

**Basic assessment for the
INSTALLATION OF A FUEL OIL TANK AT GROOTVLEI POWER
STATION, MPUMALANGA**

**BASIC ASSESSMENT FOR THE INSTALLATION OF A FUEL OIL TANK AT
GROOTVLEI POWER STATION, MPUMALANGA**

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Declaration:

I, J.A. van Schalkwyk, declare that I do not have any financial or personal interest in the proposed development, nor its developers or any of their subsidiaries, apart from the provision of heritage assessment and management services.



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Heritage Consultant
September 2011

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BASIC ASSESSMENT FOR THE INSTALLATION OF A FUEL OIL TANK AT GROOTVLEI POWER STATION, MPUMALANGA

Eskom Generation proposes to install an above ground bulk storage fuel oil tank at the Grootvlei Power station in Mpumalanga Province. For this purpose two alternative localities, all located inside the power station, have been identified.

In accordance with Section 38 of the NHRA, an independent heritage consultant was appointed by **SiVest Environmental Division** to conduct an assessment to determine if any sites, features or objects of cultural heritage significance occur within the boundaries of the area that would disqualify it from being used for the construction of the fuel oil tank, or would require the implementation of mitigation measures.

From the available information it was determined that the following heritage sites were identified in the larger region:

- Pre-colonial archaeological sites dating to the Late Iron Age have been identified to occur in the region of study area.
- Colonial period or historic period heritage manifest in a wide variety – farmsteads, infrastructure and cemeteries.

As the two areas that were identified for the construction of the fuel oil storage tank are located inside the grounds of the power station, they would have been heavily impacted on during the earlier construction activities.

- As no sites, features or objects of cultural heritage significance were identified in the study area, there would be no impact from the proposed development.

Therefore, from a heritage point of view it is recommended that the proposed development be allowed to continue. It is requested that should archaeological sites or graves be exposed during construction work, it must immediately be reported to a heritage practitioner so that an investigation and evaluation of the finds can be made.



J A van Schalkwyk
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September 2011

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

TERMS

Study area: Refers to the entire study area as indicated by the client in the accompanying Fig. 1 & 2.

Stone Age: The first and longest part of human history is the Stone Age, which began with the appearance of early humans between 3-2 million years ago. Stone Age people were hunters, gatherers and scavengers who did not live in permanently settled communities. Their stone tools preserve well and are found in most places in South Africa and elsewhere.

Early Stone Age	2 000 000 - 150 000 Before Present
Middle Stone Age	150 000 - 30 000 BP
Late Stone Age	30 000 - until c. AD 200

Iron Age: Period covering the last 1800 years, when new people brought a new way of life to southern Africa. They established settled villages, cultivated domestic crops such as sorghum, millet and beans, and they herded cattle as well as sheep and goats. These people, according to archaeological evidence, spoke early variations of the Bantu Language. Because they produced their own iron tools, archaeologists call this the Iron Age.

Early Iron Age	AD 200 - AD 900
Middle Iron Age	AD 900 - AD 1300
Late Iron Age	AD 1300 - AD 1830

Historical Period: Since the arrival of the white settlers - c. AD 1840 - in this part of the country

ABBREVIATIONS

ADRC	Archaeological Data Recording Centre
ASAPA	Association of Southern African Professional Archaeologists
BP	Before Present
CS-G	Chief Surveyor-General
EIA	Early Iron Age
ESA	Early Stone Age
LIA	Late Iron Age
LSA	Later Stone Age
HIA	Heritage Impact Assessment
MSA	Middle Stone Age
NASA	National Archives of South Africa
NHRA	National Heritage Resources Act
PHRA	Provincial Heritage Resources Agency
SAHRA	South African Heritage Resources Agency

BASIC ASSESSMENT FOR THE INSTALLATION OF A FUEL OIL TANK AT GROOTVLEI POWER STATION, MPUMALANGA

1. INTRODUCTION

Eskom Generation proposes to install an above ground bulk storage fuel oil tank at the Grootvlei Power station in Mpumalanga Province. For this purpose two alternative localities, all located inside the power station, have been identified.

