

**A LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION (WITH CONDITIONS) FOR THE EXEMPTION OF A FULL PHASE 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF RESIDENTIAL APARTMENTS ON THE REMAINING EXTENT OF ERF 3420, SEA VISTA, ST. FRANCIS BAY, KOUGA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE**



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## **PROJECT INFORMATION**

Eastern Cape Heritage Consultants cc has been appointed by Eco Route Environmental Consultancy to conduct a Phase 1 Archaeological Heritage Impact Assessment (AIA) for the proposed development of residential apartments on the Remaining Extent of Erf 3420, Sea Vista, St. Francis Bay, Kouga Local Municipality, Eastern Cape Province.

The proposed development will be the construction of four apartment blocks consisting of 4 floors (including ground floor) each and with a total of 36 units, a reception area, 81 parking bays, and paved pathways leading to future extension plans of a clubhouse and pool area. The entire property will need to be levelled and graded accordingly for the proposed development.

Access to the property is via an existing access road off Triton Avenue. Proposed vehicle access for the development will be continued on from the existing access road.

New service infrastructure will be required, including the necessary links to municipal bulk services, including water supply lines, sewerage mains, storm water infrastructure and electricity supply lines.

### **Applicant**

Crystal Chimes Properties (Pty) Ltd.

### **Consultant**

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### **Purpose of the study**

The purpose of the study was to conduct a Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) for the proposed project and the associated activities, to describe and evaluate:

- the importance of possible archaeological sites, features and materials,
- the potential impact of the development on these resources and,
- to propose recommendations to minimize possible damage to these resources.

### **Site and Location**

The site for the proposed development is located within the 1:50 000 topographic reference map 3424 BB Humansdorp (Map 1). It is situated adjacent to Port St Francis approximately 14 kilometres directly southeast of Humansdorp and 2,5 kilometres from the St Francis Bay business centre (Map 2) The site is within 100 metres from the coast on a relatively flat area. Certain areas of the property are covered by dense St. Francis Dune Thicket, as well as grass and alien vegetation (Fig. 1). The area adjacent to the port is supported by retaining walls and appears to be filled-in by building rubble. A general GPS reading was taken at 34.11.129S; 24.51.067E).

## **Relevant Archaeological Impact Assessments**

- Binneman, J. and Reichert, K. 2021. A letter of recommendation (with conditions) for the exemption of a full phase 1 archaeological impact assessment for the proposed development of the Grand Comores Retirement Estate on Erf 1382 and Portion 32 of the Farm Goedgeloof in St. Francis Bay within the Kouga Local Municipality, Eastern Cape Province. Prepared for Engineering Advice & Services. Humewood. Eastern Cape Heritage Consultants cc.
- Binneman, J. and Reichert, K. 2019. A phase 1 archaeological impact assessment for the proposed development and associated infrastructure of 40 units on Erven 922 and 958 at St. Francis Bay within the Kouga Local Municipality, Sarah Baartman District of the Eastern Cape Province. Prepared for Infinity Consulting. St. Francis Bay. Eastern Cape Heritage Consultants cc.
- Binneman, J. and Reichert, K. 2018. A letter of recommendation (with conditions) for the exemption of a full phase 1 archaeological impact assessment for the proposed development of residential apartments and related infrastructure on Erf 3195 within Precinct B of the Port St. Francis development, St. Francis Bay, in the Kouga Local Municipality of the Eastern Cape Province. Prepared for CEN Integrated Environmental Management Unit. Port Elizabeth. Eastern Cape Heritage Consultants cc.
- Binneman, J. 2011a. A phase 1 archaeological impact assessment of the proposed subdivision and rezoning of Portion 176 of the Farm Goedgeloof No. 745, from agricultural zone 1 to special zone for rural residential purposes in St. Francis Bay, Kouga Local Municipality, Eastern Cape Province. Prepared for CEN Integrated Environmental Management Unit. Port Elizabeth. Eastern Cape Heritage Consultants cc.
- Binneman, J. 2011b. A phase 1 archaeological impact assessment of the proposed construction of a communal jetty on the northern bank of the Kromme River Estuary, Kouga Local Municipality, Eastern Cape Province. Prepared for CEN Integrated Environmental Management Unit. Port Elizabeth. Eastern Cape Heritage Consultants cc.
- Nilssen, P. 2003. Proposed St. Francis Golf Estate. Phase 1 Heritage Impact Assessment. Final Report. Prepared for SRK Consulting. Port Elizabeth. Mossel Bay Archaeology Project.

