

ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

S24G Application, illegal agricultural development on Raap N Skraap, (Portion 2 of the Farm Styrkraal No. 81), near Onseepkans, Kai! Ma Municipality, Northern Cape

Assessment conducted under Section 38 (3) of the National Heritage Resource Act (No. 25 of 1999)

Prepared for:

GROENBERGENVIRO (PTY) LTD

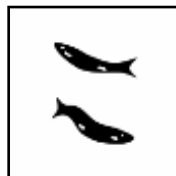
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Executive summary

1. Introduction

ACRM was instructed by GroenbergEnviro to conduct an Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) for an unauthorised agricultural development on the Farm Raap N Skraap, (Portion 2 of the Farm Styrkraal 81) Kai! Ma Municipality in, the Northern Cape.

Raap N Skraap is located adjacent the Gariep/Orange River, about 25kms north-east of the small border settlement of Onseepkans.

The illegal vineyard, date and citrus development, totalling about 214ha in extent, was established in 2006-2008 without environmental authorisation. Two evaporation ponds (2.2ha) were also established without environmental authorisation.

The AIA forms part of a Section 24G Application process, which is designed to legally correct an illegal development.

2. Legal requirements

In terms of Section 38 (1) (c) (iii) of the National Heritage Resources Act 1999 (Act 25 of 1999), a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) of the proposed project is required if the footprint area of the development is more than 5000m² in extent.

A HIA of the development was not undertaken at the time.

3. Aim of the AIA

The overall purpose of the AIA is to determine the impact that the unauthorised development had on archaeological resources.

4. Limitations

There were no constraints or limitations associated with the study.

5. Findings

A field assessment of the development took place on 14th July 2020, in which the following observations were made:

No archaeological resources were recorded in the 214ha development site. The intensively farmed area constitutes a highly transformed and modified landscape. It is noted that the archaeologist Peter Beaumont, in 2008, recorded no archaeological resources during a survey of a portion of the farm Styrkraal/Raap N Skraap. Previous archaeological assessments undertaken in Onseepkans, has noted the low density of archaeological resources in the area.

6. Graves

No graves or typical grave features (i. e. stone cairns) were encountered during the study.

7. Built environment

No old buildings, structures, features or equipment were recorded on the farm.

8. Impact statement

The results of the study suggest that the listed activity (i. e. an unauthorised agricultural development & development of evaporation ponds) has likely, not had an impact of great significance on archaeological resources.

9. Conclusion

The receiving environment comprises a severely transformed and modified landscape.

The literature survey also indicates that it is unlikely that significant archaeological resources have been impacted by the development.

The impact significance of the illegally established vineyards, date and citrus plantations on archaeological heritage is therefore assessed as LOW.

10. Recommendations

1. With regard to the illegal agricultural development, and construction of two small sewerage evaporation ponds on the Farm Raap N Skraap (Portion 2 of the Farm Styrkraal No. 81), no further archaeological mitigation is required.

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Archaeological Impact Assessment, illegal vineyard development on the Farm Raap N Skraap near Onseepkans, Northern Cape



Figure 2. Google satellite map illustrating the location of the Farm Raap N Skraap in relation to Onseepkans.



Figure 3. Google satellite map indicating the illegal agricultural development (red polygon) on Raap N Skraap

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.

The NHRA provides protection for the following categories of heritage resources:

- Landscapes, cultural or natural (Section 3 (3))
- Buildings or structures older than 60 years (Section 34);
- Archaeological sites, palaeontological material and meteorites (Section 35);
- Burial grounds and graves (Section 36);
- Public monuments and memorials (Section 37);
- Living heritage (defined in the Act as including cultural tradition, oral history, performance, ritual, popular memory, skills and techniques, indigenous knowledge systems and the holistic approach to nature, society and social relationships) (Section 2 (d) (xxi)).

3. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The terms of reference for the archaeological study were to:

- Determine whether there are likely to be any archaeological resources that may have been impacted by the proposed development activities;
- Identify potentially sensitive archaeological areas, and
- Recommend any mitigation action.

