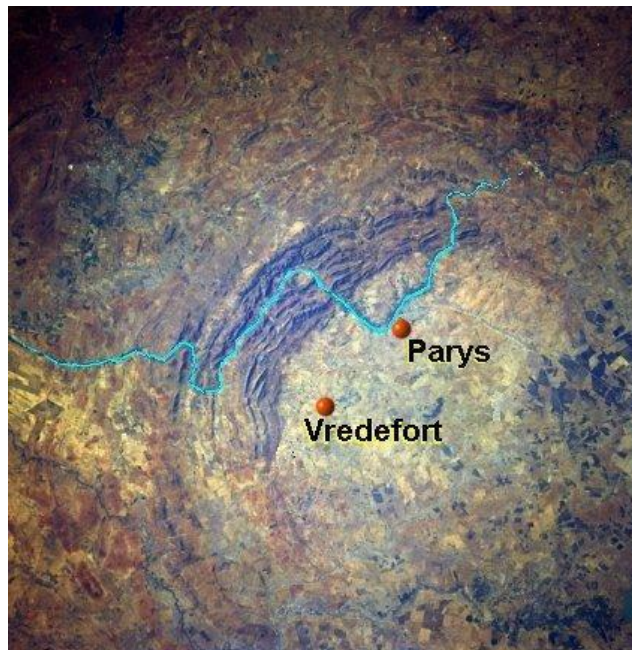


VREDEFORT DOME TOURISM MARKETING INFORMATION

Listing and Outstanding Universal Value :

The Vredefort Dome is South Africa's 7th World Heritage site and was inscribed on the UNESCO (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization) World Heritage list as a natural heritage site on the 15th July 2005. (DEA Booklet) It's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) is described under Criterion (viii) which reads as follows : Vredefort Dome is the oldest , largest and most deeply eroded complex meteorite impact structure in the world. It is the site of the world's greatest single , known energy release event. It contains high quality and accessible geological (outcrop) sites which demonstrate a range of geological evidences of a complex meteorite impact structure. The rural and natural landscapes of the serial property help portray the magnitude of the ring structures resulting from the impact. (UNESCO website)



Attached is a brochure on the Vredefort Dome World Heritage Site as it's been distributed at the DEDECT (Department Economic Development , Environment , Conservation and Tourism) Information Centre at Venterskroon.



Vredefort Dome
Information Brochure

Geological uniqueness of the site :

The meteorite impact at Vredefort happened 2023 million years ago and the only living organisms at the time were one cellular algae growing in shallow water. The meteorite was about the size of Table mountain, between 10 – 15 km in diameter , and struck the Earth at about 40 000km per hour , which created an impact crater of about 300km in diameter. The Vredefort Dome is only in the central part of this impact crater which is about 90km in diameter. The world heritage site is only a representative part of the impact crater and is about 30 111 ha. This world heritage site is surrounded by a 5km buffer zone which is designed to ensure the property's long term protection against external development threats. (OUV – Integrity). The world heritage site is been divided by the Vaal River with 60 % of the site in the NW province and 40 % in the OFS province.

What is unique about the geology of the Vredefort Dome is that the impact indicators are found on the surface and are accessible for geological research and studies. There are a number of these indicators , which are as follows :

- Pseudotachylite : Granite impact melt rock containing fragments of the same rock over large areas. Also known as friction melt rock.



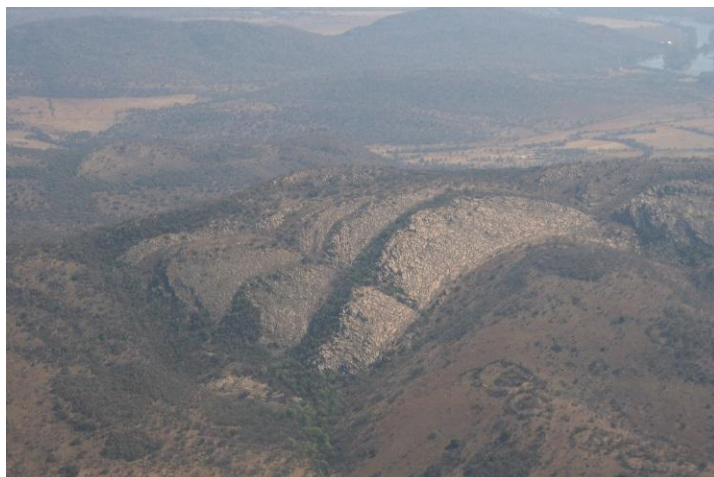
- Granophyre : Vredefort Granophyre is an Impact melt rock given to the black crystallized melt rock containing pieces of many different rock types.



- Shatter cones : Shatter cones were formed when rocks were cracked by the force of the impact shock wave , also known as shock wave deformations.



- Overturned quartzite rock formations : These overturned rock formations can be clearly seen in the Witwatersrand Supergroup of the first impact ring or collar of the impact crater.



- Gold bearing quartzite conglomerates : These conglomerates were brought up to surface level , or close to the surface level , in the hills of the Vredefort Dome.