South Africa's heritage resources, also described as the 'national estate', comprise a wide range of sites, features, objects and beliefs. However, according to Section 27(18) of the National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA), No. 25 of 1999, no person may destroy, damage, deface, excavate, alter, remove from its original position, subdivide or change the planning status of any heritage site without a permit issued by the heritage resources authority responsible for the protection of such site.

In accordance with Section 38 of the NHRA, an independent heritage consultant was appointed by **SiVest Environmental Division** to conduct an assessment to determine if any sites, features or objects of cultural heritage significance occur within the boundaries of the area that would disqualify it from being used for the construction of the fuel oil tank, or would require the implementation of mitigation measures.

2. TERMS OF REFERENCE

2.1 Scope of work

The aim of this HIA, broadly speaking, is to determine if any sites, features or objects of cultural heritage significance occur within the boundaries of the area where it is planned to develop the transmission line.

The scope of work for this study consisted of:

- Conducting of a desk-top investigation of the area, in which all available literature, reports, databases and maps were studied.

The objectives were to

- Identify possible archaeological, cultural and historic sites within the proposed development area;
- Evaluate the potential impacts of construction, operation and maintenance of the proposed development on archaeological, cultural and historical resources;
- Recommend mitigation measures to ameliorate any negative impacts on areas of archaeological, cultural or historical importance.

2.2 Limitations

- The description below is based solely on available information.

3. HERITAGE RESOURCES

3.1 The National Estate

The NHRA (No. 25 of 1999) defines the heritage resources of South Africa which are of cultural significance or other special value for the present community and for future generations that must be considered part of the national estate to include:

- places, buildings, structures and equipment of cultural significance;
- places to which oral traditions are attached or which are associated with living heritage;
- historical settlements and townscapes;
- landscapes and natural features of cultural significance;
- geological sites of scientific or cultural importance;
- archaeological and palaeontological sites;
- graves and burial grounds, including-
 - ancestral graves;
 - royal graves and graves of traditional leaders;
 - graves of victims of conflict;
 - graves of individuals designated by the Minister by notice in the Gazette;
 - historical graves and cemeteries; and
 - other human remains which are not covered in terms of the Human Tissue Act, 1983 (Act No. 65 of 1983);
- sites of significance relating to the history of slavery in South Africa;
- movable objects, including-
 - objects recovered from the soil or waters of South Africa, including archaeological and palaeontological objects and material, meteorites and rare geological specimens;
 - objects to which oral traditions are attached or which are associated with living heritage;
 - ethnographic art and objects;
 - military objects;
 - objects of decorative or fine art;
 - objects of scientific or technological interest; and
 - books, records, documents, photographic positives and negatives, graphic, film or video material or sound recordings, excluding those that are public records as defined in section 1(xiv) of the National Archives of South Africa Act, 1996 (Act No. 43 of 1996).

3.2 Cultural significance

In the NHRA, Section 2 (vi), it is stated that “cultural significance” means aesthetic, architectural, historical, scientific, social, spiritual, linguistic or technological value or significance. This is determined in relation to a site or feature’s uniqueness, condition of preservation and research potential.

According to Section 3(3) of the NHRA, a place or object is to be considered part of the national estate if it has cultural significance or other special value because of

- its importance in the community, or pattern of South Africa's history;
- its possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage;
- its potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage;
- its importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class of South Africa's natural or cultural places or objects;

- its importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by a community or cultural group;
- its importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period;
- its strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons;
- its strong or special association with the life or work of a person, group or organisation of importance in the history of South Africa; and
- sites of significance relating to the history of slavery in South Africa.

4. STUDY APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 Extent of the Study

This survey and impact assessment covers the area as presented in Section 5 and as illustrated in Figures 2 & 3.

