agriculture, land reform & rural development
Department:
Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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HERITAGE SPECIALIST STUDY: LEJWELEPUTSWA DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY

9. HERITAGE RESOURCES

9.1. OVERVIEW

A rich archaeological landscape reflects the history of the Free State Province. A few sites illustrate Stone Age habitation, mostly located in open spaces along rivers or in sediments. Historically, Bantu-speaking groups have inhabited this region for millennia, and the presumably Basotho groups occupied the landscape from 1500-1800 during the Late Iron Age. Iron Age settlements were established along rivers and nearby rocky outcrops in plains. In the middle of the 19th century, European farmers moved to the area and divided the landscape into several farms. Parts of the district have experienced intensive agricultural and mining development in recent years.

The district was previously known as the Orange Free State and stood on its own as a country. Orange Free State was a Boer republic in southern Africa. The Boers, of Dutch ancestry, had settled the area earlier in the nineteenth century among the other settlers. Lejweleputswa is a goldfields district and a major agricultural area. It is situated within the Witwatersrand basin. A gold deposit was discovered in the early 1940s.

One of the district municipality's heritage sites is the National Military Museum, also known as Voortrekker Monument. The Florisbad National Quaternary Research Station is another notable site, which was the site of the discovery of the first human skull. Additionally, the district municipality hosts Winnie Mandela's Banished home, now a museum in the small town once known as Brandfort (recently renamed Winnie Mandela).

Further details through the review of existing heritage resource databases (SAHRIS), literature and expert knowledge, heritage data for Lejweleputswa district municipality have been thoroughly investigated. Types of heritage found in the region include:

9.1.1. Archaeological sites

Majority of the district municipality's achaeological sites have been identified during Heritage Impact Assessment studies or investigations. Due to the history of the Basotho inhabitation of the area, majority of the archaeological materials found in the district are associated with them. SAHRIS noted a lot of artefacts belonging to the Iron Age group, which are notably the same age as the arrival of the Basotho speaking people in the district. Such artefacts are in the form of rock art engravings and paintings, ruins, stone wall and burial grounds and graves. The arrival of the European farmers is also noted in the artefacts through the reminants of structures and farms which were established through their arrival.

9.1.2. Military history

This district has perhaps one of the country's famous military activities, i.e., part of the Anglo-Boer war including a famous town of Brandfort (renamed recently to Winnie Mandela). Some of these wars took place in the 1800. The district is also known for its history about the concentration camp which the British set up on Dwyersdorp for Afrikaner women and children caught up in the Second Anglo-Boer war. There are also other structures and buildings associated with the area's military history. Amongst the military history is the war declared by the then Orange Free State upon the British and fought alongside its sister Boer republic, the South African Republic, during the Boer War (1899-1902).

9.1.3. Buildings and Structures

Same as most parts of the Free State province, the district has some of the notable historical buildings that are important in terms of history, aesthetics, architecture and/or social values. Although some of these are well known in terms of their location, condition and management requirements; there is are some whose such details is still not properly documented and therefore not known. Among these is the building where Winnie Mandela stayed when she was banished by the then apartheid government and many other stuctures constructed by the apartheid and boer republic governemnets. The SAHRIS website however

9.1.4. Monuments and memorials

There are a couple of monuments and memorials in the district, however, most of these are mostly for the whites who settled the area later after the natives. Among these is the; Voortrekker Monument. The SAHRIS website however note no monument and memorials in the area (Figure). It should be noted that absenteeism of heritage materials does not necessarily mean unavailability. In the case of monuments and memorials, nomination and declarations is needed.

9.1.5. Burial Grounds and Graves

Given the rich history of human inhabitation and conflict during the interaction between the natives, settlers and the boer war that took place in the area,re are high chances of locating more burial gounds and graves than what is noted on the SAHRIS website. Although some of these appears in the SAHRIS website, there is high potential that most of these are yet to be identified in this district (Figure same map as 9.1.4). The noted burial grounds and graves were due to development, chances are that there are a lot more graveyards and burial grounds that the developers completely avoid hence they are not found in the SAHRIS information platform. Majority of graves and burial ground are situated at Matjhaneng and Dealesville.

