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CK 2006/014630/23 **VAT NO.: 4360226270**

**PHASE 1 HIA REPORT FOR THE ESKOM NKAMBENI SUBSTATION
LOCATED ON PORTION 115 OF THE FARM BURGERS HALL 21JU
MBOMBELA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, MPUMALANGA**

For:

*Envirovolution Consulting: Environmental Engineering & Management Consulting
Vista Place, Suite 1a & 2, No.52
Cnr Vorster & Glen Avenue
Glenanda*

Original REPORT: APAC018/80

Amended REPORT: APAC022/116

by:

*A.J. Pelsler
Accredited member of ASAPA*

Version 1: November 2018

Amended Version: November 2022

**P.O.BOX 73703
LYNNWOOD RIDGE
0040
Tel: 083 459 3091
Fax: 086 695 7247
Email: apac.heritage@gmail.com**

Member: AJ Pelsler BA (UNISA), BA (Hons) (Archaeology), MA (Archaeology) [WITS]

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. Pelser', is centered on the page.

SUMMARY

APELSER ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTING cc (APAC) was appointed by Envirolution Consulting Environmental Engineering & Management Consulting to provide an updated version of a 2018 Phase 1 HIA Report done for the proposed new Eskom Nkambeni Substation. The study area is located on Portion 115 of the farm Burgers Hall 21JU, in the Mbombela Local Municipality, in Mahushu, Mpumalanga Province. The initial work was done for Eco Partners in November 2018 (**See Report APAC018/80**).

Background research indicated that there are some known cultural heritage (archaeological & historical) sites and features in the larger geographical area, although nothing is known for the specific development site. The field assessment undertaken in 2018 identified a few sites & features of cultural heritage (archaeological/historical) origin in the study area. The report discusses the results of both the background research and physical survey, and provides recommendations on the way forward. **No fieldwork was conducted as part of the amendment work for the 2022 Report.**

Based on the background study and the previous physical assessment it is still recommended that the proposed development be allowed to continue, taking into consideration the recommendations put forward at the end of the report.

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1. INTRODUCTION

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Background research indicated that there are some known cultural heritage (archaeological & historical) sites and features in the larger geographical area, although nothing is known for the specific development site. The field assessment undertaken identified a few sites & features of cultural heritage (archaeological/historical) origin in the study area.

The clients indicated the location and boundaries of the study area and the assessment concentrated on this portion.

2. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Terms of Reference for the study were to:

- 1. Identify all objects, sites, occurrences and structures of an archaeological or historical nature (cultural heritage sites) located on the portion of land that will be impacted upon by the proposed development;*
- 2. Assess the significance of the cultural resources in terms of their archaeological, historical, scientific, social, religious, aesthetic and tourism value;*
- 3. Describe the possible impact of the proposed development on these cultural remains, according to a standard set of conventions;*
- 4. Propose suitable mitigation measures to minimize possible negative impacts on the cultural resources;*
- 5. Review applicable legislative requirements;*
- 6. The terms of reference for the November 2022 study was the Amendment of the original 2018 Report as it was more than 4 years old and had to be resubmitted by the client as part of the Environmental Authorization for the proposed development*

3. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Aspects concerning the conservation of cultural resources are dealt with mainly in two Acts. These are the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999) and the National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998).

3.1. The National Heritage Resources (Act 25 of 1999)

According to the Act the following is protected as cultural heritage resources:

- a. Archaeological artifacts, structures and sites older than 100 years
- b. Ethnographic art objects (e.g. prehistoric rock art) and ethnography
- c. Objects of decorative and visual arts
- d. Military objects, structures and sites older than 75 years
- e. Historical objects, structures and sites older than 60 years
- f. Proclaimed heritage sites
- g. Grave yards and graves older than 60 years
- h. Meteorites and fossils
- i. Objects, structures and sites of scientific or technological value.

The National Estate includes the following:

- 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 features of cultural significance
- e. Geological sites of scientific or cultural importance
- f. Sites of Archaeological and palaeontological importance
- g. Graves and burial grounds
- h. Sites of significance relating to the history of slavery
- i. Movable objects (e.g. archaeological, palaeontological, meteorites, geological specimens, military, ethnographic, books etc.)

A Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) is the process to be followed in order to determine whether any heritage resources are located within the area to be developed as well as the possible impact of the proposed development thereon. An Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) only looks at archaeological resources. An HIA must be done under the following circumstances:

- a. The construction of a linear development (road, wall, power line, canal etc.) exceeding 300m in length
- b. The construction of a bridge or similar structure exceeding 50m in length
- c. Any development or other activity that will change the character of a site and exceed 5 000m² or involve three or more existing erven or subdivisions thereof
- d. Re-zoning of a site exceeding 10 000 m²
- e. Any other category provided for in the regulations of SAHRA or a provincial heritage authority

Structures

Section 34 (1) of the Act states that no person may demolish any structure or part thereof which is older than 60 years without a permit issued by the relevant provincial heritage resources authority.

A structure means any building, works, device or other facility made by people and which is fixed to land, and includes any fixtures, fittings and equipment associated therewith.

Alter means any action affecting the structure, appearance or physical properties of a place or object, whether by way of structural or other works, by painting, plastering or the decoration or any other means.

Archaeology, palaeontology and meteorites

Section 35(4) of the Act deals with archaeology, palaeontology and meteorites. It states that no person may, without a permit issued by the responsible heritage resources authority (national or provincial)

- 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 that assists in the detection or recovery of metals or archaeological and palaeontological material or objects, or use such equipment for the recovery of meteorites.
- e. alter or demolish any structure or part of a structure which is older than 60 years as protected.

The above mentioned may only be disturbed or moved by an archaeologist, after receiving a permit from the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA). In order to demolish such a site or structure, a destruction permit from SAHRA will also be needed.