4.2 Methodology

4.2.1 Preliminary investigation

4.2.1.1 Survey of the literature

A survey of the relevant literature was conducted with the aim of reviewing the previous research done and determining the potential of the area. In this regard, various anthropological, archaeological and historical sources were consulted – see list of references below.

- Information of a very general nature were obtained from these sources

4.2.1.2 Data bases

The *Heritage Atlas Database*, the *Environmental Potential Atlas*, the *SAHRA Database*, the *Chief Surveyor General (CS-G)* and the *National Archives of South Africa (NASA)* were consulted.

- Database surveys produced a number of sites located in the larger region of the proposed development.

4.2.1.3 Other sources

Aerial photographs and topocadastral and other maps were also studied - see the list of references below.

- Information of a very general nature were obtained from these sources

5. DESCRIPTION OF THE AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

5.1 Site description

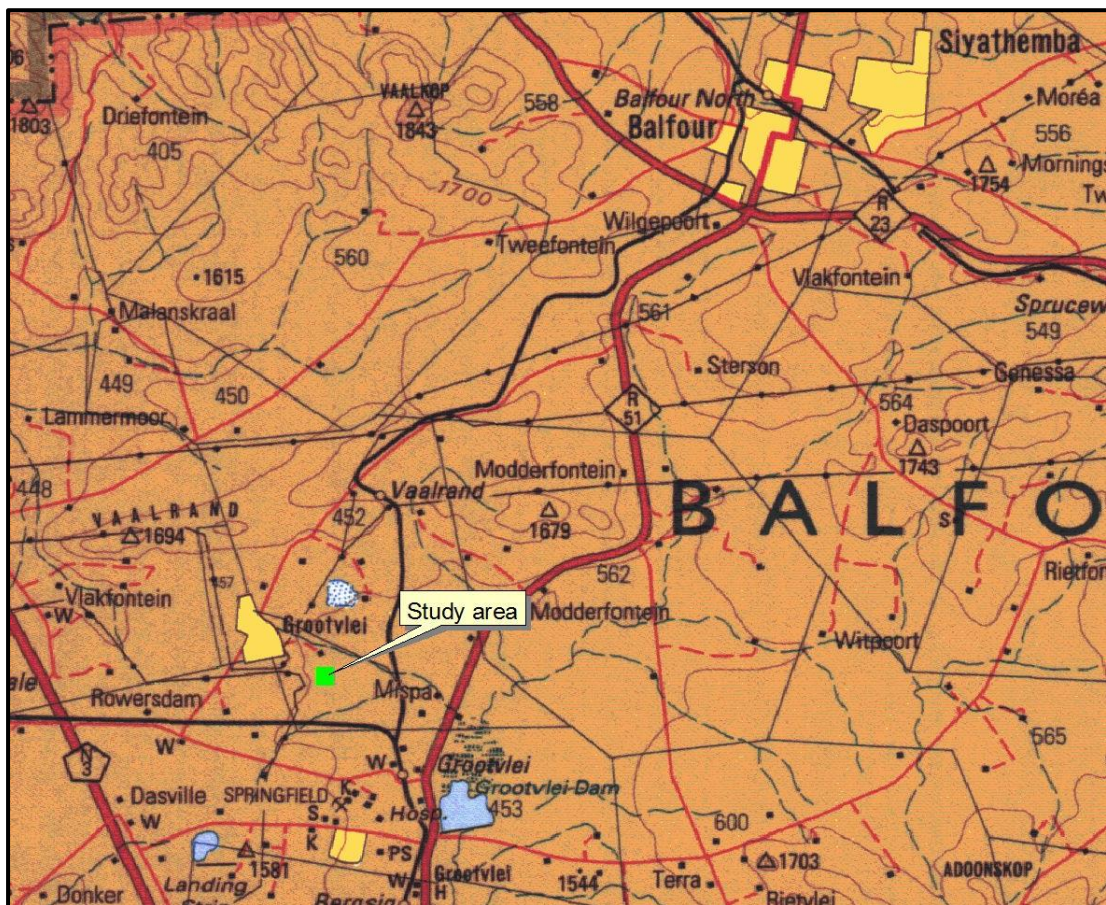


Fig. 1. The study area in regional context.