4. THE STUDY SITE

Raap N Skraap is located on Portion 2 of the Farm Styrkraal No. 81, adjacent the Gariep/Orange River, about 25kms north-east of the small border settlement of Onseepkans.

The extensive vineyard, date and citrus development were established in 2006-2008 (Figure 4-14). The citrus fields have since been replaced by large centre pivots (refer to Figure 3).

The 2 small evaporation ponds were also constructed in 2006-2008.

Archaeological Impact Assessment, illegal vineyard development on the Farm Raap N Skraap near Onseepkans, Northern Cape



Figure 4. View facing north west



Figure 5. View facing north west



Figure 6. View facing south west

Archaeological Impact Assessment, illegal vineyard development on the Farm Raap N Skraap near Onseepkans, Northern Cape



Figure 7. View facing north west



Figure 8. View facing north west

Archaeological Impact Assessment, illegal vineyard development on the Farm Raap N Skraap near Onseepkans, Northern Cape



Figure 9. View facing north



Figure 10. View facing north east



Figure 11. View facing north west

Archaeological Impact Assessment, illegal vineyard development on the Farm Raap N Skraap near Onseepkans, Northern Cape



Figure 12. View facing south east



Figure 13. View facing north



Figure 14. View facing south

5. STUDY APPROACH

5.1 Method of survey

The overall purpose of the AIA is to determine the impacts that the illegal agricultural development had on archaeological resources.

To this end a site assessment was undertaken on the 14th July, 2020.

A literature survey was also carried out to assess the archaeological context of the surrounding area.

5.2 Constraints and limitations

There were no constraints or limitations associated with the study. Access to the farm was easy and archaeological visibility was very good.

5.3 Results of the desk top study

Beaumont (2008) recorded no archaeological resources during a survey of the farm Sty-Kraal/Raap N Skraap, when a hoodia and pumpkin project was established on the farm.

Kaplan (2013, 2017) and Engelbrecht (2015) recorded very small numbers of pre-colonial archaeological resources in the course of surveys covering large parcels of land in Onseepkans while Dreyer (2008) recorded no archaeological resources in an investigation of 14 borrow pits alongside the R362 between Pofadder and Onseepkans.

6. FINDINGS

6.1 Illegal vineyard, date and citrus development

No archaeological resources were recorded on the Farm Raap N Skraap (Figure 15). Combined, the 214ha of already cultivated vineyards, dates and new centre pivot (mealies) constitute a highly transformed landscape.

No archaeological resources were encountered in the footprint area of the two small sewerage evaporation ponds.

No archaeological resources were recorded encountered in the surrounding area.



Figure 15. Trackpaths in blue (site inspection undertaken on 14th July, 2020)

6.1 Built environment

No old buildings, structures, features or equipment were recorded on the farm.

6.2 Graves

No graves, or typical graves features (i. e. stone cairns) were encountered during the field assessment.

7. ASSESSMENT OF IMPACTS

In the case of an illegal agricultural development on the Farm Raap N Skraap (Portion 2 of the Farm Styrkraal 81), it is expected that impacts on pre-colonial archaeological heritage are likely to have been *LOW*.

The assessment is based on a field assessment of the unauthorised development, as well as a desktop study of archaeological work undertaken on the farm by Beaumont (2008), and in the nearby Onseepkans area.

8. CONCLUSION

Cultivation of vineyards, date and citrus on the Farm Raap N Skraap (Portion 2 of the Farm Styrkraal 81) in 2006-2008 has fundamentally transformed the receiving environment.

The literature survey suggests that it is unlikely that significant archaeological resources would have been impacted by the unauthorised development.

The impact significance of the development on archaeological heritage is therefore assessed as LOW.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

With regard to the illegal agricultural development on the Farm Raap N Skraap (Portion 2 of Farm No. 81), the following recommendations are made:

1. No further archaeological mitigation is required.

10. REFERENCES

Beaumont, P. 2008. Phase 1 Heritage Impact Assessment report on a portion of the Remainder of the Farm Sty-Kraal 81 near Onseepkans, Siyanda District Municipality, Northern Cape Province. Report prepared for MEG Environmental Impact Studies. McGregor Museum, Kimberley.

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