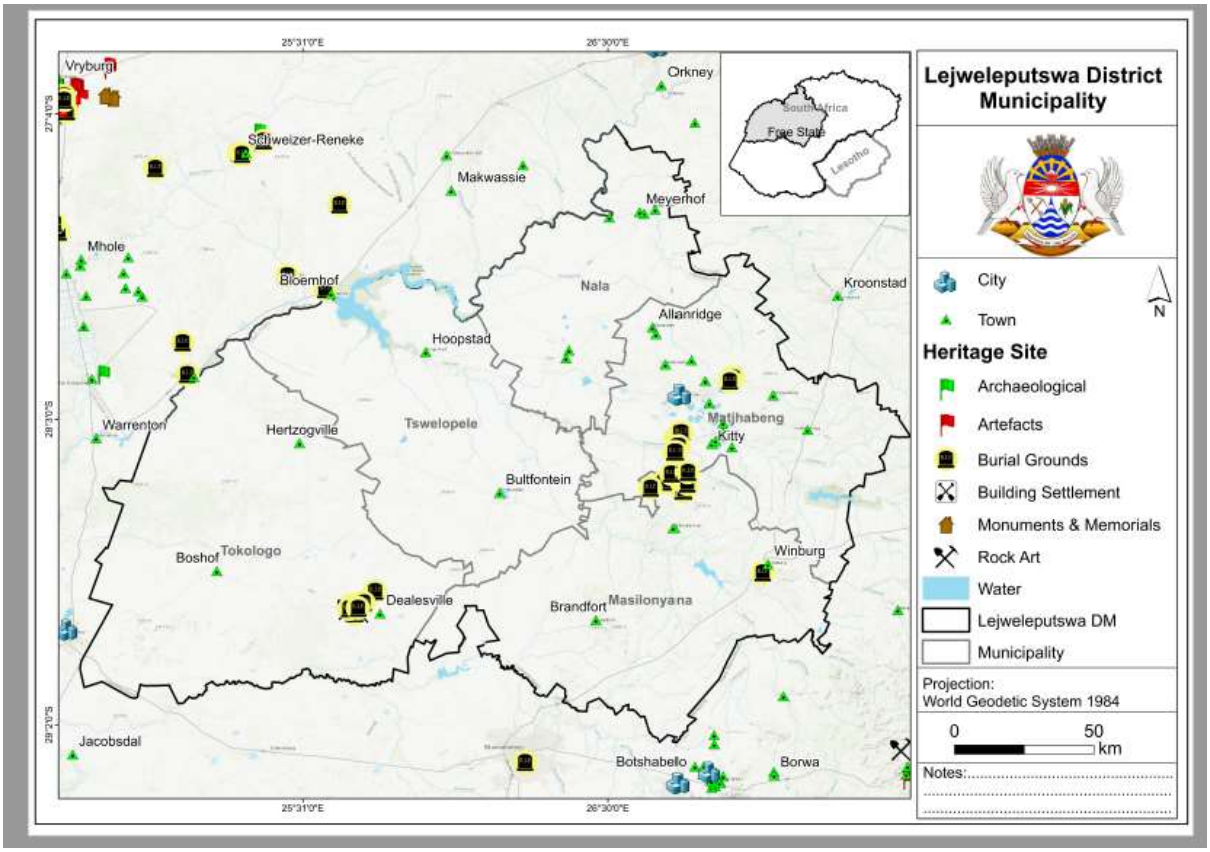


Figure :Noted heritage sites in the district

9.1.6. Living Heritage/Sacred Sites

The Lejweleputswa District has rich oral tradition and some of the living heritage resources. Among these this include some of the Basotho people who apper to be the majority of the inhabitants before the arrival of white settles. This living heritage of the Basotho include their performing arts, social practices and various rituals.

9.1.7. Conservation Areas, Cultural Landscapes, Natural Sites and Places

Overall, there is a need for formal protection of most already identified cultural landscapes, natural and sites and places across the district. However, the challenge is that there are still numerous areas that need to be identified in the Lejweleputswa District.

