



HERITGAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Proposed Sports Development at The Country Club
Johannesburg, Woodmead

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Vedhant Maharaj
M.Arch (Professional)
SACAP PrArch 45968517
SAIA 9004
vedhant.maharaj@rebelbase.camp
087 802 0780

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

General

The proposed development at the Country Club of Johannesburg in Woodmead consists of the addition of an expanded sports facility for a gym, squash courts, padel courts, extra tennis, and other recreational facilities.

The property already has some of the facilities in place and the expansion would build on these. The area around the property will be scrutinised through an environmental impact assessment (EIA).

Findings

There is no significant heritage value to the property and the surrounds in question. The land was purchased in 1966 and has no heritage structures or signs of heritage landscape. The bulk construction of the proposed construction is on already developed land. Surrounding vegetation was planted as part of the complex and makes up a very small area of the total environmentally sensitive landscape.

Recommendations

It is our recommendation that the proposed development of the area be permitted as there is no significant (obvious or underlying) heritage value of the property or the landscape which surrounds the proposed development.

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Study Area - refers to the entire area to be developed as indicated on the scale drawings by the client.

Heritage site: (a) a place declared to be a national heritage site by SAHRA or a place declared to be a provincial heritage site by a provincial heritage resources authority; (b) all previously declared national monuments in terms of the National Monuments Act, currently designated provincial heritage sites in terms of the National Heritage Resources Act.

Stone Age - The first and oldest part of human history is the Stone Age that is associated with the appearance of early humans between 3-2 million years ago. Stone Age people were hunters, gatherers and scavengers who did not settle in permanent settlements. Places associated with these humans are determined by identifying stone tools that have been preserved in the landscape.

Early Stone Age: 2 000 000- 150 000 Before Present (BP)

Middle Stone Age: 150 000- 30000BP

Later Stone Age: 30 000- until c. AD 200

Iron Age - A period covering the last 1800 years, when an altered lifestyle was introduced to southern Africa They established villages, cultivated domesticated crop types such as sorghum, millet and beans and they herded cattle, sheep and goats. They spoke early variations of the Bantu language and manufactured iron objects.

Early Iron Age: AD 200 - AD 1 000

Late Iron Age: AD 1 000-AD 1830

Historical period - Since the arrival of white settlers - c AD 1652 (Southern parts of South Africa and AD 1840 (north of the Vaal River)

Cultural significance - According to the ICOMOS Burra Charter cultural significance means

'aesthetic, historic, scientific or social value for past, present or future generations.

Aesthetic value- Criteria considered for this category may include the form, scale, colour, texture and material of the fabric, the smells and sounds associated with the place and its use.

Historic value - Historic value encompasses the history of aesthetics, science, and society and therefore to a large extent underlies all the terms used for evaluation. A place may have historic value because it has influenced or has been influenced by an historic figure, event, phase, or activity. The significance will be greater where evidence of the association or event survives in situ or where the settings are substantially intact than where it has been changed or evidence does not survive.

Scientific value The scientific or research value of a place will depend on the importance of the data involved, on its rarity, quality or representativeness and on the degree to which the place may contribute further substantial information.

Social value- Social value embraces the qualities for which a place has become a focus of spiritual, political, national, or other cultural sentiment to a majority or minority group.

Abbreviations

EIA- Environmental Impact Assessment

EIA- Early Iron Age

ESA - Early Stone Age

LIA - Late Iron Age **LSA**- Late Stone Age

MSA - Middle Stone Age

NASA - National Archives of South Africa

NHRA - National Heritage Resources Act

PHRA - Provincial Heritage Resources Agency

SAHRA- South African Heritage Resource Authority

1. BRIEF

The heritage assessment of the pool pavilion and surrounding areas of Country Club Johannesburg, Woodmead to determine the impact of the proposed development that will extend the sporting and other built recreational facilities.

