

ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT PORTION 10 OF FARM 787 VAN WYKS RIVER, PAARL WESTERN CAPE

Prepared for:

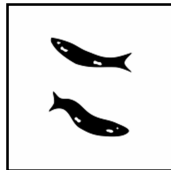
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Applicant:

IMPERIAL PROPERTIES

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Executive summary

ACRM was commissioned to conduct an Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) for the proposed development of Portion 10 of Farm 787 Van Wyks River near Paarl, in the Western Cape.

The subject property is located about 10 km south of Paarl, between the N1 and the Old Paarl Road/R101.

The proposed project entails a light industrial/commercial office space development covering a footprint area of about 10 ha.

Heritage Western Cape (Case No. 120508SD11E) requested that a Heritage Impact Assessment (or HIA), comprising an archaeological and cultural landscape study must be done, before granting approval for the proposed development.

Heritage practitioner, Lize Malan has been commissioned to coordinate the HIA, which forms part of the Basic Assessment Process that is being conducted by Guillaume Nel Environmental Consultants.

The proposed site is a vacant strip of highly degraded land, covered in a thick matt of indigenous Kweek, long dry pasture grass, and Port Jackson. Archaeological visibility is very poor. Extensive landscape modification of the property has taken place. The heavily degraded Van Wyks River meanders alongside the Old Paarl Road. The site was previously used for agriculture and is currently being grazed. Surrounding land use comprises agriculture, vacant land, roads and light industry.

A field study was undertaken on 14 February 2013, but no archaeological heritage was documented during the survey.

The results of the study indicate that the proposed development of industrial and commercial erven on Portion 10 of Farm 787 Van Wyks River will not impact on any important archaeological heritage, as the site is already in a severely degraded condition.

The following recommendations are made:

1. No archaeological mitigation is required.
2. If any unmarked human remains are uncovered or exposed during earthworks, these must immediately be reported to the archaeologist (J Kaplan 082 321 0172), or Heritage Western Cape (Mr T. Smuts 021 483 9543).

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1. INTRODUCTION

ACRM was commissioned by Imperial Properties to conduct an Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) for the proposed development of Portion 10 of Farm 787 Van Wyks River near Paarl, in the Western Cape (Figures 1 & 2).

The subject property is located about 10 km south of Paarl, between the N1 and the Old Paarl Road/R101.

The proposed project entails a light industrial, commercial and office space development covering a footprint area of about 10 ha (Figure 3). Associated infrastructure includes engineering services and internal streets. The Van Wyks River which meanders alongside the R101, and is currently very degraded, will be restored and rehabilitated.

A Notification of Intent to Develop (NID) was completed by M. M. Van Zyl and submitted to Heritage Western Cape (HWC) for comment. In a letter dated 28 November, 2012 (Case No. 120508SD11E) HWC requested that a HIA, comprising an archaeological and cultural landscape study, must be done before granting approval for the development to proceed.

The HIA, which is being coordinated by heritage practitioner Lize Malan, forms part of the Environmental Basic Assessment Process that is being conducted by Guillaume Nel Environmental Consultants.



