Prepared for:

SOUTH AFRICAN HERITAGE RESOURCES AUTHORITY

LYDENBURG SMELTER

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL DOCUMENTATION OF A LATE IRON AGE STONE WALLED SITE NEAR LYDENBURG IN MPUMALANGA.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Mpumalanga Escarpment and lowveld served as homeland for the Bokoni people from AD1700 onwards, but perhaps earlier as well. When the Maroteng (Rota, Pedi) moved across the Crocodile River from the south-west (Marapjane) into Mpumalanga during AD1650 they encountered Koni splinter groups who eventually, at the height of the Koni's existence (AD1800), occupied a swath of land stretching from the Steelpoort in the north across Lydenburg and Ohrigstad to Sabie in the east. Further to the south the Bokoni sphere of influence incorporated Badfontein, the Belfast district (including the Project Area) and Carolina in the south. The limited archaeological research which has been done in this region (confined to Lydenburg and Badfontein) provided radio carbon dates for the late 17th century or early 18th century whilst Marateng ceramics predates a stone walled settlement at one of the sites which was investigated.

This vast Bokoni sphere of influence is evident from oral history which outlines the settlement history of this group. Historical evidence also outlines the expansion of the Pedi chiefdom from the Steelpoort region which was accompanied by clashes between successive Pedi chiefs such as Moukangwe, Morwamotse and Sekwati with Koni groups such as the Kgomane (Lydenburg/Dullstroom) and the Koni living at the stronghold Kutwane near Badfontein. At least one of the sons of a Pedi chief, namely Makopole, the eldest son of Thulare, is also described as 'a chief of the Bakoni' who lived near Lydenburg.

Archaeological evidence available for the distribution of stone walled sites Mpumalanga corresponds with historical descriptions of the Bokoni sphere of influence. Stone walled sites are located in a north to south running belt stretching between Lydenburg/Ohrigstad in the north to Carolina in the south. These settlements tend to cluster around rivers such as the Komati, Elands, Crocodile, Sabi, Spekboom and Dwars Rivers. The archaeological identity that was used to described this archaeological region, or the 'whole archaeological package' including pottery and the architectural styles of the stone walled settlements was called the Marateng tradition..

The northern part of the Bokoni region incorporates rugged terrain such as the Leolo Mountain range and the Dwars River Valley in the Steenkampsberg as well as mountainous terrain around Lydenburg, Ohrigstad and Badfontein further to the south-east. The southern part of the Bokoni homeland, however, comprises an undulating rolling but open landscape with outstretched grass veld and shallow river valleys. This geography was important during times of turmoil and instability as groups preferred to move into the northerly rugged terrain which offered defensible opportunities whilst the open terrain further to the south remained

indefensible and vulnerable to Bokoni communities who probably kept large herds of cattle and pursuit agricultural practices.

The Bokoni region's climate and environment in general offered excellent opportunities for a mixed farming existence. This is visible from the archaeological evidence as reflected by the spatial composition and layout of individual sites and clusters of settlements. Soft hill slopes are covered with extensive terraces that abut against most of the stone walled sites and it is assumed that crops such as maize were cultivated on these terraced fields. The large numbers of centrally located enclosures in most of the stone walled sites are assumed to have been used for stock and most probably for the penning of large stock such as cattle. This is further supported by the presence of intrinsic networks of stone walled cattle tracks linking settlements with grazing fields on the outskirts of villages. It is accepted by some authors that the high occurrence of agricultural terraces in conjunction with central enclosures in Bokoni settlements may attest to intense farming in this region with the possibility of a surplus production which may have found its way into the Mpumalanga coastal trade system.

The Bokoni people may have been ruled by a number of dominant lineage clusters that were comprised of an amalgam of diverse ethnic groups each having an own history of origin, language, culture and traditions. These groups were in a constant process of transformation, fission and fusion whilst moulding an own identity. Although the Bokoni people therefore may have, had different languages, lifestyles, customs and traditions, a Bokoni identify may have also have been shaped, predominantly, by a particular mode of existence. The adaptation of the Bokoni to its particular environment therefore may have contributed to a unique Bokoni identity.

The spatial organisation of Site LIA01 reflects both Sotho as well as Nguni features. Nguni features include a circular ground plan which is composed of two main spatial units, namely a central place with enclosures (kraals for domestic stock) and an outer tier where residences were built. The central place in the Nguni capital usually only holds a single cattle enclosure with a parade ground. Both these spatial components also occur in Sotho Tswana settlements although the dwellings for families and family groups in the outer residential areas were clearly defined whilst several linked cattle enclosures were located in the centre of the village.

No radiocarbon dates were collected from Site LIA01 due to the absence of any charcoal or human remains in this settlement. Diachronic evidence such as European artefacts (metal items and glass) and a (modern) layout for certain elements in Site LIA01

Very little could be established about the building features of the dwellings which are associated with the stone walled complex. However, the absence of any burnt clay from the remains of the huts as well as the absence of any clear foundation stones and hut floors suggest that the dwellings may have been constructed with branches and grass. The dwellings therefore may perhaps have been bee-hived shape huts, similar to those which are used by Nguni communities. This building feature may have been necessitated by the absence of clay and branches which were needed to construct Sotho-styled cone-on-cylinder types of dwellings and/or by the fact that this building feature was brought about by a Nguni influence.

The economic subsistence of the occupants of the stone walled complex is uncertain as no animal bone waste material or any other evidence, except enclosures for keeping stock indicating that some form of farming was practised was found in the site. The central located enclosures in all the settlements suggest that most of these structures were probably used to pen domestic animals such as cattle. Smaller enclosures may have as dwellings but also as enclosures for small such as coat and sheep.

Although no agricultural terraces were observed in conjunction with Site LIA01 these may in fact exist but may be hidden by the tall grass cover which surrounded the site at the time when the investigation was done. Not a single upper or lower grinding stone was found on the site nor any other evidence which may reflect some kind of agricultural activities.

As no animal bone waste material (or any middens) were found in the complex no assumptions about the collection of food, particularly meat and therefore hunting practises could be made. However, it can be expected that the occupants of the complex did practise some kind of hunting, gathering and collecting.

No iron hoes or any other iron or metal artefacts or items were found. No agricultural was possible without any iron hoes. Neither was any evidence for permanent (stone) platforms found on which grain caskets [manufactured from clay (*sefala)* or grass (*sesigo*)] in the residential unit. These structures usually occur near hearths where food was prepared.

The absence of wood for building and construction, heating, cooking and other general

purposes had a pronounced influence on the life ways of the inhabitants of the stone walled complex. If cattle dung was used as a source for fuel, accumulations of thick concentrations of 'ash' would have been found. This practise still persists on the Eastern Highveld and was observed on the outskirts of Balfour where cattle dung was stored in order to dry before it was used as fuel.

Although literature links an intensified mixed farming in the Bokoni sphere of influence with the Mpumalanga trade system the evidence collected during this investigation did reveal any evidence for trade at this settlement.

It is highly likely that Site LIA01 together with other stone walled sites in the general area served as part of a Bokoni sphere of influence and therefore may have been occupied by Koni groups from AD1650 onwards. These settlements were located on open terrain which was difficult to defend. During the first half of the 19th century numerous groups moved through the Mpumalanga lowveld, some of whom raided the area whilst others remained in the area for periods of time. These groups included the Nguni of Zwide and Mzilikazi, armed men under the leadership of Sobhuza, Soshangaan, Zwangendaba and Nxaba. The Koni experienced severe raids from Sobhuza's Swazi from AD1815 onwards, the Ndwandwe settled in the Steelpoort area from the AD1820's whilst the Ndzundza-Ndebele exercised a mounting pressure on the Koni from AD1826 onwards.

Not only did the expansion of the Swazi chiefdom pushed communities (such as the Emakhandzambili) outwards from the northern borders of Swaziland onto the Eastern Highveld but the Swazi expansion also lead to the establishment of Swazi capitals such as Hhohho (Northern Swaziland), Mbhuleni (Carolina), Mjindini (west of Barberton) and Mekkemeke (east of Barberton) on the borders of the Bokoni homeland during 1850 and 1860. Historical evidence indicates that Swazi expansion, raids and attacks wore the local inhabitants down and that they barely kept any domestic stock during the second half of the nineteenth century.

It is most likely that historical events like these as well as the Mpumalanga trade system which flourished in the Komati River Valley near the southern perimeter of the Bokoni sphere of influence, which may have exacerbated conflict in this area, may have caused the abandonment of Site DAL001.

The mitigation of Site LIA01 is completed with the documentation of Site LIA01. It is recommended that the Lydenburg Smelter applies for a demolition permit for Site LIA01 form

the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA). As the site will merely be covered with waste material it is not necessary that an archaeologist be present when the site is covered with waste material.

1 BACKGROUND

Lydenburg Smelter near Lydenburg in the Mpumalanga Province intends to expand their existing Residue Management Facility (RMF) from north of a tributary of the Dorp spruit to a flat piece of land to the south of the tributary. The proposed new RMF with its associated infrastructure will affect (destroy) a Late Iron Age stone walled site which is located along a dolerite reef to the south of a tributary of the Dorp spruit. A Phase I Heritage Impact Assessment study was done for Lydenburg Smelter's proposed new TRF in 2005, namely:

- Pistorius, J.C.C. 2005. A Phase I Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) study for Xstrata Alloys Lydenburg new proposed Residue Management Facility (RMF) in the Mpumalanga Province of South Africa. Unpublished report for JMA Consulting (Pty) Ltd and Xstrata Alloys Lydenburg.

This study was updated in 2013 when an application was lodged with the South African Heritage Resources Agency for a permit for the archaeological documentation of the stone walled site (Site LIA01) before it will be destroyed when the proposed new RMF is constructed, namely.

- Pistorius, J.C.C. 2005. An updated Phase I Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) study for Xstrata Alloys Lydenburg new proposed Residue Management Facility (RMF) in the Mpumalanga Province of South Africa. Unpublished report for JMA Consulting (Pty) Ltd and Xstrata Alloys Lydenburg.

