

# **CULTURAL HERITAGE SCREENING OF THE EXTENDED MEDUPI LANDFILL SITE**

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**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

EIA	Early Iron Age
ESA	Early Stone Age
HISTORIC PERIOD	Since the arrival of the white settlers - c. AD 1836 in this part of the country
IRON AGE	Early Iron Age AD 200 - AD 1000 Late Iron Age AD 1000 - AD 1830
LIA	Late Iron Age
LSA	Late Stone Age
MSA	Middle Stone Age
NEMA	National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998 and associated regulations (2006).
NHRA	National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act No. 25 of 1999) and associated regulations (2000)
SAHRA	South African Heritage Resources Agency
STONE AGE	Early Stone Age 2 000 000 - 250 000 BP Middle Stone Age 250 000 - 25 000 BP Late Stone Age 30 000 - until c. AD 200

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A cultural heritage survey of the Medupi proposed landfill sites, including the newly proposed Site 5, identified no heritage features adjacent to the proposed development. There is no archaeological reason why development may not proceed as planned. However, attention is drawn to the South African National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act No. 25 of 1999) (NHRA) which requires that operations that expose archaeological or historical remains should cease immediately, pending evaluation by the provincial heritage agency.

## 1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE PROJECT

**Table 1. Background information**

Consultant:	Frans Prins
Type of development:	Landfill site
Rezoning or subdivision:	Rezoning
Terms of reference	To carry out a Heritage Impact Assessment
Legislative requirements:	The Heritage Impact Assessment was carried out in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998) (NEMA) and following the requirements of the National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act No. 25 of 1999) (NHRA)

### 1.1. Details of the area surveyed:

Footprint and Current land use: The area consists of four distinct portions designated by farm name. Hangklip form the extensive grounds to the Matimba power station, Grootvallei and Kromdraai were old farmland areas but have since been purchased by Eskom although no development has taken place on these areas. The newly proposed Site 5 falls within the boundaries of the farm Grootestryd.

## 2 BACKGROUND TO ARCHAEOLOGICAL HISTORY OF AREA

The somewhat inhospitable environment of the area, being very flat with few sources of surface water, did not allow people to settle in large numbers in this region in the past. As a result, only a few sites of cultural significance are known to occur in the larger geographical area. In areas where there are outcrops, especially close to rivers, rock art sites and sites dating to the Late Iron Age have been documented. Further a-field, to the south, some Early and Late Iron Age sites are known to exist. The

Waterberg, also located to the immediate south of the project area, is particularly rich in archaeological sites. Closer to the project area the town of Lephalale (Ellisras) contains a cemetery with the graves of some of the earliest white settlers in the area.

### **3 BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF THE SURVEY**

#### **3.1 Methodology**

A desktop study was conducted of the SAHRA inventory of heritage sites. Unfortunately this database is incomplete and of only limited use. The reports of previous heritage impact assessments in the general area were also consulted (Van Schalkwyk 2008). In addition, a ground survey of the proposed developments following standard and accepted archaeological procedures was conducted.

#### **3.2 Restrictions encountered during the survey**

##### **3.2.1 Visibility**

Visibility during the site visit was generally good. However, thick stands of *Acacia sp.* impeded visibility in some areas.

##### **3.2.2 Disturbance.**

No disturbance of any potential archaeological stratigraphy or heritage features has been noted.

#### **3.3 Details of equipment used in the survey**

GPS: Garmin Etrek

Digital cameras: Canon Powershot A460

All readings were taken using the GPS. Accuracy was to a level of 5 m.

### **4 DESCRIPTION OF SITES AND MATERIAL OBSERVED**

#### **4.1 Locational data**

Province: Limpopo

Town: Lephalale

#### **4.2 Description of the general area surveyed**

The topography of the area is very flat and there are only a few features (e.g. hills, outcrops or rock shelters, rivers) that may have acted as a drawing card for people to settle in its vicinity in the past. Only a few small hills or outcrops occur. All the rivers crossing the area are non-perennial. The biggest river, the Makolo, passes some distance to the east of the study area, flowing from south to north. The geology is made up of alternating bands of arenite and shale, with a basalt intrusion to the west of the study area. All is overlain by sand, probably aeolic in origin, having being laid down from the west. The area can be described as typical savannah, with the original vegetation consisting of Mixed Bushveld, with a section to the north classified as Sweet Bushveld.

### **4.3 Description of sites**

Although a survey of aerial photographs of the area suggests possible iron age walling on the farms Kromdraai and Grootvallei subsequent ground surveys indicated that these are natural formations. The newly proposed Site 5, which falls within the boundaries of the farm Grootestryd, also had no heritage features. No heritage or archaeological features have been located elsewhere in the project area.

### **4.4 Dating the findings**

Not applicable.

### **4.5 Description and distribution of archaeological material found**

Not applicable.

### **4.6 Summary of findings**

No heritage and archaeological features of significance have been located.

## **5 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (HERITAGE VALUE)**

Not applicable.

### **5.1 Field Rating**

Not applicable.

**Table 2. Field rating and recommended grading of sites (SAHRA 2005)**

Level	Details	Action
National (Grade I)	The site is considered to be of National Significance	Nominated to be declared by SAHRA
Provincial (Grade II)	This site is considered to be of Provincial significance	Nominated to be declared by Provincial Heritage Authority
Local Grade IIIA	This site is considered to be of HIGH significance locally	The site should be retained as a heritage site
Local Grade IIIB	This site is considered to be of HIGH significance locally	The site should be mitigated, and part retained as a heritage site
Generally Protected A	High to medium significance	Mitigation necessary before destruction
Generally Protected B	Medium significance	The site needs to be recorded before destruction
Generally Protected C	Low significance	No further recording is required before destruction

## 6 RECOMMENDATIONS

The development may proceed in terms of heritage values. The newly proposed Site 5 is also devoid of heritage features and development may proceed on this locality as well.

## 7 RISK PREVENTATIVE MEASURES ASSOCIATED WITH CONSTRUCTION

Not applicable.

## 9 REFERENCES

SAHRA, 2005. Minimum Standards for the Archaeological and the Palaeontological Components of Impact Assessment Reports, Draft version 1.4.

Van Schalkwyk, J. A. 2008. Heritage survey report for the development of a water reservoir and pipelines for the new Medupi power station, Ellisras magisterial district, Limpopo Province. Report submitted to Savannah Environmental (PTY) LTD.