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LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION FOR THE EXEMPTION FROM A FIRST PHASE ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HERITAGE INVESTIGATION OF THE STONE QUARRY AT RIETFONTEIN 159, NEAR SOMERSET EAST, EASTERN CAPE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Mining extensions are planned at the existing quarry on the farm Rietfontein 159, Somerset East, Eastern Cape.

The area is heavily disturbed by extensive mining operations since 1984 when rock material was used during the building of roads in the region.

No archaeological, cultural or historical remains occurred in the proposed area of development.

I anticipate that the new developments will cause no further impact to any cultural or archaeological material in the area.

I recommend that the proposed new extensions to the existing rock quarry on the farm Rietfontein 159 in the district of Somerset East, Eastern Cape, should be exempted from a full Phase I report.

I also recommend that the proposed development and planning of the mining project may proceed.

Mitigation measures will only be needed in the case of the discovery of archaeological material during the mining process.

INTRODUCTION & DESCRIPTION

Scope and Limitations of the present project

The present investigation provided the opportunity to examine the area proposed for the extension of the existing rock quarry. No limitations were experienced during site inspection.

Methodology

Standard archaeological survey and recording methods were used.

1. The area was investigated on foot.
2. The different points were plotted by GPS and recorded on camera.

INVESTIGATION

The area has already been heavily disturbed by extensive mining operations since about 1984 when thousands of tons of rock material were used during the building of roads in the region.

Extensions are planned to the existing rock quarry at the farm Rietfontein 159 near Somerset East.

The applicant and developers are:

B&E International,
93 Maple Street, Pomona,
Kempton Park.
P.O. Box 26730, East Rand 1462
011-979 1146.

Application is made for a mining permit for the removal of rock for general road maintenance in the region. The operations will have the following main infrastructure:

Containers to be used as offices and storage facilities.
Weigh bridge.
Vehicle parking and service area.
Mobile crusher.
Chemical ablution facilities.

The mining operations will cover about 1,5ha. The shattered rock will be removed from the the entire mining area by means of blasting and mechanical excavation equipment. The crushed gravel will be stock piled prior to being supplied to the clients.

The site was examined on 10 April 2012. Officials from Enviroworks, Environmental Consultants in Cape Town gave directions to the site. The

landowner, Mr Johan Bosch (087-550 0351 / 082 928 5148), showed us the site at the farm.

The study aims to locate and evaluate the significance of cultural heritage sites, archaeological material, manmade structures older than 60 years, and sites associated with oral histories and graves that might be affected by the proposed development.

The area was examined for possible archaeological and historical material and to establish the potential impact on any cultural material that might be found. The Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) is done in terms of the National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA), (25 of 1999) and under the Environmental Conservation Act, (73 of 1989).

Several heritage and archaeological investigation near Burgersdorp (Dreyer 2011), Jamestown (Dreyer 2008), Aliwal North (Dreyer 2007, 2008), Steynsburg (Dreyer 2012) and Cradock (Dreyer 2012), did not produce any material of archaeological or heritage significance.

LOCALITY

The existing stone quarry is located on the farm Rietfontein 159, in the district of Somerset East, Eastern Cape (Map 1).

The farm is located along the R63 road from Cookhouse to Somerset East, along a turn-off on the Bloemhof gravel road (Map 2).

The quarry is filled with water to capacity (Figs.).

The following GPS coordinates (Cape scale) were taken (3225) (Map 3):

A	32°53'11" S 025°40'01"E	Altitude 546m	(Figs.1-3).
B	32°53'09" S 025°39'57"E	Altitude 638m	(Fig.4).
GRAVES	32°53'08" S 025°39'46"E	Altitude 622m	(Figs.5-7).

RESULTS

FINDS

No cultural or historical material was found near the quarry.

A cluster of about twelve stone-covered graves (Figs.5-7), occur near the fence along the gravel road at the entrance to the quarry site.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The development of the quarry will have no effect on any archaeological or historical material. No graves were found in the area around the quarry.

Mitigation measures will be required only in case of the discovery of archaeological material.

RECOMMENDATIONS

There are no obvious reasons to delay the commencement of further planning and development of the mining extensions.

I recommend that the proposed extensions of the quarry at the farm Vrischgewaagd 554, near Cradock in the Eastern Cape, should be exempted from a full Phase I investigation and report.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank Sonette Smit and Christine Fouché from Enviroworks Environmental Consultants, Cape Town, for directions to the site. At the farm, the landowner, Mr Johan Bosch, took us to the quarry.