Attached a copy of the DTEEA (Department of Tourism , Environmental and Economic Affairs) summary of the Integrated Management Plan for the site that was compiled in 2007. The copy is of the chapter : Geological Heritage Resources :



DTEEA Summary of
IMP- 2007.pdf

Historical uniqueness of the site :

Hereby a timeline on some of the most important historical events in and around the Vredefort Dome :

VREDEFORT IMPACT EVENT – 2023 Ma (Million years ago)	
MIDDLE STONE AGE	
200 000 – 20 000 BP	Buffelskloof natural rock shelter / Holkrans
LATE IRON AGE	
1 000 AD – 1820 AD	Askoppies settlement
DIFAQANE AND THE GROOT TREK : 1824 – 1840	
21 August 1836	Matabele attack on the Voortrekkers at Scandinavia drift
22 August 1836	Matabele attack on the Voortrekkers at Liebenbergkop

23 August 1836	Battle between the Matabele and Voortrekkers on the Vaal River / Kopjeskraal
FIRST SETTLERS AND TOWN DEVELOPMENT : 1838 – 1968	
1876 – 1881	Vredefort was established and became a municipality
1881 – 1882	Parys was established and granted town status
11 June 1887	Venterskroon was established on the farm Rooderand
1892	Building of the Tygerfontein spruit bridge
GOLD MINING : 1868 – 1937	
1868	Rooderand was proclaimed as public gold fields
1887	Extensive mining activities in the “ Vaal River Diggings “
1920	Closing of mines in the “ Vaal River Diggings “
1930 – 1937	Great Western Company mining on Elandslaagte
1990's	Randfontein Estate Gold Mining Coop acquire prospecting
GRANITE MINING : 1890 – 1998	
1971	Granite was the 11 th biggest mineral export for S.A.
2 nd ANGLO – BOER WAR : 1899 – 1902	
24 July 1900	Battle of the Maize Wagons between the Boers and British
07 August 1900	Battle of Tygerfontein between the Boers and British
09 August 1900	Battle of Sandnek between the Boers and British
27 October 1900	Attack on the Boers by the British at Rensburg drift
20 TH CENTURY DEVELOPMENT : 1902 – PRESENT	
1915	Parys bridge over the Vaal River was completed
11 October 1937	Schoemansdrift bridge over the Vaal River was completed
1939 – 1945	2 nd World War Italian Internees constructing in the site
15 July 2005	Listed as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO

Natural beauty of the site :

Five broad vegetation types can be observed in the Vredefort Dome with three of them occurring in the core area. The most dominant vegetation type is the Gold Reef Mountain Bushveld (Photo) which covers about 34,300ha of the total of the world heritage site. The rest of the core area is covered by the Andesite Mountain Bushveld and the Vredefort Dome Granite Grassland. According to the National Spatial Biodiversity Assessment , the Granite Grassland is been considered as endangered. (Vredefort Dome EMF)



A unique population of wild Olive trees , *Olea europaea* subsp. *africana* , are almost a pure standing of wild olive trees covering about 30ha on the farm Kopjeskraal. This population is regarded as one of the largest wild olive tree forests in South Africa. (Prof. Cilliers) (Photo)



The Vaal River is one of the premier rivers of South Africa and flows towards the southwest through the Vredefort Dome dividing the world heritage site between the N.W. province and the O.F.S. province. (Reimold) The Vaal River is also one of the oldest rivers on Earth and started on the Karoo basin about 200 million years ago. On the surface of the Karoo basin the Vaal River had aged into a mature watercourse and as it eroded the Karoo surface , it came down from above onto the Dome which had been concealed below. The Vaal River thus has the remarkable distinction of being a river that has come down from above onto an older landscape. (Addison) (Photo)



Tourism attractions and activities in and around the site :

Tourism in the Vredefort Dome is promoted by the Vredefort Dome Tourism Association , the Vredefort Dome Tourism Guide Association , the Parys Info office , the Potchefstroom Tourism Centre , the Venterskroon Information Centre and the product owners in the site. There are a great variety of tourist activities in and around the site which include the following : river rafting , angling , abseiling , hiking , horse riding , quadbike trails , ballooning , wedding facilities , conference facilities , archery camping , game drives , hunting , mountain bike trails , zip line , sky diving , eco tours fly fishing , golf , paintball and birding.

Recommended video's on YouTube regarding the site :

- Vredefort Dome , Origins , NWU by Terrie Liebenberg
- Vredefort Dome , Footprints of the past , NWU by Mene Meyer
- Vredefort Dome , A stone created a paradise , NWU by Izelle Mostert
- Tourism in the Vredefort Dome , NWU by Jounette Everson

References :

Agricultural and Biodiversity Management Plan for the Vredefort Dome WHS , Technical Report , AGES , 31 May 2007

Generaal De Wet in die Vredefort Koepel , V. E. d'Assonville , 2010

Meteorite Impact – The Vredefort Structure , W U Reimold and R L Gibson , Second Edition , 2005

South African World Heritage Sites , DEA , Information Booklet

Vestiging langs die Vaalrivier in die omgewing van die Vredefortkoepel , 1840 – 2012
Claudia Gouws , Mei 2013

Vaal : River of the Crater , Graeme Addison , Impact No. 1 2013

Vredefort Dome World Heritage Site , DTEEA , Summary of the IMP , 2007

Vredefort Dome World Heritage Site , EMF , Final Status Quo Report , NWU – CEM ,
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Wild olives and other trees in the Vredefort Dome , Prof. Sarel Cilliers , ToGoTo
magazine

<https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1162> - Vredefort Dome (1162)

**Gustav Engelbrecht , 072 130 1995 , DEDECT – NW , Vredefort Dome ,
22/09/2022**