000 scale geological map 2626 West Rand, above) is underlain by West Rand Group (Rh) rocks and older, undifferentiated granites and gneiss (Zg) of the Witwatersrand Supergroup, considered to be of low to no palaeontological significance (indicated on portion of SAHRIS palaeosensitivity map, below).



Figure 4. Aerial view of the IA complex at Palmietfontein, located about 35 km southwest of Klipplaatsdrift 214.



Figure 5. Position of farm cemetery, situated near the southwestern boundary of the proposed development footprint.