Figure 1. Locality map indicating the site for the proposed development

Archaeological Impact Assessment, Portion 10 of Farm 787 Paarl

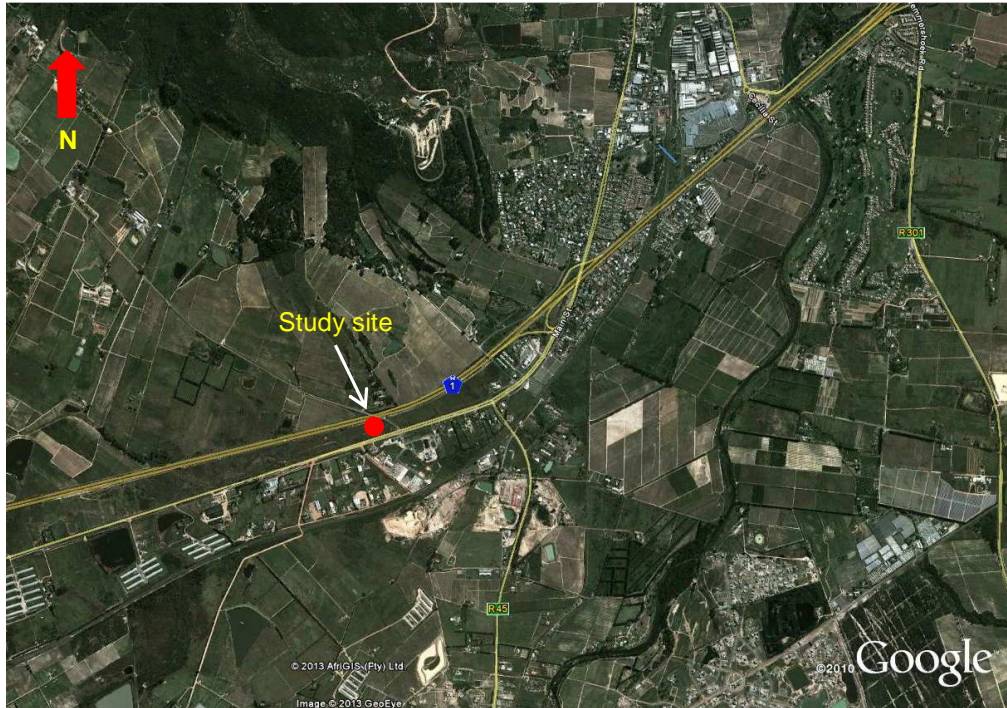


Figure 2. Aerial photograph indicating the location of the proposed site near Paarl.