Grootvlei power station is located southeast of the town of Heidelberg and southwest of Balfour in the western section of Mpumalanga province (Fig. 1).

According to Eskom's website (<http://www.eskom.co.za>), the first of Grootvlei Power Station's six units were commissioned in 1969. Three units were mothballed in 1989 and the rest in 1990. Due to the power crises in the country, it was decided to return the station to service and in 2008 two of its six units were back online. The others are to follow soon.

The two areas that were identified for the construction of the fuel oil storage tank are located inside the grounds of the power station (see Fig. 3) below. These areas would have been heavily impacted on during the construction activities.



Fig. 2. The locations of the two alternative sites.

5.2 Overview of the region

The cultural landscape qualities of the larger region essentially consist of a two components. The first is a rural area in which the human occupation is made up of a pre-colonial (Stone Age and Iron Age) occupation and a much later colonial (farmer) component. The second component is an urban one consisting of a number of smaller towns, most of which developed during the last 150 years or less.

Figure 3 presents an overview of the location of known sites of heritage significance. Due to the scale of presentation, some sites overlap, with the result that there seems to be fewer sites than is the case. In similar vein, it might seem that sites occur in the various corridors, but are actually some distance from the exact route.

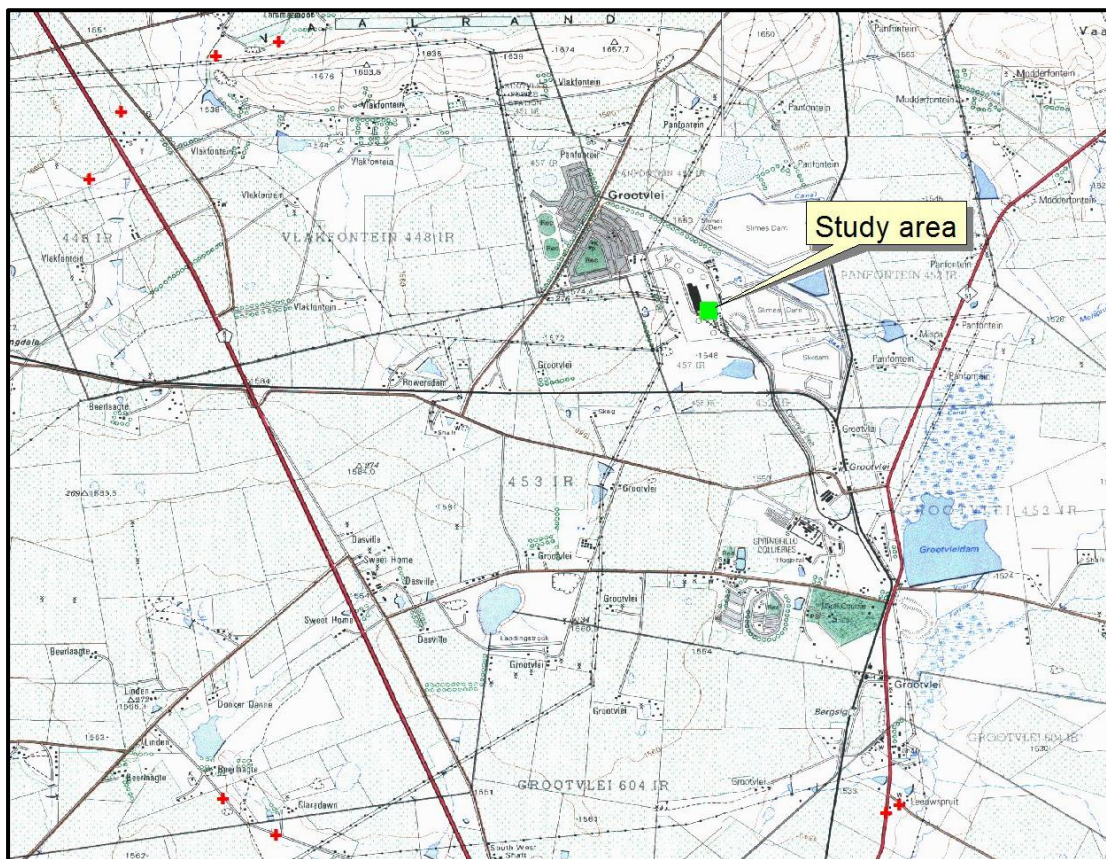


Fig. 3. The study area in relation to known heritage sites (red crosses).

5.2.1 Stone Age

This section of the highveld area has been inhabited since Early Stone Age (ESA) times. Tools dating to this period are mostly found in the vicinity of watercourses, e.g. the Vaal River gravels in the Vereeniging area. The original dating and evolutionary scheme for the development of tools during this early period, was based on a study of the river terrace gravels of the Vaal River, referred to as the *Older*, the *Younger* and the *Youngest gravels* (Söhnge, Visser & Van Riet-Lowe 1937; Breuil 1948). However, on subsequent investigation, the findings derived from this proved to be unacceptable as it was based on incorrect interpretations of the river gravels. It was only with the excavation of similar material from sealed, stratified sites, that it was realised that the material from the river gravels was not in its primary context, having been uncovered and washed about over many millenia.