2. AIM OF THE STUDY

- To identify aspects and elements of the intended area of development for any heritage value.
- To evaluate any aspects or elements of the building in terms of criteria set out by the National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA), that may be impacted on by the proposed development.
- To make recommendations regarding the future of the development and surrounding landscapes in line with the NHRA

3. ASSUMPTIONS AND CONDITIONS

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

"Development" is defined in the Act as any physical intervention, excavation, or action, other than those caused by natural forces, which may in the opinion of the heritage authority in any way result in a change to the nature, appearance, or physical nature of a place, or influence its stability and future well-being, including: -

- 1) Construction, alteration, demolition, removal or change of use of a place or a structure at a place.
- 2) Carrying out any works on or over or under a place.
- 3) Subdivision or consolidation of land comprising, a place, including the structures or airspace of a place.
- 4) Constructing or putting up for display signs or hoardings.
- 5) Any change to the natural or existing condition or topography of land; and
- 6) Any removal or destruction of trees, or removal of vegetation or topsoil.

We find that, from extensive investigations that there are no heritage related conditions that require consideration for the development of the site.

The surrounding landscape would require sensitivity which would be dealt with in an EIA. From our investigations we find no historical evidence of architectural, archaeological, or ecological value in for the developed zone.

4. GEOGRAPHIC AREA OF THE STUDY

The Country Club Johannesburg, Woodmead has a main clubhouse, a large pool pavilion area and several small service-related buildings.

The site is home to two 18-hole golf courses and several other outdoor sporting facilities.

The proposed site for development was scanned and measured by studied by a land surveyor who also found no evidence of any underlying heritage value.



Figure 1 Macro Site Plan



Figure 2 Area of development

5. METHODOLOGY

- The site was visited, and the clubhouse building was investigated on foot.
- Photographs were taken for reporting purposes
- No consultation was done with interested and affected parties and no interviews were held as part of any public participation process.
- A report was compiled on the architectural significance of the building with a brief historical background of the site and institution.
- The proposed design was developed and evaluated by us in response to the club's brief for its future expansions