Site LIA01 was subjected to a Phase 2 investigation which entailed the archaeological documentation of the site with the following objectives:

- To compile a detail ground plan for the site and possible associated (agricultural or residential) terraces.
- To compare the spatial evidence from Site LIA01 with existing classifications of stone walled sites near Lydenburg.
- To excavate selected parts of Site LIA01's settlement components in order to determine the function of the site's various spatial components (which can also be compared with ethnographic evidence to corroborate explanations for these spatial features).

- To collect any material remains from Site LIA01 in order to be analysed and described in the Phase 2 report. If any remains do occur it will be donated to the Lydenburg Museum.
- To compile a Phase 2 report which describe the results of the findings of the Phase 2 investigation.

This report outlines the findings of the Phase 2 archaeological documentation of Site LIA01.

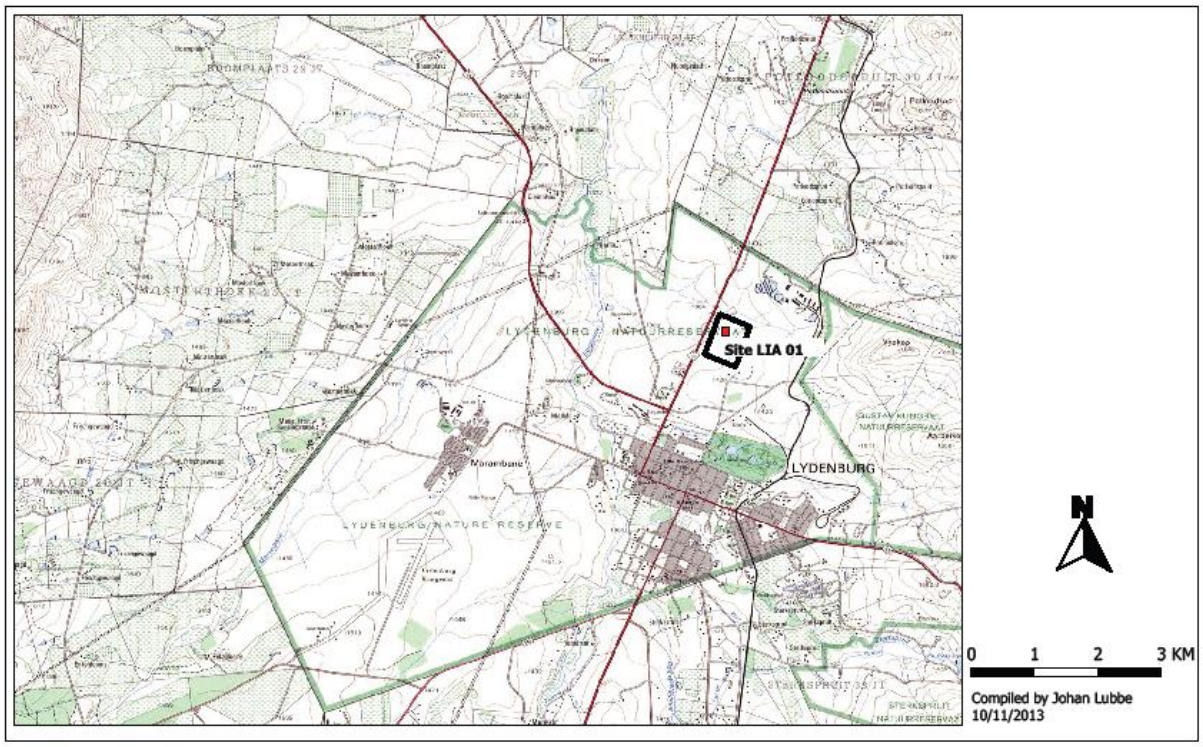

Figure 1- Regional location of the Lydenburg Smelter near the town of Lydenburg in the Mpumalanga Province (2530 Lydenburg 1:50 000 topographical map). The Lydenburg Smelter's existing Residue Management Facility (RMF) is to be extended to the south of a tributary of the Dorp spruit where it will affect (destroy) a small Late Iron Age stone walled complex (Site LIA01, represented by the red dot [above]).

2 THE PROJECT AREA

X Strata Alloys Lydenburg (X Strata) is located in the Lydenburg Valley, between the foothills of the Drakensberg mountain range to the east and the Steenkampsberge which is located further towards the Steelpoort Valley in the west. The smelter complex is located in the town of Lydenburg in the Thaba Chweu Local Municipality in the Mpumalanga Province of South Africa.

Figure 2- The Project Area where Site LIA01 is located to the south of the Lydenburg Smelter which is situated to the north of the town of Lydenburg in the Mpumalanga Province (above).

The smelter complex is situated north of the town of Lydenburg within the boundaries of the Lydenburg Conservancy and between the national road (R36) running from Lydenburg (south) to Ohrigstad (north) in the west and the Gustav Klingbeil Nature Reserve in the east (2530AB Lydenburg, 1:50 000; 2530 Nelspruit, 1:250 000) (Figures 1-2).

3 CONTEXTUALSING THE PROJECT AREA

The Project Area is located in the midst of a cultural landscape that is marked by heritage remains dating from the pre-historical into the historical (colonial) period. Stone Age and Iron Age sites as well as colonial and mining heritage remains therefore do occur across Mpumalanga and particularly along the eastern Escarpment near the Project Area (see Part 7 'Select Bibliography').

Apart from its scenic landscapes the Lydenburg Valley was home to humans from the Stone Age, through the Iron Age and during the Historical Period. The following brief overview of pre-historical, historical, cultural and economic evidence will help to contextualise the larger region and the Project Area before the results of the Phase 2 HIA study is discussed.

3.1 Stone Age sites

Stone Age sites are marked by stone artefacts that are found scattered on the surface of the earth or as parts of deposits in caves and rock shelters. The Stone Age is divided into the Early Stone Age (ESA) (covers the period from 2.5 million years ago to 250 000 years ago), the Middle Stone Age (MSA) (refers to the period from 250 000 years ago to 22 000 years ago) and the Late Stone Age (LSA) (the period from 22 000 years ago to 200 years ago).

Dongas and eroded areas at Maleoskop near Groblersdal is one of only a few places in Mpumalanga where ESA Olduwan and Acheulian artefacts have been recorded.
Evidence for the MSA has been excavated at the Bushman Rock Shelter near Ohrigstad. This cave was repeatedly visited over a prolonged period. The oldest layers date back to 40 000 years BP and the youngest to 27 000BP (Esterhuysen & Smith 2007).

LSA occupation of the Mpumalanga Province also has been researched at Bushman Rock Shelter where it dates back 12 000BP to 9 000BP and at Höningnestkrans near Badfontein where a LSA site dates back to 4 870BP to 200BP (Esterhuysen & Smith 2007).

The LSA is also associated with rock paintings and engravings which were done by San hunter-gatherers, Khoi Khoi herders and EIA farmers (Maggs 1983, 2008). Approximately 400 rock art sites are distributed throughout Mpumalanga, note-ably in the northern and eastern regions at places such as Emalahleni (Witbank) (4), Lydenburg (2), White River and the southern Kruger National Park (76), Nelspruit and the Nsikazi District (250). The Ermelo area holds eight rock paintings (Smith & Zubieta 2007).

The rock art of the Mpumalanga Province can be divided into San rock art which is the most wide spread, herder or Khoe Khoe paintings (thin scattering from the Limpopo Valley) through the Lydenburg district into the Nelspruit area) and localised late white farmer paintings. Farmer paintings can be divided into Sotho-Tswana finger paintings and Nguni engravings (Only 20 engravings occur at Boomplaats, north-west of Lydenburg). Farmer paintings are more localised than San or herder paintings and were mainly used by the painters for instructional purposes. A rock engraving site with numerous engravings ranging from geometrical motifs to different figures have been recorded near Lydenburg (Maggs 1983; Smith & Zubieta 2007).

3.2 Iron Age remains

The Iron Age is associated with the first Bantu-Negroid agro-pastoralists who lived in semi-permanent villages and who practised metal working during the last two millennia. The Iron Age is usually divided into the Early Iron Age (EIA) (covers the 1st millennium AD) and the Later Iron Age (LIA) (covers the first 880 years of the 2nd millennium AD).

Iron Age research along the Drankensberg Escarpment can be divided into two periods, namely the first phase which started with EIA research after the discovery of the Lydenburg Heads near the Sterkspruit in the 1960's. Other sites belonging to other phases of the Iron Age were found and excavated hereafter. However, archaeological research on the Escarpment has been restricted to work which has been carried out within a 30km radius from Lydenburg.

The Lydenburg Valley was occupied by EIA communities who also lived elsewhere in the Mpumalanga, Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal and the North-West Provinces of South Africa during the 6th to the 9th centuries AD. The EIA site near Lydenburg which has produced the 'Lydenburg masks' has arose wide academic interest due to these unique and enigmatic objects (Whitelaw 1996).

Based on ceramic typology, stratigraphy, and radio-carbon dates two cultural sequences consisting of four successive phases have been established for the EIA Drakensberg Escarpment near Lydenburg, namely (Evers 1977, 1980, 1981 & 1982):

- The Lydenburg Phase (Tradition) has been recognised as the first phase of the Iron Age. This phase dates between AD500 to 800. Five sites are associated with Lydenburg pottery namely the 'Head Site' (2530AB4), Doornkop (2530AB5), Plaston (2531AC1), Langdraai (2530AB24) and Klipspruit (2530AD17). These sites are all located on lower valley slopes in interfluve situations at the confluence of two streams. Sites are large and measures between 7 to 15 hectares.
- Sites belonging to the Klingbeil Phase (Tradition) appear to have a similar location and distribution than those of the Lydenburg Phase. These sites include Langdraai and Doornkop which were re-occupied while at least two others similar sites occur in the Klingbeil Nature Reserve. A Klingbeil Tradition site also occurs near Boomplaas (2530AB19) where it is situated close to a prehistoric copper mine. The Klingbeil Phase has not been firmly dated but represents a continuum of the Lydenburg Tradition sites.
- In the Lydenburg area the Eiland Phase is poorly known. It represents the third phase of the local Iron Age but is still undated. It should fall in the range AD900-1400.
- The fourth or Marateng Phase of the Iron Age is associated with the stone walled sites of the Lydenburg area. These settlements comprise complexes of stone walled sites consisting of three basic units, namely homesteads, terraces and cattle tracks. Settlement location favours lower foot slopes of mountains and spur ends. Two stone walled settlement types can be distinguished, namely simple and more complex settlement types.

