

PHASE 1 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT

TOWNSHIP ESTABLISHMENT STEENBOKPAN - LIMPOPO

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A township is proposed to be developed in the area known as Steenbokpan situated west of Lephale.

For the purpose of the heritage resources survey, the proposed development areas were covered with some limitations, due to the nature and size of the project difficulty was encountered in accessing certain areas, but all the major areas that may possibly contain any archaeological remains were covered.

The survey shows that parts of the area have been disturbed by recent human activities, and that some archaeological remains may have been obscured due to it. Historical graves were noted at a number of sites throughout the development area and appear to be family graveyards. Mitigation measures are needed to adequately protect these graves.

From a heritage resources management point of view, there is no objection with regard to the development on condition that the recommended management and mitigation measures are implemented. This will result in no further significant impacts on the heritage resources through all the stages of development.

1. INTRODUCTION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

This report addresses a proposed township which is to be developed in the area known as Steenbokpan situated west of Lephalale. The proposed development is situated on terrain that is currently used for agricultural purposes, such as fruit orchards and some farms are used as game farms.

Terms of reference: Undertake a Phase 1 Heritage Impact Assessment and submit a specialist report, which addresses the following:

- Executive summary;
- Scope of work undertaken, assumptions and/or limitations;
- Methodology used to obtain supporting information;
- Overview of relevant legislation;
- Results of all investigations;
- Interpretation of information;
- Assessment of impacts (including cumulative impacts) associated with all the stages of the project (construction, operation, closure and post closure);
- Assessment of effectiveness of management measures proposed by the client;
- Recommendations on other management measures;
- References.

The aim was to determine the presence or not of heritage resources such as archaeological and historical sites and features, graves and places of religious and cultural significance, and to submit appropriate recommendations with regard to the cultural resources management measures that may be required at affected sites / features.

The report thus provides an overview of the heritage resources that may occur in the demarcated area where development is intended. The significance of the heritage resources was assessed in terms of criteria defined in the methodology section. The impact of the proposed development on these resources is indicated and the report recommends mitigation measures that should be implemented to minimize the adverse impact of the proposed development on these heritage resources.

2. RELEVANT LEGISLATION

Two sets of legislation are relevant for this study with regard to the protection of heritage resources and graves.

2.1 The National Heritage Resources Act (25 of 1999) (NHRA)

This Act established the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) and makes provision for the establishment of Provincial Heritage Resources Authorities (PHRA). The Act makes provision for the undertaking of heritage resources impact assessments for various categories of development as determined by Section 38. It also provides for the grading of heritage resources (Section 7) and the implementation of a three-tier level of responsibilities and functions for heritage resources to be undertaken by the State, Provincial authorities and Local authorities, depending on the grade of the Heritage resources (Section 8).

In terms of the National Heritage Resources Act (1999) the following is of relevance:

Historical remains

Section 34(1) No person may alter or demolish any structure or part of a structure, which is older than 60 years without a permit issued by the relevant provincial heritage resources authority.

Archaeological remains

Section 35(3) Any person who discovers archaeological or palaeontological objects or material or a meteorite in the course of development or agricultural activity must immediately report the find to the responsible heritage resources authority or to the nearest local authority or museum, which must immediately notify such heritage resources authority.

Sub-section 35(4) No person may, without a permit issued by the responsible heritage resources authority-

- (a) destroy, damage, excavate, alter, deface or otherwise disturb any archaeological or palaeontological site or any meteorite;
- (b) destroy, damage, excavate, remove from its original position, collect or own any archaeological or palaeontological material or object or any meteorite;
- (c) trade in, sell for private gain, export or attempt to export from the republic any category of archaeological or palaeontological material or object, or any meteorite; or
- (d) bring onto or use at an archaeological or palaeontological site any excavation equipment or any equipment which assist with the detection or recovery of metals or archaeological material or objects, or use such equipment for the recovery of meteorites.

Sub-section 35(5) When the responsible heritage resources authority has reasonable cause to believe that any activity or development which will destroy, damage or alter any archaeological or palaeontological site is under way, and where no application for a permit has been submitted and no heritage resources management procedures in terms of section 38 has been followed, it may-

- (a) serve on the owner or occupier of the site or on the person undertaking such development an order for the development to cease immediately for such period as is specified in the order;
- (b) carry out an investigation for the purpose of obtaining information on whether or not an archaeological or palaeontological site exists and whether mitigation is necessary;
- (c) if mitigation is deemed by the heritage resources authority to be necessary, assist the person on whom the order has been served under paragraph (a) to apply for a permit as required in subsection (4); and
- (d) recover the costs of such investigation from the owner or occupier of the land on which it is believed an archaeological or palaeontological site is located or from the person proposing to undertake the development if no application for a permit is received within two weeks of the order being served.

