

PHASE 2 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Permit No. 80/08/09/008/51

PRELIMINARY REPORT OF THE INVESTIGATION OF A LATE IRON AGE SITE ON THE FARM TWEEFONTEIN 915 LS - PTN 154 POLOKWANE

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1. INTRODUCTION

In October 2006 a phase 1 Heritage Resources assessment was undertaken for a proposed Mixed Land Use Development on Portion 154 of the Farm, Tweefontein 915 LS, Polokwane. Part of a stonewalled archaeological site was recorded during this survey, which was covered by dense aloe and bush growth. This archaeological site, however, spanned over Portions 8 and 153 as well. Subsequently, Phase 1 and Phase 2 assessments were undertaken on the part of the archaeological site on Portion 8 (Roodt 2007). During the Phase 2 assessment of Portion 8, it was found that the archaeological site had been severely disturbed by stone robbing and post contact alterations of the original stone walling. Extensive searching for the original layout could only expose one complete unit of the Badfontein settlement type here. The rest of the original layout had been destroyed by the alterations. In addition, the part on Portion 153 had been destroyed during the construction of the Michael House School a few years earlier. The development on Portion 8 was given approval by the Limpopo office of SAHRA.

Further investigation of the stonewalling on Portion 154, with the aim of mapping the remains, revealed that this part of the archaeological site underwent a similar disturbance, previously obscured by the vegetation. Viewed in the context of the combined disturbed nature (including very recent damage) of the archaeological site; i.e., the destruction of the part on Portion 154 by the school, the development on Portion 8, a recent (2008) construction by the municipality of a bulk water supply pipeline through parts of the archaeological site on Portion 154 and the disturbances and alterations of the site on Portion 154 the archaeological site's conservation value had been diminished to such an extent that it is no longer deemed viable to protect the site measured against the sustainable social and economic benefits of the proposed development (see figures 19-21).

It was therefore decided to apply for a Phase 2 mitigation permit from SAHRA with the intention, as stated in the permit application, of obtaining a destruction permit for the archaeological remains once the Phase 2 work had been completed. The Permit dated 24th October 2008 was subsequently issued by SAHRA.

The aims of the archaeological investigation were the following:

- (a) To gather as much information as possible to assist with the interpretation and identification of the site, and in particular, to draw an accurate site plan of the part of the stonewalled complex present on Portion 154.
- (b) To submit recommendations for further monitoring of the site during development in order to access additional information that may be exposed and to undertake rescue work should any human skeletal remains be uncovered.

2. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Aspects concerning the conservation of cultural resources are mainly dealt with in two acts. These are the South African Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999) and the Environmental Conservation Act (Act 73 of 1989).

- **National Heritage Resources Act**

Archaeology, palaeontology and meteorites

Section 35(4) of this act states that 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 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.

3. METHODOLOGY

The excavations are numbered: 2329 DC + abbreviation for farm name, Tweefontein – TW 2 + Trench No (2329 DC TW 2/TR1).

Archaeological Excavations

The archaeological excavations included both formally laid out excavation trenches and/or squares in predetermined areas, in this regard it was decided to concentrate on midden areas as it was hoped that these areas would produce that greatest quantity of material culture. Enclosures were not focused on as it appeared that they had been emptied by local farmers in the past to be used as fertilizer. Only an enclosure in Unit 5 was excavated to determine the base of walls in this area as very few standing walls were noted and foundation stones had to be uncovered to determine site layout.

Photographic - Photos of all excavations and clearing of walls and features were taken, while individual objects were also photographed for record purposes. In addition emphasis was placed on feature-for-feature photographic documentation of the entire site. Units were photographed in detail; each wall was photographed and included wide angle shots of the area. Units were numbered and features, such as enclosures and grinding stones etc. sub-numbered. Visual documentation of the walls comprises over 300 photographs.

Mapping & Drawing

Fieldwork placed great emphasis on accurately documenting, mapping and recording features. This is to form a major component of an Honours research paper for F.E Roodt as part of his Honours thesis for UNISA . The mapping was considered of vital importance. An incomplete map was obtained. Upon investigation it was

noted that many walls were excluded and other units not included at all. This gave a skewed representation of the site. Walls were systematically cleared of vegetation and sketched in. As mapping progressed it became clear that walls were 'missing'. Any stone noted on the ground was systematically cleared by mechanical means and sketched in on the map. The mapping process was the most intense aspect of the investigation and underwent many revisions until a complete and detailed map of the site was achieved. The map was also drawn to scale.

Analysis & Documentation/Curation of cultural material

This includes the cleaning and sorting of all material recovered during the excavations, as well as the expert analysis of ceramics, faunal remains and other cultural material remains. A recognized cultural institution will handle the final curation of the material, in this case the Polokwane Museum.

4. THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION

This document constitutes a preliminary report of the archaeological work undertaken. The aim was to draw an accurate site plan of the stonewall remains to determine the group and/or cultural identity, to determine the stratigraphy of the archaeological deposit and finally to determine its position within the cultural sequence and wider settlement pattern of the Polokwane area. A major aim of the project was to accurately map the site as none of the sites in the region has previously been mapped in detail. Most of the mapping done in the past has been with the aid of aerial photos and the mapping of visible walls only. This proved inadequate as a number of obscured walls were not identified or mapped; a number of sites in the region have also been robbed of their stone which was then used in other structures such as houses, farmsteads, etc.

The site most likely belonged to a Ndebele group, however, this statement is problematic as it does not wholly fall into one of Loubser's Group II or III sites, but appears to be a combination of the two with Portion 8 being a classical Badfontein walling and falling into Loubser's Group II sites with Portion 154 having elements of

Group II sites with some Group III elements as well. The location of the site is also consistent with later Group II sites.

In addition, the Phase 2 assessment must facilitate the application for a destruction permit from SAHRA for the development, pending the results of the investigation. A detailed discussion of the archaeological findings will not be included here. This will only be possible once monitoring during development has been completed and all the gathered information has been interpreted and expert analysis of all cultural material has been completed. Final recommendations regarding the proposed development will be put forward at the end of this report.

For the purpose of this investigation we firstly concentrated on determining the layout and positions of the stonewall units and secondly eight trenches and one block were excavated in different parts of the site where information yielding deposits were considered to be.

4.1 Layout pattern of the stonewall units

The archaeological site spans three different properties that have each come under developmental pressure within the past few years. The section of the site on Portion 153 (Mitchell House School) has for all practical purposes been completely destroyed. The part on Portion 8 is completely destroyed, (SAHRA permit no. 80/06/12/002/51). A full phase 2 archaeological investigation has taken place and the final report is near completion. A section of Portion 154 has been destroyed in the course of the construction in 2008 of a Municipal bulk water supply line and an access road for the pipeline. This has destroyed all remains pertaining to what we termed unit 2, as evident on a partially completed map by J. van Schalkwyk. Recent stone structures exist on the northern section of the site and would have joined the archaeological site on Portion 154 with that on Portion 8. However, this area had been severely degraded due to the construction of a road leading to Mitchell House School. This road had to be rebuilt with the development on Portion 8 and has further destroyed part of the site on Portion 154.

The layout and position of the stone walls were determined by means of:

1. Clearing of the debris and vegetation on the site, with emphasis on walls.
2. Where only rubble was visible, the probable position was extrapolated from sections where walling was visible and then the rubble was removed until the foundation stones were exposed. The foundation stones were then followed and the rest of the foundation exposed.

From this exercise it was possible to locate or extrapolate the position of the walls and to determine the layout pattern of the stonewall units on the property.

The remaining archaeological site contains 6 units.

<u>Unit number</u>	<u>Description</u>
<u>Unit 1</u>	<p>Mostly complete, albeit sections of the outer wall, having been destroyed by the pipeline.</p> <p>Size: 55m in length, 63m in width</p> <p>Consists of: Wide open central area, surrounded by 7 enclosures ranging between 10m and 5m in diameter. 4 subsidiary enclosures are found adjoining the most southern enclosure. A very large midden is situated adjacent to Unit 1 on the southern side, possibly attesting to ceremony.</p>
<u>Unit 2</u>	<p>Fully intact unit, although parts were obscured, separated into what can be considered two enclosure complexes. Foundations uncovered.</p> <p>Size: 70m in length and 47.5m in width</p> <p>Consists of: two enclosure complexes:</p> <p>1: Two large enclosures: Oval in shape 10m x 5m. 1- 4m diameter enclosure. Adjoining the two oval enclosures are located 3 small enclosures averaging 3m in diameter.</p> <p>Foundations of an enclosing wall were uncovered which joins the one 4m diameter enclosure with the uppermost oval enclosure.</p> <p>2: 1 large enclosure 8m diameter with a 6m diameter enclosure adjoining it to the east. Two small enclosures and/grain bins 1m diameter are located south of the adjoining enclosure. South-west of these enclosures and joined by a 3m long wall are what appears to be similar to what Huffman (pers comm.) purports to be milking enclosures. This consists of 1- 3m diameter</p>

