

**WEST FORT HOSPITAL (FORT WEST VILLAGE), PRETORIA TOWN AND TOWN  
LANDS, PRETORIA WEST**

**9/2/258/59**

---

**Background/Progress Report**

1. The records show that National Monuments Council/SA Heritage Resources Agency has had an interest in the West Fort Hospital since at least 1986.

The site was being investigated for protection by declaration as a conservation area in 1998. Subsequently, the NMC Council made a decision in December 1998 to recommend that the West Fort Hospital property and all the buildings thereon be declared as a conservation area. This was due to the property containing features of geological (the ridge?), botanical (nature conservation area), historical and architectural (the old hospital and village), and archaeological significance (two Iron Age sites).

3. Letter from SAHRA to Environmental Outsource (May 2000) referring to an EIA notice for the property and stating that due to a problem in the survey status on the property the declaration had been delayed.
4. Letter from SAHRA to Environmental Outsource (October 2000) regarding Environmental Scoping report for Fort West. This notes that all structures older than 60 years are protected from alteration or demolition without a permit. The letter also made specific recommendations, inter alia:
  - development of a conservation management plan for the whole property, based on a detailed assessment of the cultural significance and other special values of the property.
  - contextual conservation and the proposed interpretation of the cultural and other significance of the property ie in terms of interpretive plaques and brochures.
  - section 38(3) of the National Heritage Resource Act which requires the submission of detailed information on the impact of the proposed development on the heritage resources.

The letter also required that a heritage specialist/s be appointed to develop a comprehensive conservation management plan to address the above issues.

5. Copy of letter from Pretoria City Planning and Development Department (December 2000) which criticises certain aspects of the proposal and suggests that the applicants submit proper documentation to the SAHRA for approval.
6. Site Visit and Meeting at the Fort West village on 6 May 2003. SAFIRA staff and members of Permit Committee were involved. A brief presentation on the proposal was made. SAFFRA then explained the application of the NT RA and that the Provincial Heritage Resources Authority may be involved with some aspects of the proposal. The developers stated that it was intended to establish an Aesthetics and Heritage Committee to deal with applications for permits. It was noted that this did not exclude SAHRA from formally considering individual buildings for approval in terms of the heritage legislation. Ms Kitto was subsequently appointed to be the SAHRA representative on the above Committee.

7. Meeting regarding Fort West with representatives from a French heritage organisation (CRAM), the French Embassy and Fort West Foundation, held on 5 February 2005. Ms Mvusi explained that the French are interested in being involved with Fort West due to the fact that Fort Daspoortrand was built by a French company. Ms Kitto explained about the application of the MIRA and the sections that would be relevant to the project (sections 35, 38, 34). Ms Mvusi undertook to let SAHRA have a formal notification of the Fort West proposal so that SAT-IRA can call for a Heritage Impact Assessment.
  
8. **As at May 2005 no further information has been received from Fort West and no further meetings have been held. Also, no further communication about meetings of the Aesthetics and Heritage Committee has been received.**

Ms J Kitto  
Assistant Manager  
SAHRA Gauteng Office

18 May 2005



## SOUTH AFRICAN HERITAGE RESOURCES AGENCY

## PROVINCIAL OFFICE: GAUTENG

FILE NOTE

---

**REF: 9/2/258/59; 9/2/258/7****DATE: 31 May 2005**

---

**RE: SITE VISIT TO CEMETERY AT PROPOSED EXTENSION OF STAATSARTILLERIE ROAD, NEAR FORT WEST, PRETORIA TOWNLANDS**

---

Ms Kitto met with Ms Sneziwe Mzozwane (environmental scientist), and Mike (engineer) from Arcus Gibb to undertake an inspection of a cemetery in the area of a proposed extension of the Staatsartillerie road, near Fort West Village, Pretoria Townlands. At the site met Mr Gerhard Coetzee from Tshwane Municipality.

It was noted that there are two cemeteries in the area close to the existing road and also close to the Fort West Village (Westfort Hospital). One of the cemeteries contains graves marked with cement crosses of a standard design and directly adjacent there are other graves with slate headstones. Some inscriptions are visible which date the graves as being older than 60 years (up to 1960s?). There is also a large granite marker on a pile of pebbles which probably marked the entrance to the cemeteries. This marker faces the Fort West Village and could be associated with the Westfort Hospital.

There is a further cemetery located to the west of the Fort West Village. This seems to be later extension of the first cemetery as the graves are more individual and the dates on the inscriptions seem to be later than those on the first cemetery.

An old building that seems to be on the Fort West Village property which is definitely older than 60 years was also identified. It is built of red brick in an old bond (English?) and the features (circular window) are historical.