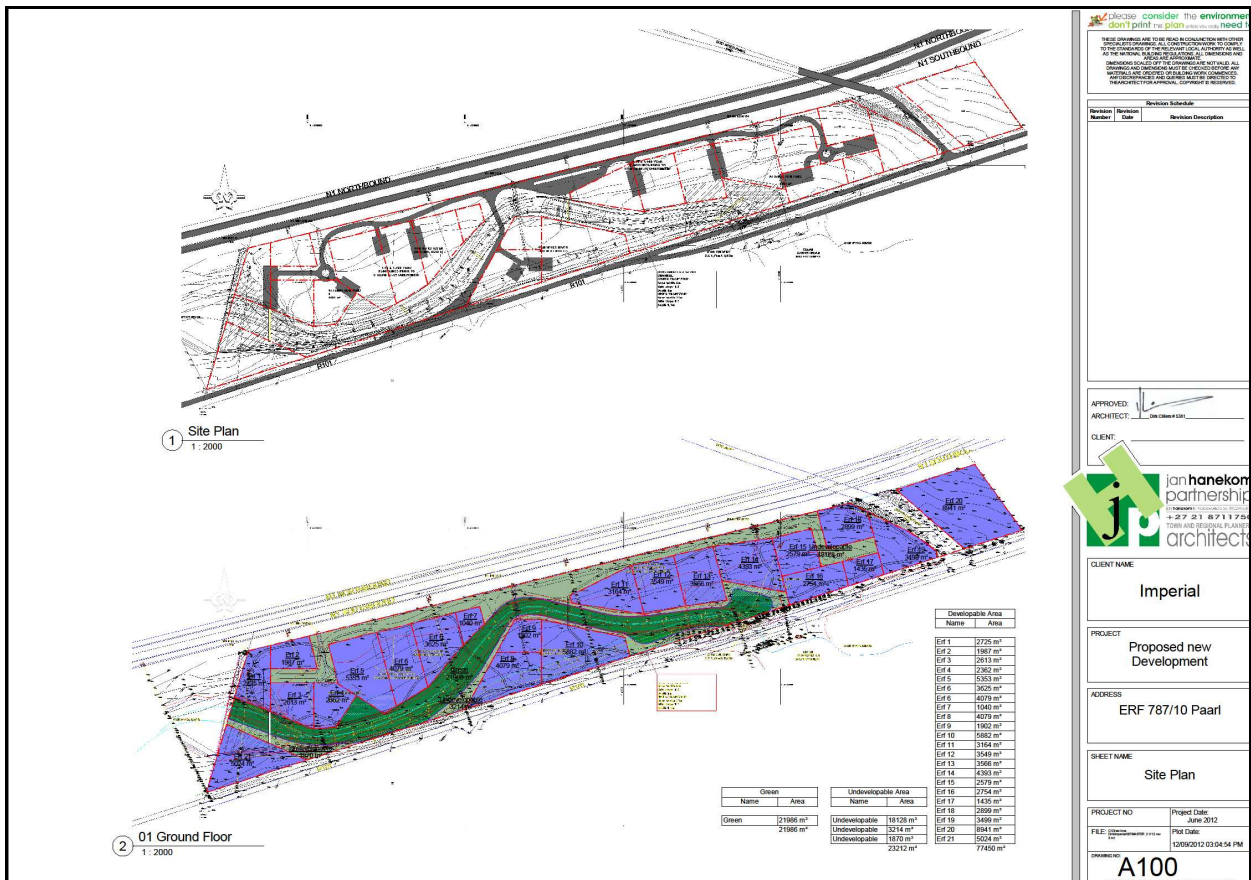


Figure 3. Portion 10 of Farm 787: Proposed site development plan

2. HERITAGE LEGISLATION

The National Heritage Resources Act (Act No. 25 of 1999) makes provision for a compulsory Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) when an area exceeding 5000 m² is being developed. This is to determine if the area contains heritage sites and to take the necessary steps to ensure that they are not damaged or destroyed during development.

3. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The terms of reference for the archaeological study were:

- To identify and map archaeological heritage that might be impacted by the proposed development;
- To assess the sensitivity and conservation significance of archaeological heritage on the proposed site
- To assess the status and significance of any impacts resulting from the proposed development, and
- To identify measures to protect any valuable archaeological heritage that may exist within the proposed site.

4. DESCRIPTION OF THE RECEIVING ENVIRONMENT

Portion 10 of Farm 787 Van Wyks River is located between the N1 and the Old Paarl Road/R101 and the intersection of the Agter Paarl Road, about 10 kms south of Paarl (Figure 4).

The site is currently vacant and fairly level, but extensive landscape modification has taken place in the past. Building material was imported onto the site sometime in the 1990s, and the course of the Van Wyks River, which drains the site from the N1, has also been severely altered (Harding 2011). Much of the top soil has over the site has already been lost. Dumping is also quite widespread. Several drainage ditches bisect the property from the N1 which drain into the Van Wyks River. A temporary concrete pillar wall and diamond mesh fence runs alongside the N1. The property is covered in a thick matt of indigenous Kweek and long dry pasture grasses. There are remnants of some vines in the north eastern portion alongside R101 suggesting that some agricultural activity has taken place in the past. Examination of the aerial photograph of the property appears to confirm this (refer to Figure 11). There is very little natural vegetation left on the site and grazing by cattle is also evident. The southern portion of the site is covered in very thick grass and infested with new growth Port Jackson (Figures 5-10). There is a gravel road and several small tracks that intersect the site, and a barely visible twee spoor track that runs alongside the river, which meanders mostly alongside the Old Paarl Road. The river which is fairly narrow with very steep sides is clogged with reeds. Some road works has taken place in the south, near the Agter Paarl Road/R101 intersection. Surrounding land use is agricultural north of the N1, roads, vacant land, and light industry alongside the R101.

