

**Heritage impact scoping assessment for the
PROPOSED P166-1/2 ROAD DEVELOPMENT, MBOMBELA,
MPUMALANGA PROVINCE**

HERITAGE IMPACT SCOPING ASSESSMENT FOR THE PROPOSED P166-1/2 ROAD DEVELOPMENT, MBOMBELA, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

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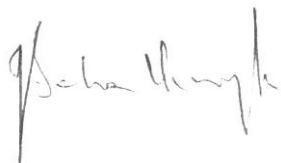
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Declaration:

I, J.A. van Schalkwyk, declare that I do not have any financial or personal interest in the proposed development, nor its developers or any of their subsidiaries, apart from the provision of heritage assessment and management services.



J A van Schalkwyk (D Litt et Phil)
Heritage Consultant
September 2012

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HERITAGE IMPACT SCOPING ASSESSMENT FOR THE PROPOSED P166-1/2 ROAD DEVELOPMENT, MBOMBELA, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

The P166-1/2 is a proposed new road which will run in parallel to the R40 road to White River in a northerly direction from Mbombela. Preliminary design has been done for the road more than twenty years ago and sections of this road proclaimed in the Provincial Gazette as a provincial road. This was done, however, before enactment of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA), No 107 of 1998 (as amended), and its Regulations, and therefore no Environmental Authorisation in terms of these requirements was obtained. A short section of the route was constructed in 2010 for convenient access from the new N4 Nelspruit bypass to the Mbombela Stadium for the 2010 Soccer World Cup. Some township development and planning has also taken place in close proximity to the route.

In accordance with Section 38 of the NHRA, an independent heritage consultant was appointed by **Royal Haskoning DHV** to conduct a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) to determine if any sites, features or objects of cultural heritage significance occur within the boundaries of the area where the proposed road development is to take place.

- Based solely available information and a short site visit, it is our opinion that no sites, features and objects of heritage significance occur in the study area, i.e. the original alignment as well as the different alternatives that would prevent to proposed development from proceeding to a next level of investigation, e.g. a full heritage impact assessment.



J A van Schalkwyk
Heritage Consultant
September 2012

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Property details	
Province	Mpumalanga
Magisterial district	Nelspruit, Witrivier
Local municipality	Mbombela
Topo-cadastral map	2530BD, 2530DB, 2531AC
Closest town	Mbombela
Farm name	Various

Development criteria in terms of Section 38(1) of the NHR Act	Yes/No
Construction of road, wall, power line, pipeline, canal or other linear form of development or barrier exceeding 300m in length	Yes
Construction of bridge or similar structure exceeding 50m in length	No
Development exceeding 5000 sq m	No
Development involving three or more existing erven or subdivisions	No
Development involving three or more erven or divisions that have been consolidated within past five years	No
Rezoning of site exceeding 10 000 sq m	No
Any other development category, public open space, squares, parks, recreation grounds	No

Development	
Description	Development of a regional road
Project name	P166-1/2

Land use	
Previous land use	Agriculture
Current land use	Agriculture/Vacant

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

TERMS

Study area: Refers to the entire study area as indicated by the client in the accompanying Fig. 1 and 2.

Stone Age: The first and longest part of human history is the Stone Age, which began with the appearance of early humans between 3-2 million years ago. Stone Age people were hunters, gatherers and scavengers who did not live in permanently settled communities. Their stone tools preserve well and are found in most places in South Africa and elsewhere.

Early Stone Age	2 000 000 - 150 000 Before Present
Middle Stone Age	150 000 - 30 000 BP
Late Stone Age	30 000 - until c. AD 200

Iron Age: Period covering the last 1800 years, when new people brought a new way of life to southern Africa. They established settled villages, cultivated domestic crops such as sorghum, millet and beans, and they herded cattle as well as sheep and goats. As they produced their own iron tools, archaeologists call this the Iron Age.

