

PHASE ONE ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION OF FARM 567/1, CLANWILLIAM.

Prepared for

C.K. Rumboll and Partners

on behalf of

Messrs J. Mouton and L. Rontgen

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Prepared by

Archaeology Contracts Office

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Archaeology Contracts Office of the University of Cape Town was commissioned by C. K. Rumboll and Partners on behalf of their client Mr J. Mouton to undertake a Phase 1 archaeological investigation of the property described as Farm 567/1, Clanwilliam. Three archaeological sites were identified and contain rock paintings and artefactual material. The rock paintings are poorly preserved and artefactual material is not dense. It is unlikely that the proposed development will impact archaeological sites.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Archaeology Contracts Office (ACO) of the University of Cape Town was commissioned by C.K. Rumboll and Partners¹ on behalf of their client Mr J. Mouton to undertake a Phase 1 archaeological investigation of the property described as Farm 567/1, Clanwilliam.

The contracts office undertook to search the area on foot and locate archaeological and historical sites and to record the positions of any sites on suitably scaled plans as well as assign them GPS co-ordinates.

2. BACKGROUND

The Olifants River valley and Cederberg mountains contain large numbers of archaeological sites spanning most of the long history of human occupation of southern Africa. While the earliest recognisable artefacts date back to the early stone age and can be as old as 500 000 yrs, the greatest concentration of archaeological material accumulated over the last 5000 yrs. The people responsible for this material were initially San (Bushmen) hunter/gatherers and later perhaps Khoi-Khoi herders although this is still under debate. The rock paintings have been the subject of great interest for many years. The paintings are now recognised as "a remarkable artistic achievement...created for religious purposes as part of a changing cultural tradition..."². Whereas in earlier years not much attention was paid to rock paintings, the increase in local and overseas tourism to the Cape has seen a surge in interest as it is realised that paintings constitute a marketable resource.

While perhaps it is a good thing that these artistic achievements receive the recognition they now get, they are also subjected to much greater risk of damage. As rock art sites are often the location of the remains of occupation, the artefactual material is also placed at risk. A recent study commissioned by the Department of Environment Affairs and Tourism addresses the problems of increased access to rock painting sites and considers management criteria³.