	enclosure with an enclosing wall linking it to a small 1m diameter enclosure. The larger one for milking, the smaller for the cows' calves.
<u>Unit 3</u>	<p>Partially complete. Includes what is preliminarily being termed as a discernable activity area, due to the presence of lower grinding stones.</p> <p>This unit is more complex in layout than any of the other 5. The unit extends over a large surface area and may well have originally been 2 separate units which, may have fused at some stage.</p> <p>Covering a total area of approximately 2400 m² this unit comprises of 3 enclosure complexes.</p> <p>Group 1: Lies to the south western side of the unit and is adjacent to unit 2. This consists of 1- 5m diameter enclosure with a 6m diameter enclosure to the north. The group is enclosed with subsidiary outer walls. North of this unit along a primary outer wall is located the lower grinding stones, which appears at this stage of analysis to indicate a possible women's activity area.</p> <p>Group 2: Lies approximately 15m north of group 1 and is nearly joined to group 3 to the north east.</p> <p>This group consists of a large enclosure 12m in diameter. Adjacent and adjoining this enclosure to the south is a 7m diameter enclosure. This enclosure has a double terrace to the south west with what appears to be entrances and water drainage openings. These terraces connect a small 1.5m diameter enclosure to the larger group.</p> <p>Group 3: Consists of a conglomerate of enclosures in the central area. 4 enclosures adjoin one another, 12m, 8m (oval), 6m and 4m diameter enclosures respectively. East of this group is situated 1- 2m diameter enclosure. West of the group is situated 3 small enclosures, 1m, 2.5m and 2m diameter respectively. What appears to be an outer wall runs north of the entire group.</p>
<u>Unit 4</u>	Completely destroyed by the pipeline and access road, no foundations could be located.
<u>Unit 5</u>	<p>Partially destroyed by Mitchell House School.</p> <p>Most of this unit was uncovered through clearing top soil to unearth the foundations of walls. Situated on the western downward slope toward the</p>

	school are situated 4 enclosures, 6m, 2m, 1.5m and 6.5m in diameter respectively. Situated in the west are outer walls with small enclosures of approximately 1m diameter. No further walls could be located as this side leads directly into Mitchell House School's property and has been destroyed.
<u>Unit 6</u>	Greatly degraded and large sections have been destroyed by the two roads that have successively been constructed through the unit. Recent farm labourer occupation has further degraded the unit. Older walling is interspersed with more modern walling probably from farm workers. Other walls have been raided. All in all older and modern enclosures amount to 10, ranging between 6m to 1m in diameter.

4.2 The Excavations.

Excavations were conducted on a large scale in order to gain as much information as possibly in order to comply with requirements for a destruction permit. Trenches were preferred and placed strategically in order to comprehensively cover the entire site. A sieve of 2mm was used throughout.

4.2.1 Excavation TW 2/ TR 1

Size: 3m x 1m. This trench was placed in what was labelled midden 5. This trench was situated on the eastern side of the site outside of the outer wall of unit 3. The intention was to determine if this was a single or multi-component site which would have been determined stratigraphically. Spits of 10 cm were excavated. Four levels were excavated and at a depth of 40cm base rock was reached. The deposit consisted of homogeneous mixture of ash and cultural material. Capping was noted between 12 and 14cm, with a charcoal layer at 16cm. Ceramic and faunal remains were uncovered from the trench, together with a low density of glass beads. The pottery style remained homogeneous throughout the deposit.

4.2.2 Excavation TW 2/ TR2

Size: 4m x 1m. This trench was placed in what was labelled midden 6. This trench was situated on the western side of the site within unit 5. The intention was to

determine if this was a single or multi-component site which would have been determined stratigraphically. Spits of 10 cm were excavated. Six levels were excavated and at a depth of 56cm base rock was reached. The deposit consisted of homogeneous mixture of ash and cultural material. Capping was noted between 38 and 42cm. Ceramic and faunal remains were uncovered from the trench, together with a low density of glass beads and a few ostrich eggshell beads. The pottery style remained homogeneous throughout the deposit.

4.2.3 Excavation TW 2/ TR3

Size: 4m x 1m. This trench was placed into a terrace on the western side of the enclosures of unit 1. This trench was used to attempt to determine the use of unit 1, as from mapping the enclosures appeared to be placed in a dissimilar manner to the other units on the site. Spits of 10 cm were excavated. Eight levels were excavated and at a depth of 72cm base rock was reached. In addition a pit was noticed and cleared; this petered out at 80cm. The deposit consisted of homogeneous mixture of ash and cultural material. Capping was noted between 28 and 30cm and 51 and 53cm. Sandwiched between capping, dark ash layers were noted. Ceramic and faunal remains were uncovered from the trench, together with a low density of glass beads. In layer 6 a high density of ostrich eggshell beads were recovered. The pottery style remained homogeneous throughout the deposit.

4.2.4 Excavation TW 2/ TR4

Size: 4m x 1m. This trench was placed into a midden (7) on the western side of the unit 2 near the outer wall. Spits of 10 cm were excavated. Six levels were excavated and at a depth of 57cm base rock was reached on the eastern side. The deposit consisted of homogeneous mixture of ash and cultural material. Ceramic and faunal remains were uncovered from the trench, together with a low density of glass beads. The pottery style remained homogeneous throughout the deposit.

4.2.5 Excavation TW 2/ TR5

Size: 6m x 1m. This trench was placed to intersect the enclosure wall in unit 5. This enclosure had the most deposit, still intact compared to other enclosures that appear to have been raided. The aim was to determine the height of the wall and to test for

any burials. Spits of 10 cm were excavated. Four levels were excavated and at a depth of 36cm base rock was reached inside the enclosure. The deposit consisted of little to no cultural material and no burial was noted.

4.2.6 Excavation TW 2/ TR6

Size: 4m x 1m. This trench was placed intersect a wall in unit 6. Spits of 10 cm were excavated. Seven levels were excavated and at a depth of 68cm base rock was reached. The deposit consisted of homogeneous mixture of ash and cultural material. Ceramic and faunal remains were uncovered from the trench, together with a low density of glass beads. The pottery style remained homogeneous throughout the deposit.

4.2.7 Excavation TW 2/ TR7

Size: 25m x 1m. This trench was placed to attempt to locate hut floors in a large open area of unit 2 on the eastern side. The trench was subdivided into 1m x 1m blocks with every third block being excavated to 10cm. Base rock was reached and no hut floors or cultural material noted.

4.2.8 Excavation TW 2/ TR8

Size: 10m x 1m. This trench was placed to attempt to locate hut floors in a large open area of unit 2 on the eastern side. The trench was subdivided into 1m x 1m blocks with every third block being excavated to 10cm. Base rock was reached and no hut floors or cultural material noted.

4.2.9 Test Pit 1

Size: 1m x 1m. 10cm spits were used. This block was used to test for the use of an area cordoned off from the unit by the outer wall and a small subsidiary wall running parallel. No cultural material was noted and base rock was reached at 30cm.

5. BACKGROUND DISCUSSION

In 1980 Loubser (1981) undertook research in the area immediately south of Polokwane/Pietersburg for his masters' thesis. He established that successive

layers of Ndebele speaking groups dominated the Pietersburg plateau from the 17th century up to the Voortrekker period of the mid 19th century.

Loubser identified three types or groups of stone walled sites. Group I sites are situated only on hilltops. Each site consists of a multiplicity of discontinuous walls, forming terraces, which surround an area of relatively large enclosures in the centre. Group II sites are located at the base of hills, or on gradual rises between valleys, and they generally face north. Each unit consists of a perimeter wall around a corridor, which leads to a central enclosure surrounded by smaller ones. Loubser also notes that vast areas of ash deposit and dense patches of vegetation are diagnostic of Group II sites. Group III sites are imploded and haphazard versions of Group II sites. The perimeter walls of Group III sites are scalloped and linked by straight walls to a series of central enclosures.

From the excavations undertaken on the site it is clear that this is a multi component site with Late Iron Age and recent historical remains. However, it seems that when considering the remains on Portion 8 mentioned in the introduction, this entire site show evidence of a combination of group II and group III features; Portion 8 being group II (extending into Portion 153 where it had been destroyed) and Portion 154 being the group III component (imploded and haphazard versions of Group II sites). The division has been obscured by the historical alteration and the destruction caused by the roads between the two Portions (see map). A similar situation exists at the Loubser's CD 9B and CD 9C sites at the Bakone Malapa Museum to the south.

Although Loubser did not mention this particular site, it is clear from the evidence that most of the stonewalled remains on Tweefontein, Portion 154, is a Group III site. Loubser's informants could relate minor Ndebele and Koni leaders with Group III sites and dates them from 1855 onwards after White conquest of the Polokwane area.

*Recent research by Huffman explores the origin of stonewalling found among Sotho-Tswana and Ndebele speaking communities of the Iron Age. The oldest

*Extracted from Huffman (2007)

known walling following the Central Cattle Pattern occurs in the midlands of KwaZulu-Natal. Dating from the 14th to 16th centuries, **Moor Park** walling partially served defensive purposes. Located on spurs and the ends of hills, stonewalls cut the settlement off from the remaining terrain. Perimeter walls enclose about two-thirds of the settlement, leaving the back free. Low hut platforms supported beehive huts in the residential zone behind cattle enclosures.