In Pedi oral tradition the LIA people (Marateng Phase of the Iron Age) who lived near Ohrigstad and Lydenburg were called Bakoni. The Bakoni originated from south-east Swaziland and moved westwards across the Drakensberg Escarpment to settle at Ma$a$ane - north-west of Polokwane during AD1730, a date which is not accepted by all researchers. However, some of these Koni moved south close to the Apies River around AD1790-1800 whilst numerous other fragments - which hived off from the main body – also moved onto the Highveld and into Sekhukhuneland (Collett 1979, 1983; Delius 1984; Maggs 2008; Makhura 2007; Delius & Schoeman 2008).

The Bakoni were raided early in Pedi history under Chief Moukangoe and later became under Pedi rule during the reign of Thulare at the turn of the 18th century. One of Thulare's sons was placed in charge of the Koni near Ohrigstad.

The Pedi west of the Steelpoort River and the Bakoni were devastated by Mzilikazi in about 1826. The Pedi retreated into caves and other refuges in the Leolo mountain. Famine and cannibalism prevailed during these times. In the Steelpoort Valley the Pedi recovered under Sekwati but in the Lydenburg and Ohrigstad areas recovery seems to have been delayed. The end of the Iron Age in the Lydenburg area coincided with the arrival of the Ohrig-Potgieter trek in 1845 (Mönnig 1978).

3.3 The Historical Period

The colonial towns closest to the Project Area include Ohrigstad and Lydenburg in the south and Hoedspruit in the north.

The village of Ohrigstad was founded in 1845 by the Voortrekker leader Andries Hendrik Potgieter and his followers. The establishment of the village occurred as a result of political and geographic reasons, namely being close to the port at Lourenco Marques.

Ohrigstad was laid out in the well-watered valley of the present day Ohrigstad River, a tributary of the Olifants River. In June 1845 the town was established with broad streets and a fort for protection. The name chosen was Andries-Ohrigstad in honour of Potgieter and the Dutch benefactor Ohrig.

The residents were tormented by malaria carrying mosquitos and stoically suffered their visitation for three years. However, in the summer of 1848-49 the number of deaths from malaria reached epidemic proportions. Potgieter and some of his followers moved north to the Soutpansberg whilst others moved to Lydenburg. Ohrigstad was finally abandoned in 1849.

The present day village was established in 1923. The main crops of the area are citrus fruit, tobacco and wheat currently grown under irrigation from the Ohrigstad Dam. Other sites of historical interest include:

- The ruins of the original fort and abandoned village occur along the R36. On 10 October 1942 the remains of those who died from malaria and other causes during AD1845 to AD1850 were re-interred under a concrete replica of an ox wagon tilt.
- The Andries Hendrik Potgieter Memorial Hall was inaugurated in 1950 in honour of Andries Potgieter and the other founders of Ohrigstad.

Lydenburg, the ‘town of suffering’ is situated between the Drakensberg Escarpment and the Steenkampsberge and occupies a special place of interest in the former Transvaal Republic.

Lydenburg was founded in 1850 by a faction of Hendrik Potgieter’s Voortrekker party who abandoned their first settlement at Ohrigstad, 45 km further to the north. At the time Ohrigstad was subjected to the scourge of the Lowveld, namely the ubiquitous malaria mosquito. Some of the Voortrekkers moved to the Soutpansberg further north under Potgieter’s leadership while a dissident group moved south-west to establish Lydenburg.

This group of men and women laid out a village on the farms Boschhoek, Waterval and Enkeldoorn in 1849. Due to a lack of water their settlement was also abandoned and in the following year they finally settled on the farm Rietspruit, at the confluence of the Sterkspruit and Spekboom River. They called this village Lydenburg for the misfortunes that had befallen them at Ohrigstad.

The Dutch Reformed parish, the third oldest in the Transvaal Republic was founded in the same year (1850) and the first Dutch Reformed Church building north of the Orange River was finally completed in March 1852. It also served as a school which made it the oldest school building in the former Transvaal.

Lydenburg was one of several pocket republics that were established in the Transvaal by various dissident Voortrekker leaders who differed about the political destiny of their followers. In 1856 Lydenburg seceded from the Transvaal Republic (whose capital was at Potchefstroom) and joined the Republic of Utrecht in the south-east. However, in 1860 both these little states re-joined the Transvaal Republic. Lydenburg featured prominently in the Voortrekkers' quest for a wagon route to Mozambique where they intended to establish a port free from British control.

On 6 February 1873 alluvial gold was discovered in the area by several prospectors and the Lydenburg gold fields were proclaimed three months later.

Today the principal agricultural products of the district are beef, dairy, soya beans, fruit (yellow clingstone peaches), wheat barley, maize, lucerne, tobacco and wool.

Deposits of platinum, chrome, vanadium and magnesite have been found. The gravels of the Spekboom River are still being washed for alluvial gold today (Bergh 1992; Erasmus 1995).

Other heritage resources of significance in Lydenburg include:

- The present Dutch Reformed Church was consecrated in 1894. The pulpit of the church is made of Cape teak and is a model replica of that of the mother church in Stellenbosch.
- During the Anglo Transvaal War (1880-1881) a British garrison under Lieutenant W.H. Long was stationed at Lydenburg and a small fort was built. The fort was named 'Mary' in honour of the commanding officer's wife. After the war the fort fell in dilapidation. In 1899 some of its stones were used to build a powder magazine which still stands today.

- There are two nature reserves, namely the Sterkspruit and the Gustav Klingbeil on the road east to Long Tom Pass. Apart from a treasure house of flora and fauna the latter also contains settlements with agricultural terraces built by Iron Age people.
- Amongst exhibits in the local museum are replicas of seven terracotta heads, the so-called 'Lydenburg heads,' that were found in the Sterkspruit Valley. These objects date from the Early Iron Age (AD500-800). Six of the heads are those of humans while the seventh is some kind of animal.
- The Steenkampsberg mountain range south-west of the town is dominated by 'Die Berg'. At 2 331m above sea level it is the highest peak north of the Vaal River.

The origin of the name of the town of Hoedspruit is unknown. The reverend Frans Lion Cachet of the Dutch Reformed Church held a meeting here as early as 1865. The meeting took place on the original farm which was also known as Hoedspruit. The town was surveyed in 1869. Today the village is the junction where the sixty kilometre branch railway line from Phalaborwa joins the Kaapmuiden-Soekmekaar line.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Surveying, mapping and photographing

The main aim with the investigation of Site LIA01 was to document this settlement as well as all associated features and structures as Site LIA01 will be destroyed when the Lydenburg Smelter's RMF is extended to beyond a tributary of the Dorp Spruit.

The documentation of the site was achieved by means of preparing a ground plan of Site LIA01 as well as ground plans of the historical structures that are associated with the site (HS01, HS02). These maps were compiled after the stone walled complex and the associated historical structures were surveyed with a theodolite. Site LIA01 and its associated historical structures were also photographed. The investigation of Site LIA01 provided evidence regarding the spatial and possible cultural organisation of this settlement as well as information on the additional historical structures which are associated with the archaeological site. The spatial organisation (composition) of Site LIA01 provided some evidence regarding the historical and cultural affiliation of this stone walled site in the Lydenburg area.

Site LIA01 is composed of three different structures, namely a circular and older stone walled complex with two sites both constructed with stone walls located near the northern outer boundary wall and some distance to the south of the outer southern boundary wall of Site LIA01 respectively. These three sites, which are components of a single settlement although they were not contemporaneously occupied, were identified as:

- Site LIA01 which comprises the main settlement
- HS01 which comprises a historical settlement on Site LIA01's northern boundary wall
- HS02 which involves a historical settlement on Site LIA01's southern boundary wall.

4.2 The excavations

It was clear from the initial investigation of Site LIA01 that the site most likely represents a single cultural unit and that no stratigraphic layering or different archaeological (cultural) components will be distinguished in the site. This was confirmed with the few test excavations that were conducted and which did not reveal any stratigraphic layering in any of the test excavations that were conducted. The excavations only revealed an ordinary layering of natural soils in the structures that were excavated.

The excavations were done with shovels in all the spatial units when it became clear that no archaeological deposits or material can be distinguished.

The excavated material was not sieved and this may have caused the loss of possible small items such as small pieces of fragmented potsherds or small glass beads (if these in fact did exist).

No archaeological material such as pottery, faunal remains or any evidence for ash or middens were encountered in any of the test excavations. Neither was any archaeological material visible on the surface of the site except for a few modern items which were encountered in Site LIA01.

Digital photographs of the excavations were taken. No plan or profile drawings of the excavations were done as no archaeological deposits were encountered.

4.3 Detail analysis

No detail analysis of any of the collected material (pottery and faunal remains) was undertaken as limited archaeological material occurred on site.

No evidence for any ash or any remains of charcoal was observed and therefore collected from anywhere on the stone walled site.

5 DOCUMENTATION OF SITE LIA01

5. 1 Stone walled complexes in the larger region

Site LIA01 is merely one of several hundred or perhaps thousands of stone walled sites - depending on which criteria are used to define a single settlement - which are scattered across the Eastern Highveld between Lydenburg in the north and Carolina in the south in the Mpumalanga Province. Google imagery is used to illustrate the presence of large numbers of stone walled complexes near Lydenburg, close to the Project Area.

