

# AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF A PORTION OF LAND AT THE CITRUSDAL HOT SPRING

Prepared for

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Prepared by

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Archaeology Contracts Office (ACO) was asked to undertake an archaeological impact assessment of a portion of land adjoining the Citrusdal Hot Baths. The assessment will form part of the EIA of the site where it is proposed to construct additional accommodation as indicated on the sketch plan in Figure 1 as supplied by the client, Mr. Alan Hall.

## **2. PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SITE**

The searched area is characterised by boulder strewn slopes covered by dense fynbos. The proposed site of the chalets is on a gently sloped platform defined by steep rocky slopes to the west and east, and a prominent rock outcrop to the south. To the north the slope is moderate and partially developed including 2 reservoirs fed by water furrows, labourer's cottage and picnic area (Plate 1). The geology in the immediate area does not favour the formation of rockshelters such as is the case further to the north in the Olifants River valley.

## **3. RESULTS OF THE SURVEY**

Dr. Janette Deacon had previously visited the site and had reported the presence of 2 rock art sites. These are both located on the rocky outcrop to the south of the proposed development site. A search of the area as shown on Figure 2 (and extending an additional approximately 100 meters to the south) revealed no additional archaeological material apart from what appears to be a roughly packed portion of "wall" located on the development platform. The large size of the blocks suggest that this feature probably dates to the colonial period but the alignment is rough and does not form an enclosure such as a kraal.

### **3.1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES**

Two sites are located on the outcrop. While in distinctly separate locations, their proximity to each other suggests that they are probably part of a single complex. The sites have therefore been designated CHS1a and CHS1b. The archaeological content of the sites is characteristic of the latter part of Late Stone Age, and probably dates within the last 2000 years.