Archaeological Impact Assessment, Portion 10 of Farm 787 Paarl

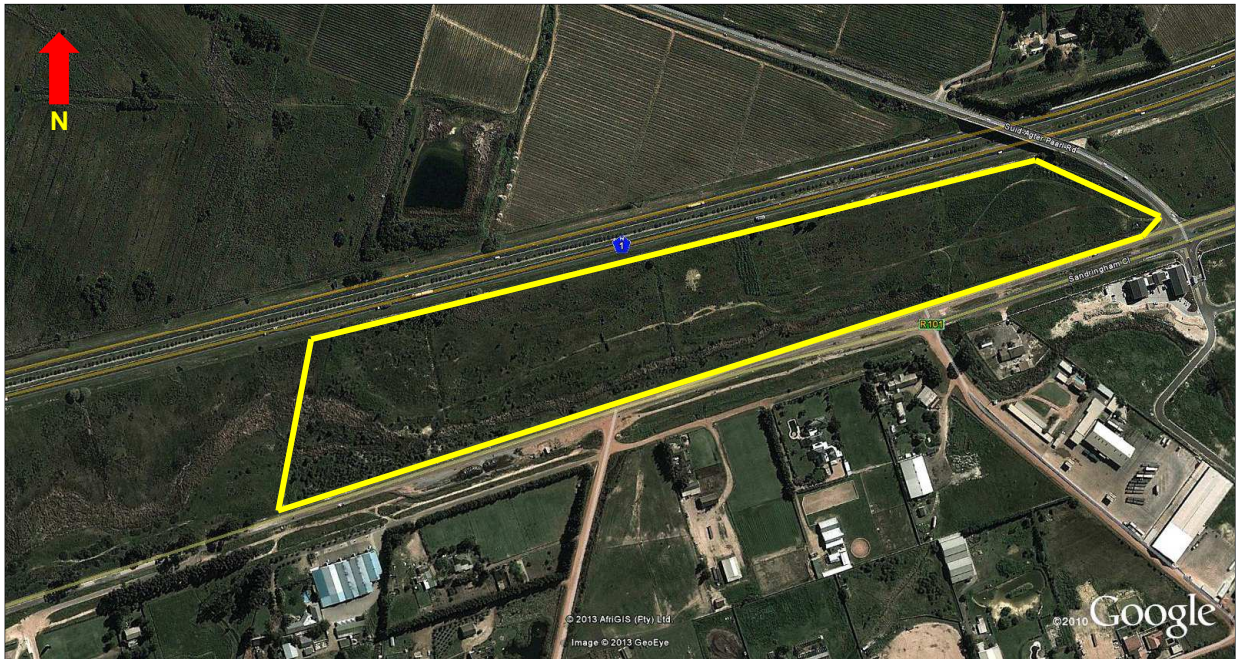


Figure 4. Google Earth image of the proposed development site,



Figure 5. View of the site facing west from the Agter Paarl Road Intersection. The N1 is to the right of the plate. Note the boundary wall alongside the N1



Figure 6. View of the site facing north east. The Helderberg Mountains are in the distance. The N1 boundary wall is to the left of the plate.



Figure 7. View of the site facing north east with the Helderberg Mountains in the distance. Note the extremely thick, long dry pasture grass.



Figure 8. View of the site facing north east



Figure 9. View of the site facing west



Figure 10. View of the site facing north east from the western boundary. Note the very dense young Port Jackson.

5. STUDY APPROACH

5.1 Method

A fairly random, but reasonably detailed walk through survey of the proposed development site was undertaken (refer to Figure 11). A desk top study was also done

The field study took place on the 14th February, 2013.

5.2 Constraints and limitations

Apart from the gravel road that cuts through the proposed site, almost the entire property is covered in a thick matt of Kweek and long dry pasture grass, while the southern portion is infested with new Port Jackson. As a result, archeological visibility is very poor.

5.3 Identification of potential risks

Given the extremely disturbed nature of the subject property, it is the archaeologist's professional opinion that there are no archaeological risks associated with the proposed development.

5.4 Results of the desk top study

The Paarl region provides glimpses into our earliest pre-colonial history. The historic town was first settled by Dutch speaking farmers in the late 1600's and Khoekhoe Herders were known to have occupied the landscape in the latter part of the 17th Century (O'Donoghue 2011). Even before Herder settlement more than 1000 years ago, Early Stone Age (ESA) people roamed the landscape, more than 250 000 years ago. Their

presence is evident in the form of the many stone implements that are found in the area. Ancient ESA tools in Paarl are encountered in agricultural fields (wheat lands & vineyards) and often among surface river gravels alongside the Berg River, as well as on the slopes and hills surrounding the town, in quarries and along gravel farm roads. These include mostly crude stone flakes, angular chunks and large round cores, but occasionally formal retouched tools such as pear-shaped handaxes, cleavers and choppers are also found (Kaplan 2011a, b, 2010a, b, 2005). While Middle (MSA) and Later Stone Age (LSA) implements are quite rare, these have sometimes also been recorded (Kaplan 2007). ESA and MSA tools have also been found by this archaeologist on top of Paarl Mountain, as well as on several wine farms on the western side of the mountain, alongside the Agter Paarl Road. The Paarl Museum also houses a collection of Stone Age material that has been collected from the surrounding region. It is also interesting to note that some farmers in the region have amassed their own, quite impressive, personal collections (Kaplan 2011a).

6. RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

No archaeological heritage was encountered during the field study.

7. IMPACT STATEMENT

Even though archaeological visibility was very poor, the results of the study indicate that the proposed development of Portion 10 of the Farm 787 Van Wyks River will not impact on any important archaeological heritage.

8. CONCLUSION

The study has identified no impacts to the archaeological heritage that will need to be mitigated prior to the proposed activities.

It is highly unlikely that any important archaeological heritage will be exposed during preparation of the site for development, as the site is already severely degraded.