Early Iron Age	AD 200 - AD 900
Middle Iron Age	AD 900 - AD 1300
Late Iron Age	AD 1300 - AD 1830

Historical Period: Since the arrival of the white settlers - c. AD 1840 - in this part of the country

ABBREVIATIONS

ADRC	Archaeological Data Recording Centre
ASAPA	Association of Southern African Professional Archaeologists
CS-G	Chief Surveyor-General
EIA	Early Iron Age
ESA	Early Stone Age
LIA	Late Iron Age
LSA	Later Stone Age
HIA	Heritage Impact Assessment
MSA	Middle Stone Age
NASA	National Archives of South Africa
NHRA	National Heritage Resources Act
PHRA	Provincial Heritage Resources Agency
SAHRA	South African Heritage Resources Agency

HERITAGE IMPACT SCOPING ASSESSMENT FOR THE PROPOSED P166-1/2 ROAD DEVELOPMENT, MBOMBELA, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

1. INTRODUCTION

The P166-1/2 is a proposed new road which will run in parallel to the R40 road to White River in a northerly direction from Mbombela. Preliminary design has been done for the road more than twenty years ago and sections of this road proclaimed in the Provincial Gazette as a provincial road. This was done, however, before enactment of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA), No 107 of 1998 (as amended), and its Regulations, and therefore no Environmental Authorisation in terms of these requirements was obtained. A short section of the route was constructed in 2010 for convenient access from the new N4 Nelspruit bypass to the Mbombela Stadium for the 2010 Soccer World Cup. Some township development and planning has also taken place in close proximity to the route.

South Africa's heritage resources, also described as the 'national estate', comprise a wide range of sites, features, objects and beliefs. According to Section 27(18) of the National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA), Act 25 of 1999, no person may destroy, damage, deface, excavate, alter, remove from its original position, subdivide or change the planning status of any heritage site without a permit issued by the heritage resources authority responsible for the protection of such site.

In accordance with Section 38 of the NHRA, an independent heritage consultant was appointed by **Royal Haskoning DHV** to conduct a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) to determine if any sites, features or objects of cultural heritage significance occur within the boundaries of the area where the proposed road development is to take place.

This HIA report forms part of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) as required by the EIA Regulations in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998) and is intended for submission to the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA).

2. TERMS OF REFERENCE

2.1 Scope of work

The aim of this scoping assessment, broadly speaking, is to determine if any sites, features or objects of cultural heritage significance occur within the boundaries of the area where it is planned to develop the road.

The scope of work for this study consisted of:

- Conducting of a desk-top investigation of the area, in which all available literature, reports, databases and maps were studied; and
- A visit to the proposed development area.

The objectives were to

- Identify possible archaeological, cultural and historic sites within the proposed development area;

- Evaluate the potential impacts of construction, operation and maintenance of the proposed development on archaeological, cultural and historical resources; and
- Recommend mitigation measures to ameliorate any negative impacts on areas of archaeological, cultural or historical importance.

2.2 Limitations

Due to the fact that the proposed development is still in a planning stage, the whole route could not be accessed.

Table 1: Applicable category of heritage impact assessment study and report.

Type of study	Aim	SAHRA involved	SAHRA response
Heritage Impact Assessment	The aim of a full HIA investigation is to provide an informed heritage-related opinion about the proposed development by an appropriate heritage specialist. The objectives are to identify heritage resources (involving site inspections, existing heritage data and additional heritage specialists if necessary); assess their significances; assess alternatives in order to promote heritage conservation issues; and to assess the acceptability of the proposed development from a heritage perspective.	Provincial Heritage Resources Authority	Comments on built environment and decision to approve or not
	The result of this investigation is a heritage impact assessment report indicating the presence/ absence of heritage resources and how to manage them in the context of the proposed development. Depending on SAHRA's acceptance of this report, the developer will receive permission to proceed with the proposed development, on condition of successful implementation of proposed mitigation measures.	SAHRA Archaeology, Palaeontology and Meteorites Unit	Comments and decision to approve or not

3. HERITAGE RESOURCES

3.1 The National Estate

The NHRA (No. 25 of 1999) defines the heritage resources of South Africa which are of cultural significance or other special value for the present community and for future generations that must be considered part of the national estate to include:

- places, buildings, structures and equipment of cultural significance;
- places to which oral traditions are attached or which are associated with living heritage;
- historical settlements and townscapes;
- landscapes and natural features of cultural significance;
- geological sites of scientific or cultural importance;
- archaeological and palaeontological sites;
- graves and burial grounds, including-

- ancestral graves;
- royal graves and graves of traditional leaders;
- graves of victims of conflict;
- graves of individuals designated by the Minister by notice in the Gazette;
- historical graves and cemeteries; and
- other human remains which are not covered in terms of the Human Tissue Act, 1983 (Act No. 65 of 1983);
- sites of significance relating to the history of slavery in South Africa;
- movable objects, including-
 - objects recovered from the soil or waters of South Africa, including archaeological and palaeontological objects and material, meteorites and rare geological specimens;
 - objects to which oral traditions are attached or which are associated with living heritage;
 - ethnographic art and objects;
 - military objects;
 - objects of decorative or fine art;
 - objects of scientific or technological interest; and
 - 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).

3.2 Cultural significance

In the NHRA, Section 2 (vi), it is stated that “cultural significance” means aesthetic, architectural, historical, scientific, social, spiritual, linguistic or technological value or significance. This is determined in relation to a site or feature’s uniqueness, condition of preservation and research potential.

According to Section 3(3) 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

- its importance in the community, or pattern of South Africa's history;
- its possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage;
- its potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage;
- its importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class of South Africa's natural or cultural places or objects;
- its importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by a community or cultural group;
- its importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period;
- its strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons;
- 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
- sites of significance relating to the history of slavery in South Africa.

4. STUDY APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 Extent of the Study

This survey and impact assessment covers the area as presented in Section 5 and as illustrated in Figures 1 and 2.

4.2 Methodology

4.2.1 Preliminary investigation

4.2.1.1 Survey of the literature

A survey of the relevant literature was conducted with the aim of reviewing the previous research done and determining the potential of the area. In this regard, various anthropological, archaeological, historical sources and heritage impact assessment reports were consulted – see list of references below.

- Information of a very general nature was obtained from these sources.

4.2.1.2 Data bases

The *Heritage Atlas Database*, the *Environmental Potential Atlas*, the *Chief Surveyor General* and the *National Archives of South Africa* were consulted.

- Database surveys produced a number of sites located in adjacent areas.

4.2.1.3 Other sources

Aerial photographs and topocadastral and other maps were also studied - see the list of references below.

- Information of a very general nature was obtained from these sources.

4.2.2 Field survey

The area that had to be investigated was identified by **Royal Haskoning DHV** by means of maps. The site was investigated by following the route as close as possible.

5. DESCRIPTION OF THE AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

5.1 Site location and description

The P166-1/2 is a proposed new road which will run in parallel to the R40 road to White River in a northerly direction from Mbombela. A short section of the route was constructed in 2010 for convenient access from the new N4 Nelspruit bypass to the Mbombela Stadium for the 2010 Soccer World Cup. Some township development and planning has also taken place in close proximity to the route (Fig. 1).

A number of smaller hills and outcrops occur, giving the area a broken topography. The geology is largely made up of granite. The original vegetation of the area is classified as Sour Lowveld Bushveld. However, much of this has been subjected to agricultural activities, e.g. citrus orchards, sugar cane, etc. The development of these activities, most of which are located close to the river for irrigation purposes, would have had a negative impact on any heritage resources that might have occurred here.



Fig. 1. Location of the study area in regional context.
(Map 2530: Chief Surveyor-General)



Fig. 2 Views over the site.

5.2 Development proposal

The section of the P166-1/2 under review starts at Maggiesdal, south of Nelspruit, where an interim connection to the R40-2 needs to be defined, and ends north of White River where it meets the R40-4, as indicated in Figure 1. This section of the route is approximately 45 kilometres long, and follows an alignment in part close proximity to newly established townships or planned areas of developments.