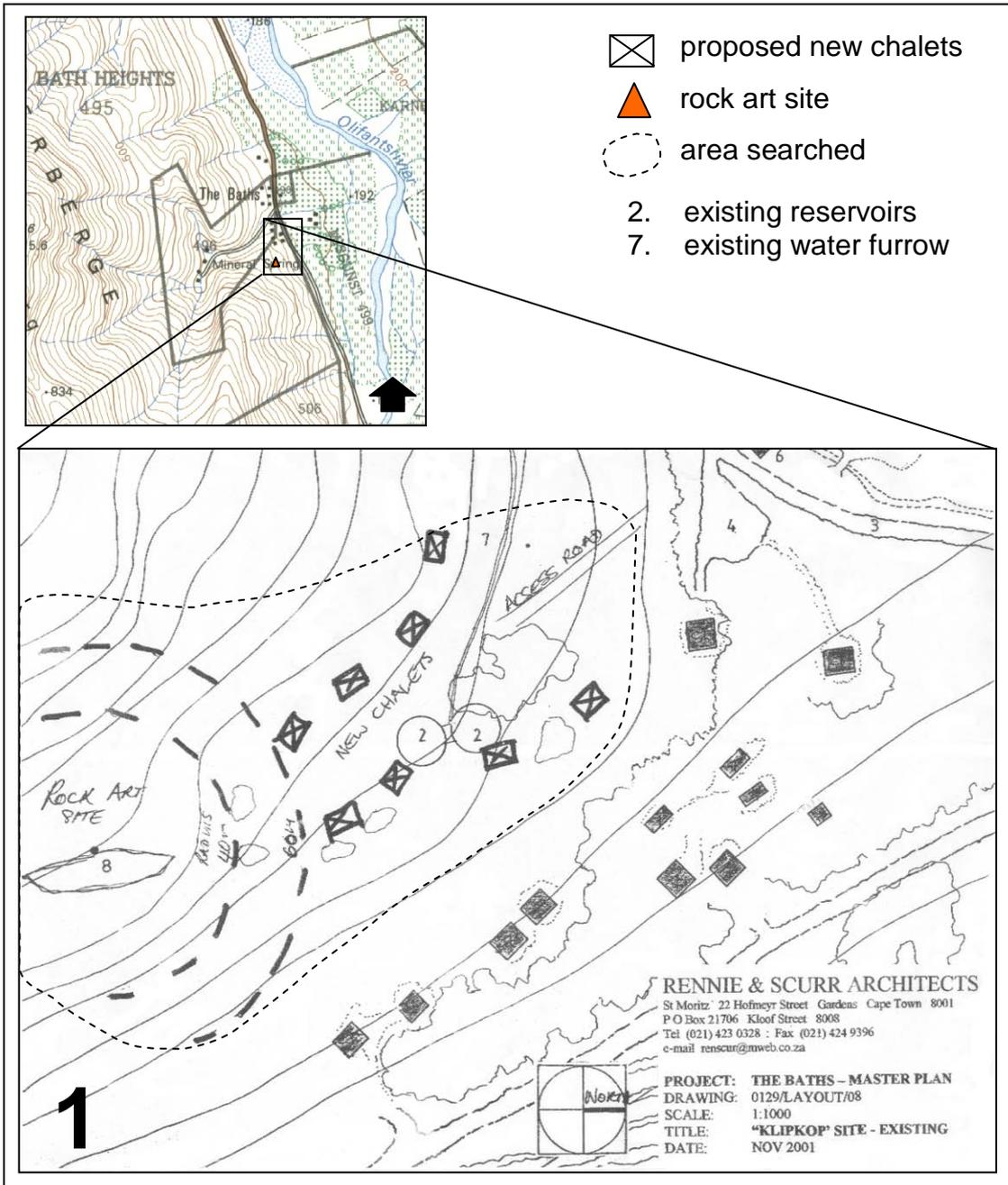
#### **3.1.1 CHS1b**

This is a small site located beneath a large boulder immediately to the north of the main outcrop at 32°44'20.2"S and 19°02'27.5"E.

The rock painting consists of a single human figure and a "palette" in orange/red. Two flakes of siliceous material were observed in the vicinity.

#### **3.1.2 CHS1a**

This is the main site located at 32°44'20.7"S and 19°02'27.4"E. The site consists of a slightly overhanging, west facing rock face, approximately 4-5 meters in height, and approximately 15-20 meters wide (Plate 2). A flat floor some 4-5 meters wide made this an attractive site for the precolonial inhabitants of the area, and is the only site with a



“level” floor and good paintable rock surface in the searched area. The site would not provide much cover during rain and as a result many of the paintings are faded, or covered by a white deposit, probably a buildup of dissolved minerals leaching from above.

### **3.1.2.1 Artefacts and deposit**

The floor of the shelter is composed a sand and coarse grit. Cavities formed in the drip lines reveal little by way of artefactual material. A search of the surface produced less than 10 stone flakes. These consisted of quartz, silcrete and quartzite. One silcrete adze, and a single silcrete thumbnail scraper were observed. Several pieces of ochre were scattered across the surface. No ceramics were noted.

### **3.1.2.2 Rock paintings**

The rock paintings appear to form 4 panels. Panel 1 located to the extreme left of the shelter, Panel 2, or the main panel containing multiple fairly well preserved images, lies in a slight concavity of the wall slightly to the left of the center of the site, and Panels 3 and 4, containing very faded images, lie at the extreme right hand side of the site.

While this study will not describe the paintings in detail, it should be noted that the main panel contains amongst others: several human figures, animals – both eland and a smaller antelope possibly *Raphicerus sp.*, a line of human figures some of which have lower legs crossed, and a largish hollow-bodied figure without legs (see Plate 3). Traces of both white and yellow pigments are still discernible in places.

Crude graffiti is present on the main panel. This has been executed by scratching with a stone. A kite-shaped design, several vertical lines, and scratching over the face of a human figure were noted.

## **4. CONCLUSIONS**

No archaeological material will be directly impacted by the proposed developments. There is however the potential for indirect impacts on the rock art site as a result of increased human activity in the immediate vicinity. The intention to make the site accessible to tourists also increases the potential for damage.

## **5. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Archaeological sites are protected under the South African Heritage Resources Act of 1999. Section 35 (4) of the Act states:

No person may, without a permit issued by the responsible heritage resources authority—

- (a) destroy, damage, excavate, alter, deface or otherwise disturb any archaeological or palaeontological site or any meteorite;

5.1 In providing and promoting access to known archaeological sites, the owners of the resort must make every effort to familiarise visitors with the heritage value of archaeological material and the penalties for damage thereof. To this end appropriate materials should be available in all cottages, camping and picnic areas and should mention specifically activities that are detrimental to rock paintings. These may be in the

form of booklets or signage. SAHRA should be consulted as to the number, placement and wording of signage.