Of all the organizational principles of the Central Cattle Pattern, Moor Park appears to have emphasized the front/back axis.

Adverse climatic conditions occurred in the early 17th century, and by this time populations had expanded. As a result, it appears, some Nguni-speaking people left KwaZulu-Natal and moved up onto the plateau where they built walls on top of defensive hilltops similar to Moor Park. These Trans-vaal Ndebele built stonewalled settlements throughout the Waterberg in the 17th to 18th centuries. Named after a prominent hill in the Lapalala drainage, **Melora** walling incorporates beehive huts at the back of small terrace platforms. Defensive walling on Melora Hill itself follows the edge of the hilltop, surrounding the entire settlement, while the sparsely decorated pottery includes rim notching and punctates. Melora walling in the Waterberg thus derives from Moor Park.

Some Melora Nguni appear to have moved east to the Polokwane area because characteristic walling stands in the saddle of Bambo Hill at the Bakone Malapa Museum. Low residential terraces, cattle track ways and the front/back orientation place this site in the Moor Park cluster. Significantly, the front/back arrangement contrasts markedly with settlements below at the base of the hill (Group II) and shows that Melora Nguni once lived here. Dated to the early 17th century, Melora settlements represent the second Nguni movement up onto the interior plateau. This early movement appears to have predated oral history, and we cannot yet identify their descendants.

Some Koni are identified with the extensive Badfontein type of walling found along the Mpumalanga escarpment, more or less contemporary with Melora. Badfontein

walling emphasizes the centre/side axis of the Central Cattle Pattern expressed through concentric circles: the inner circle encompassed cattle, the next marked the men's court, and the outer ring the zone of houses. Rock engravings in the same area depict this settlement pattern. Associated engravings, terrace walls, cattle lanes and circular settlements extend over an enormous area along the escarpment south of Lydenburg. Oral traditions place Koni in this escarpment area before the Pedi, and so some walled settlements must first date before AD 1650, perhaps as early as AD 1600 and the second dispersal. The centre/side layout pattern indicates that they were of Langa origin from northern KwaZulu-Natal. Later, as the associated ceramics show, they became allied to the Pedi. These Badfontein Koni probably chose the escarpment because it is part of a mist belt that would have offered some relief to dry conditions during the Little Ice Age.

Based on such datable phenomena as initiation cycles, other northern and southern groups are thought to have left KwaZulu-Natal between about AD 1630 and 1670. These dates, of course, are tentative. At about the same time, around AD 1700, cool, very dry conditions prevailed throughout the subcontinent. According to climatic data, this was the worst time in the Little Ice Age. Dated with remarkable precision, this event is so close to the historical dating that the severe conditions were the most likely reason for the third set of movements. Although the reason may have been the same, there were so many small groups at different times that a coordinated movement was unlikely.

As part of this uncoordinated movement, several small groups entered the Pretoria area. These include the well known Manala and Ndzundza Ndebele who claim Musi as a legendary leader. Significantly, Ndzundza capitals in the Steelpoort area to the northeast, such as KwaMaza have a Moor Park variant of stonewalling: kraals and middens lay down slope of the most important residential zone. Pedi pottery (*Marateng*) in Ndzundza settlements demonstrates interaction with northern neighbours.

Because Ndzundza settlements are a variation of Moor Park, and Ndzundza claim Musi, it follows that Musi people most probably inhabited Malora settlements in the

Waterberg. It further follows that the Estcourt Midlands, the locus of Moor Park walling, was the original homeland of the Musi cluster.

Fortunately, the history of many Nguni-derived groups on the plateau today is accessible to oral traditions. Generally, those who live north of the Springbok Flats are known collectively as Northern (Transvaal) Ndebele and those below as Southern (Transvaal) Ndebele. Generally again, many northern groups claim Langa as a legendary leader and many of those to the south claim Musi (Van Warmelo 1935). If they retained the Nguni language, they are called Ndebele, while those who adopted Sotho-Tswana are Koni (Sotho-Tswana for *Nguni*).

The third set of movements also included various groups that claim Langa as a legendary leader. Most of these Langa people were supposed to have followed the escarpment north through Swaziland to the Leydsdorp area in the Limpopo Province low-veld before turning west to climb onto the plateau. Thus, there was a different Langa route out of KwaZulu-Natal.

The Ledwaba are an example of Langa Ndebele who followed the Langa route. The Ledwaba settled in the Polokwane (Pietersburg) district in about AD 1840 and found that the Sebietela (Musi) to the south and the Bakoni ba Matlala (Langa) to the north had preceded them. The Matlala had also followed the Langa route.

While living in the northeastern low-veld, some members of the Langa cluster, including the Ledwaba, were greatly influenced by the Zimbabwe culture in general and the Lovedu in particular. Loubser (1994) interprets *Letaba* pottery found on Group II sites, characteristic of the low-veld, as evidence for this influence in Ledwaba sites.

The main route most Langa Ndebele took north, through the Swaziland and Mpumalanga low-veld, suggests that the original Langa homeland was in northern KwaZulu-Natal. It is significant that most Nguni groups today who claim a Langa ancestry live in that area. The combination of oral history, routes and settlement patterns shows that the division between Langa and Musi is ancient, extending back

to at least the middle of the Moor Park phase, and that this division has a geographical expression.

The Tweefontein 154 site's layout pattern seems to fall into Loubser's Group III category. It is also very similar to the Koni or Badfontein type along the Mpumalanga escarpment. In the absence of radiocarbon dates it is postulated that this portion of the site on Tweefontein dates more or less to the Ledwaba arrival on the plateau; more or less the same time as did the Voortrekkers. The Ledwaba had adopted the Letaba or eastern low-veld style before moving onto the plateau. Letaba style pottery was found on the site. Koni (Sotho-ised Nguni) people that moved from the Lydenburg escarpment area probably inhabited the Tweefontein Portion 8 site in the 17th – early 19th centuries, although they may have been under the authority and may have been influenced by Ndebele speaking people. When the Ledwaba people arrived they probably went to live on the southern side of the hill in the group III settlement type, which is basically an adapted version of the original Badfontein pattern of stonewalling.

6. MATERIAL CULTURE DISCUSSION

6.1 CERAMICS

Trench 1

This trench is located outside the outer wall, in a midden.

Trench 1 yielded 40 shards in total, 12.5% decorated and 87.5% undecorated. Letaba *facies* predominated although only found in Layers 1-3. No further ceramics were noted below 30cm. A modern (historical period) shard of ceramic was noted, blue and brown on white. The shard was too small to determine vessel. See sketch 1 and 2.

Trench 2

This trench is located in a midden on the northern side of unit 5.

Trench 2 yielded 122 shards in total, 13.9% decorated and 86.1% undecorated. Shards were only noted in Layers 2 and 3. Letaba *facies* was noted in layer 2 and an Icon *facies* shard in Layer 3. See sketch 3.

Trench 3

This trench was located in midden deposit on a platform to the west of enclosures in Unit 1.

Trench 3 yielded the most ceramics, 469 in total, only 4.47% were decorated and 95.53% undecorated. Letaba *facies* ceramics were predominant throughout, though two shards demonstrate Tavhatshena *facies* motifs- these are currently being re-examined. See sketch 4 and 5.

Trench 4

This trench was located in midden 7, adjacent to a wall that separated unit 2 and 3 on the western side.

Trench 4 yielded 179 shards in total, 18.9% decorated and 81.1% undecorated. Letaba *facies* is predominant. In addition this trench yielded the most modern (historical period) ceramics of all trenches on the site. Historical period blue on white transfer, green on white transfer, green on white with gold trim and white shards were noted. Some pieces were diagnostic and provided evidence of tea cups and plates. Tentatively, the historical period shards are relatively dated to after 1830. Final analysis is awaited. See sketch 6.

Trench 5

This trench was located in unit 5 where it transected the largest cattle enclosure.

Trench 5 yielded a total of 31 shards, 12.9% decorated and 87.1% undecorated. Shards displayed a herringbone motif but cannot be completely attributed to *facies*.

Trench 6

This trench was located in a disturbed section of the site that was influenced by modern farm labourer occupation and is an area where 2 roads have been constructed.

Trench 6 yielded 68 shards, 29.4% decorated and 70.6 undecorated. Letaba *facies* predominates, the assemblage although 1 modern ceramic shard was noted. See sketch 7 and 8.

Iron Age

A total of 909 shards were excavated¹. Of this 11.1% were decorated and 88.9% undecorated. Trench 3 (TR3) yielded the most ceramic shards- 469. This trench was also the trench that extended the deepest – 80cm and was located in midden deposit on a type of platform/terrace, in Unit 1. The vast majority of the decorated ceramics belong to the Letaba *facies* and are characterised by hatched bands on the shoulder, use of red ochre and graphite burnishing and triangles (Huffman 2007: 269). Decorative motifs from other *facies* other than Letaba can possibly be attributed to trade or random movement of earlier Iron Age people throughout the area. The Pietersburg area is known for a long Iron Age occupation; however the site in question was only occupied by Late Iron Age people of the Ndebele Clan.