In addition three alternative routes are planned at Phumulani, in the northern part of the proposed road development and one alternative in the southern section at Maggiesdal

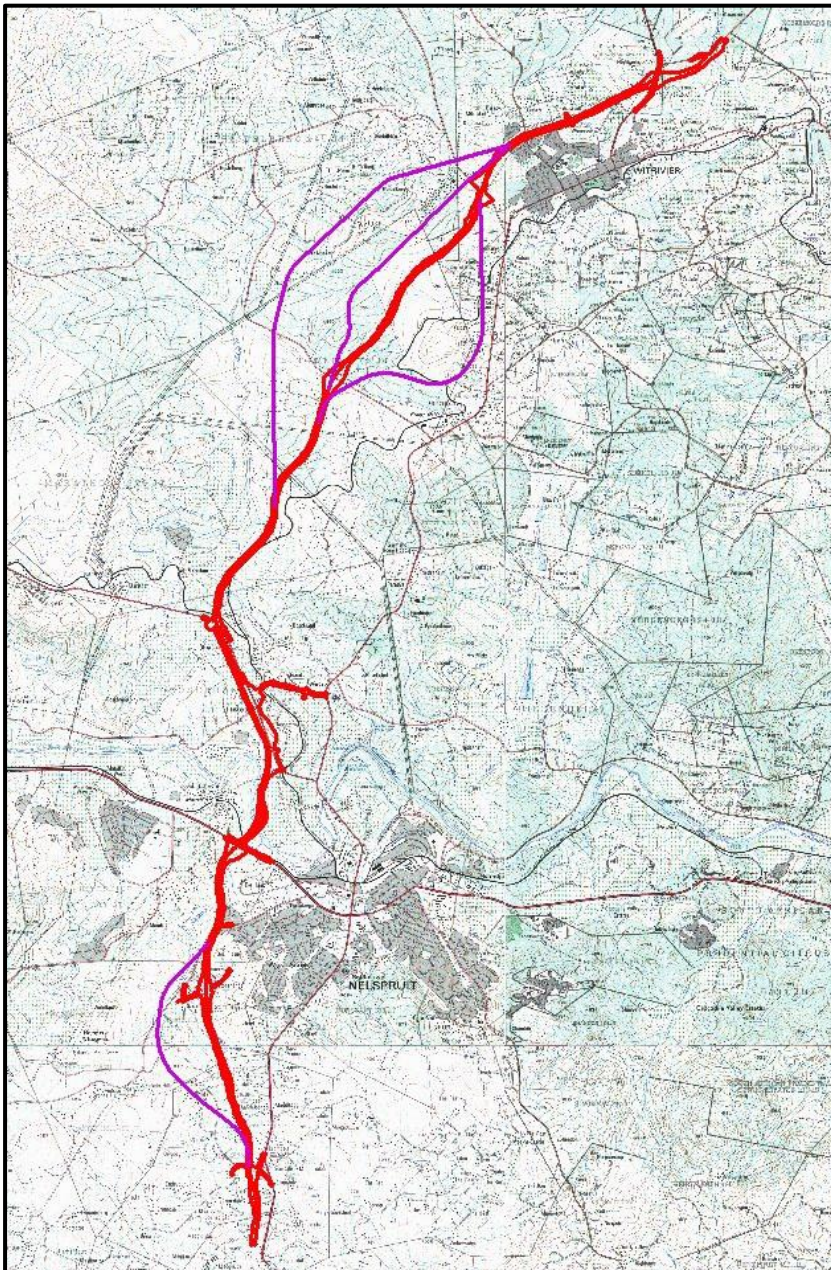


Fig. 3. Layout of the proposed development, showing the alternatives.

5.3 Overview of the region

5.3.1 Stone Age

Human occupation of the region started at least during the Middle Stone Age and continued through to the Later Stone Age. Because of the high impact of agricultural development, as well as the dense vegetation cover in the undeveloped area, very few indications of Stone Age occupation were identified during the survey. What was found was a number of stone tools, flakes and cores, dating to the Middle and Later Stone Age, as surface finds. As these objects are surface finds, they are out of context and are viewed to have a very low significance.

A number of rock shelters containing San rock art are known to exist in the region. These usually occur in shelters located on the granite outcrops. It is our understanding that most of the area has been extensively surveyed (e.g. Van Schalkwyk, et al 1996), although it is always possible that new sites might be identified. However, none of the known sites occur close to the new road alignment.