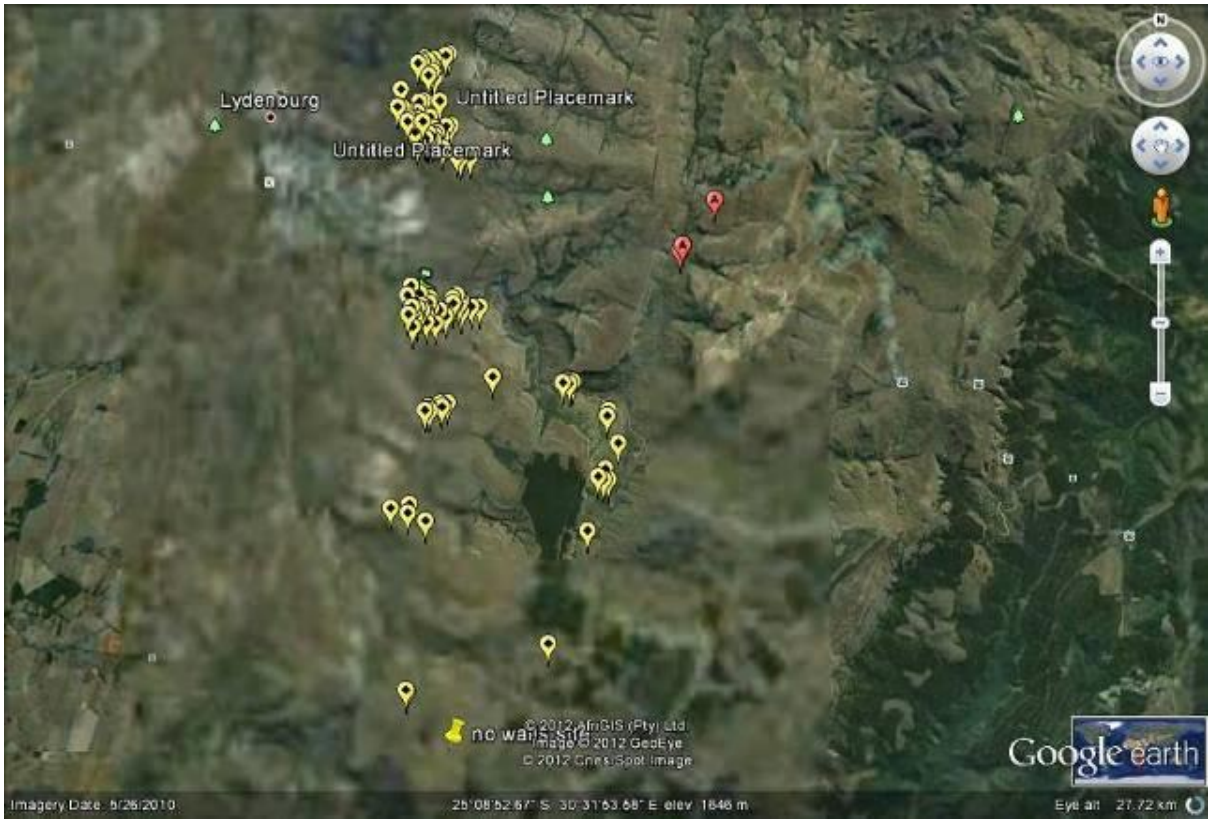

Figure 3- Google Earth image showing the distribution and clustering of stone walled sites near Lydenburg, east of the current Project Area. Most of these stone walled sites are located along altitudes of the Drakensberge and therefore are generally on higher ground than Site LIA01 (above).

The general appearance of some of these complexes are indicated and discussed in a number of Google Images (see Figures 3-7). It seems as if resemblances between

the stone walled complexes are more general than differences and this may suggest that the region was occupied by people with a common origin and culture, possibly from AD1700 onwards. It is highly likely that this cultural affinity lay which people with Nguni and Sotho origins as individual settlements resemble Nguni type of villages (*imizi*) although Sotho characteristics are also part of these settlements.

Figure 4- Closer view of stone walled sites in the Lydenburg area. These settlements are circular in appearance with smaller enclosures located in the central part of the sites. Some of the settlements are fitted with corridors or pathways thet were constructed with stone and which probably acted as cattle tracks. It appears as if these settlements are identical to Site LIA01 close to Lydenburg (above).

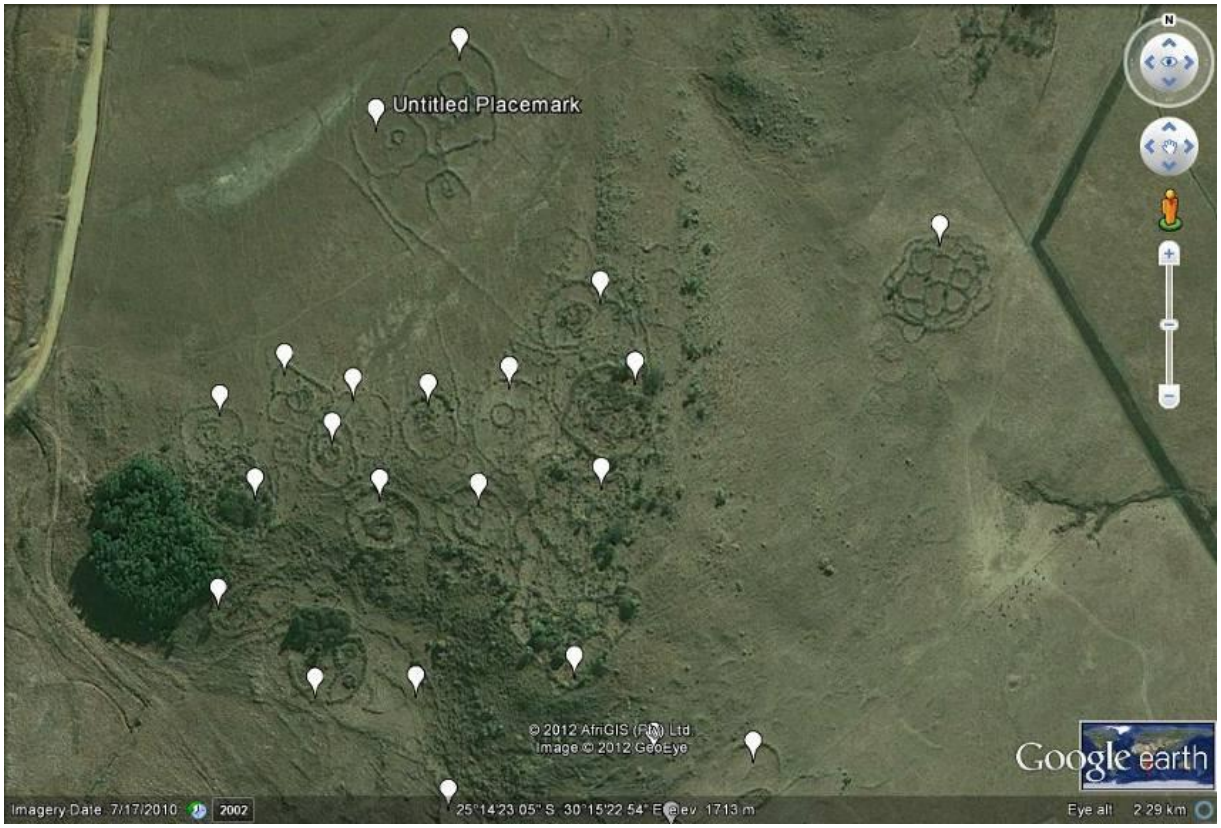

Figure 5- A stone walled complex south of Lydenburg follows a dolerite reef similar to Site LIA01 which was investigated near Lydenburg. Individual settlements in this complex have features and structures that resemble those in Site LIA01. The isolated site located in the top right part of the image clearly differs in spatial composition form the cluster of sites in the bottom of the image (above).

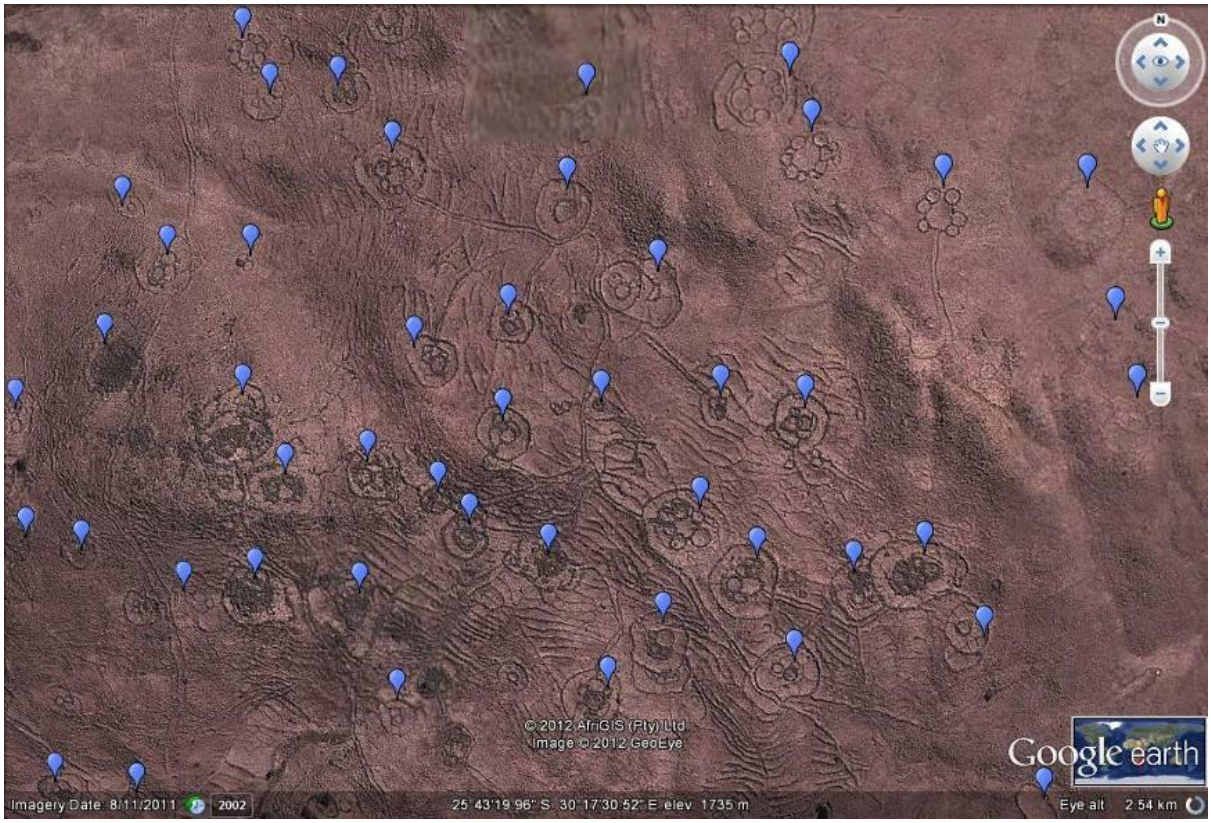

Figure 6 - Clusters of stone walled settlements further south of Lydenburg near Machadodorp. Note the outer circular walls which surround centrally located enclosures, most of which join each other. Also notice the presence of extensive terracing around and between the stone walled sites. Cattle tracks and/or footpaths link settlements with each other and with unoccupied terrain outside these cultural landscapes (above).