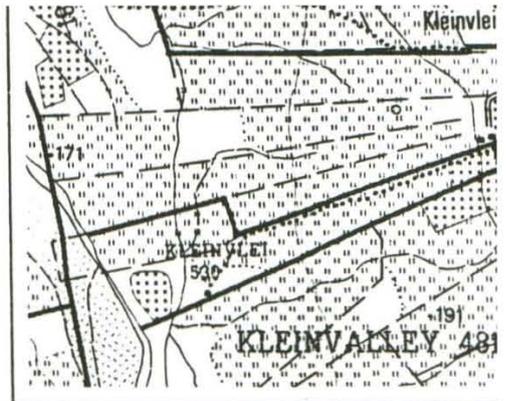
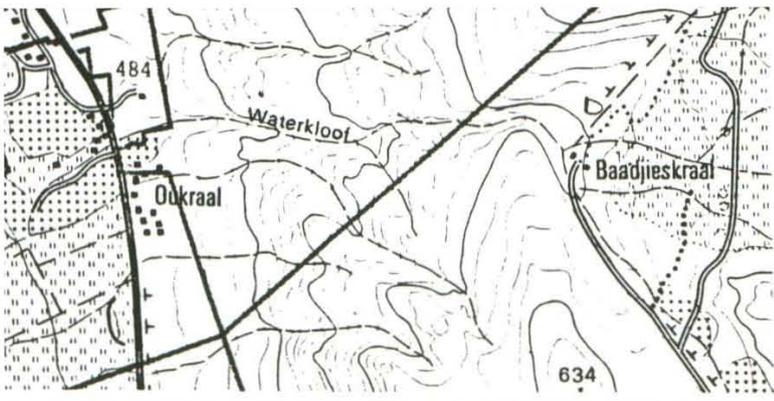
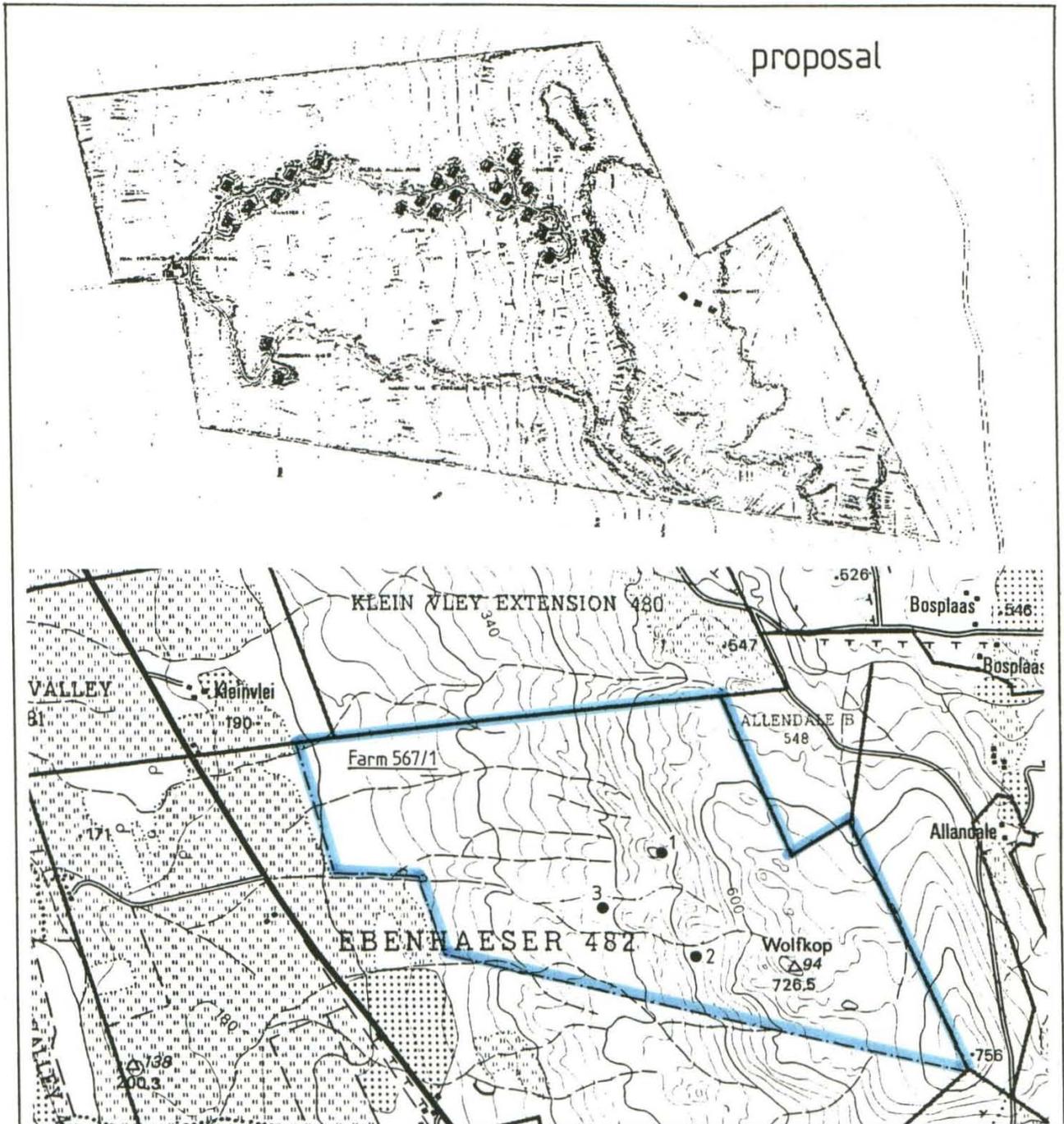
3. METHOD

The area was visited and a search carried out for archaeological sites. Attention was paid to areas that would be directly impacted through the physical building process as well as to areas that are likely to suffer secondary impacts from increased human activity even though they were not necessarily that close to the immediate development. It proved impossible to examine every rock face in the search area in the time allowed as to complete this would require several days and the results of the initial days search in the lower, readily accessible rocky areas showed that there was not much in the way of archaeology and that additional search time would have been unjustified. The high, inaccessible rocky ridges were not searched and if sites do exist here they are unlikely to experience any impacts.