## **ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION**

### **Methodology and results**

Google aerial images as well as previous heritage reports related to the study area were studied prior to the investigation. The investigation was conducted on foot by an archaeologist. GPS readings were taken with a Garmin and all important features were digitally recorded. The archaeological visibility was poor in certain areas due to the dense grass and other vegetation but the visibility was better in other areas that have been cleared of vegetation and as a result of other surface disturbances. Apart from a few marine shells from presumably a disturbed/destroyed shell midden, no sites/materials were observed (Fig. 1). In general, the proposed study area appears to be of low archaeological sensitivity, but archaeological sites/materials may be covered by rubble, dune sand and vegetation. There are no known graves or buildings older than 60 years on the property. The remains of a dilapidated structure / building was observed near the southern boundary of the property, but the structure is not older than 60 years and no further action is required.



**Figure 1. General views of the proposed area for the development of the Remaining Extent of Erf 3420. The remains of an old structure / building on the southern boundary of the property (bottom left insert) and a few marine shells from presumably a disturbed/destroyed shell midden (bottom right insert).**

## **DISCUSSION AND CONDITIONS**

It would appear that the property has been severely disturbed in the past by building/construction activities surrounding the property and it is uncertain if any in situ archaeological remains will be exposed during the development. Nevertheless, the property is situated within 100 metres from the high water mark of the coast and is therefore situated in an archaeological sensitive zone and it is possible that shell middens and other archaeological sites/materials (including human remains) may be found when the construction of the residential development takes place.

In recent years several KhoiSan burials were exposed during building operations in the general area of the proposed development (Map 3). Should human remains or archaeological material be exposed then work must cease in the immediate area of the finds and it must be reported to the Albany Museum (046 622 2312) or to the Eastern Cape Provincial Heritage Resources Authority (043 642 2811), so that a systematic and professional investigation can be undertaken. Sufficient time should be allowed to remove/collect such material (See Appendix B for a list of possible archaeological sites that maybe found in the area). Due to the fact that the property is situated in an archaeological sensitive area the following additional recommendations are made;

1. All vegetation clearing must be conducted by hand and must be cut above the ground, not 'pulled' out. An archaeologist or trained monitor must be present during the vegetation clearing activity.
2. An archaeologist must inspect the property after the clearing of the vegetation. Further recommendations may follow after the inspection.
3. All levelling and trenching must be monitored by an archaeologist . If any shell middens or any other archaeological sites/materials are exposed, all work in that area must cease and an archaeologist must inspect the find and make recommendations.
4. If any archaeological sites/materials are exposed, the affected community must be consulted regarding the proposed mitigation and the destiny of the material.
5. If the affected community agrees to the removal of the material, an archaeologist must apply for a permit from the Eastern Cape Provincial Heritage Resources Authority (ECPHRA) to scientifically excavate/collect the material
6. All costs must be financed by the applicant. This may include: • All monitoring and mitigation expenses regarding the excavations/collecting of material, travel, accommodation and subsistence, analysis of the material, radiocarbon date(s) of the site(s) and a one-off curation/storage fee payable to the Department of Archaeology at the Albany Museum in Makanda (Grahamstown), the Eastern Cape Repository for Archaeological material.

## **LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the proposed development of the Remaining Extent of Erf 3420, Sea Vista, St. Francis Bay, Eastern Cape Province is exempted from a full Phase 1 Archaeological Heritage Impact Assessment. The proposed development area appears to be of low archaeological sensitivity but it is uncertain if any significant archaeological remains will be found on the property. The proposed development may proceed as planned.

Note: This letter of recommendation only exempts the proposed development from a full Phase 1 Archaeological Heritage Impact Assessment, but not for other heritage impact assessments. It must also be clear that this letter will be assessed by the relevant heritage resources authority.

The final decision rests with the heritage resources authority, which should give a permit or a formal letter of permission for the destruction of any cultural sites.