5.3.2 Iron Age

Iron Age people moved into southern Africa by c. AD 200, entering the area either by moving down the coastal plains, or by using a more central route. It seems more likely that the first option was what brought people into the study area. From the coast they followed the various rivers inland. One of the earliest dated sites are located near Tzaneen (Silver Leaves). Some sites dating to this and a slightly later period, were identified at Plaston (Evers 1977) and at Vergenoeg and The Curlews (Van Schalkwyk & Teichert 2007)

Being cultivators, they preferred the rich alluvial soils close to rivers to settle on. Consequently, as the study area is in close proximity to the Crocodile River, one would expect settlement sites dating to the Early Iron Age to occur here. Unfortunately, large sections of this area has been subjected to agricultural activities, being ploughed over annually, or are used for orchards. These activities would have had a negative impact on any heritage sites that might have occurred here. Furthermore, the areas not in use for agricultural activities, are densely vegetated, which also makes the detection of sites very difficult.

A few pieces of pottery were noticed in ploughed areas during the field survey. Unfortunately, all of it was non-diagnostic (i.e. it did not have any decorations), with the result that it could not be identified or dated.

5.3.3 Historic period

The historic period started in the 1840s. Due to the presence of malaria, few people settled here and most, being traders, hunter and miners, only passed through the area. Nelspruit as town was proclaimed only in 1905. As time went by, the area was divided into farms and more and more people settled on a permanent basis.

The Pretoria – Lorenço-Marques (Maputo) railway line, also known as the NZASM line, was built through the region during the 1880s. A number of features, e.g. bridges, culverts, stations, houses, good sheds, etc. still exist and forms part of this feature.

During the 1920s the old national road (now the N4) was built. Later, it was realigned in some places and upgraded. As a result some of the bridges and culverts that formed part of this road still exist, although it is not used any more.

5.4 Identified sites

The following sites, features and objects of cultural significance were identified in the study area (Fig. 9):