Human remains

Graves and burial grounds are divided into the following:

- a. ancestral graves
- b. royal graves and graves of traditional leaders
- c. graves of victims of conflict
- d. graves designated by the Minister
- e. historical graves and cemeteries
- f. human remains

In terms of Section 36(3) of the National Heritage Resources Act, no person may, without a permit issued by the relevant heritage resources authority:

- a. destroy, damage, alter, exhume or remove from its original position of 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 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; or
- c. bring onto or use at a burial ground or grave referred to in paragraph (a) or (b) any excavation, or any equipment which assists in the detection or recovery of metals.

Human remains that are less than 60 years old are subject to provisions of the Human Tissue Act (Act 65 of 1983) and to local regulations. Exhumation of graves must conform to the standards set out in the **Ordinance on Excavations (Ordinance no. 12 of 1980)** (replacing the old Transvaal Ordinance no. 7 of 1925).

Permission must also be gained from the descendants (where known), the National Department of Health, Provincial Department of Health, Premier of the Province and local police. Furthermore, permission must also be gained from the various landowners (i.e. where the graves are located and where they are to be relocated to) before exhumation can take place.

Human remains can only be handled by a registered undertaker or an institution declared under the **Human Tissues Act (Act 65 of 1983 as amended)**.

3.2. The National Environmental Management Act (No. 107 of 1998)

The National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) states that a survey and evaluation of cultural resources must be done in areas where development projects, that will change the face of the environment, will be undertaken. The impact of the development on these resources should be determined and recommendations for the mitigation thereof are made in the Discussion and Conclusions & Recommendations sections of the Report.

Environmental management should also take the cultural and social needs of people into account. Any disturbance of landscapes and sites that constitute the nation's cultural heritage should be avoided as far as possible and where this is not possible the disturbance should be minimized and remedied.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1. Survey of literature

A survey of available literature was undertaken in order to place the development area in an archaeological and historical context. The sources utilized in this regard are indicated in the bibliography.

4.2. Field survey

The field assessment section of any study is conducted according to generally accepted HIA practices and aimed at locating all possible objects, sites and features of heritage significance in the area of the proposed development. The location/position of all sites, features and objects is determined by means of a Global Positioning System (GPS) where possible, while detail photographs are also taken where needed.

4.3. Oral histories

People from local communities are sometimes interviewed in order to obtain information relating to the surveyed area. It needs to be stated that this is not applicable under all circumstances. When applicable, the information is included in the text and referred to in the bibliography.

4.4. Documentation

All sites, objects, features and structures identified are documented according to a general set of minimum standards. Co-ordinates of individual localities are determined by means of the Global Positioning System (GPS). The information is added to the description in order to facilitate the identification of each locality.

5. DESCRIPTION OF THE AREA

APELSE ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTING cc (APAC) was originally appointed in 2018 by Eco Partners to conduct a Phase 1 HIA for the proposed new Eskom Nkambeni Substation. The study & proposed development area is located on Portion 115 of the farm Burgers Hall 21JU, in the Mbombela Local Municipality, in Mahushu, Mpumalanga Province.

The study area is located in an area that has been substantially disturbed by earlier agricultural activities (ploughing and planting, as well as cattle grazing). Bordering the area is fairly high density residential settlement. The topography of the area is relatively flat and open, with some low rocky (granite) outcrops found in one section. The vegetation was fairly scarce during the assessment (except for some large old trees in places) and visibility was therefore good. Some erosion also occurs in parts of the area. The assessment was done on foot.