Figure 7- Stone walled sites near Machadodorp follow a meandering river and the foot slope of a hill. These sites reveal a similar settlement style than that of Site LIA01 near Lydenburg and indicate how wide these uniform appearing settlements are distributed across the Eastern Escarpment of the Mpumalanga Province (above).

Figure 8. Historical sites which post date AD1840 occurs in close proximity of a stone walled complex near Lydenburg. These historical sites which are composed of square or rectangular structues share similar features to the historical features which occur along the northern and southern boundaries of Site LIA01 (above).

Figure 9- Note square structures which are historical sites (post dating AD1840) in close proximity of earlier stone walled sites to the south of Machadodorp (above).

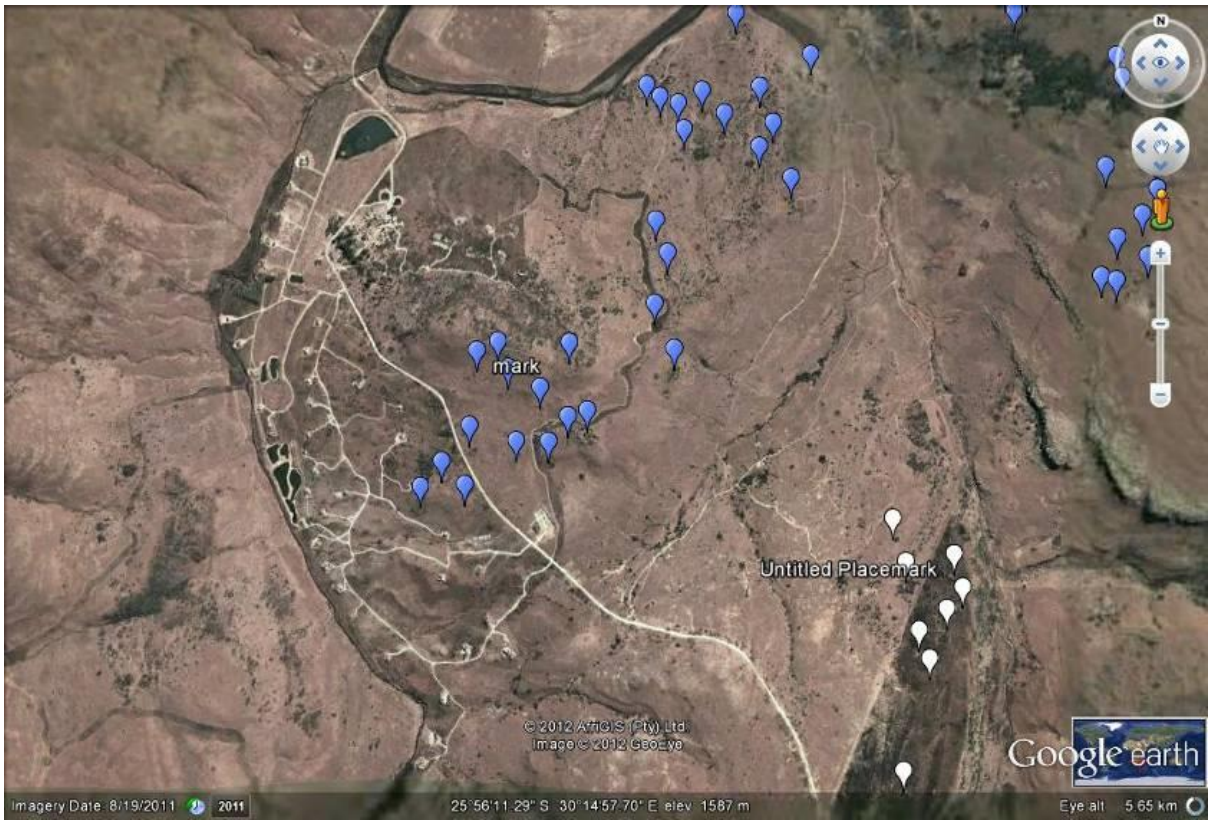

Figure 10- Note contemporary dwellings in close proximity of Late Iron Age stone walled sites to the south of Machadodorp. It seems as if many of the Late Iron Age stone walled sites in the Lydenburg and Machadodorp areas have either historical features themselves or are associated with historical settlements. This suggests cultural-historical continuation between the pre-historical and the historical sites (above).

Figure 11- A historical stone walled site near Machadadorp reflects the transitional character of these sites who have their roots in earlier Late Iron Age settlements which are scattered across the Mpumalanga Escarpment (above).

Figure 12- More examples of transitional stone walled sites. Here, the historical sites were constructed on top of the older Late Iron Age settlements and also recycled the available building material (above).

5.2 Site LIA01

Site LIA01 is circular in shape and is situated along the eastern edge of a long narrow dolerite outcrop to the south of a tributary of the Dorp Spruit. The site therefore is circular in its ground plan and in its general appearance. Its orientation is west to east with the slightly higher elevated part on the dolerite reef facing towards the east. The stone that was used to construct the settlement was collected from the reef and therefore were locally available.

Site LIA01 is located approximately 200m to 300m from the banks of a tributary of the Dorps Spruit and it is most likely that the sites inhabitants collected their drinking water from this source. Domestic animals such as cattle, sheep and goat would have grazed in the immediate surroundings of the site which is flat and covered with grass veld which stretches towards the west and to the east.

Few natural trees are present in the area. Trees that currently occur are exotics such as wattle whilst the most common indigenous vegetation comprises of a low shrubbery which grows on rocky dolerite outcrops and which include species such as 'Bloubos'. The limited tree cover could not have provided in the need for building material such as branches for houses and fences for any long period considering the scale according to which settlement occurred in the region during the last few centuries. Subsequently, very little building material could have been sourced from available trees in the region.

Site LIA01 is still in a pristine condition. No impact of any nature is visible on the site. The fact that Site LIA01 was constructed along a dolerite reef clearly indicates the need for dolerite as building material. Loose dolerite stones were collected from the reef and used in a construction technique which is similar to that which is found amongst most stone walled sites in the North-West and the Mpumalanga Provinces. This building technique comprises the construction of two parallel walls with large to medium-sized dolerite stone which then is filled-in with rubble or with smaller pieces of stone. The walls of these sites are generally low, except in the central part of settlements where structures were used as kraals for domestic stock, and are in many instances collapsed.

The settlement pattern of Site LIA01 therefore is primarily determined by geomorphology and topography. This is also note-able on Google images elsewhere in the region where stone walled sites and particularly large clusters of sites (complexes) are concentrated where rocky outcrops exist. Site LIA01 is circular in shape except where its outer boundary wall joins the dolerite reef where this wall was not completed. The site's circular appearance is common to most of the sites settlements styles that can be observed on Google imagery (Figures 4-12).

Site LIA01 was surveyed in detail and ground plans were compiled for the site and its associated structures. A few test excavations were conducted in this settlement. Site LIA01 also encompasses historical features which are now briefly discussed and illuminated by means of maps and photographs.

Site LIA01 is composed of three spatial components, namely:

- An outer circular wall which encloses and define the settlement.
- The central inner kraal complex which consist of a number of large and small enclosures which are directly joined with each other as well as low stone walls which demarcate circular shaped structures in the central part of the site.
- An intervening space between the outer circular wall and the central kraal complex. Little evidence for any structures or any other features such as foundations for dwellings or stone platforms occurs in association with this spatial component.

The two historical structures which are associated with Site LIA01were designated:

- Historical structure 01 (HS01) near Site's LIA01 northern boundary wall.
- Historical structure 02 (HS02) some distance from Site LIA01's southern boundary wall.

Site LIA01's three spatial components and the additional structures near the sites are now discussed.