Modern ceramics

Modern ceramic shards from the 19th century were noted throughout the site, albeit in low density. Stratigraphically the position of the modern ceramics bears testimony for a single component - single occupation site. Modern ceramics were excavated between level 2 and level 6 of various tranches - most notably in TR 4, which was located in a large midden in Unit 2 and lay centrally in the site. Preliminary, relative dating of the shards indicates a *terminus post quem* date of 1800. This is especially true of the modern blue-on-white and green-on-white shards. The fact that these

¹ Number of ceramic shards are related to “Iron Age” ceramics only. Modern ceramic shards are discussed separately.

shards are found within the site also point to an occupation date post dating that of European contact in the Pietersburg area- also pos AD 1800.

Huffman (2007) states that the Letaba *facies* most likely ranges from AD 1600 – 1840, however AD 1840 cannot be construed as the end of the line for Letaba ceramics- it did not just stop overnight. In addition Huffman also does not extend the range of his analysis much beyond this date as it is presumed that the Iron Age can be construed as coming to an end around this period and heralds the historical period. This is good and well, however people did not entirely give up on the 'Iron Age' way of life and we cannot cut South African history into neat chronological segments. The fact remains that in all likelihood the site in question was occupied later than 1840 and the people used 'Iron Age' material culture and simultaneously assimilated European material culture into their way of life as these items became available through trade and increased contact with Europeans after the 1840's when white settlement in the area accelerated. This would adequately explain the excavated material culture. There is no 'break' between the Letaba *facies* ceramics and the historical period European ceramics. The two different classes of ceramics are found together within the same layers from the uppermost to the lowest levels throughout the site. This consistency cannot therefore be attributed to intrusion either by animal or other natural factors.

Other ceramic artefacts

TR 1 yielded a ceramic fragment that resembles an artifact noted by Roodt (1992) at UmGundgundlovu, that was used as a mould for casting metal beads, this is referenced by Roodt as having been witnessed by missionary Gardiner during the reign of Dingaan-post dating 1800. Trench 2 L3 yielded a copper bead.



Fig 1. Possible ceramic mould.



Fig 2. A Letaba style bowl.



Fig 3. Letaba pottery shards.



Fig 4. 19th century imported ceramics.

	<i>TR1</i>	<i>TR2</i>	<i>TR3</i>	<i>TR4</i>	<i>TR5</i>	<i>TR6</i>
<i>L1</i>	Letaba lip				Herringbone pos 2+3 Not Doornkop or Eiland????	Letaba pos 2
<i>L2</i>	Letaba pos 2 Modern piece white, brown blue	Letaba pos 2 + lip		Modern-blue on white ?tea cup fragment Lethaba pos 3?? see notes		Tavahtshena pos 3 Letaba pos2
<i>L3</i>	Letaba pos 2	Icon lip + dec pos 2 1 Piece= ladder stamping	Tavhatshena pos 2	Modern green on white 1 piece pos 2 line with upper and lower fine notching???		Letaba pos 2
<i>L4</i>			Letaba lip	Letaba pos 3 +lips Moloko Branch punctates and finger nail impressions. Modern cup piece Green with gold trim.		1 piece dec in pos 2 could be from more modern settlement. modern ceramic piece
<i>L5</i>			Letaba pos 2+3			
<i>L6</i>			Letaba lip	Letaba/Tavahtshena Letaba lip Letaba pos 3 Modern plate piece Modern tea cup fragment 1830's		
<i>L7</i>						
<i>L8</i>			Letaba pos 2 but could be linked to Tavahtshena			

TABLE OF CERAMIC ANALYSIS

	<i>TR1</i>			<i>TR2</i>			<i>TR3</i>		
	<i>Total</i>	<i>Dec</i>	<i>undec</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Dec</i>	<i>undec</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Dec</i>	<i>undec</i>
<i>L1</i>	4	1	3	37	6	31	36		36
<i>L2</i>	25	2	23	30	3	27	36		36
<i>L3</i>	11	2	9	19	3	16	29	4	25
<i>L4</i>				16	4	12	148	7	141
<i>L5</i>				20	1	19	158	8	150
<i>L6</i>							44	1	43
<i>L7</i>							11		11
<i>L8</i>							7	1	6
	40	5	35	122	17	105	469	21	448
<i>%</i>		12.5	87.5		13.9	86.1		4.47	95.53
	<i>TR4</i>			<i>TR5</i>			<i>TR6</i>		

	<i>TR1</i>			<i>TR2</i>			<i>TR3</i>		
	<i>Total</i>	<i>Dec</i>	<i>undec</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Dec</i>	<i>undec</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Dec</i>	<i>undec</i>
<i>L1</i>	38	9	29	6	4	2	37	12	25
<i>L2</i>	53	7	46	15		15	8	3	5
<i>L3</i>	25	3	22	9		9	9	4	5
<i>L4</i>	35	8	27				7	1	6
<i>L5</i>	5	1	4	1		1	5		5
<i>L6</i>	8	2	6				1		1
<i>L7</i>	15	4	11						
<i>L8</i>									
	179	34	145	31	4	27	68	20	48
<i>%</i>		18.9	81.1		12.9	87.1		29.4	70.6

Total Ceramic shards: 909

Total Decorated: 101 – 11.1 %

Total Undecorated: 808 – 88.9 %

6.2 BEADS

Trench 1

This trench is located outside the outer wall, in a midden.

Trench 1 yielded 24 beads in total between Layers 1 and 3. Beads relatively dating to the Historical and Khami period predominated. Opaque Indian red-on-green were noted, as well as pink, white and white with stripes beads from the Historical period.

Trench 2

This trench is located in a midden on the northern side of unit 5.

Trench 2 yielded 16 beads in total. The historical period is represented by white beads. This trench also yielded ostrich eggshell beads.

Trench 3

This trench was located in midden deposit on a platform to the west of enclosures in Unit 1.

Trench 3 yielded 24 beads. White beads represent the historical period yet in this trench the presence of 17 ostrich eggshell beads is important. This area, unit 1, has been temporarily attributed to being a ceremonial area - see settlement discussion.

Trench 4

This trench was located in midden 7, adjacent to a wall that separated unit 2 and 3 on the western side.

Trench 4 yielded 25 beads. White, pink and opaque Indian red-on-green and Dutch or Dogon doughnut cobalt blue were noted, in addition a red-on-white was noted in Layer 7. Khami period beads are also represented in the assemblage.

Trench 5

This trench was located in unit 5 where it transected the largest cattle enclosure.

Trench 5 yielded one K2 type bead.

Trench 6

This trench was located in a disturbed section of the site that was influenced by modern farm labourer occupation and is an area where 2 roads have been constructed.

Trench 6 yielded one Khami and one K2 type beads.

Background information to historical period beads:

In this section we primarily refer to the work done by Marilee Wood (2000, 2005).

Four categories of historical period beads are categorized by Wood and 3 categories are represented by beads from Tweefontein 2, Portion 154.

<u>Bead type</u>	<u>Dating</u>	<u>Type</u>
Bead type 1-A	Ca1600-1836 Replaced by red-on-white late 19 th century-20 th century	Opaque Indian red-on- green Red-on-white
Bead type 2-B	Early 1800-1910	Blue faceted hexagonal
Bead type 3-C	Pre 1850 1860 End 19 th century	Single wound annular- Dutch/Dogon Doughnuts Greyish blue-grey Colourless Cobalt blue
Bead type 4-D	1580-1890 white exterior coat Later- pure white Uniform shape 1867	White, pink, white with stripes

European style beads can be used as temporal markers as they were manufactured between known dates. The presence of these types of beads can be used to relatively date a site. Beads in the site assemblage bear testimony to a later period site, post 1830. The white beads are not coated and appear to be pure whites and are small to medium. 2 beads are coated in the assemblage. Opaque Indian Red-on Green's are noted throughout the assemblage. A white bead with red/pink stripes was noted in Trench 1. In addition a Dutch/Dogon Cobalt blue single wound annular bead was also noted. These beads are not upper level specific and are noted in conjunction with earlier beads such as those from the K2, Mapungubwe, Great Zimbabwe and Khami Period beads. It cannot be presumed that the site was occupied during these earlier periods. Beads are a popular trade item and were often also used as heirlooms; this can explain the presence of the earlier beads within the assemblage.