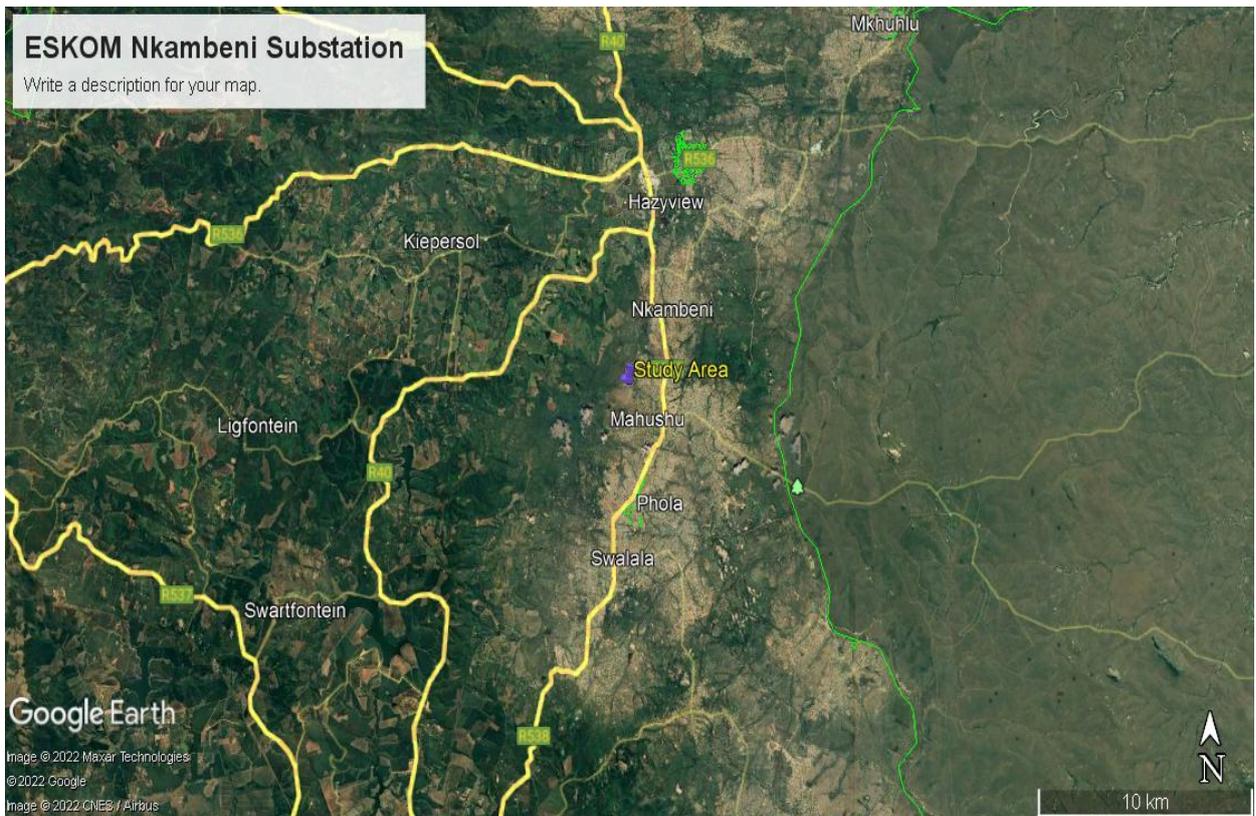


Figure 1: General location of study & proposed development area (Google Earth 2022).



Figure 2: Closer view of study & development area footprint (Google Earth 2022).



Figure 3: A general view of the area.



Figure 4: Another view of the area.



Figure 5: Another view showing the largely flat and open nature of the study area.

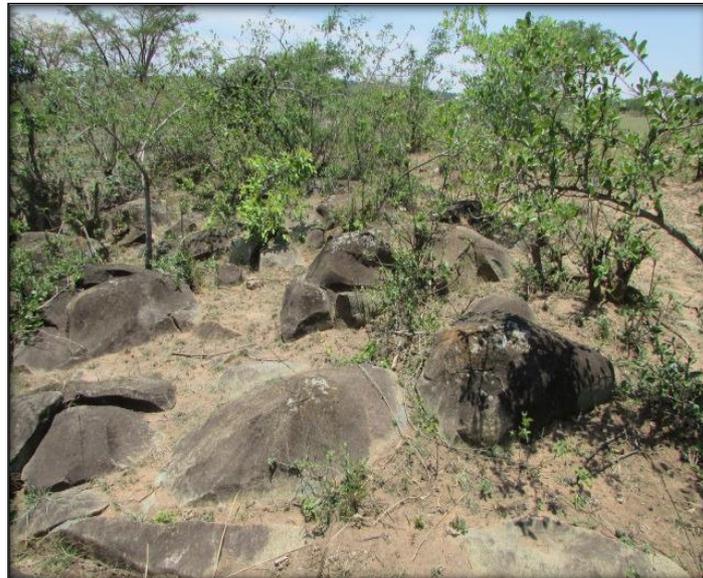


Figure 6: A low rocky ridge (granite) in the area.



Figure 7: Some of the natural and man-made erosion in the area.

6. DISCUSSION

The Stone Age is the period in human history when lithic (stone) material was mainly used to produce tools. In South Africa the Stone Age can be divided basically into three periods. It is however important to note that dates are relative and only provide a broad framework for interpretation. A basic sequence for the South African Stone Age (Lombard et.al 2012) is as follows:

Earlier Stone Age (ESA) up to 2 million – more than 200 000 years ago

Middle Stone Age (MSA) less than 300 000 – 20 000 years ago

Later Stone Age (LSA) 40 000 years ago – 2000 years ago

It should also be noted that these dates are not a neat fit because of variability and overlapping ages between sites (Lombard et.al 2012: 125).

The first inhabitants of the eastern Lowveld were probably the San or Bushmen. They were a nomadic people who lived together in small family groups and relied on hunting and gathering of food for survival. Evidence of their existence is to be found in numerous rock shelters throughout the Lowveld where some of their rock paintings are still visible. A number of these shelters have been documented in the Nelspruit area. It has been argued that the red ochre source for these paintings is to be found at Dumaneni, near Malelane (Celliers 2012: 12).

Two Late-Holocene (Later Stone Age) sites near Hazyview in the Kruger National Park date to the last 2500 years and are associated with pottery and microlithic stone tools (Bergh 1999: 95). This is contemporary to typical hunter-gatherer lifestyle and may also have been sites frequented by San (Celliers 2012: 12).

No Stone Age sites or objects (such as stone tools) were identified in the area, and if any were to be found it would most likely be single, out of context, stone tools.

The Iron Age is the name given to the period of human history when metal was mainly used to produce artifacts. In South Africa it can be divided in two separate phases (Bergh 1999: 96-98), namely:

Early Iron Age (EIA) 200 – 1000 A.D.
Late Iron Age (LIA) 1000 – 1850 A.D.

Huffman (2007: xiii) indicates that a Middle Iron Age should be included. His dates, which are widely accepted in archaeological circles, are:

Early Iron Age (EIA) 250 – 900 A.D.
Middle Iron Age (MIA) 900 – 1300 A.D.
Late Iron Age (LIA) 1300 – 1840 A.D.

It was only later that Bantu-speaking tribes moved into this area from the northern parts of Southern Africa and settled here. This period is referred to as the Early Iron Age (AD 200-1500 approx.). These were presumably Sotho-Tswana herder groups. Various historians and ethnographers describe that the Lowveld was frequented by Swazi and Sotho-Tswana groups during historic times i.e. Late Iron Age times during the period AD 1500-1800 (Celliers 2012: 12). Some archaeological research was done during the 1970's at sites belonging to the EIA (Early Iron Age), at Plaston, a settlement close to White River (Celliers 2012: 31). Plaston is approximately 13km south-west of the study area. Early Iron Age pottery was also excavated by archaeologist, Prof. Tom Huffman during 1997 on location where the Riverside Government complex is currently situated. This site known as the Riverside site is situated a few kilometers north of Nelspruit next to the confluence of the Nelspruit and Crocodile River (Celliers 2012: 32).