¹ The contact person is: Mr Bertus Beukes, C.K. Rumboll and Partners, PO Box 211, Malmesbury, 7300 Fax: (0224)71661 Tel: (0224)21845

² Deacon, J. 1993. Management guidelines for rock art sites in two wilderness areas in the western Cape. Project funded by Dept of Environmental Affairs and Tourism.

³ see footnote 2.



An extract from the 1:50 000 topographic map and the proposed location of the development is presented in Figure 1. Locations of archaeological sites are indicated.

4. RESULTS

The following section contains summary descriptions of the sites that have been located.

4.1 WK1

GPS Location: 32°38.4864'S 19°03.7106'E

(GPS reading was taken in the kloof below the site as not all satellites could be accessed from the site itself)

The site contains both rock paintings and artefactual material. No overhang is present and the site is fairly exposed. This had led to the deterioration of the paintings which are hardly visible. The painting consists of a line of 4 human figures 2 of which have male genitalia. These face left and least two appear to be holding sticks. Range of size is between 5 and 8cm. Very faded orange/red in colour.

The floor of the site is sandy in places with rocky ledges showing through. Artefactual material consists of a single MSA flake made on hornfels and a large core which may be ESA found at the edge. Several large pot sherds are scattered around and are typical of Cape coastal pottery. No decoration or lugs were observed. Numerous fragments of ochre are present.

Importance: low

Impact: Not expected

Mitigation: None suggested

4.2 WK2

GPS Location: 32°38.8680'S 19°03.7797'E

The site contains rock paintings. Two large stone artefacts which could be ESA or MSA were found not far away. The site consists of an exposed face on a large boulder. No overhang is present and has led to deterioration of the paintings. The painting consists of 5 linear smears which were probably a line of human figures, a small crayon mark which may have been a figure with a stick and a patch of ochre rubbing which is dark maroon in colour. The other paintings are very faded orange.

Importance: low

Impact: Not expected

Mitigation: None suggested

4.3 WK3

GPS Location: 32°38.6972'S 19°03.4687'E

This is the best of the three sites that we have seen. It consists of a small overhang and contains rock paintings and artefactual material. The floor is partly sandy but is not an archaeological deposit.

The painting includes a small but fairly well preserved antelope, several smears and daubs some of which may have been human figures, a partial antelope head, also small. Two daubs at the RHS of the main panel could be handprints. On a lower panel of rock are 3 small figures 4cm high walking to left. Up and to the right on a separate rock panel are an additional 8 faded handprints.

Artefacts consist of flakes on quartz and hornfels and an adze on ccs. Numerous fragments of ochre were observed some showing traces of striations from having been rubbed on rough surfaces. Numerous potsherds typical of Cape coastal ware were observed. No decoration or lugs were present. Ostrich eggshell fragments and pieces of burnt tortoise bone were also found.

Importance: low

Impact: Not expected

Mitigation: None suggested

5. CONCLUSIONS

The absence of large numbers of archaeological sites can probably be explained in a number of ways. Firstly and most importantly is that the strike of the local rock formation is fairly steep and has not led to the formation of habitable shelters. In addition we saw very few overhangs or shelters formed by falling rocks that would have been attractive as living areas. Secondly, while water is available from the Olifants river, there do not appear to be any permanent water sites in the immediate vicinity, at least not in the summer months. The situation is very different in the next valley over the top of the ridge where permanent water can be found year round. A number of large rock art sites are known to exist in this back valley.

The proposed location of houses is on a fairly steep slope devoid of any extrusive rock formations and contains no archaeological material. While we may not have located every single site in the upper rocky areas, it seems likely that additional ones will be few and would be in very inaccessible spots. It would seem unlikely that there will be any impact on archaeological sites as a result of development.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Even though the few sites that we have described in this report are not of high quality when compared to some other sites, they still represent part of an important historical resource. It would be an idea to put up a sign notifying people who intend to walk in the rocky areas that they should not deface rock paintings. Throwing water or other

substances on them causes serious damage and speeds up the deterioration. This should be pointed out. The National Monuments Council can assist with the wording to be used on any signage.

7. PROFESSIONAL TEAM

Fieldwork

Dave Halkett
John Lanham
Harriet Clift

Report

Dave Halkett