



Date: 15 September 2017

SUBJECT: SITE ASSESSMENT OF UNKNOWN GRAVES LOCATED AT INNESFREE PARK IN SANDTON

Johannesburg City Parks and Zoo (JCPZ) is a municipal entity within the City of Johannesburg which is responsible for the development and maintenance of Public Open Spaces, Parks, Road verges and cemeteries within the jurisdiction of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality.

Environmental Protection was notified by an external organisation concerning the existence of unknown and historical graves at Innesfree Park. Subsequently, a site visit was undertaken on the 14th September 2017 where it was confirmed there are approximately eleven (11) unknown graves.

The site survey methodology employed to determine the existence of graves and associated markers included visual inspection, observations, walk-about and interviews with a local resident from the nearby informal settlement, Mr Charlie Lurie – one of the descendants from the site owners, and on-site security guard.

The site assessment confirmed the existence of unknown historical graves of approximately eleven graves; pictorial evidence is attached to that effect.
Information obtained from a discussion and brief interview with Mr Lurie revealed these unknown graves to be those of the descendants of the original site owners prior to the purchase of the farmland by the Lurie family in and around 1960.

Based on the above, it is recommended that:

- a) The area where the graves are located be fenced off as a security measures in accordance with the preservation of cultural and historical heritage**
- b) The age of the graves to be determined by an Heritage Practitioner to determine if the graves are of historical origin and whether they qualify for a protection status in accordance with the National Heritage Resources Act.**
- c) The Conservation Management Plan be developed and notification forwarded to the relevant Provincial Heritage Authority.**
- d) Notification to be undertaken to locate the descendants and identification of the graves. This can be achieved by means of a broader public participation, stakeholder engagement or placing of placards in public places or through the local newspapers.**

All graves are of significance and protected by various legislation irrespective of whether they are known or unknown. Legislation with regard to graves include the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999) whenever graves are 60 years and older.

Directors: Mr E Neluvhalani (Chairperson), Mr L Radzuma, Ms B Madikizela, Dr O Horwood, Ms B Makgalo, Prof Y Gordhan, Mr T Nevondo, Mr F Leketi, Ms N Sandlana, Mr M M Manala, Mr B Nelana (Managing Director), Ms L Ngcongco (Chief Financial Officer), Ms A Shongwe (Company Secretary)

PICTORIAL EVIDENCE:



Figure 1: site location

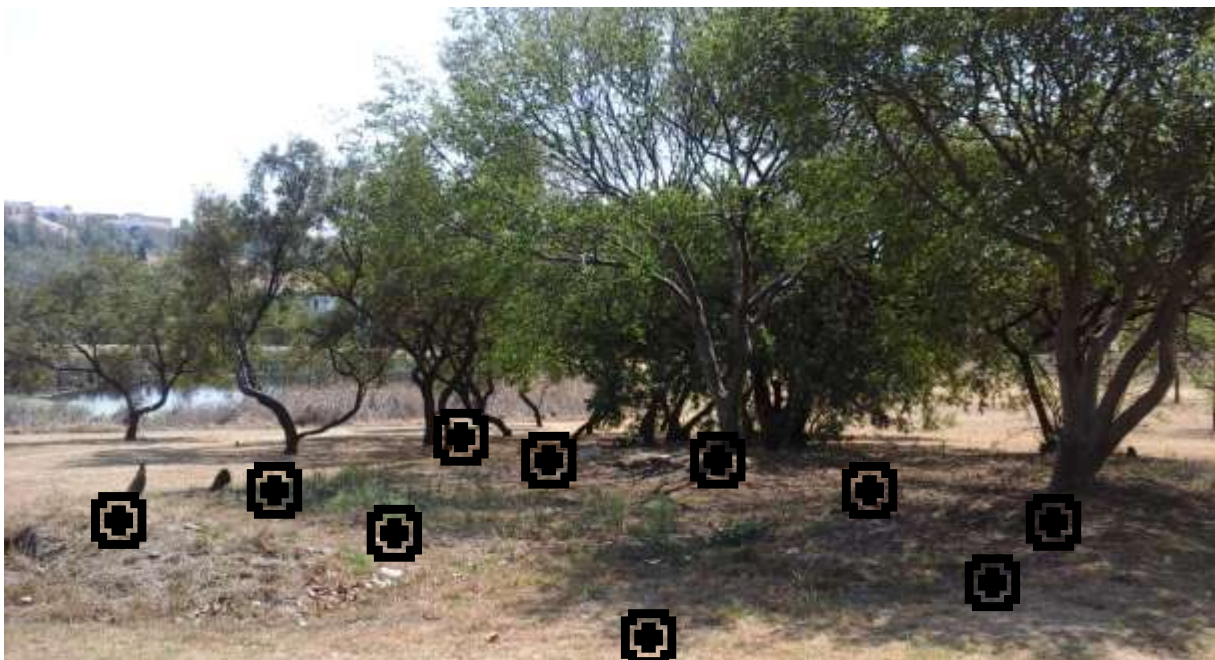


Photo 1a: Indicative position of graves – for further verification through excavation and confirmation of the existence of human remains

- Independent Heritage Practitioner to determine and confirm if the origins are of human or animal origin

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Photo 2ba: Indicative position of graves not highlighted in Photo 1a



Photo 3c: extent of the site to be fenced off

- To maintain a reasonable buffer zone around the identified graves; and no dumping of construction material is allowed within the graveyard and no un-monitored alteration or excavation may occur
- Long term measure include fencing off the graves, restricting access by members of the public and protection of the site from vandalism

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Photo 4d: historical grave markers –unmarked stones

- No stone robbing or removal of any material is allowed. Any disturbance or alteration on this graveyard would be illegal and punishable by law, under section 36 (3) of the National Heritage Resources Act NHRA of 1999 (Act 25 of 1999).
- Independent Heritage Practitioner to determine and confirm if the origins are of human or animal origin
- Exhumation is recommended and relocation to a suitable site
- Short term measure include fencing off the grave and restricting access by members of the public

The National Heritage Resources Act places an obligation for the conservation of cultural and heritage resources which includes the protection, maintenance, preservation and sustainable use of places or objects so as to safeguard their cultural significance. With Section 35(4) of the Act which states that no person may, without a permit issued by the responsible heritage resources authority: alter or demolish any structure or part of a structure which is older than 60 years as protected. The above mentioned may only be disturbed or moved by an archaeologist, after receiving a permit from the South African Heritage Resources Agency.

The National Heritage Resources Act, **section 34(1)** requires that 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.

Hence it is on this contextual basis outlined above that a comprehensive assessment of the heritage elements associated with graves located at Innesfree Park is recommended as an urgent intervention.

Report compiled by:
Environmental Protection
14/09/2017

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