Figure 3 Area to right marked for development



Figure 4 Existing Parking area for development

6. FINDINGS

6.1 Section 38(3) (a) Identification and mapping of all heritage areas impacted on the affected site area

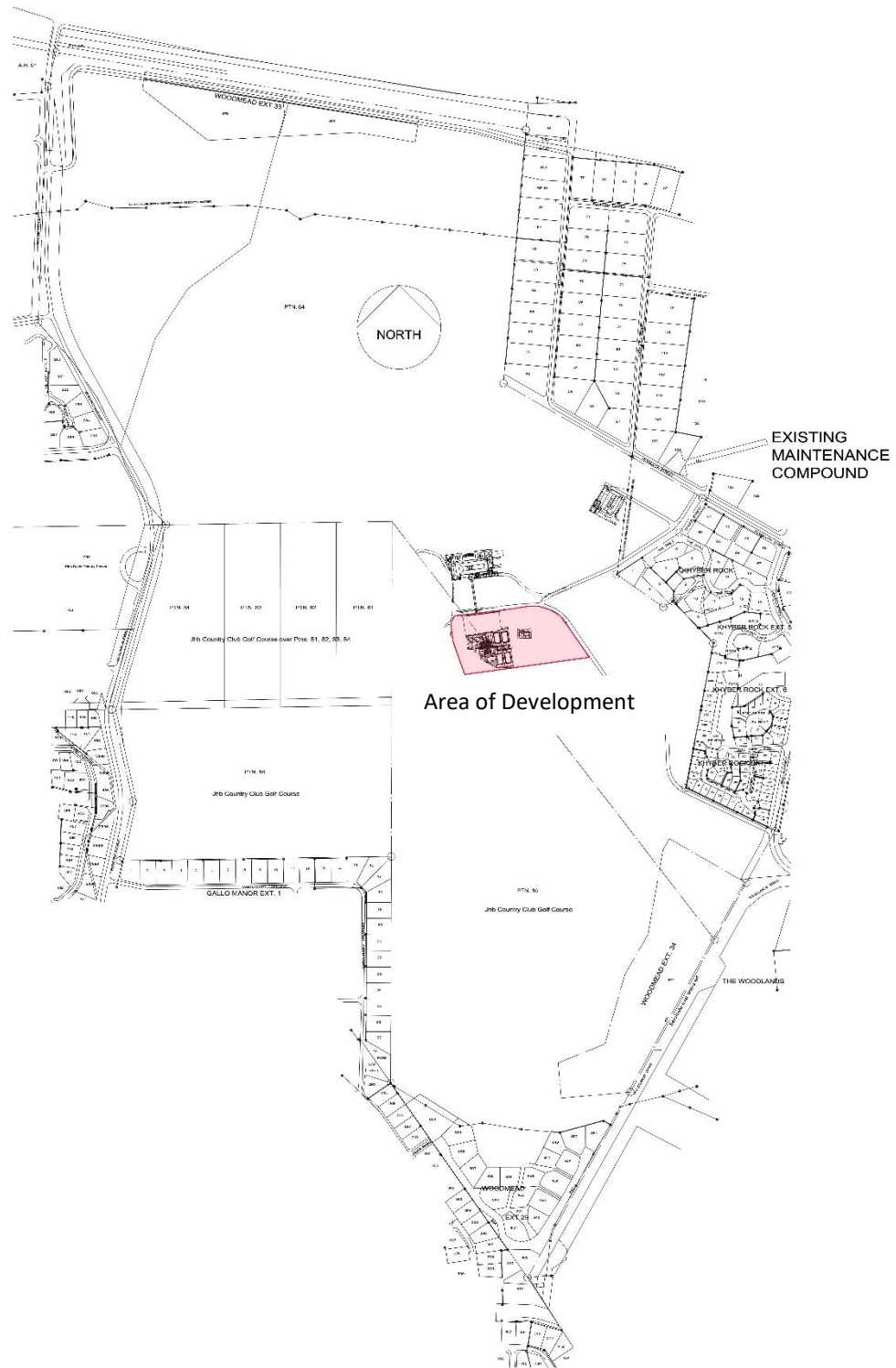


Figure 5 Site Drawing with marked out area for development



Figure 6 Existing pool pavilion facility



Figure 7 Area on the southern boundary of the intended development

6.2 Significance criteria in terms of Section 38(3) (b) of the National Heritage Resources Act.

According to the Burra Charter 'cultural significance' means 'aesthetic, historic, scientific or social value for past, present or future generations'. Cultural significance is a concept which helps in estimating the value of places. These terms and their meaning are not mutually exclusive, for example, architectural style has both historical and aesthetic aspects (Burra Charter, 1999).

The categorization into aesthetic, historic, scientific, and social values is one approach to understand the concept of cultural significance (Burra Charter, 1999). However, more precise categories may be used as understanding of a particular place may increase.

For the purposes of this report such categories are used in tandem with the criteria set out by the National Heritage Resources Act.

1. *The importance of the cultural heritage in the community or pattern of South Africa's history (Historic and political significance)*

Rated LOW

The Country club of Johannesburg has been a landmark in Johannesburg and in the history of Johannesburg since its establishment in 1906.

The motivation for the founding of the Club was a business decision by Auckland Park Real Estate Limited, the township developer of Auckland Park. The initiators of the proposed club recruited leaders in the Johannesburg community for membership. The success of the Club was solely dependent on attracting influential individuals with good incomes.

In 1966 the land on which 16 holes of the golf course would be sold and the purchase of which by The Rand Afrikaans University (RAU) enabled the club to purchase the Woodmead property. This was developed, over time, into a impressive golf club with 2 18 hole courses. All development of the property is less than 60 years of age and holds no heritage value.

2. *Possession of uncommon, rare, or endangered aspects of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage (Scientific significance).*

Rated: MEDIUM

The property was, prior to purchase, classified as farmland. The property has since evolved into a recreational complex with two golf courses and transformed, in part, into an environmental conservation area. This area has been restored and preserved an indigenous highveld environment.