The receiving environment is not a threatened or vulnerable archaeological landscape.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

With regard to the proposed development of Portion 10 of Farm 787 Van Wyks River near Paarl, the following recommendations are made:

1. No archaeological mitigation is required.
2. If any unmarked human remains are uncovered or exposed during earthworks, these must immediately be reported to the archaeologist (J Kaplan 082 321 0172), or Heritage Western Cape (Troy Smuts 021 483 9543)

10. REFERENCES

Harding, W. R. H. 2010. Aquatic Assessment Stream and Wetland Report: Portion 10 of the Farm Van Wyk's River, Paarl. Final Report. Report prepared for Guillaume Nel Environmental Consulting. DH Environmental Consulting South Africa.

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Appendix I

Track path of survey

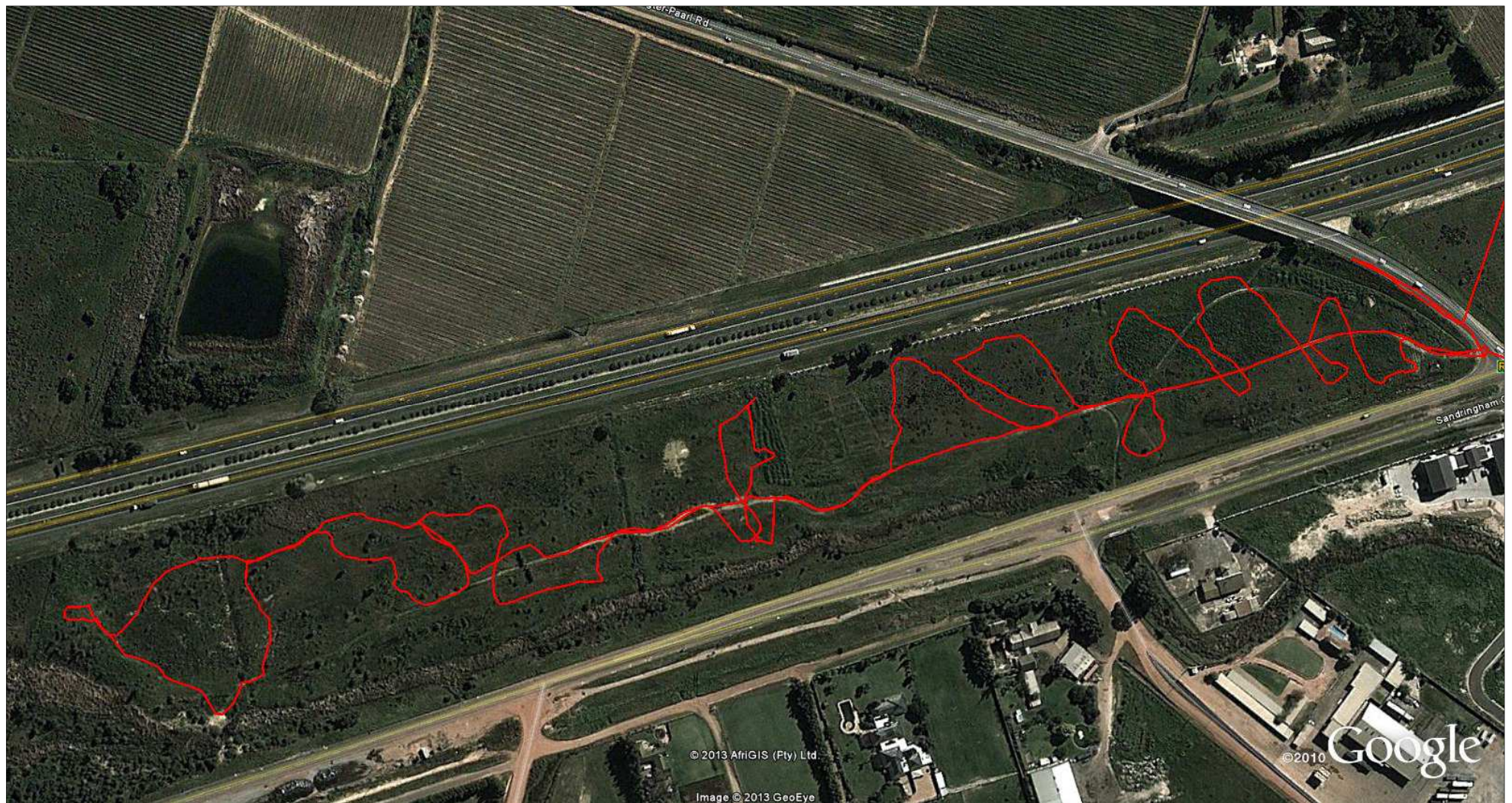


Figure 11. Track path of the archaeological survey