	<i>TR1</i>	<i>TR2</i>	<i>TR3</i>	<i>TR4</i>	<i>TR5</i>	<i>TR6</i>
L1	<p>Historical 2 pink 1mmx1mm; 2mmx2mm red stripe on white 2mmx2mm</p> <p>Khami 2 new honey 1.4mmx1.4mm opaque cobalt blue 2mmx1.7mm 3 pale blue 1.5mmx1.7mm</p>			<p>Historical A. white 3mmx2mm; 2.5mmx2mm; 3mmx2mm 1 pink 3.5mmx2mm</p> <p>Khami opaque cobalt blue 4mmx4mm; 3mmx2mm</p>	<p>K2 Transparent cylindrical green blue 2.5mmx3mm</p>	<p>Khami opaque cobalt blue 3.5mmx2.2mm</p>
L2	<p>Historical A. red on green 3mmx2mm white 3mmx4mm</p> <p>Khami cobalt 1.5mmx1.5mm</p> <p>K2 turquoise transparent 2.5mmx3mm</p>	<p>Historical A. white 4mmx2mm, 3mmx3mm</p> <p>Other 1 ostrich 9.5mmx1mm</p>	<p>Historical A. white 4mmx3mm; 3.5mmx3mm; 2.5mmx2mm</p> <p>K2 turquoise transparent 3mmx2mm</p>	<p>Historical white on red 2.6mmx1.3mm white 1.6mmx2mm single wound annular (Dogon doughnut) cobalt blue ½</p>		
L3	<p>Historical A. red on green 3mmx2mm 3 white 2mmx2.5mm 2= 2mmx1mm</p> <p>Khami new honey 3mmx2mm 2 opaque blue 2mmx2mm; 3mmx2mm 2 pale blue 2mmx2mm 2mmx1.5mm</p> <p>Mapungubwe black 2mmx1.5mm</p>	<p>Khami cobalt 3mmx1.5mm new honey 2.3mmx1.2mm Other 1 copper 4mmx3mm ¾ ostrich 7mmx1mm</p>	<p>Great Zimbabwe transparent emerald 3.2mmx3mm</p>	<p>Historical 2 white 2.3mmx2mm; 1.5mmx1mm red on green 3mmx2.5mm</p> <p>Khami pale blue 2mmx2.5mm (2) 2mmx2mm 1.5mmx1mm 1 oyster white 2.6mmx1.5mm</p> <p>Other 1 ostrich 8mmx1mm</p>		<p>K2 tourquoise transparent 3mmx2mm</p>
L4	-	<p>Historical A. white 2.4mmx1.5mm</p> <p>Khami ½ new honey</p> <p>Great Zimbabwe transparent emerald 1.5mmx1mm ½ translucent blue</p> <p>Mapungubwe 2 half pieces lime</p> <p>K2 ½ translucent turquoise</p> <p>Other 1 ½ ostrich 9mmx1mm; 6.1mmx1mm</p>	<p>Khami cobalt 2mmx1.5mm</p>	<p>Historical A. white 4.1mmx3.7mm</p> <p>Khami pale blue ½ cobalt 3.5mmx2mm</p>		
L5	-		<p>Other 3 ostrich 7mmx1.5mm</p>	<p>Historical A. white 3mmx2.6mm</p>		
L6	-		<p>K2 turquoise transparent 3mmx2mm</p> <p>Other 14 ostrich 8= 6.5mmx1mm 6= 4.5mmx1mm</p>	<p>Historical red on green ½</p> <p>K2 ½ translucent turquoise</p> <p>Other ostrich 9mmx1.5mm</p>		
L7	-			<p>Historical red on white 2mmx1mm</p> <p>Khami cobalt 3mmx2.3mm</p>		
L8	-					

TABLE OF BEADS

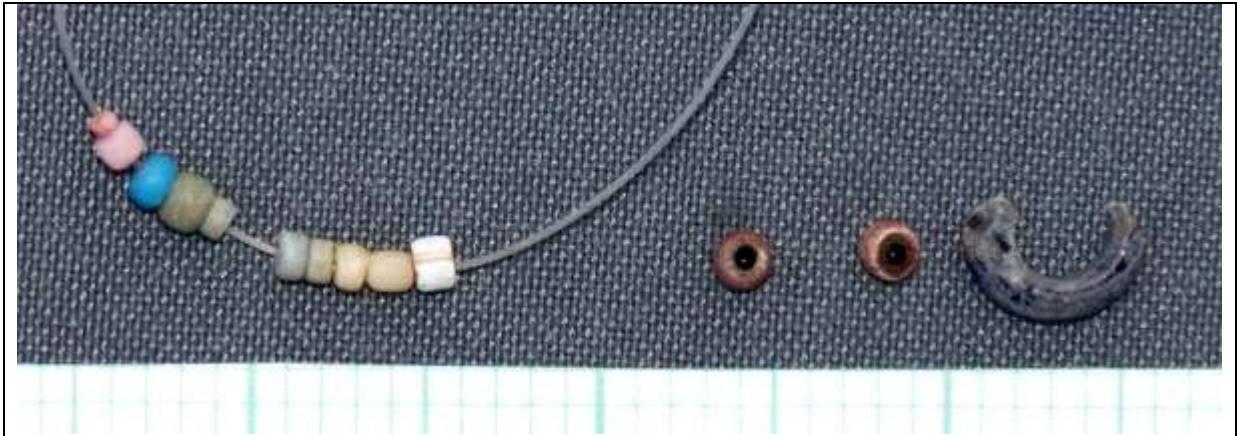


Fig 5. Collection of beads.

6.3 STONE ARTEFACTS

Soapstone appears to have been the preferred type stone used by the people of the site. Three soapstone milk strainers were noted in the activity areas noted on the map (Loubser 1981 and 1994). Milk strainers were also noted on similar sites by Loubser (1981). In addition a soapstone pipe was noted near TR 4 when foundation walls were opened. The pipe resembles a European pipe and was beautifully carved.



Fig 6. Milk strainer.



Fig 7. Soapstone smoking pipe.

6.4 METAL ARTEFACTS

A spouted shallow metal scoop was noted near TP1. On preliminary analysis the bowl appears to be of a more modern **post -1800** nature, due to the spout that is

unknown from Nguni or Sotho-Tswana Iron Age groups. A Spear tip was noted as a surface find and measures 242mm in length, the tip would have been longer but the point was broken. No evidence of metal working was noted on the site.



Fig 8. Metal scoop.



Fig 9. Spear point.

6.5 OTHER WESTERN ARTEFACTS

Two buttons of **European nature** were noted in TR1 Level 2 and TR 4 Level 2. Button 1 would have probably been covered in fabric and button 2 is a standard four-hole button.

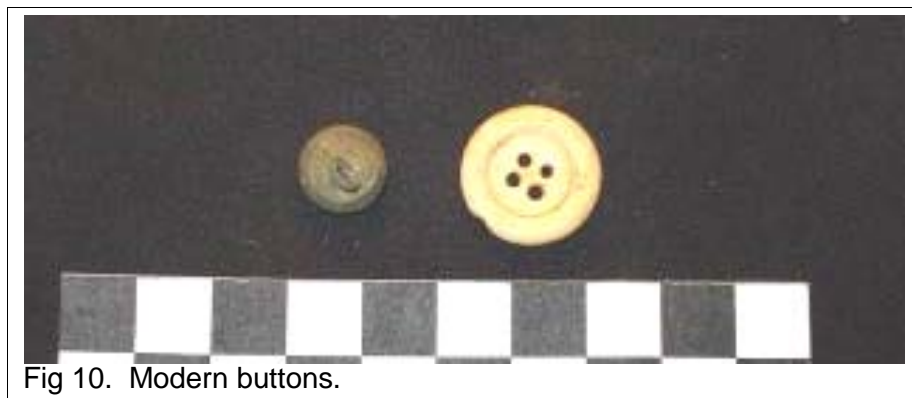


Fig 10. Modern buttons.

A large piece of red ochre was noted near Trench 1 as a surface find and weighs 690g. Ochre was used in ceramic vessel burnishing at the site as is evident on the ceramic shards from the site. Two lower grinding stones also display markings indicating that ochre was ground on site. Ochre is also archaeologically known to have been used in personal ornamentation by Iron Age peoples.

6.6 FAUNAL REMAINS

The Faunal remains were sent in for specialist analysis to K. Scott.

The discussion below is quoted from the faunal analysis report by K. Scott, June 2009.

‘The subsistence economy seems to have been mainly supported by herding and hunting. Although the presence of domestic dog is not as clear as in Tweefontein 1 the carnivore bones found along with the carnivore gnaw marks again confirms the presents of domestic dog on the terrains.

The mongoose (*Viverridae*) was identified from a lower molar and the rabbit/hare (*Lagomorpha*) from two teeth. Both these species presence on the site could be a natural introduction but as their skins were used to carry water this could also serve as a possible explanation, due to the small amount of material identified any conclusion that might be drawn is merely speculative at this time.

There is a balance between the hunted and the herded animals consumed. The presence of Zebra in fairly large quantities on the Tweefontein 2 terrain, as it was on the Tweefontein terrain, is still a matter of interest that should possibly be culturally investigated.

It is possible that the large mammal in TR 3 L3 metapodial belonged to a hippopotamus but once again the lack of a permanent water source places this identification in doubt. Unfortunately the proximal articulation of the metapodial is broken and thus no certain identification can be made. As the metapodial is large (not large enough to belong to an elephant) and its morphology indicates that it belonged to a three or four toed large mammal it could only have hailed from a hippopotamus or a rhinoceros. It is the only bone of this size that was identified and any conclusions drawn as to its possible origins or reason for being on the Tweefontein 2 excavation site is speculative.