**(a letter was sent on 8 June 2005 by e-mail to Mr Coetzee of Tshwane Roads and Stormwater dept. requesting copy of EIA/HIA document for consideration by SAHRA]**

*Jennifer Kitto (Assistant Manager)*

## SOUTH AFRICAN HERITAGE RESOURCES AGENCY

## PROVINCIAL OFFICE: GAUTENG

**FILE NOTE**

---

**REF: 9/2/258/59; 9/2/258/7****DATE: 29 June 2005**

---

**RE: FORT WEST VILLAGE OPEN DAY: SITE VISIT, WESTFORT HOSPITAL,  
PRETORIA TOWNLANDS, TSHWANE**

---

Ms J Kitto was invited to the Fort West Village Open Day to see the results of the heritage camp that was undertaken in conjunction with the French heritage organisation CHAM. The invitation was partly as a result of a phone call to Mrs Linda Mvusi to discuss allegations by Dr van Vollenhoven that excavation work was happening at the Daspoortrand Fort without a permit (located on the same property).

The heritage camp involved youths studying heritage and tourism from different countries in Africa where CHAM is active eg Zimbabwe, Seychelles, Reunion; and South Africa and France. The work was divided into two main projects: marking the hiking trail which visits several heritage sites (the Fort, two archaeological sites); and "cleaning" the entrance to the Fort.

Apparently cleaning the entrance to the Fort included taking off soil at the entrance that had eroded down from the surrounding banks which were mainly composed of sand from Genl. Smuts' filling in of the Fort in the 1940s to prevent Nazi sympathisers from using it. Dr van Vollenhoven stated that he had previously excavated the entrance to the Fort (in the 1970s/1980s) down to the original ground level; so that what was taken out now was soil that had been eroded down since then.

However, I was concerned that the landowner (Mrs Mvusi) had apparently not considered that a permit from SAHRA was necessary, even though she had been informed on many occasions that this would be the case. There was also, apparently, some confusion with the Tshwane Council about whether Dr van Vollenhoven would be able to participate in the camp as an employee of the Council.

Nothing seems to have been done at the two Iron age archaeological sites however.

The youths involved in the heritage camp all seemed to be very enthusiastic and to have enjoyed the work. I had a couple of conversations with some of them about SAHRA and the work we do within the heritage legislation.

*Jennifer Kitt\* (Assistant Manager)*

**SOUTH AFRICAN HERITAGE RESOURCES AGENCY****PROVINCIAL OFFICE: GAUTENG****FILE NOTE**

---

**REF: 9/2/258159; 9/2/258/7****DATE: 29 June 2005**

---

**RE: FORT WEST VILLAGE OPEN DAY: SITE VISIT, WESTFORT HOSPITAL,  
PRETORIA TOWNLANDS, TSHWANE**

---

Ms J Kitto was invited to the Fort West Village Open Day to see the results of the heritage camp that was undertaken in conjunction with the French heritage organisation CRAM. The invitation was partly as a result of a phone call to Mrs Linda Mvusi to discuss allegations by Dr van Vollenhoven that excavation work was happening at the Daspoortrand Fort without a permit (located on the same property).

The heritage camp involved youths studying heritage and tourism from different countries in Africa where CRAM is active eg Zimbabwe, Seychelles, Reunion; and South Africa and France. The work was divided into two main projects: marking the hiking trail which visits several heritage sites (the Fort, two archaeological sites); and "cleaning" the entrance to the Fort.

Apparently cleaning the entrance to the Fort included taking off soil at the entrance that had eroded down from the surrounding banks which were mainly composed of sand from Genl. Smuts' filling in of the Fort in the 1940s to prevent Nazi sympathisers from using it. Dr van Vollenhoven stated that he had previously excavated the entrance to the Fort (in the 1970s/1980s) down to the original ground level; so that what was taken out now was soil that had been eroded down since then. Dr van Vollenhoven confirmed that he had excavated the entrance to the Fort in the 1980s so the soil taken away was recent overburden.

However, I was concerned that the landowner (Mrs Mvusi) had apparently not considered that a permit from SAHRA was necessary, even though she had been informed on many occasions that this would be the case. There was also, apparently, some confusion with the Tshwane Council about whether Dr van Vollenhoven would be able to participate in the camp as an employee of the Council.

Nothing seems to have been done at the two Iron age archaeological sites however.

Marking the hiking trail consisted of identifying the various heritage sites, setting up a metal pole and stone cairn in the vicinity of each site (not too close so that there was no impact) and finding a route between the sites so that the markers were visible.

The youths involved in the heritage camp all seemed to be very enthusiastic and to have enjoyed the work. I had a couple of conversations with some of them about SAHRA and the work we do within the heritage legislation. Those I talked to seemed to be very interested.

*Jennifer ICitto (Assistant Manager)*