During Middle Stone Age (MSA) times (c. 150 000 – 30 000 BP), people became more mobile, occupying areas formerly avoided (Thackeray 1992). The MSA is a technological stage characterized by flakes and flake-blades with faceted platforms, produced from prepared cores, as distinct from the core tool-based ESA technology. Open sites were still preferred near watercourses. These people were adept at exploiting the huge herds of animals that passed through the area, on their seasonal migration.

Late Stone Age (LSA) people had more advanced technology than the MSA people and therefore succeeded in occupying even more diverse habitats. Also, for the first time we now get evidence of people's activities derived from material other than stone tools. Ostrich eggshell beads, ground bone arrowheads, small bored stones and wood fragments with

incised markings are traditionally linked with the LSA. The LSA people have also left us with a rich legacy of rock art, which is an expression of their complex social and spiritual beliefs.

5.2.2 Iron Age

Iron Age people started to settle in southern Africa c. AD 300, with one of the oldest known sites at Broederstroom south of Hartebeespoort Dam dating to AD 470. Having only had cereals (sorghum, millet) that need summer rainfall, Early Iron Age (EIA) people did not move outside this rainfall zone, and neither did they occupy the central interior highveld area. Because of their specific technology and economy, Iron Age people preferred to settle on the alluvial soils near rivers for agricultural purposes, but also for firewood and water.

The occupation of the larger geographical area (including the study area) did not start much before the 1500s. By the 16th century things changed, with the climate becoming warmer and wetter, creating conditions that allowed Late Iron Age (LIA) farmers to occupy areas previously unsuitable, for example the Witwatersrand and the treeless plains of the Free State.

This wet period came to a sudden end sometime between 1800 and 1820 by a major drought lasting 3 to 5 years. The drought must have caused an agricultural collapse on a large, subcontinent scale.

This was also a period of great military tension. Military pressure from Zululand spilled onto the highveld by at least 1821. Various marauding groups of displaced Sotho-Tswana moved across the plateau in the 1820s. Mzilikazi raided the plateau extensively between 1825 and 1837. The Boers trekked into this area in the 1830s. And throughout this time settled communities of Tswana people also attacked each other.

As a result of this troubled period, Sotho-Tswana people concentrated into large towns for defensive purposes. Because of the lack of trees they built their settlements in stone. These stone-walled villages were almost always located near cultivatable soil and a source of water.