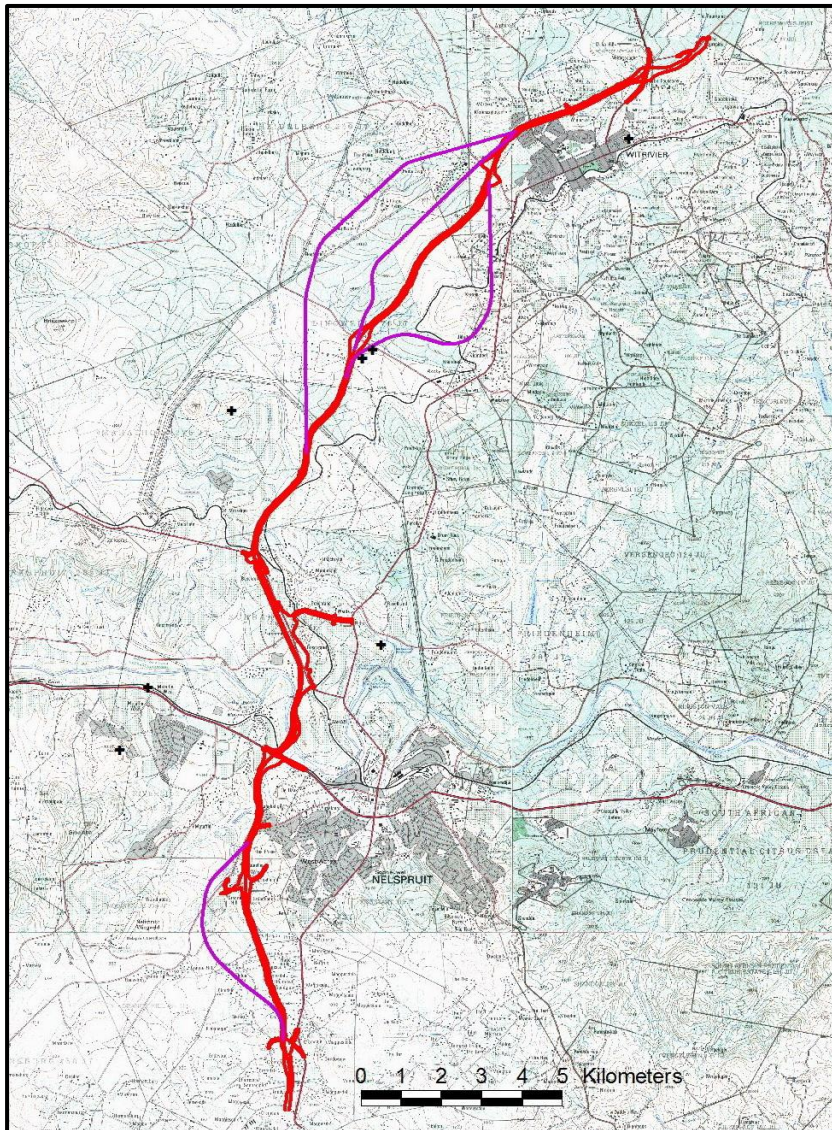


Fig. 4. The study area showing the location of known heritage sites.
(Map 2530BD, 2530DB, 2531AC, 2531CA: Chief Surveyor-General)

5.4.1 Stone Age

No sites, features or objects of cultural significance dating to the Stone Age were identified in the study area.

5.4.2 Iron Age

No sites, features or objects of cultural significance dating to the Iron Age were identified in the study area.

5.4.3 Historic period

No sites, features or objects of cultural significance dating to the historic period were identified in the study area.

6. SITE SIGNIFICANCE AND ASSESSMENT

6.1 Heritage assessment criteria and grading

The NHRA stipulates the assessment criteria and grading of archaeological sites. The following categories are distinguished in Section 7 of the Act:

- **Grade I:** Heritage resources with qualities so exceptional that they are of special national significance;
- **Grade II:** Heritage resources which, although forming part of the national estate, can be considered to have special qualities which make them significant within the context of a province or a region; and
- **Grade III:** Other heritage resources worthy of conservation, on a local authority level.

The occurrence of sites with a Grade I significance will demand that the development activities be drastically altered in order to retain these sites in their original state. For Grade II and Grade III sites, the applicable of mitigation measures would allow the development activities to continue.

6.2 Statement of significance

A matrix was developed whereby the above criteria, as set out in Sections 3(3) and 7 of the NHRA, No. 25 of 1999, were applied for each identified site (see Appendix 1). This allowed some form of control over the application of similar values for similar sites. Three categories of significance are recognized: low, medium and high. In terms of Section 7 of the NHRA, all the sites currently known or which are expected to occur in the study area are evaluated to have a grading as identified in the table below.

Table 2. Summary of identified heritage resources in the study area.

Identified heritage resources	
<i>Category, according to NHRA</i>	<i>Identification/Description</i>
Formal protections (NHRA)	
National heritage site (Section 27)	None
Provincial heritage site (Section 27)	None
Provisional protection (Section 29)	None
Place listed in heritage register (Section 30)	None
General protections (NHRA)	
structures older than 60 years (Section 34)	None
archaeological site or material (Section 35)	None
palaeontological site or material (Section 35)	None

graves or burial grounds (Section 36)	Yes
public monuments or memorials (Section 37)	None
Other	
Any other heritage resources (describe)	None

6.3 Impact assessment

Impact analysis of cultural heritage resources under threat of the proposed development, are based on the present understanding of the development.

- As no sites, features or objects are currently known to occur in the original alignment or any of the four proposed alternatives, there would be no impact as a result of the proposed development.

7. CONCLUSIONS

The aim of the survey was to locate, identify, evaluate and document sites, objects and structures of cultural significance found within the area in which it is proposed to develop the P166-1/2 road and to determine if there are any fatal flaws that would prevent to project from proceeding to a next level of investigation.

- Based solely available information and a short site visit, it is our opinion that no sites, features and objects of heritage significance occur in the study area, i.e. the original alignment as well as the different alternatives that would prevent to proposed development from proceeding to a next level of investigation, e.g. a full heritage impact assessment.

