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FIRST PHASE HERITAGE / ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSED RESEDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AT TREDENHAM, BLOEMFONTEIN

INVESTIGATION

The proposed residential development is located on the farm Tredenham 2153? Bloemfontein (Surveyor-General O.F.S. 1973). The site was visited and inspected on 16 February 2004 in the company of Dr Johan du Preez, from Cebo Environmental Consultants, Bloemfontein.

The area was examined for possible archaeological and historical material to establish the potential impact on any cultural relics that might be present. 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).

The following observations were made.

LOCALITY

The site for the proposed residential development is located on the farm Tredenham 2153? (29°03'06"S. 026°13'59"E. Altitude 1401m). The property lies east of the N1 main route and the R700 road to Bultfontein (2926AA 1993). The area for development can be described as a flood plain, partly covered by a thick growth of large Acacia karoo (Soetdoring), Olea africana (Wild Olive) and other indigenous species.

Several buildings are found in the area.

HISTORICAL FINDS

The farm previously belonged to a certain Mr David Gradwell, an honourable citizen of Bloemfontein. It is not known exactly when the house and outbuildings

were erected on the farm, but the building operations must have taken place shortly after the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902). According to Miss Oenone Gradwell of Bloemfontein, a daughter of the owner, their family had already been living on the farm during the Rebellion of 1914. Miss Gradwell states that she was born in the house on 10 June 1924. She recalls being told that the residence and outbuildings were planned by the architect Wallis, designer of the Old Mutual building at Hoffman Square in Bloemfontein. As a note of interest Miss Gradwell speculates that the same design had also been used to erect similar buildings for Old Mutual in other major centres in South Africa.

Miss Gradwell relates that the water from several springs in the hill behind the farmstead was channelled into a reservoir for the supply of drinking water to the farmhouse.

The cowshed was presumably erected at the same time and was of an advanced design for its time, allowing for the animals to be fed while they were standing at the crib. The building was fully roofed, but it is remembered that in later years, a certain part of the cover was damaged by fire. Presently the cowshed and other out buildings are in an excellent state and in a well-maintained condition.

The land afterwards belonged to Dr (Otto Fredrich Albert) Krause (Jnr) (1890-1970), a prominent personality in medical circles at Bloemfontein (Schoeman 1980:250). It is not known exactly when the land became the property of Krause. At the time of the birth of their son, John Brebner Krause on 20 September 1935, the property already belonged to the Krause family (John Krause, personal communication).

There is, therefore, no doubt that the residence and outbuildings at Tredenham are older than sixty years.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDS

Due to disturbances by ploughing, it seems unlikely that remains of any early human occupation could have survived on the flood plain. Part of the site lies closer to the higher ground, which is the obvious living area for people during prehistoric times. It is possible, therefore, that stone tools and other cultural material could be found closer to the hill during building operations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that more research on the origin, use and historical significance of the buildings on the farm, and especially the cowshed should be done.

It is further recommended that serious consideration should be given to the preservation and re-use of the cowshed and associated storerooms. It should seriously be considered to develop the building into a useable structure.

MITIGATION

Concerning the area for the proposed development, mitigation measures are needed in the case of the cowshed and storerooms. The building can be considered as quite unique and should be preserved.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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