From the air, these homesteads and towns are easily recognised and it is also possible to determine variations in smaller detail. In its simplest form they resemble a 'fried egg': that is, the central cattle kraal formed an inner circle and the smooth outer wall the second. In others the layout consists of a group of large primary stone walled enclosures, with associated dwellings linked to it. The latter usually occur in groups of four to five units, facing the associated livestock pens to the centre of the settlement (Mason 1968; Maggs 1976; Taylor 1979).

5.2.3 Historic period

White settlers moved into the area during the first half of the 19th century. They were largely self-sufficient, basing their survival on cattle/sheep farming and hunting. Few towns were established and it remained an undeveloped area until the discovery of coal and later gold. During the Anglo-Boer War, a number of skirmishes occurred in the larger area. Most of these had to do with the British using the Vaal River as a border to catch the elusive Boer commandos.

5.3 Identified sites

The following sites that would be impacted on by the proposed development of the fuel oil storage tank had been identified. For more information on their location and significance, please see Appendix 3.

5.3.1 Stone Age

- No sites, features or objects of significance dating to the Stone Age were identified in the study area.

5.3.2 Iron Age

- No sites, features or objects of significance dating to the Iron Age were identified in the study area.

5.3.3 Historic period

- No sites, features or objects of significance dating to the historic period were identified in the study area.

6. SITE SIGNIFICANCE AND ASSESSMENT

6.1 Heritage assessment criteria and grading

According to the NHRA, No. 25 of 1999, Section 2(vi), the *significance* of heritage sites and artefacts is determined by its aesthetic, architectural, historical, scientific, social, spiritual, linguistic or technical value in relation to the uniqueness, condition of preservation and research potential.

A matrix was developed whereby the above criteria, as set out in Sections 3(3) and 7 of the NHRA, No. 25 of 1999, were applied for each identified site (see Appendix 1). This allowed some form of control over the application of similar values for similar sites.

The NHRA stipulates the assessment criteria and grading of archaeological sites. The following categories are distinguished in Section 7 of the Act:

- **Grade I:** Heritage resources with qualities so exceptional that they are of special national significance;
- **Grade II:** Heritage resources which, although forming part of the national estate, can be considered to have special qualities which make them significant within the context of a province or a region; and
- **Grade III:** Other heritage resources worthy of conservation, on a local authority level.

The occurrence of sites with Grade I significance will demand that the development activities be drastically altered in order to retain these sites in their original state. For Grade II and Grade III sites, the application of mitigation measures would allow the development activities to continue.

6.2 Statement of significance

In terms of Section 7 of the NHRA, all the sites currently known or which are expected to occur in the larger region are evaluated to have Grade III significance.

- No sites, features or objects of heritage significance are expected to exist in the study area.

7. CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this review was to determine what the heritage potential of the larger region is in which the power station is located, and what this might mean in terms of the proposed development. From the available information it was determined that the following heritage sites were identified in the larger region:

- Pre-colonial archaeological sites dating to the Late Iron Age have been identified to occur in the region of study area.
- Colonial period or historic period heritage manifest in a wide variety – farmsteads, infrastructure and cemeteries.

As the two areas that were identified for the construction of the fuel oil storage tank are located inside the grounds of the power station, they would have been heavily impacted on during the earlier construction activities.

- As no sites, features or objects of cultural heritage significance were identified in the study area, there would be no impact from the proposed development.

Therefore, from a heritage point of view it is recommended that the proposed development be allowed to continue. It is requested that should archaeological sites or graves be exposed during construction work, it must immediately be reported to a heritage practitioner so that an investigation and evaluation of the finds can be made.

8. REFERENCES

8.1 Data bases

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Environmental Potential Atlas, Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism.
Heritage Atlas Database, Pretoria.
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South African Heritage Resources Agency Database

8.2 Literature

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Van Vollenhoven, A. & Van den Bos, J. 1997. *'n Kultuurhulpbronstudie van die Britse blokhuisstelsel van die Tweede Anglo-Boer re-oorlog (1899-1902) in die voormalige Transvaal (ZAR)*. Pretoria: Raad vir Geesteswetenskaplike Navorsing.