Sub-section 35(6) The responsible heritage resources authority may, after consultation with the owner of the land on which an archaeological or palaeontological site or meteorite is situated, serve a notice on the owner or any other controlling authority, to prevent activities within a specified distance from such site or meteorite.

Burial grounds and graves

Sub-section 36(3)

- (a) No person may, without a permit issued by SAHRA or a provincial heritage resources authority-
- (c) destroy, damage, alter, exhume, remove from its original position or otherwise disturb any grave or burial ground older than 60 years which is situated outside a formal cemetery administered by a local authority; or
- (d) bring onto or use at a burial ground or grave referred to in paragraph (a) or (b) any excavation equipment, or any equipment which assists in detection or recovery of metals.

Sub-section 36(6) Subject to the provision of any law, any person who in the course of development or any other activity discovers the location of a grave, the existence of which was previously unknown, must immediately cease such activity and report the discovery to the responsible heritage resources authority which must, in co-operation with the South African Police Service and in accordance with regulations of the responsible heritage resources authority-

- (a) carry out an investigation for the purpose of obtaining information on whether or not such grave is protected in terms of this Act or is of significance to any community; and
- (b) if such grave is protected or is of significance, assist any person who or community which is a direct descendant to make arrangements for the exhumation and re-interment of the content of such grave or, in the absence of such person or community, make any such arrangement as it deems fit.

Culture Resource Management

Sub-section 38(1) Subject to the provisions of subsection (7), (8) and (9), any person who intends to undertake a development* ...

must at the very earliest stages of initiating such development notify the responsible heritage resources authority and furnish it with details regarding the location, nature and extent of the proposed development.

***“development”** means 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-

- (a) construction, alteration, demolition, removal or change of use of a place or a structure at a place;
- (b) carry out any works on or over or under a place*;
- (e) any change to the natural or existing condition or topography of land, and
- (f) any removal or destruction of trees, or removal of vegetation or topsoil;

***“place”** means a site, area or region, a building or other structure* ...”

***“structure”** means any building, works, device or other facility made by people and which is fixed to the ground, ...”

2.2 The Human Tissues Act (65 of 1983)

This Act protects graves younger than 60 years. These fall under the jurisdiction of the National Department of Health and the Provincial Health Departments. Approval for the exhumation and re-burial must be obtained from the relevant Provincial MEC as well as the relevant Local Authorities.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Sources of information

The source of information was primarily the field reconnaissance and referenced literary sources.

A pedestrian survey of selected areas and a drive through by vehicle of the demarcated area was undertaken, during which standard methods of observation were applied. As most archaeological material occur in single or multiple stratified layers beneath the soil surface, special attention was given to disturbances, both man-made such as roads and clearings, as well as those made by natural agents such as burrowing animals and erosion. Locations of heritage remains were recorded by means of a GPS (Garmin 60). Heritage material and the general conditions on the terrain were photographed with a Panasonic Lumix Digital camera.

3.2 Limitations

- Dense vegetation in some areas limited archaeological visibility.

3.3 Categories of significance

The significance of archaeological sites is ranked into the following categories.

No significance: sites that do not require mitigation.
Low significance: sites that <i>may</i> require mitigation.
Medium significance: sites that require mitigation.
High significance: sites that must not be disturbed at all.

The significance of an archaeological site is based on the amount of deposit, the integrity of the context, the kind of deposit and the potential to help answer present research questions. Historical structures are defined by Section 34 of the National Heritage Resources Act, 1999, while other historical and cultural significant sites, places and features, are generally determined by community preferences.

A crucial aspect in determining the significance and protection status of a heritage resource is often whether or not the sustainable social and economic benefits of a proposed development outweigh the conservation issues at stake. Many aspects must be taken into consideration when determining significance, such as rarity, national significance, scientific importance, cultural and religious significance, and not least, community preferences. When, for whatever reason the protection of a heritage site is not deemed necessary or practical, its research potential must be assessed and mitigated in order to gain data / information which would otherwise be lost. Such sites must be adequately recorded and sampled before being destroyed. These are generally sites graded as of low or medium significance.

3.4 Terminology

Early Stone Age: Predominantly the Acheulean hand axe industry complex dating to ± 1 Myr – 250 000 yrs. before present.

Middle Stone Age: Various lithic industries in SA dating from ± 250 000 yrs. - 30 000 yrs. before present.

Later Stone Age: The period from ± 30 000 yrs. to the contact period with either Iron Age farmers or European colonists.

Early Iron Age: Most of the first millennium AD.

Middle Iron Age: 10th to 13th centuries AD.

Late Iron Age: 14th century to colonial period. *The entire Iron Age represents the spread of Bantu speaking peoples.*

Historical: Mainly cultural remains of western influence and settlement from AD 1652 onwards – mostly structures older than 60 years in terms of Section 34 of the NHRA.