Old trade routes was well established before the period of Colonial expansion and these routes mainly existed as a direct consequence of metallurgy and mining for iron, tin, copper and some gold to make weapons, agricultural equipment and ornaments (Bergh, 1998:103). The earliest signs of iron mining and working in the old Transvaal dates to approximately 300 AD and copper mining and working in Southern Africa may have been practiced as early as 620 AD (Bergh 1999:103; Celliers 2012:12 - 13).

These people were responsible for the establishment of large centrums like Monomotapa the Zimbabwe Complex and also the famed Mapungubwe in the Limpopo valley. At around 900 AD Arab merchants established a trade post at Sofala (Beira). From the start of the 11th century, these Arabs had trade relations with the people of Zimbabwe. Textiles, porcelain and glass beads were traded for gold, ivory and other minerals. An ancient trade route passed close-by the current Nelspruit and started from Delagoabay in a westward direction through the Lowveld towards the gold fields of Lydenburg, by passing through Malalapoort, the Nkomati and Crocodile Rivers to Skipberg in the current Kruger National Park close-by the place where Pretoriuskop Rest Camp is located. From here onwards there were two possible routes up the mountains to reach the goldfields. The first one passed by Spitskop (Sabie) and from there on to Lydenburg. The second passed south of the "Devils Knuckles" to Lydenburg. The Voortrekkers used this route in 1845 when making the wagon route between Ohrigstad and Delagoabay (Berg 1999: 104). There were also several linking routes to existing main routes, one of which started from Sabie or Lydenburg to the route which linked Delagoabay to the Soutpansberg via Pilgrim's Rest. It is also believed that a footpath existed

at the foothills of the (Transvaal) Drakensberg which led around the mountain to link again with a major route alongside the Olifants River (Bergh 1999:104; Celliers 2012: 12 - 13).

In 1721 Dutch sailors reached Delagoa Bay and settled there for nine years, during this time they launched a number of expeditions inland. During August 1723 Lt. Jan Steffler and 17 men launched the first of these expeditions but they were ambushed by natives shortly after crossing the Lebombo Mountains. Exactly where they crossed the mountains is uncertain but it is possible that they were actually in northern Swaziland when they were attacked. Steffler succumbed as a result of this ambush and his followers returned to Delagoa Bay (Bergh 1999:116; Celliers 2012: 13).

A second attempt to create an inland route took place two years later in June 1725 when Francois de Cuiper and 34 men departed from Delagoa Bay and travelled in a north-western direction. They reached Gomondwane in the current Kruger National Park where they were also attacked by a local tribe. This resulted in them also having to return to Delagoa Bay. Although this attempt was also not successful it is seen as the first European intrusion into this northern area (Bergh 1999:116).

In the (Eastern Transvaal) Lowveld a sub-group of the Northern Sotho, known as the eastern Sotho, were present nearby the eastern escarpment. They are known as the Pulana, Pai (emaMbayi) and Kutswe, these people moved from northern Swaziland further northwards when Swazi expanded into this area during the mfecane (Bergh 1999:107-108). One of the recorded events relates to the attack of the Ndwande under Zwide on the Pedi in 1825 (Bergh 1999: 114-115). This seems to have started from the Lowveld in the region of the Pretoriuskop area towards Steelpoort.

During the nineteenth century the Lowveld area of Mpumalanga was extensively settled by both Bantu and European groups that migrated into this area. Bantu migration was mainly as a result of political upheaval during the mfecane (“the crushing” in Nguni). This was a period of bloody tribal and faction struggles in present-day Kwa-Zulu Natal and on the Highveld area, which occurred around the early 1820’s until the late 1830’s (Bergh 1999). During this period, a movement of Swazi people took place to the areas north and northwest of Swaziland. As a result reports indicate that the Swazi were living in the Lowveld area by the 1840’s (Bergh 1999).

Before the mfecane period (1820’s) small farmer groups including the Pai and Pulana resided in the mountainous area surrounding Barberton and Nelspruit. The conflict during the mfecane, when the Swazi under Mswati II raided these smaller groups, resulted in scattered settlement of those who managed to escape the Swazi onslaught. Evidence of these scattered settlements is sometimes found in the form of small stone walled enclosures in and around Barberton, Nelspruit and onwards to the Schoemanskloof (Celliers 2012: 14).

The information below is from a 2013 report (p.8-13 & p.24) by Christine Rowe for a cemetery establishment (Nkambeni) relatively close to the November 2018 study area:

Very little contemporary research has been done on prehistoric African settlements in the study area. Later Stone Age sites in the Kruger National Park date to the last 2500 years and are associated with pottery and microlithic stone tools.

The only professionally excavated Early Iron Age site in the immediate area, besides those in the Kruger National Park, is the Plaston site towards the south-west, dating circa 900 AD. No other archaeological excavations have been conducted to date within the study area, which have been confirmed by academic institutions and specialists in the field. A stone walled settlement with terracing was recorded by C. van Wyk (Rowe) close to Hazyview, as well as several others further west and north-west, outside the study area.

Several early ethnographical and linguistic studies by early researchers such as D. Ziervogel and N.J. Van Warmelo, revealed that the study area was inhabited by Eastern Sotho groups (Pulana, Kutswe and Pai), the Tsonga (Nhlanganu and Tshangana), from before the 18th century. However, when concentrating on ethnographical history, it is important to include a slightly wider geographical area in order for it to make sense. The whole district is divided in two, with the Drakensberg Escarpment in the west, and the Low Veld (in which the study area is situated) towards the east. Today, we found that the boundaries of groups are intersected and overlapping. Languages such as Zulu, Xhosa, Swazi, Nhlanganu, Nkuna, sePedi, hiPau and seRôka, are commonly spoken throughout this area.