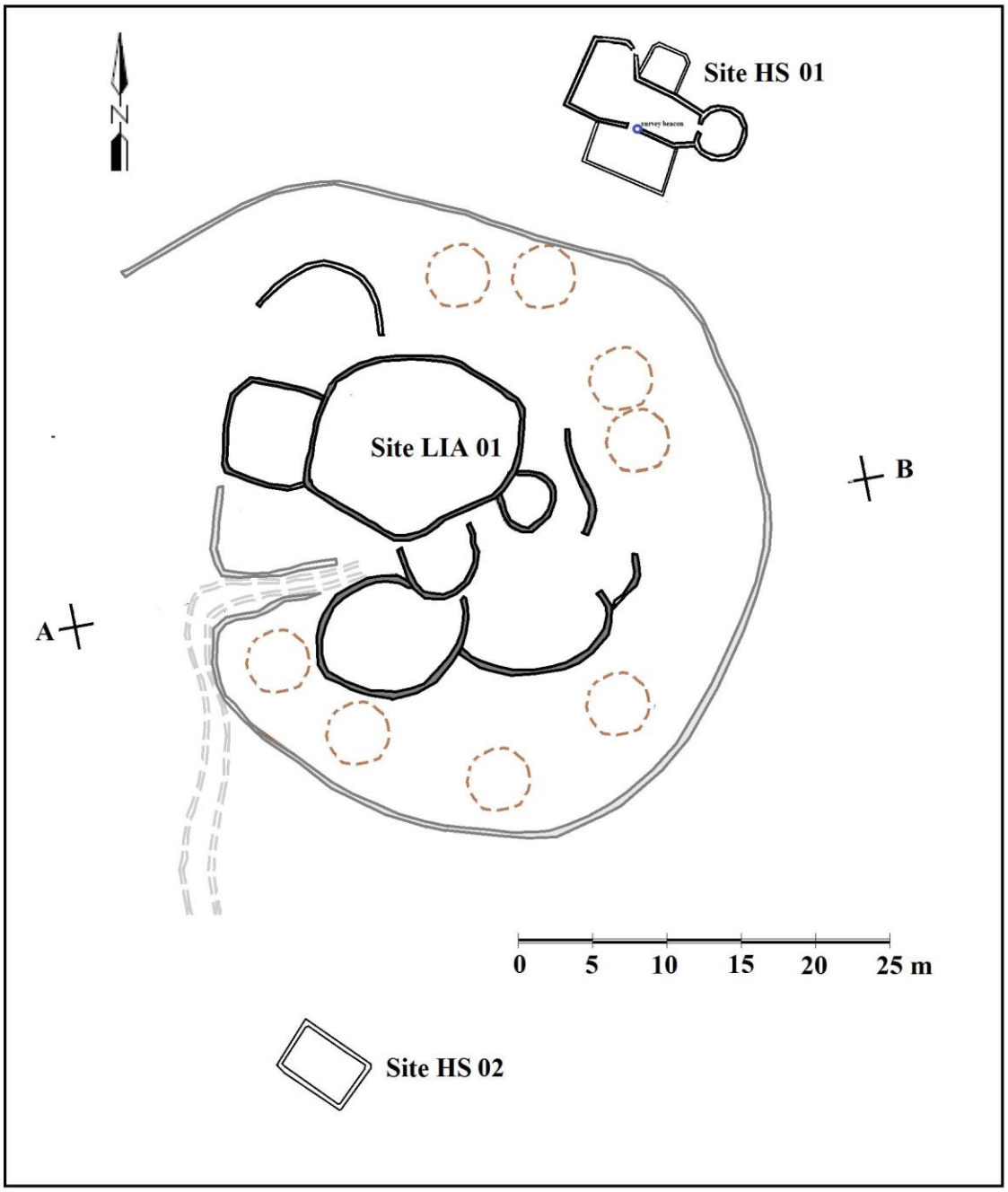

Figure 13- The ground plan of Site LIA01 and its associated historical features (above).

5.2.1 The outer circular wall

Site LIA0'1 outer boundary wall demarcates the settlement as a single entity which can be distinguished from other similar entities or sites whenever these sites occur in clusters.

Site's outer boundary wall is relatively low, approximately 40ch high and seems to have an opening on higher ground along the dolerite reef in the west. This opening probably serves as entrance and exit for both domestic stock and for humans into Site LIA01**.** No clear openings are visible in the large enclosures (E01, E02), but if these existed opposite the entrance it means that domestic stock could easily be directed into these enclosures *via* the entrance without having to circulated the stock through the residential area causing havoc and damage in the residential area whenever the animals got bewildered.

5.2.2 The central inner kraal complex

This unit consists of three enclosures, the main or largest enclosure (E01), the second largest enclosure (E02) and a third square shaped enclosure (E03) which are directly joined to each other. Two small enclosures (SE01, SE02) abut against the largest enclosure whilst a third secondary enclosure (SE03) is joined to all the enclosures in the central part of Site LIA01. This enclosure comprises a low wall with at least two entrances. It clearly had a different function than all the other enclosures which are marked by high walls. The central enclosures were constructed with heavy stone walls and the main enclosures' (E01, E02, E03) walls were higher than 1,2m on average. Both SE01 and SE02 were also fitted with heavy walls although both these small enclosures have lower walls than the main enclosures. Secondary enclosure SE03 merely comprises a low wall which encircles a relatively comfortable large space which is linked with two entrances giving access to this spatial unit. A fourth secondary enclosure (SE04) comprises a low half-circular wall and is not attached to the central kraal complex. It is highly likely that the function and purpose of this structure is more closely link to the intervening space where it served as the outer boundary for a residential unit.

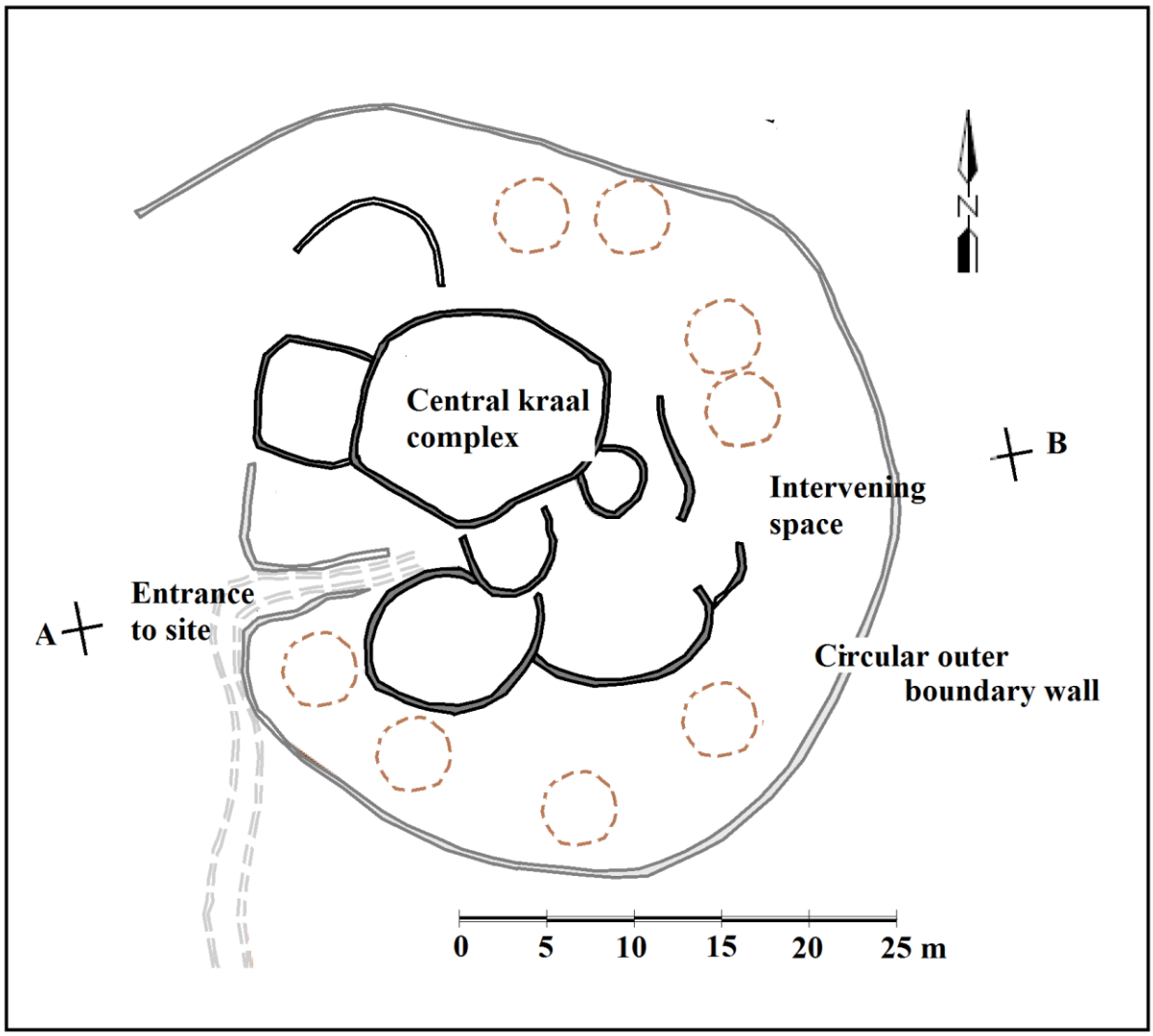

Figure 14- Ground plan of Site LIA01 indicates that the site is composed of three main spatial units: a circular outer boundary wall; central kraal complex comprised of several primary enclosures and an intervening space where possible dwelling structures were constructed (above).

Figures 15 to 18- The circular outer wall which encloses Site LIA01 is low and is fitted with a single entrance on its western boundary (top left). The entrance into Site LIA01 runs along a dolerite reef and gives access to the residential area and the central kraal complex (top, right). The main enclosure (E01) in Site LIA01 is approximately 35m in diameter (below, left and right).

Figures 19 & 20 - View across the second largest enclosure (SE02) in Site LIA01 which is approximately twenty five meters in diameter (above and below).

Figures 21 & 22- The third largest enclosure in Site LIA01 (E03) has a square ground plan and was solidly constructed. E03 joins the main enclosure (E01) near the entrance to the site (above and below).

5.3 The intervening space

An intervening space occurs between the outer circular wall and the central kraal complex of Site LIA01. This near complete circular tier runs from next to the entrance in Site LIA01 in the west around the central kraal complex to join E03 which is also located on the western perimeter of Site LIA01.
This tier is devoid of any visible structures or other features except for SE04. As stated earlier it is most likely that semi-enclosure SE04 served as the outer boundary for one of the dwellings that used to exist in.

5.4 Additional structures

Two additional structures occur in association with Site LIA01. These structures are historical in nature as they both were constructed with square and rectangular walls. Consequently, both were established after Colonial contact have occurred in the Lydenburg area, namely AD1840.

5.4.1 Historical structure 01 (HS01)

This structure comprises the composition of at least two rectangular structures, a circular structure and a square structure with each other. HS01 is located near Site LIA01's northern boundary wall. An upright stone (monolith) has been erected in the entrance to the smaller rectangular room.

5.4.2 Historical structure 02 (HS02)

This structure consists of a single rectangular structure. HS02 is located some distance from Site LIA01's southern boundary wall.

Figures 23 to 26 - Historical structure 01 comprises two rectangular, a square and a half-circular composition of structures near the northern boundary wall of Site LIA01 (above and below). Note the monolith at the entrance to the smaller rectangular room in Site LIA01 (below, left).