Phase 1 assessment: Scoping surveys to establish the presence of and to evaluate heritage resources in a given area.

Phase 2 assessment: In depth culture resources management studies which could include major archaeological excavations, detailed site surveys and mapping / plans of sites, including historical / architectural

structures and features. Alternatively, the sampling of sites by collecting material, small test pit excavations or auger sampling.

Sensitive: Often refers to graves and burial sites although not necessarily a heritage place, as well as ideologically significant sites such as ritual / religious places. *Sensitive* may also refer to an entire landscape / area known for its significant heritage remains.

4 LOCATION OF THE STUDY AREA.

The proposed development is to be situated on the following farms:

1. Portion 20 of the farm Theunispan 293 LQ;
2. Portion 22 of the farm Theunispan 293 LQ;
3. Portion 25 of the farm Theunispan 293 LQ;
4. Portion 1 of the farm Grootdoorn 292 LQ;
5. Portion 2 of the farm Grootdoorn 292 LQ;
6. Portion 3 of the farm Grootdoorn 292 LQ;
7. Portion 4 of the farm Grootdoorn 292 LQ;
8. Remaining Extent of the farm Grootdoorn 292 LQ
9. Portion 3 of the farm Steenbokpan 295 LQ.

The proposed development area is currently being utilized by local farmers, primarily as game farms. Graves in the area indicated past occupation into the historical period. Invader species of vegetation attest to the past use of the land for agricultural purposes, probably for cattle grazing.

5. BASELINE INFORMATION

According to the most recent archaeological cultural distribution sequences by Huffman (2007), this area falls within the distribution area of various cultural groupings originating out of both the Urewe Tradition (eastern stream of migration) and the Kalundu Tradition (western stream of migration). The facies that may be present are:

Urewe Tradition:	Moloko Branch –	<i>Letsibogo facies</i>	AD 1500-1700
Kalundu Tradition:	Benfica sub-branch –	<i>Bambata facies</i>	AD 150-650
	Happy Rest sub-branch –	<i>Happy Rest facies</i>	AD 500-750
		<i>Diamant facies</i>	AD 750-1000
		<i>Eiland facies</i>	AD 1000-1300

None of the above-mentioned archaeological remains or other heritage remains of importance were noted on the terrain. No archaeologically induced ecologically disturbed area was observed either. However, the archaeological cultures referred to above may be present as obscured subterranean deposits.

Lastly, people of European descent had greatly influenced the project area in the 19th century, establishing farms, towns, and road infrastructure.

6. RESULT OF THE SURVEY

The discussion is based on the result of observations on the development area.

6.1 Graves

Graveyard 1: Co-ordinates: *S23° 42' 28.2" E27° 16' 15.9"*

European graveyard dating from 1944 onwards. It contains approximately 7 graves. See figure 1.

Graveyard 2: Co-ordinates: $S23^{\circ} 42' 36.0'' E27^{\circ} 15' 42.6''$

Farm labourer's graveyard. Graves consist mostly of stone cairns, but a number also contain tombstones which date to the 1990's. The graveyard contains approximately 20 graves. See figure 2.

Graveyard 3: Co-ordinates: $S23^{\circ} 42' 19.0'' E27^{\circ} 16' 04.4''$

European graveyard, some date to before 1917 up till 2004. The graveyard contains approximately 13 adults and 3 children. See figure 3.

6.2 Iron Age Sites

No Iron Age sites were noted on the terrain.

6.3 Stone Age Sites

No Stone Age sites were noted on the terrain.

6.4 Historical Period Sites

A small general dealer's shop was noted on the terrain. During a discussion with the shopkeeper it became evident that this general dealer was established by the shopkeeper's father just after her birth in 1941. This original building has been engulfed by the newer shop, built by her father in the early 1950's. This was the first 'shop' in the area, thus the shop is significant in terms of its heritage value to the local residents of the area.

Co-ordinates: $S23^{\circ} 41' 03.6'' E27^{\circ} 15' 27.7''$

7. EVALUATION

The General dealer shop partially consists of a structure that is older than 60 years. It is therefore protected by Section 34 of the NHRA (1999) and requires a permit from SAHRA should it be intended to demolish or alter the building.

The graves are sensitive and are protected in terms of Section 36 of the NHRA (1999). The developers have proposed that the three graveyards can be incorporated into the planned open public spaces. It is recommended that they remain *in situ* and are appropriately cordoned off. A management plan will need to be developed and implemented to ensure that the graveyards are maintained and managed in an appropriate manner.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MANAGEMENT AND MITIGATION MEASURES

1. It is recommended that the graves remain *in situ* and are appropriately cordoned off, with a management plan devised to protect and conserve the graves.
2. Should any action be taken that would negatively impact on the General dealer shop, a full heritage assessment must be undertaken of the building and a permit application submitted to SAHRA for such an action.