Section 35 of the National Heritage Resources Act , No. 25 of 1999 (see Appendix A) requires a full Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) in order that all heritage resources, that is, all places or objects of aesthetics, architectural, historic, scientific, social, spiritual linguistic or technological value or significance are protected. Thus, any assessment should make provision for the protection of all these heritage components, including archaeology, shipwrecks, battlefields, graves, and structures older than 60 years, living heritage, historical settlements, landscapes, geological sites, palaeontological sites and objects.

### **GENERAL REMARKS AND CONDITIONS**

It must be emphasized that this letter of recommendation for the exemption of a full Phase 1 archaeological heritage impact assessment is based on the visibility of archaeological sites/material and may not therefore, reflect the true state of affairs. Sites and material may be covered by soil and vegetation and will only be located once this has been removed. In the event of such finds being uncovered, (during any phase of construction work), it must be reported to the archaeologist at the Albany Museum in Makhanda (Grahamstown) (Tel: 046 622 2312) or to the Eastern Cape Provincial Heritage Resources Authority (Tel.: 043 745 0888) immediately. The developer must finance the costs should additional studies be required as outlined above. The consultant is responsible to forward this report to the relevant Heritage Authority for assessment, unless alternative arrangements have been made with the specialist to submit the report.

## **APPENDIX A: brief legislative requirements**

Parts of sections 34, 35(4), 36(3) and 38(1) (8) of the National Heritage Resources Act, No. 25 of 1999 apply:

### ***Structures***

*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.*

### ***Archaeology, palaeontology and meteorites***

*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;*
- (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.*

### ***Burial grounds and graves***

*36. (3) (a) 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.*

### ***Heritage resources management***

*38. (1) Subject to the provisions of subsections (7), (8) and (9), any person who intends to undertake a development categorized as –*

- (a) the construction of a road, wall, powerline, pipeline, canal or other similar form of linear development or barrier exceeding 300m in length;*
- (b) the construction of a bridge or similar structure exceeding 50m in length;*
- (c) any development or other activity which will change the character of the site –*
  - (i) exceeding 5000m<sup>2</sup> in extent, or*
  - (ii) involving three or more erven or subdivisions thereof; or*
  - (iii) involving three or more erven or divisions thereof which have been consolidated within the past five years; or*
  - (iv) the costs of which will exceed a sum set in terms of regulations by SAHRA, or a provincial resources authority;*
- (d) the re-zoning of a site exceeding 10 000m<sup>2</sup> in extent; or*
- (e) any other category of development provided for in regulations by SAHRA or a provincial heritage resources authority, must as the very earliest stages of initiating such a development, notify the responsible heritage resources authority and furnish it with details regarding the location, nature and extent of the proposed development.*

## **APPENDIX B: IDENTIFICATION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL FEATURES AND MATERIAL FROM COASTAL AREAS: guidelines and procedures for developers**

### **Shell middens**

Shell middens can be defined as an accumulation of marine shell deposited by human agents rather than the result of marine activity. The shells are concentrated in a specific locality above the high-water mark and frequently contain stone tools, pottery, bone and occasionally also human remains. Shell middens may be of various sizes and depths, but an accumulation which exceeds 1 m<sup>2</sup> in extent, should be reported to an archaeologist.

### **Human Skeletal material**

Human remains, whether the complete remains of an individual buried during the past, or scattered human remains resulting from disturbance of the grave, should be reported. In general, the remains are buried in a flexed position on their sides but are also found buried in a sitting position with a flat stone capping and developers are requested to be on the alert for this.

### **Fossil bone**

Fossil bones or any other concentrations of bones, whether fossilized or not, should be reported.

### **Stone artefacts**

These are difficult for the layman to identify. However, large accumulations of flaked stones which do not appear to have been distributed naturally should be reported. If the stone tools are associated with bone remains, development should be halted immediately, and archaeologists notified.