The frog/toad remains identified in TR4 L6 hailed from a fairly large individual possibly that of a bullfrog.’

The faunal remains are consistent with Tweefontein 1 and show no deviation from the norm for this type site. This is confirmed by work conducted by Loubser (1981), in that similar faunal species were noted.

Identification	NISP	QSP	MNI	Mass
<i>Soricidae</i>	8			0.2
Carnivore	1			0.1
Canis/non-bovid	3	1	1	1
cf <i>Canis</i>	1			1
<i>Canis cf familiaris</i>	1	1	1	0.1
<i>Viverridae</i>	2			0.2
Small mammal	3			2
Large mammal	1		1	123
Non-bovid med	2			5
cf <i>Cecopithecus</i>	1			0.1
cf <i>Equus</i>	1			50
<i>Equus burchelli</i>	12	1	1	308
cf <i>Bos taurus</i>	4			102
<i>Bos taurus</i>	25	16	1	673
cf <i>Ovis aries</i>	2	1	1	22
<i>Ovis aries</i>	21	16	2	102.2
cf <i>Sylvicapra grimmia</i>	1		1	10
<i>Sylvicapra grimmia</i>	7	6	1	45
<i>Raphicerus campestris</i>	4	3	1	15
cf <i>Aepyceros melampus</i>	2		1	8
<i>Taurortagus oryx</i>	1		1	11
Bov I	4			3.2
Bov II	32	2	2	143.3
Bov II / cf <i>Ovis aries</i>	1			6
Bov II (non-dom)	4	1	1	6.2
Bov II (dom)	3	1		2
Bov III	42		2?	846.6
Small rodent	3			0.3
Medium rodent	5			0.5
Rodent <i>Mus</i> sp	27	25	3	0.2
Rodent <i>Rattus</i> sp	17	13	3	1
cf <i>Lagomorpha</i>	1			0.2
<i>Lagomorpha</i>	3			0.3
Small aves	1			0.1
Aves med	2			1
<i>Struthio camelus</i>	1			0.1
Reptile	1			0.1
Frog/toad	7	2	1	2.3
Tortoise	6		1	5
<i>Achatina</i> sp	24	2	2	7.7
<i>Unio</i> sp	3			10

6.7 BURIAL

One burial was excavated outside the outer wall north of Trench 1. Skeletal analysis is pending but it is preliminarily attributed to a male. The body was interred in an upright, sitting position facing west. In terms of the worldview of people adhering to the Central Cattle Pattern west is considered the direction of death. The body was sitting with knees drawn up under the chin. Much of the body had been destroyed by termite activity.



Fig 11. Burial exposed – shoulder & skull missing.



Fig 12. Detail of initial exposure.



Fig 13. Pelvis exposed.



Fig 14. Burial pit.

7. CONCLUSION

The archaeological investigation is not yet completed or conclusive, as much of the analysis of material has still to be undertaken and the final report will consider

evidence from both Portion 8 and Portion 154. Despite its disturbed nature, it has been established that the remains on Portion 154 was predominantly a Group III settlement and an accurate plan could be drawn of the remaining features. The analysis of the archaeological material will be presented in a final report after the monitoring of the development phase has been concluded and all available data incorporated. At this stage we believe that the site belongs to a Northern Ndebele group who occupied the site from the mid 1800's till the late 1800's *based on the presence of Western ceramics, items such as buttons, and 19th century beads.*

8. MITIGATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES

With the mitigation measures of the permit completed, we herewith confirm that there is no objection with regard to the development and recommend that the proposed development may continue at the site for which a destruction permit must be applied for from SAHRA.

However, the following culture resources management measures must be implemented:

Extensive monitoring of the archaeological site during the construction phase of the development. Any exposed archaeological features or human burials must be recorded or excavated before it is destroyed.

9. REFERENCES

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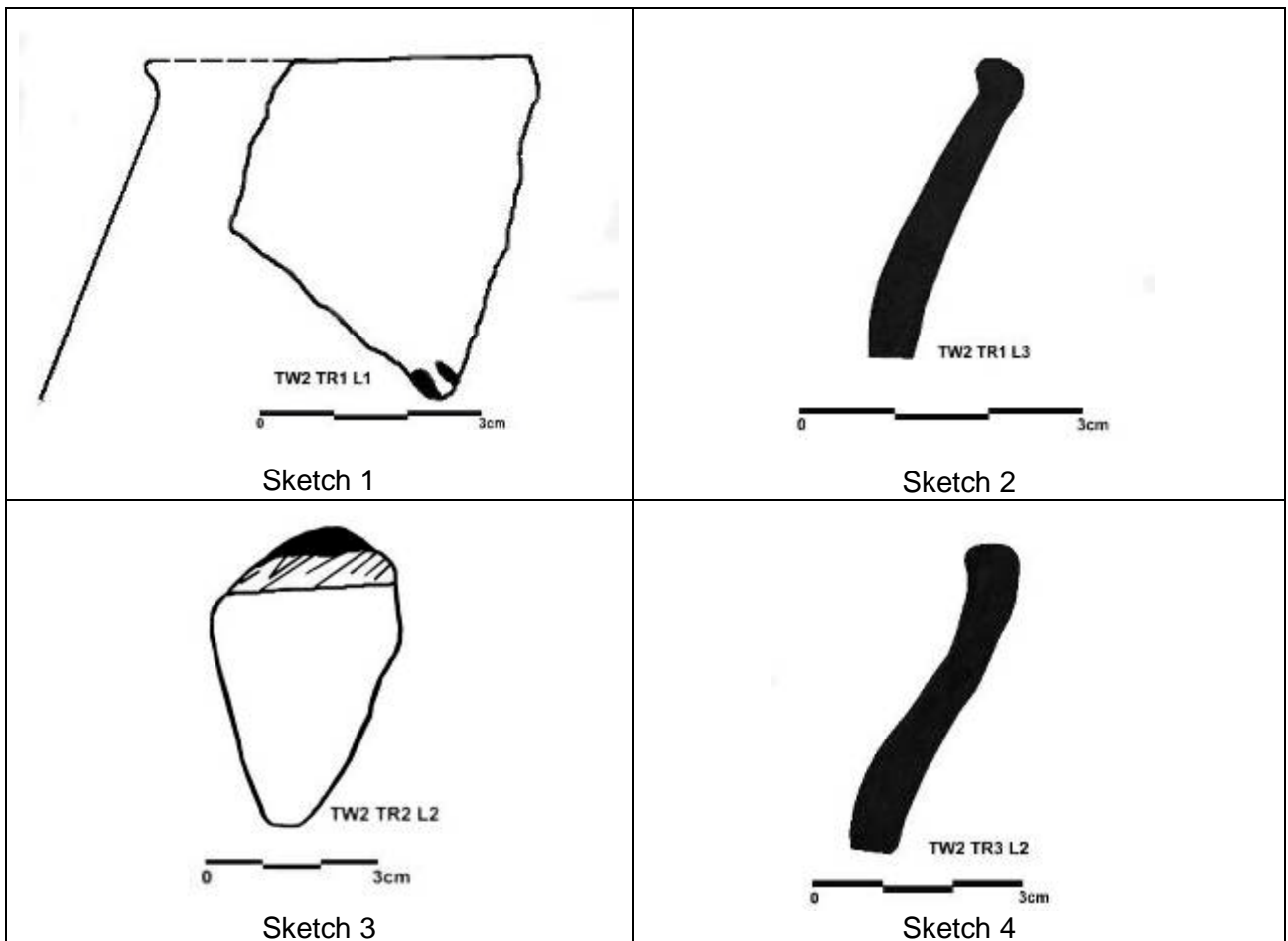
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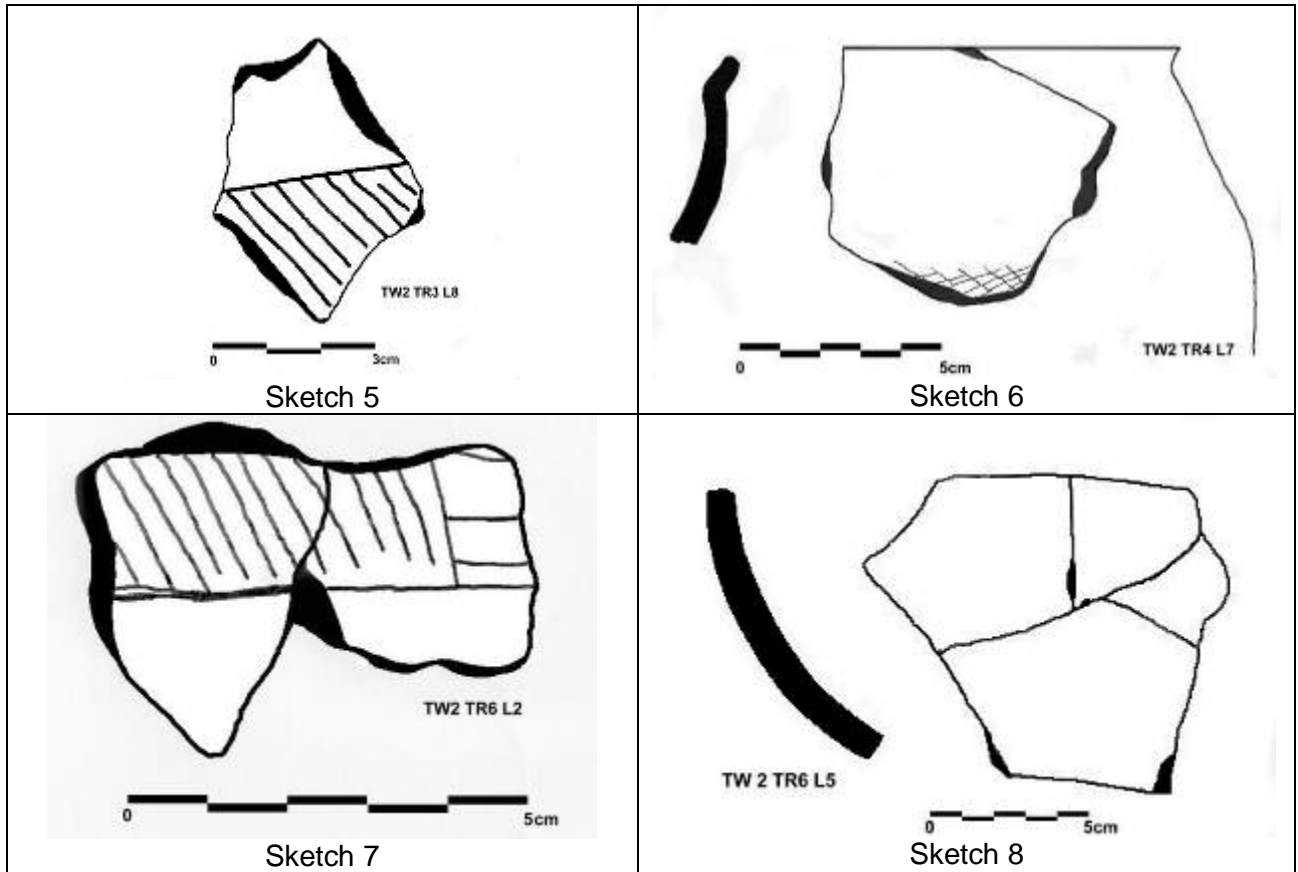
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FRANS ROODT (BA Hons, MA Archaeology, Post Grad Dip. in Museology; UP)
Principal Investigator for R & R Cultural Resource Consultants.