8. REFERENCES

8.1 Data bases

Chief Surveyor General
Environmental Potential Atlas, Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism.
Heritage Atlas Database, Pretoria.
National Archives of South Africa

8.2 Literature

Acocks, J.P.H. 1975. *Veld Types of South Africa*. Memoirs of the Botanical Survey of South Africa, No. 40. Pretoria: Botanical Research Institute.

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8.3 Maps and aerial photographs

1: 50 000 Topocadastral maps: 2530BD, 2530DB, 2531AC
Google Earth

APPENDIX 1: CONVENTIONS USED TO ASSESS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF HERITAGE RESOURCES

Significance

According to the NHRA, Section 2(vi) the **significance** of heritage sites and artefacts is determined by its aesthetic, architectural, historical, scientific, social, spiritual, linguistic or technical value in relation to the uniqueness, condition of preservation and research potential. It must be kept in mind that the various aspects are not mutually exclusive, and that the evaluation of any site is done with reference to any number of these.

Matrix used for assessing the significance of each identified site/feature

1. Historic value				
Is it important in the community, or pattern of history				
Does it have strong or special association with the life or work of a person, group or organisation of importance in history				
Does it have significance relating to the history of slavery				
2. Aesthetic value				
It is important in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by a community or cultural group				
3. Scientific value				
Does it have potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of natural or cultural heritage				
Is it important in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period				
4. Social value				
Does it have strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons				
5. Rarity				
Does it possess uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of natural or cultural heritage				
6. Representivity				
Is it important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class of natural or cultural places or objects				
Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a range of landscapes or environments, the attributes of which identify it as being characteristic of its class				
Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of human activities (including way of life, philosophy, custom, process, land-use, function, design or technique) in the environment of the nation, province, region or locality.				
7. Sphere of Significance		High	Medium	Low
International				
National				
Provincial				
Regional				
Local				
Specific community				
8. Significance rating of feature				
1.	Low			
2.	Medium			
3.	High			

APPENDIX 2. RELEVANT LEGISLATION

All archaeological and palaeontological sites and meteorites are protected by the National Heritage Resources Act (Act no 25 of 1999) as stated in Section 35:

(1) Subject to the provisions of section 8, the protection of archaeological and palaeontological sites and material and meteorites is the responsibility of a provincial heritage resources authority: Provided that the protection of any wreck in the territorial waters and the maritime cultural zone shall be the responsibility of SAHRA.

(2) Subject to the provisions of subsection (8)(a), all archaeological objects, palaeontological material and meteorites are the property of the State. The responsible heritage authority must, on behalf of the State, at its discretion ensure that such objects are lodged with a museum or other public institution that has a collection policy acceptable to the heritage resources authority and may in so doing establish such terms and conditions as it sees fit for the conservation of such objects.

(3) Any person who discovers archaeological or palaeontological objects or material or a meteorite in the course of development or agricultural activity must immediately report the find to the responsible heritage resources authority, or to the nearest local authority offices or museum, which must immediately notify such heritage resources authority.

(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;
- (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 which assist in the detection or recovery of metals or archaeological and palaeontological material or objects, or use such equipment for the recovery of meteorites.

In terms of cemeteries and graves the following (Section 36):

(1) Where it is not the responsibility of any other authority, SAHRA must conserve and generally care for burial grounds and graves protected in terms of this section, and it may make such arrangements for their conservation as it sees fit.

(2) SAHRA must identify and record the graves of victims of conflict and any other graves which it deems to be of cultural significance and may erect memorials associated with the grave referred to in subsection (1), and must maintain such memorials.

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

- (a) destroy, damage, alter, exhume or remove from its original position or otherwise disturb the grave of a victim of conflict, or any burial ground or part thereof which contains such graves;
- (b) 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
- (c) 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 the detection or recovery of metals.

(4) SAHRA or a provincial heritage resources authority may not issue a permit for the destruction or damage of any burial ground or grave referred to in subsection (3)(a) unless it is satisfied that the applicant has made satisfactory arrangements for the exhumation and re-interment of the contents of such graves, at the cost of the applicant and in accordance with any regulations made by the responsible heritage resources authority.