When the Swazi began to expand northwards they forced the local inhabitants out of Swaziland, or absorbed them. There is evidence of resistance, but the Eastern Sotho groups who lived in the northern parts of Swaziland, moved mainly northwards. This appears to have taken place towards the end of the 18th century, when these groups fled from Swaziland to areas such as Nelspruit, Bushbuckridge, Klaserie, Blyde River and Komatipoort. Several circular stone-walled complexes and terraces as well as graves have been recorded in the vicinity of Hazyview, Bushbuckridge, Graskop and Sabie, clay potsherds and upper as well as lower grinding stones, are scattered at most of the sites. Many of these occur in caves as a result of the Swazi attacks on the smaller groups. Van Warmelo based his 1935 survey of Bantu Tribes of South Africa on the amount of taxpayers in an area. The survey does not include the extended households of each taxpayer, so it was impossible to actually indicate how many people were living in one area.

A map of the “Transvaal” (Bradford’s pre-1926: Map of black settlement in the Transvaal) indicated that the areas east and south of Pilgrim's Rest towards the current Kruger National Park, were extensively occupied by African people before 1926. The only early trade route mentioned, which crossed this section, was a footpath used by the African groups from Delagoa Bay towards Bushbuckridge (Magashulaskraal as it was previously named), along the Sabie river, up the Escarpment, and further north to the Soutpansberg. There is however, no physical evidence left of this early route.

Eastern Sotho group: The Pai

Van Warmelo identified the groups in northern Swaziland and the Pilgrim's Rest district before 1886, as Eastern Sotho (Pulana, Pai and Kutswe). According to Von Wielligh, the Pai occupied the area as far south as the Komati River (umLumati). Most of the younger generation has adopted the Swazi language. The Swazi constantly attacked the Eastern Sotho groups during the nineteenth century. The Pai fled to the caves in the mountains near MacMac (between Sabie and Pilgrim's Rest), while some of them (which were subjugated by a Swazi leader) fled from Mswazi in about 1853 to Sekukuniland (Steelpoort area), but decided to turn back towards their country along the Sabie River (1882). By this time, Europeans had already settled in this area when gold was discovered in 1873.

Eastern Sotho group: The Pulana

The history of the Pulana goes back to the Barberton area from where they trekked via Krokodilpoort (Nelspruit district) to settle north-east of Pretoriuskop. When the Swazi invaded them, they moved on and split up under several chieftainships, of who chief Kobêng (after which Kowyns' Pass was named), is well-known in the area's history. The Pulana roughly lived in the following areas: north of the Crocodile River, west of the western boundary of the Kruger National Park as far north as its crossing the Sabie River, south of the Sabie river until its cutting through the main road from Pretoriuskop (including Hazyview), to Bushbuckridge, west of this road as far as Klaserie, south of a line drawn from Klaserie to the confluence of the Blyde and Orighstad rivers, east of the Blyde River. This large area is divided in two by the main road from Pilgrim's Rest to Bushbuckridge.

This road was since ancient times the only connection between the Low Veld and Escarpment, and became known as "Kowyns' Pass". The majority of Pulana lived to the north of this line, while south of this line the Pulana are scattered in groups into which are wedged Pai groups on both sides of the Sabie River, and Swazi peoples in the south, and south-eastern portions. It was the Pulana clans who, under chief Maripi Mashile, defeated the Swazi at Mariepskop in the Blyde River Canyon, circa 1864.

Eastern Sotho group: The Kutswe

The Kutswe trekked from the northern parts of Swaziland northwards as a result of pressure from the Swazi in the south. The Kutswe settled north-east of the present Nelspruit at a river called Kutswe (Gutshwa) from where they got their present name. From here they moved on and settled at various places, and ruins of their kraals are scattered from Pretoriuskop, Hazyview (Phabeni) as well as on the farms Welgevonden 364, Lothian 258, Boschhoek 47, Sandford 46, Culcutta 51 and Oakley 262. They occupied additional areas between White River and Sabie, and had sufficient influence amongst the Pai during the early 20th century, to establish authority over more than 2000 individuals living on farms on both sides of the Sabie River from the town of Sabie as far as the main road from White River / Hazyview to Bushbuckridge.

They had chief jurisdiction over the following farms near Bushbuckridge: Oakley 262, Culcutta 51, Madras 50, Alexandria 251, Cork 60 and Ronaldsey 273. They intermarried with Nhlangu (Shangaan), Swazi and Pai. The ruins of the kraals of Kutswe chiefs are still known on the following farms, where they were most probably buried as well:

- Mogogong: near Pretoriuskop (KNP)
- Senwapitsi between Pretoriuskop & Skukuza (KNP)
- Phabêng Phabeni gate in KNP (close to Hazyview)
- Phandane Farm Welgevonden Makgate Farm Lothian
- gaMoépé Farm Boschhoek
- Lesaba la Mbanyêlé Farm Sandford
- Khubuthamaga Farm Culcutta
- Matsabane Farm Lothian
- Selôkôtšô Farm Oakley

Tsonga groups: The Nhlanganu and Tšhangana

The Nhlanganu and Tšhangana (also generally known as the Shangaan-Tsonga) form part of the larger Tsonga group of which the original group occupied the whole of Mozambique (Portuguese East Africa), and it has been recorded that by 1554, they were already living around the Delagoa Bay area (Maputo). They fled from the onslaughts of the Zulu (Nguni) nation from the Natal area, and great numbers of emigrants sought safety in the “Transvaal” as recently as the 19th century, especially in the greater Pilgrim's Rest district (including the study area that we are concerned with). The Tsonga also moved west from Mozambique into the “Transvaal”. They have never formed large powerful tribes but were mostly always subdivided into loosely-knit units, and absorbed under the protection of whichever chief would give them land. They were originally of Nguni origin. The term “Shangaan” is commonly employed to refer to all members of the Tsonga division.