Sketches of Letaba ceramics





Profile Drawings

Only 1 profile drawing is included at this time in the report as this too forms a major part of the Honours thesis.

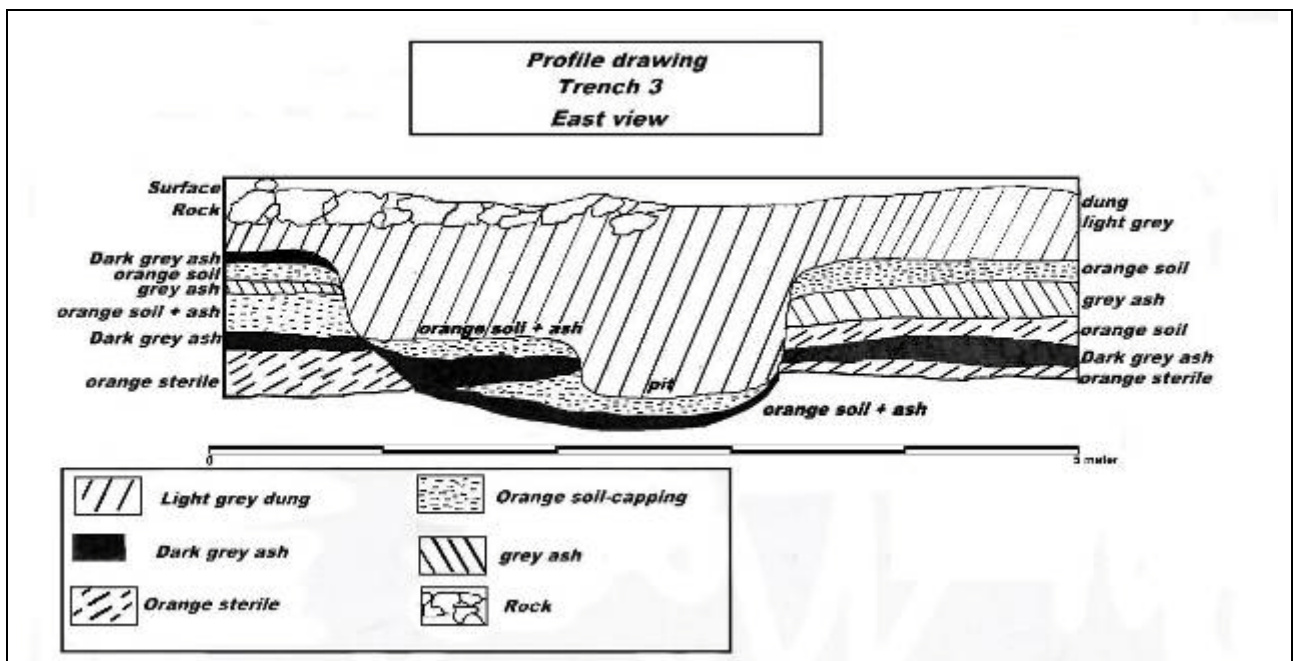




Fig 15. Clearing of walls, manually.



Fig 16. Cleared wall foundation.



Fig 17. Visual documentation of walling.



Fig 18. Visual documentation of walling



Fig 19. Visual documentation of walling.



Fig 20. General example of test trench (TR).



Fig 21. Methodology – drying of excavated deposit before sifting.



Fig 22. Trench TR 1.



Fig 23. Trench TR 2 on completion.



Fig 24. Trench TR 3.



Fig 25. Trench TR 4.



Fig 26. Trench TR 5.



Fig 27. Trench TR 6.



Fig 28. Trench TR 7.



Fig 29. Trench TR 8.



Fig 30. Test Pit 1.



Fig 31. Entrance uncovered after clearing rubble.



Fig 32. *View of areas that have been destroyed through previous development in the area.*

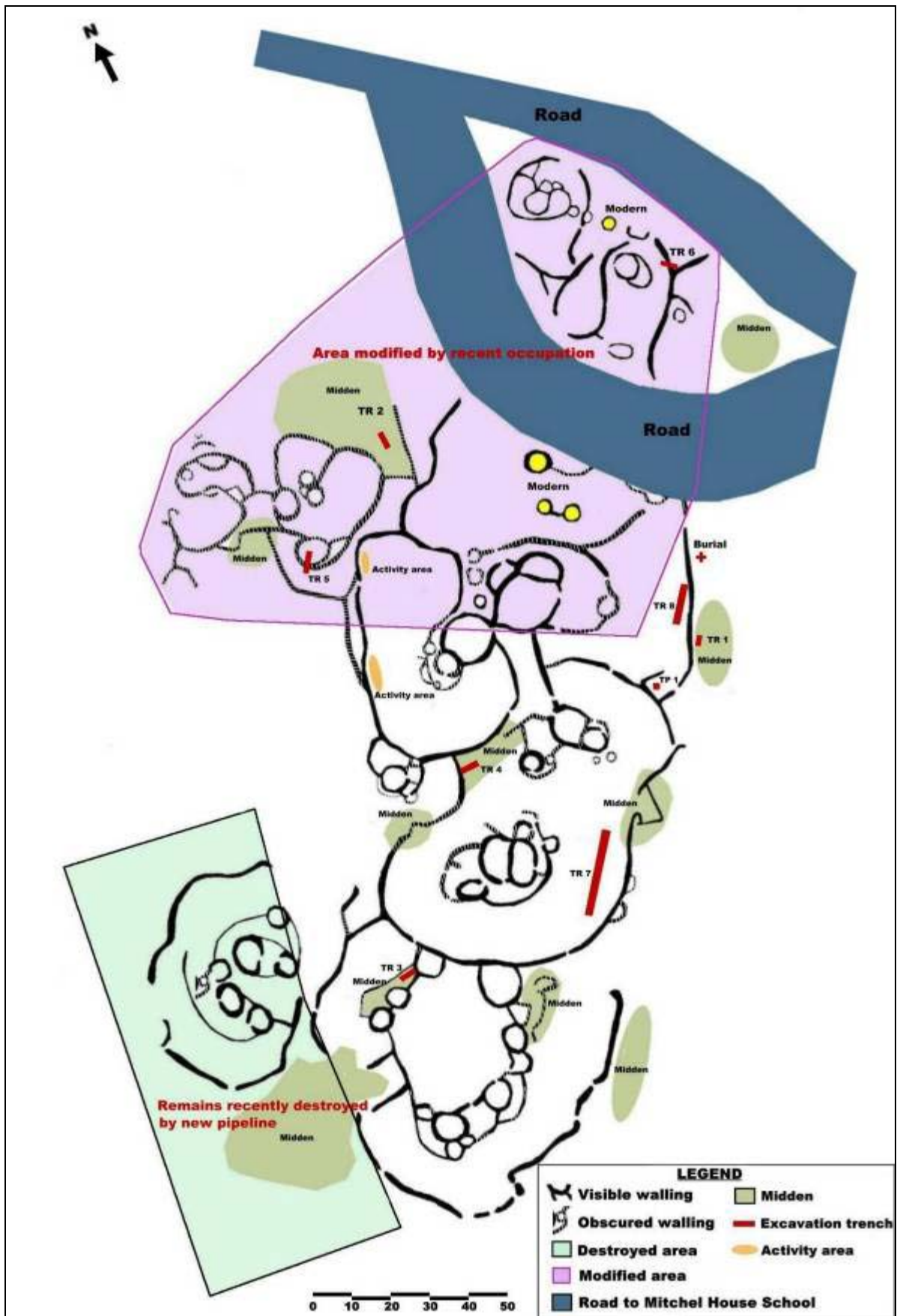


Fig 33. Layout plan of archaeological remains on Portion 154.