From a heritage resources management point of view we have no objection with regard to the development on condition that the recommendations above are implemented. The discovery of undetected heritage remains must be reported to the archaeologist, who will then comply with the necessary legal requirements.

9. REFERENCES

Huffman, T.N. 2007. *Handbook to the Iron Age. The archaeology of Pre-colonial Farming Societies in Southern Africa*. University of KwaZulu-Natal Press.

National Heritage Resources Act (Act No. 25 of 1999)



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Fig 1. Graveyard 1.



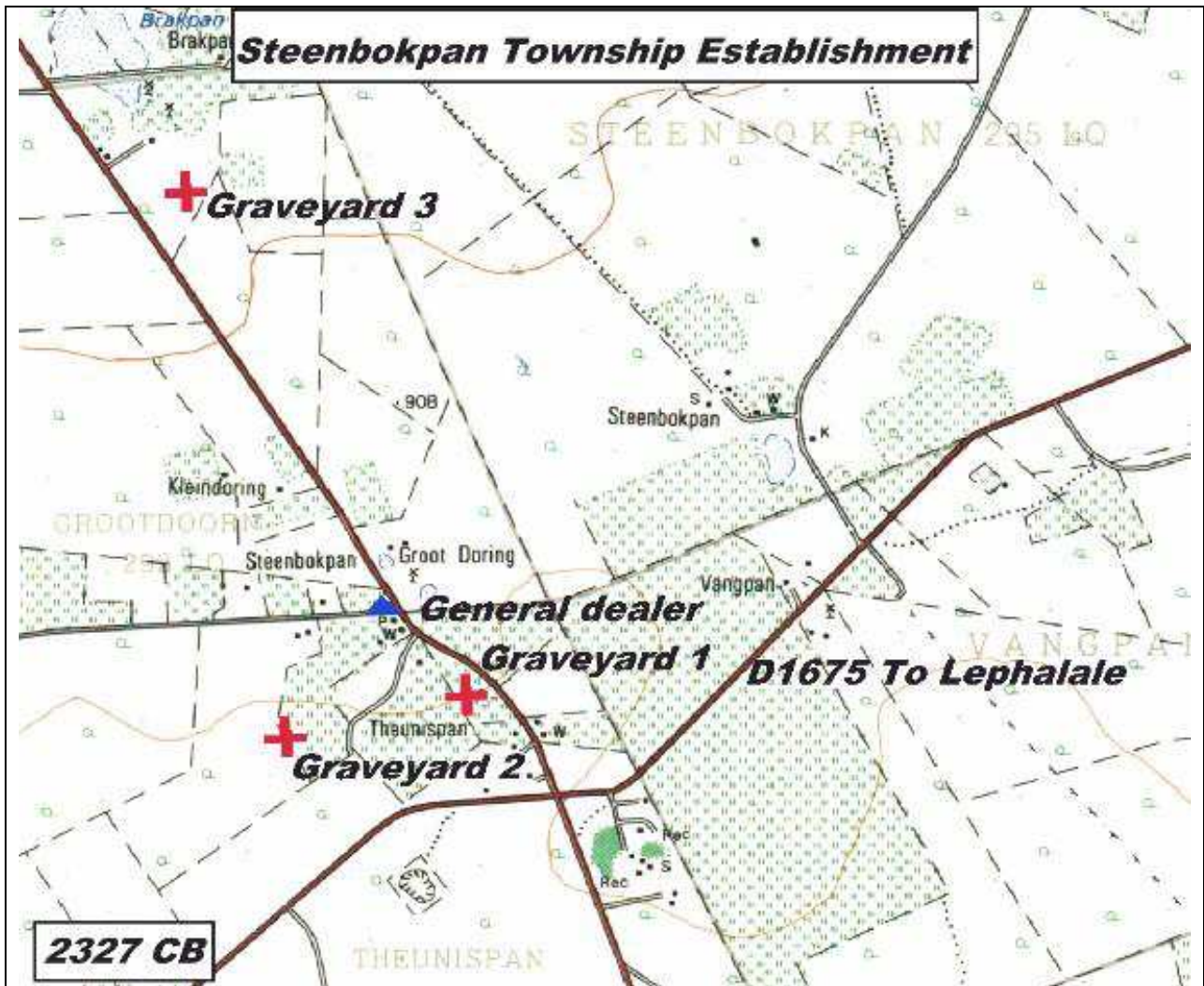
Fig 2. Graveyard 2.



Fig 3. Graveyard 3.



Fig 4. General Dealer



Locality map (2327 CB)