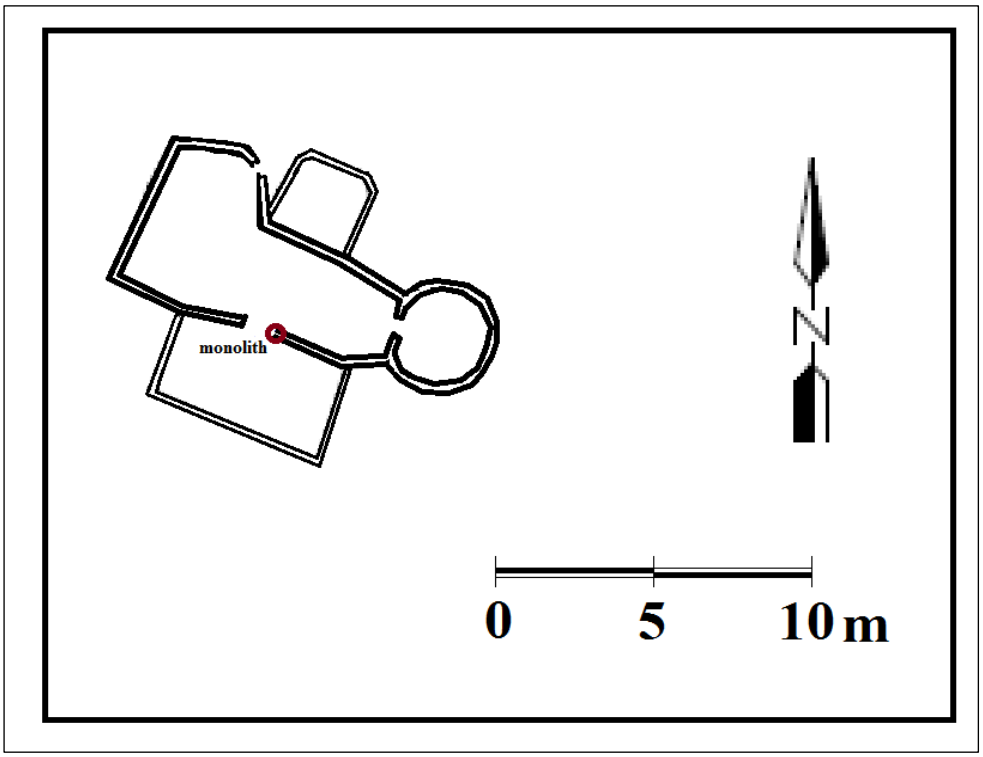

Figure 27 - The ground plan of Historical Structure 01 indicates two rectangular, a square and a semi-circular structure which adjoins each other (above). HS02 represents a multi-roomed residential unit (above).

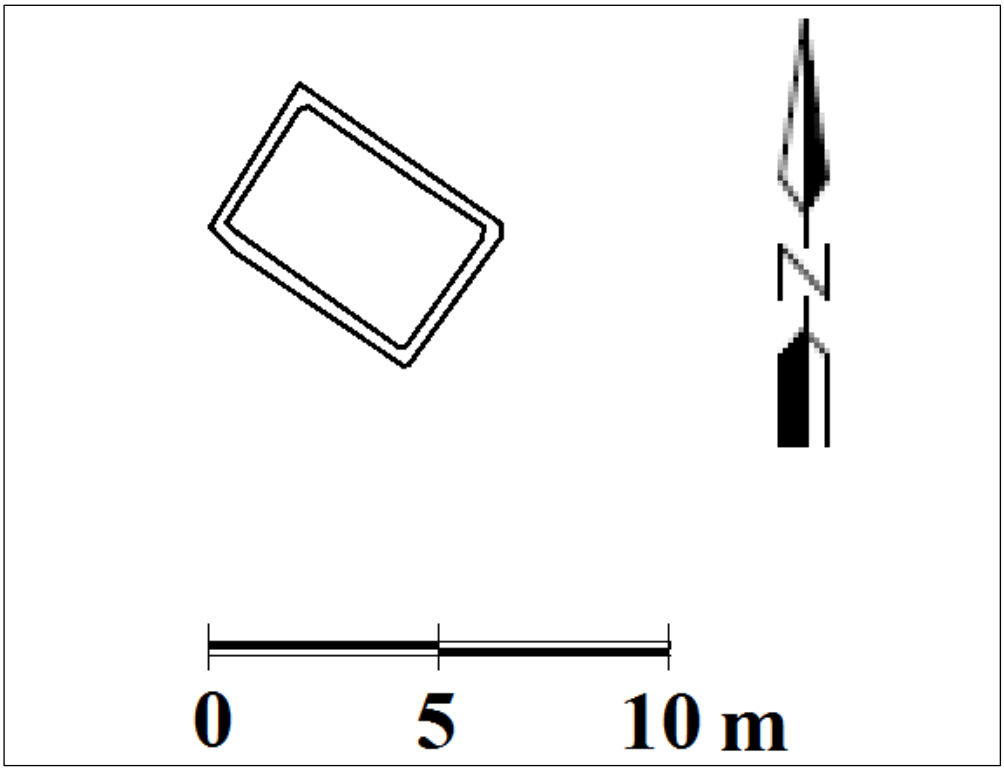

Figure 28 – The ground plan of HS01 comprises a single rectangular structure which represents the remains of a single dwelling. Both HS01 and HS02 dates from the colonial era and both were probably utilised after AD1850 (above).

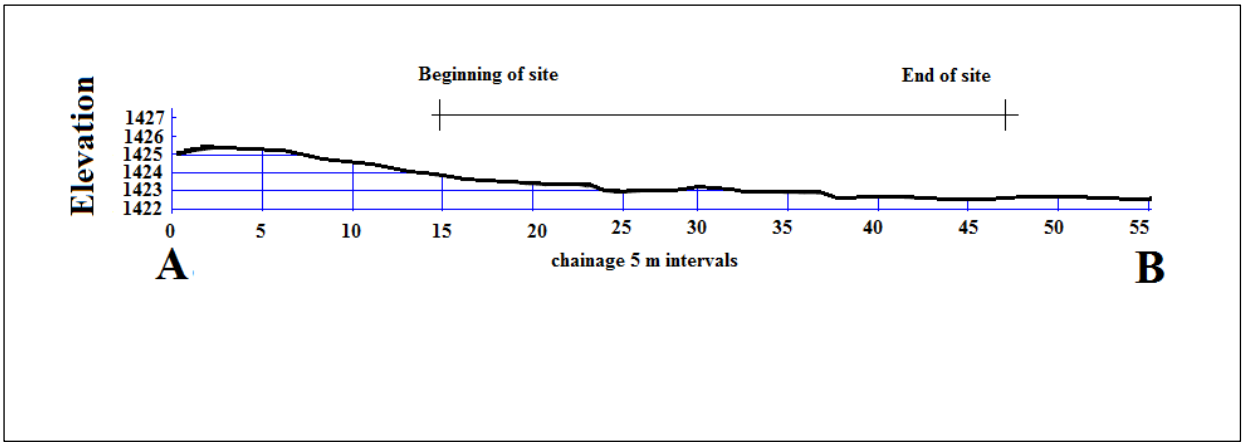

Figure 29- Cross section A-B (see figure 13 above) from dolerite reef (west) to flat ground (east) shows elevation of Site LIA01 which faces eastwards across a grass plain towards a tributary of the Dorpspruit (above). (Elevation is shown in meters above sea level).

5.5 The excavations

The excavations that were conducted in Site LIA01 were limited to a number of test trenches and squares that were dug in two main spatial units of the settlement, namely:

- The outer tier that encircles the centrally located enclosures. The outer tier was divided into a northern, eastern and southern section which was created between the continuous outer wall which encircles the settlement and the central located enclosures.
- The central complex of enclosures is constituted by a number of enclosures (E01 to E03) which join each other or which are linked with each other via secondary enclosures (SE01 to SE04) which comprise half-circular walls.

The outer tier of the settlement was used for domestic space and therefore was utilized as living areas whilst the centrally located enclosures may have been used to pen domestic space. This spatial organisation is in accordance with Sotho-Tswana and Nguni settlement patterns.

Historical structure 01 was cleared from all vegetation and some of the soil which covered the remains of the structure was removed.

Figures 30 & 31 – Feature 01 in the eastern part of the residential tier in Site LIA01 indicates straight stone lines which probably served as foundations for dwellings or as foundation stones for hedges between dwellings which occur in demarcated areas along the residential component of Site LIA01 (above and below).

5.5.1 The outer tier or ring

Two squares and two spots were respectively excavated and cleared in the northern, eastern and southern sections of the outer tier of Site LIA01. These squares and spots varied in sizes and were not excavated to bedrock but were exccuted with the purpose to expose features that are associated with the dwellings that used to exist in the domestic space of Site LIA01. The layers of soil that were removed included:

- A thin upper lens with humus.
- A layer consisting of black clay soil which was not excavated until bedrock was reached.

No plan drawings were made as the photographs adequately illuminate the nature of the structures and features that are associated with residential remains in Site LIA01. The outer ring served as the residential area of Site LIA01 but no evidence for any living surface such as clay floors was encountered. Although the straight and half circular lines of upright stones did not allow for a clear understanding of the nature of dwelling structures in the site it suggests a possible mix of residential units for families which may have included circular as well as rectangular foundations for dwellings and foundations for hedges (fences) which demarcated different residential (family) units from each other.

What was clear is that no hut floors were constructed with clay. Nor was any clay used to build the walls of the houses. No evidence for any hut floors were found whilst half-circular and straight lines of stones may have served as part of the foundation stones or perimeters for dwellings.

By clearing and excavating the total residential tier of Site LIA01, as well as other sites similar to Site LIA01, it is most likely that a definite understanding of the spatial (and social) organisation of these kinds of settlements can be obtained.

5.5.2 The central enclosures

Three trenches were excavated across the widest diameter of the three largest enclosures which compose the central located enclosures. All three trenches were

excavated until bedrock was reached, between 20 to 25cm deep. An identical layering of natural soil was encountered in all these structures comprising of the following, namely:

- A thin upper lens with humus followed by red soil.
- A layer with regiolith.

Figures 32 & 33 – Feature 02 and Feature 03 in the southern part of the residential tier in Site LIA01 indicate half-circular stone lines which probably served as foundations for dwellings or as foundation stones for hedges erected between dwellings which occur in this residential component of Site LIA01 (above and below).

Figures 34 to 36 – Excavated test trenches in the three largest enclosures in the central kraal complex revealed an identical layering of soil consisting of a thin upper lens with humus followed by red soil (above, centre and below).