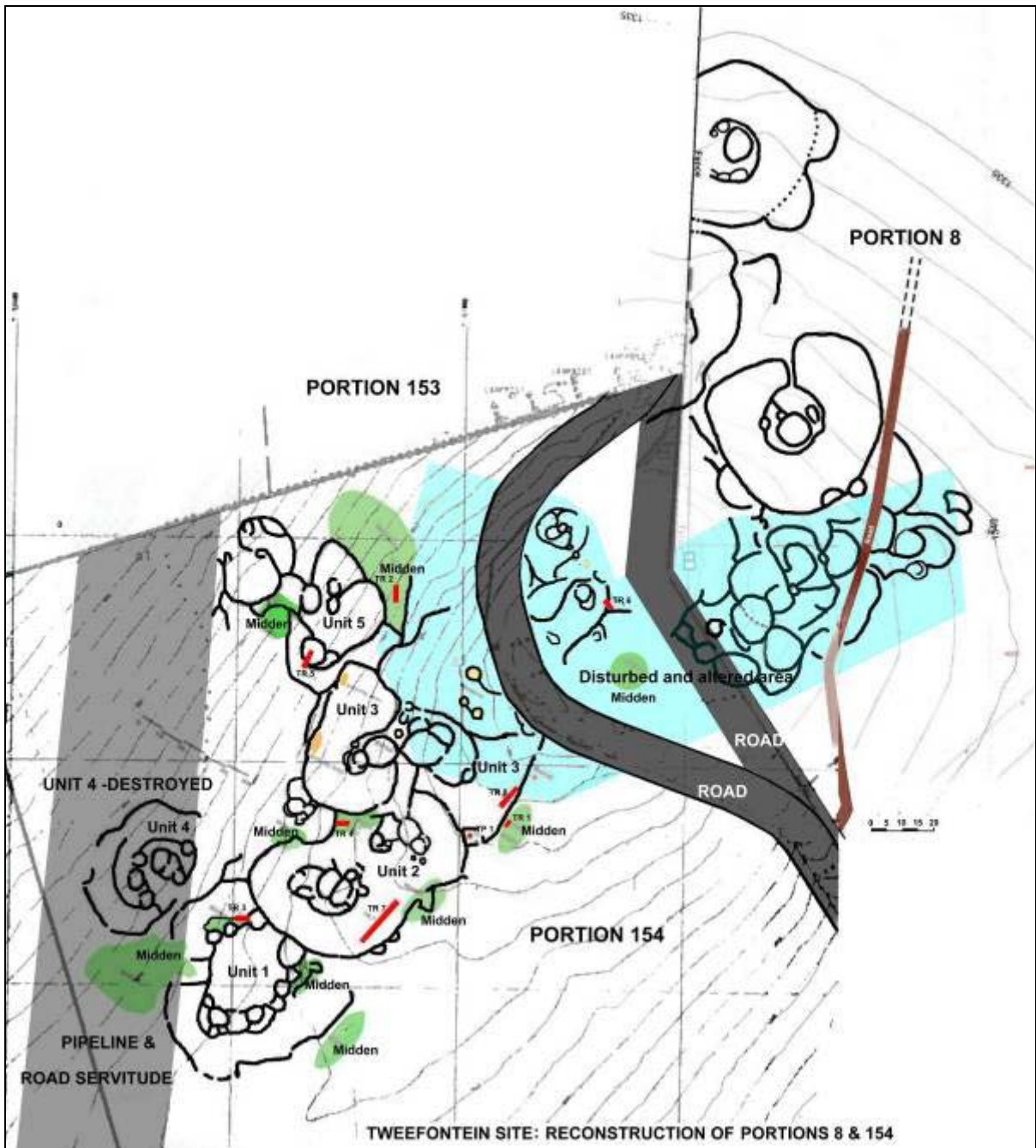


Fig 34. Plan overlapping the three Portions (8, 153 & 154), which the archaeological site overlays.

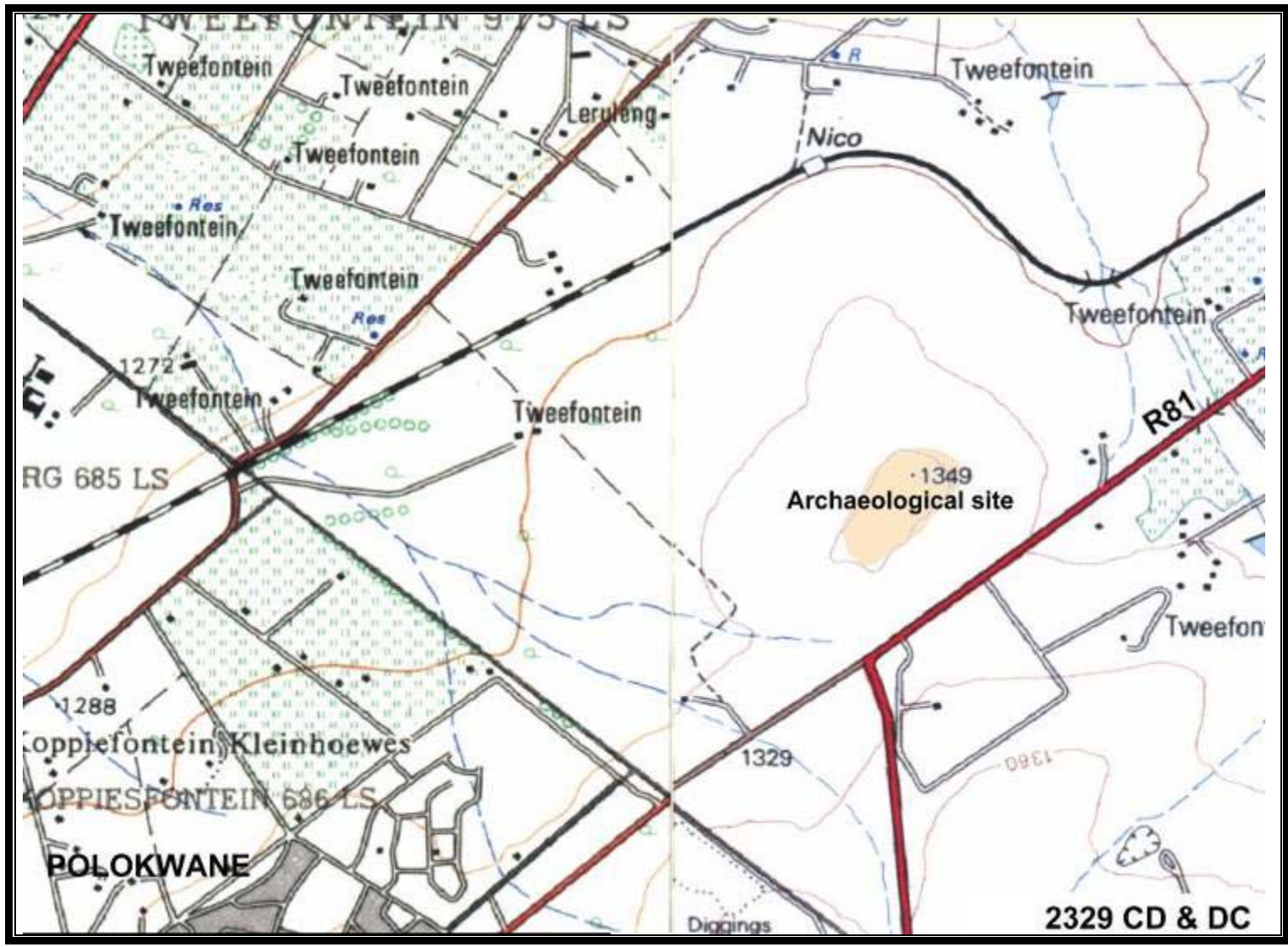


Fig 35. Locality Map 1:50 000 2329 CD & DC.