9.2. SPATIAL EXTENT

9.2.1. Cultural Heritage Sites

Across the Lejweleputswa District, there are a total of 378 identified heritage resources. Of these, over 110 are historical structures which are found across the district. Most of these historical structures are graded IIIc. These structures are mostly in Dealesville, a mixed farming town. There are also just above 80 artefacts identified in the SAHRIS website. These are also mostly found at the farming town, Dealesville. The

histrocial buldings in the district identified and listed on the SAHRIS website are just over 30; these buildings are found mostly in Theunissen, a small town located 95 km northeast of the city of Bloemfontein.

9.2.2. Proposed Sites for Freedom Route

Across South Africa, there are various areas whose inhabitants fought for freedom, in particular colonialism and suppression of native groups. The Lejweleputswa district has such sites, however, currently most of these are not official declared. The proposed sites not only have the historical value of what the individuals or groups of people fought for but also have a tourism attraction. Also, interesting about this district is the town of Brandfort which is well known as a place where Winnie Mandela stayed at when the Apartheid government banished her. The same town is said to have a school where Hendrik Verwoerd completed his high school studies in 1919.

Table : proposed freedom route

Site name	Description	Coordinates	Grading
Winnie Mandela house	This is the house in which Winnie Mandela was banished from by the apartheird government in 1977.	28°41'7.93"S 26°27'34.09"E	Grade I
Dwyersdorp	named after Captain Dwyer who assisted white women and children who had been incarcerated at the camp	29°35'30.35"S 26°39'59.93"E	Ungraded
Site where General De Villebois-Mareuil was killed,	Place where the Boer leader was killed	-28.670526, 25.294049	Graded II

9.2.3. District Palaeontological Heritage

Fossils in South Africa are found predominantly in sedimentary rocks and not in igneous and metamorphic rocks. The palaeontological sensitivity is thus generally low to very high if there are Karoo Supergroup strata present, but locally high for the Quaternary and Prince Albert Formation, and low for kimberlite (Fourie, H. 2017). The Karoo Supergroup occupies vast areas of southern Africa. Ecca Group rocks date from the early to mid-Permian (545-250 Ma). Snyman (1996) describes Ecca group sediments

as marine to fluvio-deltaic. This group is known for their coal deposits (primarily the Vryheid Formation) (five coal seams) and uranium.

The coalfields were created when plant material accumulated in large swampy deltas and shallow areas. The paleontological sensitivity of the district low to moderate and will only require desktop study in the case of development (see figure). In despite the province as a whole having made headlines for the discovery of the Taung child closer to Vryburg and Florisbad near Bloemfontein which yielded archaic Homo sapiens, Letjweleputswa holds no records of significant paleontological materials.

