

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND CULTURE

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SOUTH AFRICAN HERITAGE RESOURCES AGENCY

DECLARATION OF "KADITSHWENE" CULTURAL LANDSCAPE AS A NATIONAL HERITAGE SITE

By virtue of the powers vested in the South African Heritage Resources Agency in terms of section 27(5) of the National Heritage Resources Act, 25 of 1999, SAHRA hereby declares Kaditshwene Cultural Landscape in Zeerust, North West, as a National Heritage Site.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Kaditshwene is historically considered a capital of the Bahurutshe nation and the largest Batswana settlement in Southern Africa with a population of 16000 to 20000, around the early 1800's. The large population of Kaditshwene is evidenced by extensive settlement remains that include house foundations, stone walls, ash middens as well as evidence for metal working industry.

Kaditshwene presents physical remnants of an ancient civilization renowned for the smelting and mining of iron and copper. Oral testimonies tell us that the thriving Iron Age economy was based on the indigenous technique and technology of smelting of Iron and mining of Copper. In this regard, the Bahurutshe were famed for their exceptional skill as miners and smelters of iron and copper. There are visible traces of iron melting furnaces and manufactured implements.

Other strong elements of the sophisticated indigenous building techniques are evident in the built environment such as the ruins of stone walls and circular dwellings of Kaditshwene. Drawing from empirical observations on the built environment in the neighbouring villages of Lekubu and Mokgola, there are prominent recurring features of building techniques and styles similar to the circular ancient stone walls of the architectural dwellings of Kaditshwene. This denotes the perpetual transmission of indigenous knowledge system, through the recent application of the traditional skills and techniques, from the past to the present Bahurutshe generation. The indigenous knowledge system associated with the infrastructural developments of Kaditshwene underpins the historical achievements and contribution of the Bahurutshe of Zeerust to the socio-economic development of South Africa.

Tangible Heritage – Archaeological evidence

Physical evidence based on empirical observations

Intangible Heritage or Living Heritage

In terms of living heritage or intangible heritage, the cultural significance of Kaditshwene is based on interpretations emanating from the oral testimonies of the Bahurutshe community of Zeerust, particularly members of Lekubu and Mokgola villages who are currently residing close to Kaditshwene. Drawing from the rich oral history, Kaditshwene is inscribed with symbolism and meaning, and it prevails as a physical manifestation of the intangible values associated with the culture and tradition of the Bahurutse, Batswana nation of Southern Africa. The oral history constitutes a crucial aspect of the intangible heritage that could be presented juxtaposed to or complements the documented history of the site.

Sacred Site

The vast cultural landscape of Kaditshwene constitutes sacred sites such as '*Metsi a wa*', '*Liphutsieng*' and '*Tshwenyane*' (amongst others), which continue to serve as spiritual places for the expression of aspects of cultural practices (intangible heritage) such as baptism, rituals for rain making, worshipping and appeasement of ancestors. As such these sacred sites still provide the context for the perpetual transmission and expression of cultural practices amongst the current generation of Bahurutshe of Southern Africa. According to the 2003 UNESCO on the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage 'to ensure the safeguarding, development and promotion of Intangible Cultural Heritage...adopt appropriate legal, administrative and financial measures aimed at... the transmission of such heritage through forums and spaces intended for the performance or expression thereof' (2003 UNESCO Convention).