The Nhlanganu occupied the Low Veld area in their efforts to escape the Zulu raids during 1835-1840. They lived side by side with the Tšhangana, and the differences between the two are inconsiderable. They have mixed extensively with other tribes. The Tšhangana are also of Nguni origin which fled in the same way as the Nhlanganu, settled in the “Transvaal” a little later than the former. Most of the Tsonga were subjects to Soshangane, who came from Zululand. The downfall of Ngungunyana (son of Soshangane) saw his son seeking sanctuary in the “Transvaal”, and the latter became known as Thulamahashi, the name that is still used for the area east of Busbuckridge.

The historical background of the study area confirms that it was occupied since the 17th century by the Eastern Sotho (Pai, Kutswe and Pulana) as well as Tsonga groups (Nhlanganu and Tšhangana). These groups have intermarried extensively or were absorbed by other groups in time, and today groups such as Eastern Sotho, South-Ndebele, Swazi, Tsonga and Northern-Sotho occupy this area. These early settlements all developed into larger settlements by the descendants of the groups mentioned above, and the entire area to date, consists of villages, settlements or farms of which some are only a few kilometers apart.

During her 2013 assessment Rowe found some poorly defined features (broken lower grinder and rough clay potsherds) that are situated out of any archaeological context and are not believed to have any historic or cultural value. They are not close to or in the vicinity of any visible archaeological sites.

Results of the November 2018 Assessment

A number of sites and finds were identified and recorded in the study area during the assessment. Most of these are however individual scatters of material (pottery, grinding stones) and of very low cultural heritage (archaeological and/or historical) significance. There is however a few with higher significance as will be discussed below. The area has been ploughed over the years, and as a result if any sites did occur here it would have been extensively disturbed or destroyed. Individual pieces and small scatters of undecorated pottery were noticed across the area, while out of context upper grinding stones were also identified. This is of course evidence of earlier settlement in the area that has all but been destroyed. Traces of this settlement can however still be present underground. Pieces of building material (cement/concrete) found is also further evidence of this, while the communal grinding hollows found on the rocky outcrop (Site 5) in the area substantiates this.

Sites 1, 3 & 4 are of low significance and no further mitigation is required. Site 1 is a scatter of undecorated pottery located just outside the area (on its boundary), while 2 & 3 are upper grinders.

GPS Location of Sites: S25 07 20.30 E31 07 08.90 (1); S25 07 17.80 E31 06 59.60 (3) and S25 07 11.20 E31 07 00.40 (4)

Cultural Significance: Low

Heritage Significance: None.

Field Ratings: General protection C (IV C): Phase 1 is seen as sufficient recording and it may be demolished (Low significance)

Mitigation: None required.

Site 2

Site 2 contains a fairly dense scatter of undecorated pottery, metal, porcelain and glass objects, located on an open area that could possibly denote an old refuse midden close to homestead (no physical evidence for the homestead remains). What makes this site very significant however is the scatter of metal slag (evidence for metal smelting and working). A fragment of a clay blow pipe (used in the metal smelting furnaces) was also found on the site.

The age of these remains possibly date to the LIA, with some later historical settlement on the site as well. A stone cairn found close by (initially thought to be a possible grave is more likely a granary platform. A similar feature was found in close proximity to Site 5 (the fixed grinding hollows discussed in the next section).

Similar open patches were noticed in the study area, but very little material was found at these locations except for one or two pieces of pottery. It is possible that these open areas could be evidence of earlier homesteads that has been destroyed by recent farming activities.

It is recommended that Site 2 should be investigated archaeologically if it cannot be avoided by the proposed development before demolition and before demolition commences. For this an archaeological excavation permit will be required from SAHRA. Another possibility is to put a buffer zone of approximately 20m around the site (from its outer perimeter) and to leave the site in situ. If this is done a Cultural Heritage Management Plan should also be drafted and implemented.

GPS Location of Site: S25 07 20.40 E31 07 06.90

Cultural Significance: High

Heritage Significance: Grade III: Other heritage resources of local importance and therefore worthy of conservation.

Field Ratings: General protection A (IV A): Site should be mitigated before destruction (High/Medium significance),

Mitigation: Archaeological investigations/excavations before destruction. SAHRA Permit. Possible buffer zone of 20m around site to keep in situ and Heritage Management Plan

Site 5

Site 5 is located on a low rocky (granite) outcrop in the area and contains some fixed grinding hollows on the rocks and other evidence of grinding scattered across it. A stone cairn (possible granary stand) was also identified in close proximity.

This site is further evidence of earlier (LIA) settlement and activity in the study area and should be investigated in relation to Site 2. It is recommended that the site and the rocky outcrop be avoided by the proposed development, but if it cannot then the site needs to be mapped in detail before demolition. A SAHRA permit (together with the one for Site 2) will be required. Another possibility is to put a buffer zone of approximately 20m around the site (from its outer perimeter) and to leave the site in situ. If this is done a Cultural Heritage Management Plan should also be drafted and implemented.

GPS Location of Site: S25 07 11.50 E31 07 05.40

Cultural Significance: High

Heritage Significance: Grade III: Other heritage resources of local importance and therefore worthy of conservation.

Field Ratings: General protection A (IV A): Site should be mitigated before destruction (High/Medium significance),

Mitigation: Archaeological investigations/excavations before destruction. SAHRA Permit. The implementation of a buffer zone of 20m around the site to keep it in situ and a Heritage Management Plan is recommended



Figure 8: Undecorated pottery Site 1.



Figure 9: A view of the Site 2 midden/homestead area.



Figure 10: Pottery, metal, porcelain and glass at Site 2.



Figure 11: Piece of a clay blowpipe for a metal smelting furnace.



Figure 12: The stone cairn at Site 2.



Figure 13: The upper grinder at Site 3.



Figure 14: The upper grinder at Site 4.