Figures 37 & 38 – The excavation in E03 encountered sterile soil except for a double thumb sized piece of thin glass which was found directly above the regiolith (left). All excavations in the kraal complex ended in sterile regiolith (right).

5.5.3 Historical structure 01

Historical structure 01 (HS01) was cleared from all vegetation and the soil which covered the visibility of the structure was removed.

A single rubbing stone was found in association with this structure which has largely collapsed. It seems as if HS01 may have served as a single rectangular shaped room.

Figures 39 & 40 - HS01 seems to be a rectangular one roomed structure which has totally collapsed (left and right).

6 THE FINDS

The finds from the excavations mainly comprised of the following:

6.1 Metal items

At least four metal items were found on the site. These items clearly have a historical affinity.

Figures 41 & 42 - Pieces of metal wares from the surface of Site LIA01 (above and below).

Figures 43 to 45 – Metal wares from Site LIA01 include hoops (above), the top lid of a cooking pot (top right) and a part of a container (bottom).

6.2 Stone artefacts

Three stone artefacts which were all probably used as rubbing stones were collected from the surface of the site, in association with HS01 and

Figures 46 to 49 - Rubbing and grinding stones from the surface of Site LIA01 (top left and right, bottom).

6.3 Potsherds

Less than ten small pieces of potsherds were excavated from E02. All the potsherds were not diagnostic.

6.4 Glass

A piece of thin transparent glass the size of two thumbnails was excavated from E03.

7 CONCLUSION

The Mpumalanga Escarpment and lowveld served as homeland for the Bokoni people from AD1700 onwards, but perhaps earlier as well. When the Maroteng (Rota, Pedi) moved across the Crocodile River from the south-west (Marapjane) into Mpumalanga during AD1650 they encountered Koni splinter groups who eventually, at the height of the Koni's existence (AD1800), occupied a swath of land stretching from the Steelpoort in the north across Lydenburg and Ohrigstad to Sabie in the east. Further to the south the Bokoni sphere of influence incorporated Badfontein, the Belfast district (including the Project Area) and Carolina in the south. The limited archaeological research which has been done in this region (Lydenburg) provided radio carbon dates for the late 17th century or early 18th century whilst Marateng ceramics predates a stone walled settlement at one of the sites which was investigated.

The vast Bokoni sphere of influence is evident from oral history which outlines the settlement history of this group. Historical evidence also describes the expansion of the Pedi chiefdom from the Steelpoort region which was accompanied by clashes between successive Pedi chiefs such as Moukangwe, Morwamotse and Sekwati with Koni groups such as the Kgomane (Lydenburg/Dullstroom) and the Koni living at the stronghold Kutwane near Badfontein. At least one of the sons of a Pedi chief, namely Makopole the eldest son of Thulare, is also described as 'a chief of the Bakoni' who lived near Lydenburg.

Some of the archaeological evidence available for the distribution of stone walled sites in Mpumalanga corresponds with historical descriptions of the Bokoni sphere of influence. Stone walled sites are located in a north to south running belt stretching from Lydenburg/Ohrigstad in the north to Carolina in the south. These settlements tend to cluster around rivers such as the Komati, Elands, Crocodile, Sabi, Spekboom and Dwars Rivers. The archaeological identity that was used to described this archaeological region, or the 'whole archaeological package' including pottery and the architectural styles of the stone walled settlements is called the Marateng tradition.

The northern part of the Bokoni region incorporates rugged terrain such as the Leolo Mountain range and the Dwars River Valley in the Steenkampsberg as well as mountainous terrain around Lydenburg and Ohrigstad and Badfontein further to the south-east. The southern part of the Bokoni homeland, however, comprises an undulating rolling but open landscape with outstretched grass veld and shallow river valleys. This geography was important during times of turmoil and instability when groups preferred to move into rugged terrain which offered defensible opportunities whilst the open terrain remained indefensible and vulnerable to Bokoni communities who kept large herds of cattle and pursuit agricultural practices.

The Bokoni region's climate and environment in general offered excellent opportunities for a mixed farming existence. This is visible from the archaeological evidence as reflected by the spatial composition and layout of individual sites and clusters of settlements. Soft hill slopes are covered with extensive terraces that abut against most of the stone walled sites and it is assumed that crops such as maize were cultivated on these terraced fields. The large numbers of centrally located enclosures in most of the stone walled sites are assumed to have been used for stock and most probably for the penning of large stock such as cattle. This is further supported by the presence of intrinsic networks of stone walled cattle tracks linking settlements with grazing fields. It is accepted by some authors that the high occurrence of agricultural terraces in conjunction with central enclosures in Bokoni settlements may attest to intense farming in this region with the possibility of a surplus production which may have found its way into the Mpumalanga coastal trade system.

The Bokoni people may have been ruled by a number of dominant lineage clusters that were comprised of an amalgam of diverse ethnic groups each having an own history of origin, language, culture and traditions. These groups were in a constant process of transformation, fission and fusion whilst moulding an own identity. Although the Bokoni people therefore may have, had different languages, lifestyles, customs and traditions, a Bokoni identify may have also have been shaped, predominantly, by a particular mode of existence. The adaptation of the Bokoni to its particular environment therefore may have contributed to a unique Bokoni identity.

The spatial organisation of Site LIA01 reflects both Sotho as well as Nguni features. Nguni features include a circular ground plan which is composed of two main spatial units, namely a central place with enclosures (kraals for domestic stock) and an outer tier where residences were built. The central place in the Nguni capital usually only holds a single cattle enclosure with a parade ground. Both these spatial components also occur in Sotho Tswana settlements although the dwellings for families and family groups in the outer residential areas were clearly defined whilst several linked cattle enclosures were located in the centre of the village.

No radiocarbon dates were collected from Site LIA01 due to the absence of any charcoal or human remains in the settlement. Diachronic evidence such as colonial artefacts (metal wares and glass) and an adapted (modern) layout for certain elements in Site LIA01 indicates that this site dates from the more recent past.

Very little could be established about the building features of the dwellings which are associated with Site LIA01. However, the absence of any burnt clay from the remains of the huts as well as the absence of any clear foundation stones and hut floors suggest that the dwellings may have been constructed with branches and grass. The dwellings therefore may perhaps have been bee-hived shape huts, similar to those which were used by Nguni communities. This building feature may have been necessitated by the absence of clay and branches which were needed to construct Sotho-styled cone-on-cylinder types of dwellings and/or by the fact that this building feature was brought about by a Nguni influence.

The economic subsistence of the occupants of the stone walled complex is uncertain as no animal bone waste material or any other evidence, except enclosures for keeping stock indicating that some form of farming was practised was found in the site. The central located enclosures in all the settlements suggest that most of these structures were probably used to pen domestic animals such as cattle. Smaller enclosures may have served as dwellings but also as enclosures for small such as coat and sheep.

Although no agricultural terraces were observed in conjunction with Site LIA01 these may in fact exist but may be hidden by the tall grass cover which surrounded the site

at the time when the investigation was done. Not a single upper or lower grinding stone was found on the site nor were any other evidence found which may reflect some kind of agricultural activities.

As no animal bone waste material (or any middens) were found in the complex no assumptions about the collection of food, particularly meat and therefore hunting practises could be made. However, it can be expected that the occupants of the complex did practise some kind of hunting, gathering and collecting.

No iron hoes or any other iron or metal artefacts or items were found. No agricultural was possible without any iron hoes. Neither was any evidence for permanent (stone) platforms found on which grain caskets [manufactured from clay (*sefala)* or grass (*sesigo*)] in the residential unit. These structures usually occur near hearths where food was prepared.

The absence of wood for building and construction, heating, cooking and other general purposes had a pronounced influence on the life ways of the inhabitants of the stone walled complex. If cattle dung was used as a source for fuel, accumulations of thick concentrations of 'ash' would have been found. This practise still persists and was observed on the outskirts of Balfour where cattle dung was stored on a cattle kraal's wall to dry before it is being used.

Although literature links intensified mixed farming in the Bokoni sphere of influence with the Mpumalanga trade system the evidence collected during this investigation did reveal any evidence for trade at this settlement.

It is highly likely that Site LIA01 together with other stone walled sites in the general area served as part of the Bokoni sphere of influence and therefore may have been occupied by Koni groups from AD1650 onwards. It is however unlikely that Site LIA01 was occupied as early as this date suggests. The historical features that are incorporated in Site LIA01 rather suggest that this site was occupied from AD1780 and experienced contact with colonials from AD1840 onwards where after these settlements were abandoned during the second half of the nineteenth century.

Most of these settlements were located on open terrain which was difficult to defend. During the first half of the 19th century numerous groups moved through the Mpumalanga lowveld, some of whom raided the area whilst others remained in the area for periods of time. These groups included the Nguni of Zwide and Mzilikazi, armed men under the leadership of Sobhuza, Soshangaan, Zwangendaba and Nxaba. The Koni experienced severe raids from Sobhuza's Swazi from AD1810's whilst the Ndwandwe settled in the Steelpoort from the AD1820's whilst the Ndzundza-Ndebele excecised a mounted pressure on the Koni from AD1826 onwards.

Not only did the expansion of the Swazi chiefdom pushed communities outwards from the northern borders of Swaziland onto the Eastern Highveld but the Swazi expansion also lead to the establishment of Swazi capitals such as Hhohho (Northern Swaziland), Mbhuleni (Carolina), Mjindini (west of Barberton) and Mekkemeke (east of Barberton) on the borders of the Bokoni homeland during 1850 and 1860. Historical evidence indicates that Swazi expansion, raids and attacks wore the local inhabitants down and that they barely kept any domestic stock during the second half of the nineteenth century. It is most likely that historical events like these as well as the Mpumalanga trade system which flourished in the Komati River Valley near the southern perimeter of the Bokoni sphere of influence may have exacerbated conflict in this area and may have caused the abandonment of Site LIA01.

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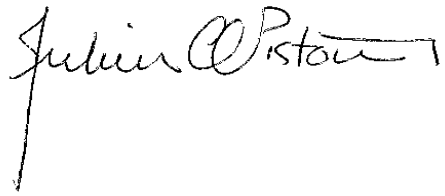

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