5.2 No modifications of any kind may be made to archaeological sites without consultation with SAHRA. Modifications include amongst others erection of barriers, roofing, drip excluders.

5.3 Rock paintings should be recorded in detail before sites are made accessible to the public. Both photographic and written descriptions should be made so that a record exists in the event of vandalism. This record also provides a baseline for assessment of impact through public access.

5.4 At site CHS1a, the public should be prevented from coming within three (3) meters of the painted rock surface. This could be achieved by the use of appropriate barrier material. Placement of photographic reproductions or drawings of the various key images on signage at the site, would very likely make viewing more interesting and informative.

5.5 Periodic site inspections should be made by SAHRA personnel or delegated heritage inspectors to monitor the condition of the paintings.

## **6. PROFESSIONAL TEAM**

Fieldwork and report

Dave Halkett

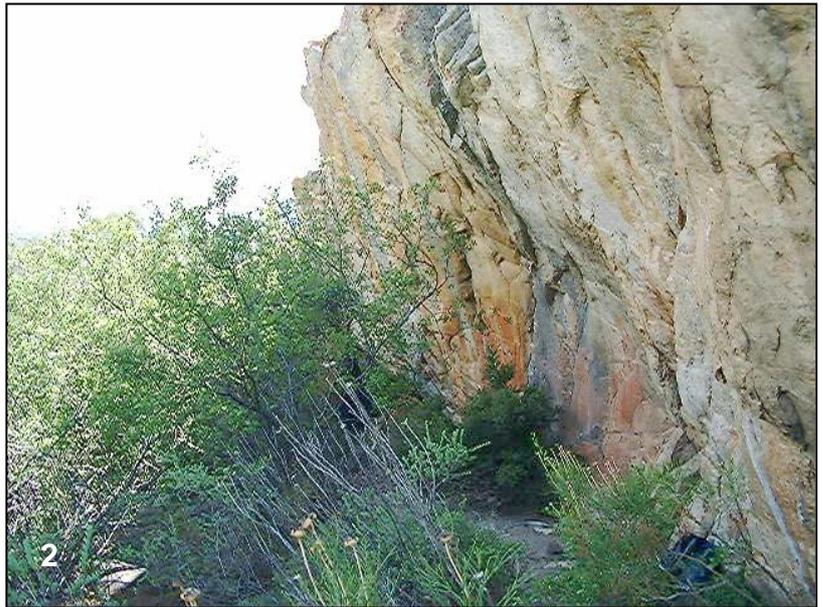
Area proposed  
for development

CHS1b

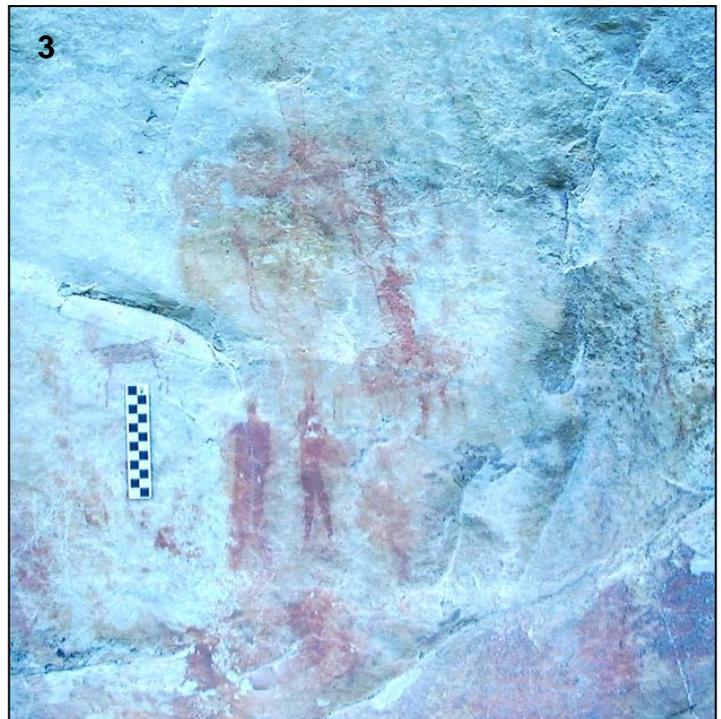
CHS1a



looking north



The rock wall in CHS1a  
looking north



Main rock art  
panel in CHS1a