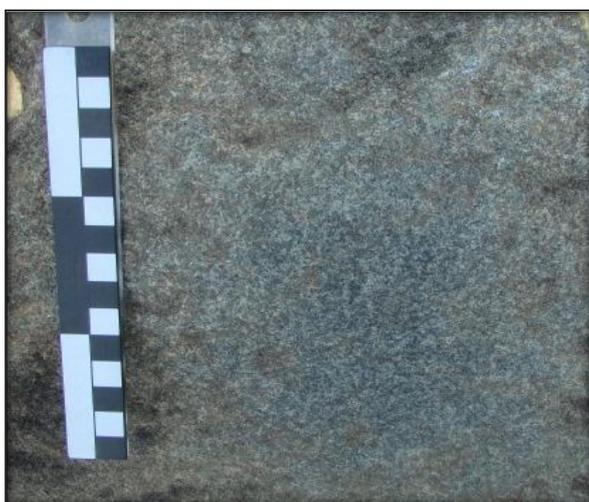


Figure 15: One of the fixed grinding hollows at Site 5.



Figure 16: A large grinding hollow at Site 5.



**Figure 17: The stone cairn at Site 5.
This is similar to the one at Site 2.**



Figure18: More evidence of grinding on the rocky outcrop at Site 5.

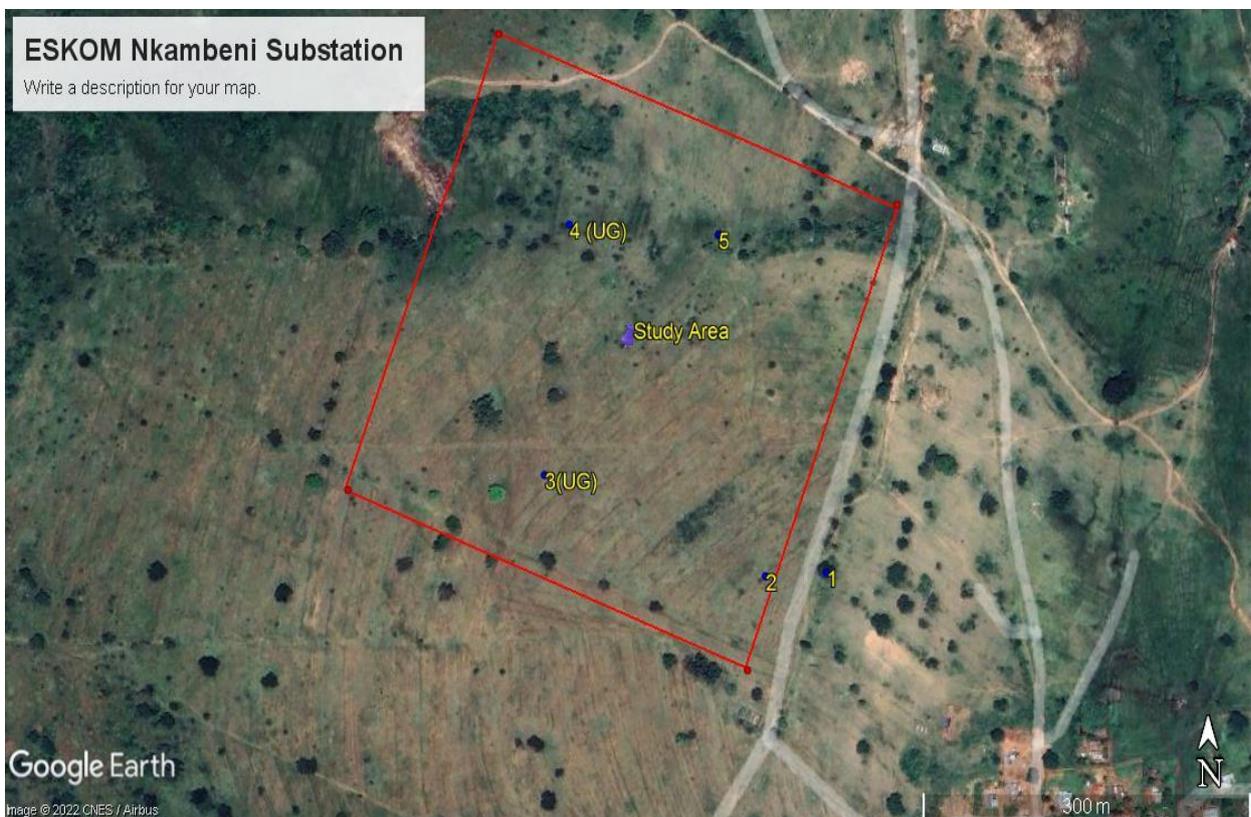


Fig.19: Aerial view showing the distribution & locations of the sites found in November 2018 (Google Earth 2022).

It should be noted that although all efforts are made to cover a total area during any assessment and therefore to identify all possible sites or features of cultural (archaeological and/or historical) heritage origin and significance, that there is always the possibility of something being missed. This will include low stone-packed or unmarked graves. This aspect should be kept in mind when development work commences and if any

sites (including graves) are identified then an expert should be called in to investigate and recommend on the best way forward.

7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

APELSER ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTING cc was appointed by Envirolution Consulting Environmental Engineering & Management Consulting to provide an updated version of a 2018 Phase 1 HIA Report done for the proposed new Eskom Nkambeni Substation. The study area is located on Portion 115 of the farm Burgers Hall 21JU, in the Mbombela Local Municipality, in Mahushu, Mpumalanga Province. The initial work was done for Eco Partners in November 2018.

Background research indicated that there are some known cultural heritage (archaeological & historical) sites and features in the larger geographical area, although nothing is known for the specific development site. The field assessment undertaken in 2018 identified a few sites & features of cultural heritage origin in the study area.

No fieldwork was conducted as part of the amendment work for the 2022 Report.