8.3 Maps and aerial photographs

1: 50 000 Topocadastral maps

Google Earth

APPENDIX 1: CONVENTIONS USED TO ASSESS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF HERITAGE RESOURCES

Significance

According to the NHRA, Section 2(vi) the **significance** of heritage sites and artefacts is determined by its aesthetic, architectural, historical, scientific, social, spiritual, linguistic or technical value in relation to the uniqueness, condition of preservation and research potential. It must be kept in mind that the various aspects are not mutually exclusive, and that the evaluation of any site is done with reference to any number of these.

Matrix used for assessing the significance of each identified site/feature

1. Historic value				
Is it important in the community, or pattern of history				
Does it have strong or special association with the life or work of a person, group or organisation of importance in history				
Does it have significance relating to the history of slavery				
2. Aesthetic value				
It is important in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by a community or cultural group				
3. Scientific value				
Does it have potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of natural or cultural heritage				
Is it important in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period				
4. Social value				
Does it have strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons				
5. Rarity				
Does it possess uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of natural or cultural heritage				
6. Representivity				
Is it important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class of natural or cultural places or objects				
Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a range of landscapes or environments, the attributes of which identify it as being characteristic of its class				
Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of human activities (including way of life, philosophy, custom, process, land-use, function, design or technique) in the environment of the nation, province, region or locality.				
7. Sphere of Significance		High	Medium	Low
International				
National				
Provincial				
Regional				
Local				
Specific community				
8. Significance rating of feature				
1.	Low			
2.	Medium			
3.	High			

APPENDIX 2. RELEVANT LEGISLATION

All archaeological and palaeontological sites, and meteorites are protected by the National Heritage Resources Act (Act no 25 of 1999) as stated in Section 35:

(1) Subject to the provisions of section 8, the protection of archaeological and palaeontological sites and material and meteorites is the responsibility of a provincial heritage resources authority: Provided that the protection of any wreck in the territorial waters and the maritime cultural zone shall be the responsibility of SAHRA.

(2) Subject to the provisions of subsection (8)(a), all archaeological objects, palaeontological material and meteorites are the property of the State. The responsible heritage authority must, on behalf of the State, at its discretion ensure that such objects are lodged with a museum or other public institution that has a collection policy acceptable to the heritage resources authority and may in so doing establish such terms and conditions as it sees fit for the conservation of such objects.

(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 offices or museum, which must immediately notify such heritage resources authority.

(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 in the detection or recovery of metals or archaeological and palaeontological material or objects, or use such equipment for the recovery of meteorites.

In terms of cemeteries and graves the following (Section 36):

(1) Where it is not the responsibility of any other authority, SAHRA must conserve and generally care for burial grounds and graves protected in terms of this section, and it may make such arrangements for their conservation as it sees fit.

(2) SAHRA must identify and record the graves of victims of conflict and any other graves which it deems to be of cultural significance and may erect memorials associated with the grave referred to in subsection (1), and must maintain such memorials.

(3) No person may, without a permit issued by SAHRA or a provincial heritage resources authority-

- (a) destroy, damage, alter, exhume or remove from its original position or otherwise disturb the grave of a victim of conflict, or any burial ground or part thereof which contains such graves;
- (b) 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
- (c) 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 the detection or recovery of metals.

(4) SAHRA or a provincial heritage resources authority may not issue a permit for the destruction or damage of any burial ground or grave referred to in subsection (3)(a) unless it is satisfied that the applicant has made satisfactory arrangements for the exhumation and re-interment of the contents of such graves, at the cost of the applicant and in accordance with any regulations made by the responsible heritage resources authority.

APPENDIX 3. SITES THAT WOULD BE IMPACTED ON

The following sites have been identified to be located in the study area and would as a result be impacted on by the proposed development:

NIL