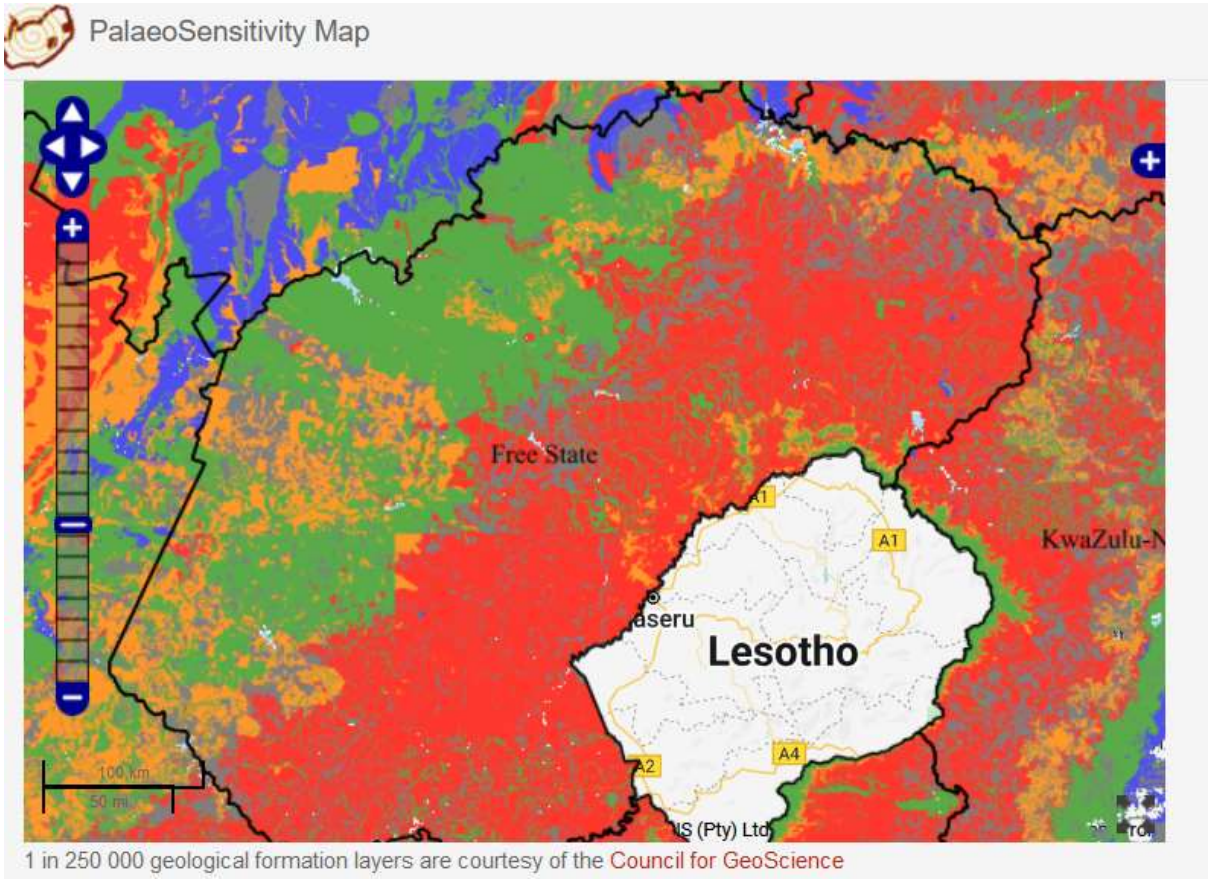


Figure :Paleontological sensitivity map @SAHRIS PaleoMap

9.3. CONSERVATION STATUS

9.3.1. Formally protected heritage resources

The SAHRIS website contained some formally procted and graded sites across the Letsweleputswa district. However, same as the rest of South Africa, most heritage resources are largely biased towards the settlers who arrived in the area.

9.3.2. Generally Protected Sites

There are a couple of sites that although identified on the SAHRIS website, they are not yet graded; these include the historic buildings and also structures.

9.3.3. Sites not currently on SAHRIS

Numerous heritage resources in Lejweleputswa District are not documented in the SAHRIS website, however, recently there has been an increase in the number of heritage resources which are being listed on SAHRIS.

9.3.4. Proposed Sites for Freedom Route

There are many sites that have pontential to be on the Freedom Route for Lejweleputswa District. Among, many of these include the house of Winnie Mandela's Banished Home, now a museum in the small town once called Brandfort (recently renamed Winnie Mandela). The proposed sites of Freedom Route as suggested above will yield more information of the history of the area and have economic potential.

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9.4. HERITAGE RESOURCES SOCIAL VALUE

These heritage resources identified in the Lejweleputswa District has pontential to contribute in the economic development of the district. There are sites such Winnie Mandela's Banished Home, Boers women and children Concentration Camp Cemetery, Site where General De Villebois-Mareuil was killed, Paardeberg Battlefield and various religious buildings (in particular churches of settles).

The district was a host of the first aeroplane built in Africa in Brandfort on property owned by Rear-Admiral John Weston. The site has been nominated a National Heritage Site by SAHRA. This is where John Weston lived and designed both the

aeroplane and Gnome engine now exhibited by the Bloemfontein Museum. He also designed the first RV/motorised caravan in the world. The site have the potential of having an economical value not only in South Africa but also in the whole wide world.

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