A number of sites and finds were identified and recorded in the study area during the 2018 field assessment. Most of these are individual scatters of material (pottery, grinding stones) and of very low cultural heritage (archaeological and/or historical) significance. The area has been agriculturally impacted (ploughed) in the recent past, and as a result if any sites did occur here it would have been extensively disturbed or destroyed. Individual pieces and small scatters of undecorated pottery were noticed across the area, while out of context upper grinding stones were also identified.

Sites 1, 3 & 4 were of low significance and no further mitigation was required. Site 1 was a scatter of undecorated pottery located just outside the area (on its boundary), while 2 & 3 were upper grinders.

Site 2 contained a fairly dense scatter of undecorated pottery, metal, porcelain and glass objects, located in an open area that could possibly denote an old refuse midden close to a homestead. What made this site very significant however is the scatter of metal slag (evidence for metal smelting and working). A fragment of a clay blow pipe (used in the metal smelting furnaces) was also found on the site.

A stone cairn found close by initially thought to be a possible grave is more likely a granary platform. It is recommended that Site 2 should be investigated archaeologically if it cannot be avoided by the proposed development before demolition and before demolition commences. For this an archaeological excavation permit will be required from SAHRA.

Site 5 was located on a low rocky (granite) outcrop in the area and contained some fixed grinding hollows on the rocks and other evidence of grinding scattered across it. A stone cairn (possible granary stand) was also identified in close proximity. This site should be investigated in relation to Site 2. It was recommended that the site and the rocky outcrop be avoided by the proposed development, but if it cannot then the site needs to be mapped in detail before demolition. A SAHRA permit (together with the one for Site 2) will be required.

Another possibility is to implement a buffer zone of approximately 20m around the sites (from their outer perimeters) and to leave the sites in situ. If this is done a Cultural Heritage Management Plan should also be drafted and implemented.

From a Cultural Heritage point of view it is concluded that the development should be allowed to continue once the above recommended mitigation measures have been implemented.

Finally, it should be noted that although all efforts are made to locate, identify and record all possible cultural heritage sites and features (including archaeological remains) there is always a possibility that some might have been missed as a result of grass cover and other factors. The subterranean nature of these resources (including low stone-packed or unmarked graves) should also be taken into consideration. Should any previously unknown or invisible sites, features or material be uncovered during any development actions then an expert should be contacted to investigate and provide recommendations on the way forward.

8. REFERENCES

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APPENDIX A
DEFINITION OF TERMS:

Site: A large place with extensive structures and related cultural objects. It can also be a large assemblage of cultural artifacts, found on a single location.

Structure: A permanent building found in isolation or which forms a site in conjunction with other structures.

Feature: A coincidental find of movable cultural objects.

Object: Artifact (cultural object).

(Also see Knudson 1978: 20).

APPENDIX B
DEFINITION/ STATEMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE:

Historic value: Important in the community or pattern of history or has an association with the life or work of a person, group or organization of importance in history.

Aesthetic value: Important in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by a community or cultural group.

Scientific value: Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of natural or cultural history or is important in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement of a particular period

Social value: Have a strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.

Rarity: Does it possess uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of natural or cultural heritage.

Representivity: Important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class of natural or cultural places or object or a range of landscapes or environments characteristic of its class or 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.

APPENDIX C SIGNIFICANCE AND FIELD RATING:

Cultural significance:

- Low: A cultural object being found out of context, not being part of a site or without any related feature/structure in its surroundings.
- Medium: Any site, structure or feature being regarded less important due to a number of factors, such as date and frequency. Also any important object found out of context.
- High: Any site, structure or feature regarded as important because of its age or uniqueness. Graves are always categorized as of a high importance. Also any important object found within a specific context.

Heritage significance:

- Grade I: Heritage resources with exceptional qualities to the extent that they are of national significance
- Grade II: Heritage resources with qualities giving it provincial or regional importance although it may form part of the national estate
- Grade III: Other heritage resources of local importance and therefore worthy of conservation

Field ratings:

- i. National Grade I significance: should be managed as part of the national estate
- ii. Provincial Grade II significance: should be managed as part of the provincial estate
- iii. Local Grade IIIA: should be included in the heritage register and not be mitigated (high significance)
- iv. Local Grade IIIB: should be included in the heritage register and may be mitigated (high/medium significance)
- v. General protection A (IV A): site should be mitigated before destruction (high/medium significance)
- vi. General protection B (IV B): site should be recorded before destruction (medium significance)
- vii. General protection C (IV C): phase 1 is seen as sufficient recording and it may be demolished (low significance)

APPENDIX D
PROTECTION OF HERITAGE RESOURCES:

Formal protection:

National heritage sites and Provincial heritage sites – Grade I and II

Protected areas - An area surrounding a heritage site

Provisional protection – For a maximum period of two years

Heritage registers – Listing Grades II and III

Heritage areas – Areas with more than one heritage site included

Heritage objects – e.g. Archaeological, palaeontological, meteorites, geological specimens, visual art, military, numismatic, books, etc.

General protection:

Objects protected by the laws of foreign states

Structures – Older than 60 years

Archaeology, palaeontology and meteorites

Burial grounds and graves

Public monuments and memorials

APPENDIX E
HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT PHASES

1. Pre-assessment or Scoping Phase – Establishment of the scope of the project and terms of reference.
2. Baseline Assessment – Establishment of a broad framework of the potential heritage of an area.
3. Phase I Impact Assessment – Identifying sites, assess their significance, make comments on the impact of the development and makes recommendations for mitigation or conservation.
4. Letter of recommendation for exemption – If there is no likelihood that any sites will be impacted.
5. Phase II Mitigation or Rescue – Planning for the protection of significant sites or sampling through excavation or collection (after receiving a permit) of sites that may be lost.
6. Phase III Management Plan – For rare cases where sites are so important that development cannot be allowed.