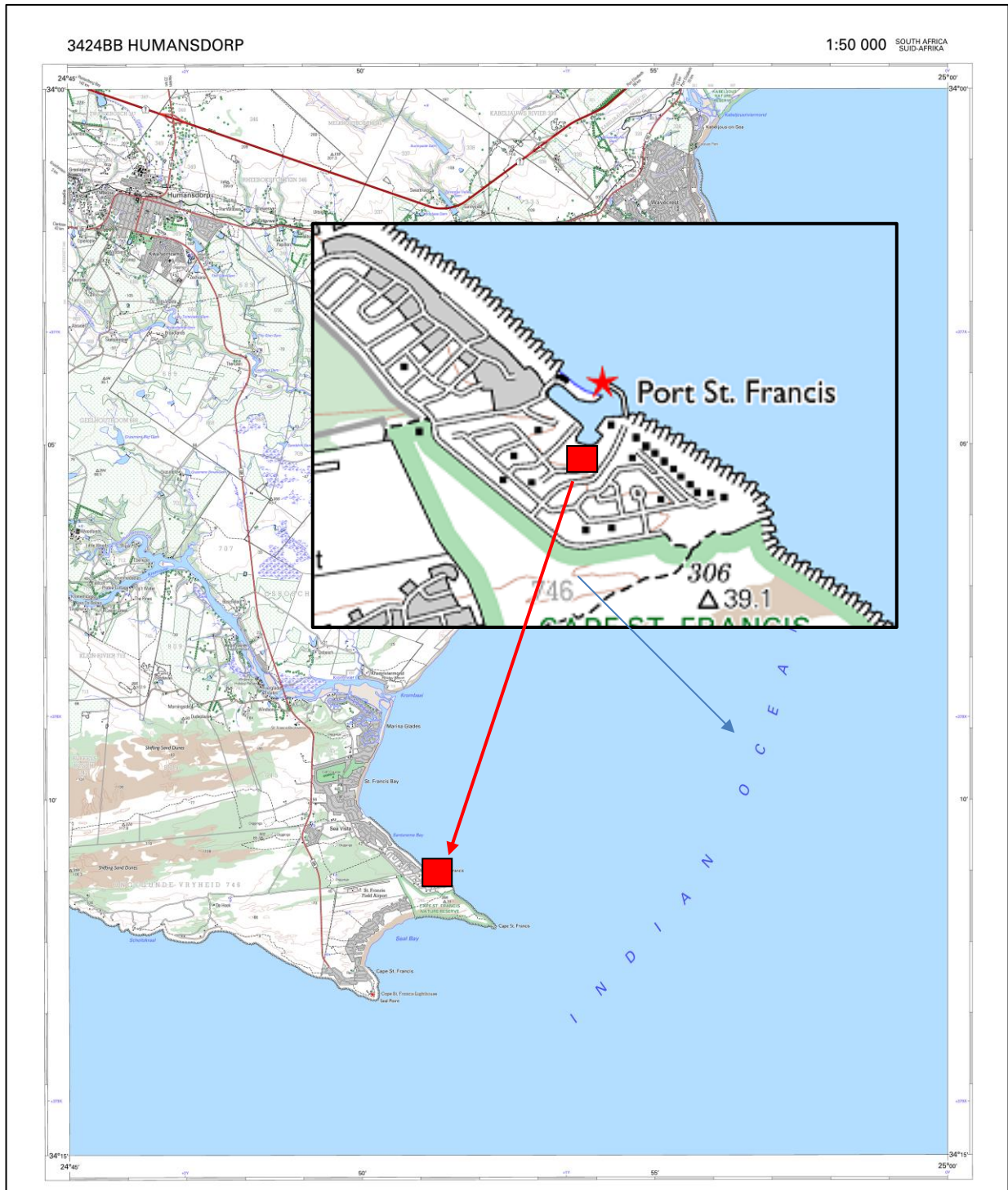
### **Stone features and platforms**

These occur in different forms and sizes, but easily identifiable. The most common are an accumulation of roughly circular fire cracked stones tightly spaced and filled in with charcoal and marine shell. They are usually 1-2 metres in diameter and may represent cooking platforms for shellfish. Others may resemble circular single row cobble stone markers. These occur in different sizes and may be the remains of windbreaks or cooking shelters.

### **Historical artefacts or features**

These are easy to identify and include foundations of buildings or other construction features and items from domestic and military activities.





**Map 1. 1:50 000 Topographic maps indicating the approximate location of the proposed area for the development of the Remaining Extent of Erf 3420, marked by the red squares.**



**Map 2. Aerial views of the general location of the proposed area for the development Remaining Extent of Erf 3420 (indicated by the yellow arrow). The property boundary outlined in red.**



**Map 3.** The proposed development area is outlined in red and the yellow dots mark the locations of KhoiSan burials exposed during building operations in recent years.



**Map 4.** Layout of the proposed development at the Remaining Extent of Erf 3420 (map courtesy of Eco Route Environmental Consultancy).