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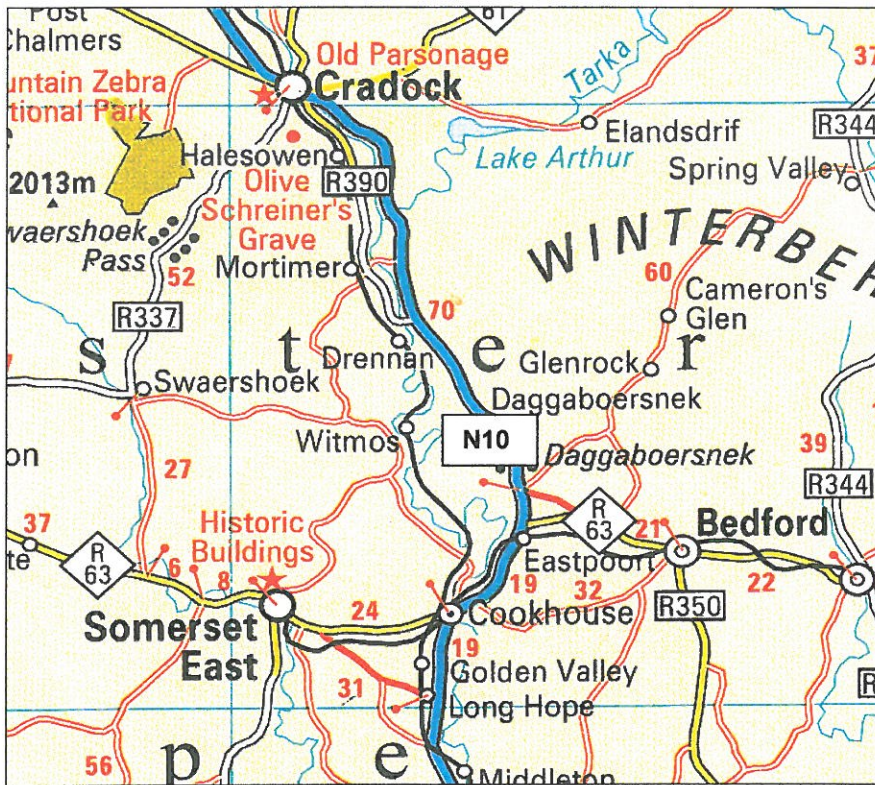
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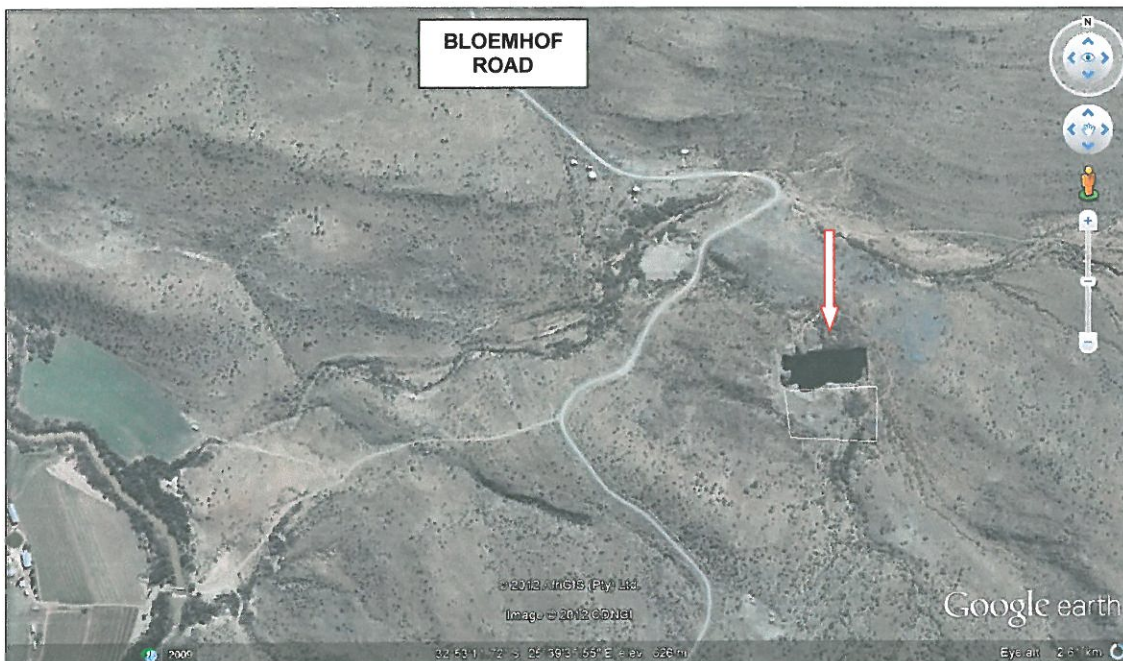
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LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS



Map 1 Locality of Cradock, Cookhouse and Somerset East in the Eastern Cape.



Map 2 Locality of the quarry at Rietfontein 159 near Somerset East, Eastern Cape (3225).



Map 3 Existing quarry at Rietfontein 159 near Somerset East, Eastern Cape. Locality of the graves and the placing of the GPS coordinate points.



Fig.1 Proposed area of extension at the quarry, Rietfontein 159, Somerset East.



Fig.2 Point A next to the quarry at Rietfontein 159, Somerset East. Facing Point B.



Fig.3 Existing quarry at Rietfontein 159, Somerset East. Facing Point A.



Fig.4 Point B at the quarry, Rietfontein 159, Somerset East.



Fig.5 Graves near the quarry at Rietfontein 159, Somerset East.



Fig.6 Graves near the quarry at Rietfontein 159, Somerset East.



Fig.7 Graves near the quarry at Rietfontein 159, Somerset East.