The portion of the property intended for development has largely been developed already. The surrounding natural landscape is not of any research or significant ecological importance. There are no indications of any cultural significance across the property.

3. *Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage places (Research/scientific significance)*

Rated: LOW

The history of the country club is significant in the story of the original club situated in Auckland Park. It shares a chronological journey of the development of Johannesburg and the societies which

lived in it, their social activities and the development of a particular space and class which emerged from it.

The Woodmead portion of the club shares the historic ties to this history but is not of any scientific, natural, or cultural heritage value.

4. *Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class of South Africa's natural or cultural places or objects (Scientific significance)*

Rated: LOW

The Country Club Johannesburg embodies a significant part of Johannesburg's class history. The relocation of the golf course from the more centrally located (expropriated) site to the north is part of a palpable of a class relocation from central Johannesburg.

The rich history of the social class that founded The Country Club Johannesburg is still embodied in its Auckland Park Property. The Woodmead site, is only significant to this it its continuation of the legacy.

5. *Importance in exhibiting aesthetic characteristics valued by a community or cultural group (Aesthetic significance)*

Rated: LOW

The club grounds and buildings of the property are all less than 60 years of age. The buildings are of a corporate contemporary style that was popular in Johannesburg between the late 1970's and early 2000's.

There are no notable architectural features that are worthy of conservation.

6. *Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period (technical and scientific significance)*

Rated: LOW

There is no especially technically significant architectural, artistic or engineering value to the site proposed for development.

7. *Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons (Social significance)*

Rated: LOW

The Country Club Johannesburg has always had a strong membership reflecting the higher social and economic echelons of Johannesburg society. The original 1906 Clubhouse in Auckland Park is the custodian of the club's rich history. By extension, the Woodmead part of the club is an extension of this but the property itself has no major historical social significance.

8. *Strong or special association with the life and work of a person, group, or organization of importance in the history of South Africa (Historic significance)*

Rated: MEDIUM

The Country Club of Johannesburg may not have the status as place of National significance and may but it has become the arguably most significant social private club in Johannesburg and its long history of existence and sustainable growth are proof of its significance.

It boasts a significant historic list of members from its conception until now of influential professionals, politicians, artists. As a result the legacy of the Country club itself is of significant local heritage importance.

9. *The significance of the site relating to the history of slavery in South Africa.*

Rated: LOW

Neither the site nor any of the buildings are associated with the history of slavery in South Africa.



Figure 8 Existing Tennis Facilities for expansion towards the east

6.3 Section 38(3) (c) An assessment of the impact of the development on such heritage resources

There is no impact on any heritage resource with the implementation of the proposed design.

6.4 Section 38(3) (d) An evaluation of the impact of the development on heritage resources relative to the sustainable economic benefits to be derived from the development.

The proposed development will only have positive economic impacts. There is no threat to any heritage resource or its economic value.

6.5 Section 38(3) (e) The results of consultation with the communities affected by the proposed development and other interested parties regarding the impact of the development on heritage resources.

No public participation process has been done from a heritage aspect as there is no cause for it due to the nature and age of the property.

6.6 Section 38(3) (f) If heritage resources will be adversely affected by the proposed development the consideration of alternatives.

The proposed development is compatible with the club's existing offering and only expands on its recreational value to the community. There are no heritage resources which would be adversely affected by this.

6.7 Section 38(3)(g) plans for mitigation of any adverse effects during and after the completion of the proposed development.

The only mitigation measures required for the development would be environmental. The surrounding areas of the demarcated development will be protected as outlined in a separate EIA.

7.RECOMMENDATION

Proposed Development

The design uses the bases of the old building, which is not a heritage building and of no architectural significance to create a new recreational complex.

The contemporary style of the building will be designed to utilise the views over the golf courses and the surrounding indigenous landscape. In addition to covered sports facilities there will also be additional outdoor racket sport facilities for tennis and padel.



Figure 9 Aerial view of proposed site development



Figure 10 View over new sports complex

We recommend that the proposed development be supported by PHRA with no restrictions as there is no heritage significance.