



COBUS DREYER

Pr. Archaeologist/Heritage Specialist

**P.O. Box 12910
BRANDHOF 9324
Bloemfontein
dreyerj@telkomsa.net**

**Tel: 051-444 1187
Fax: 051-444 4395
Cell: 083 357 7982**

20 MAY 2008

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSED LEISURE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS AT ANNEX ELDERSLEA "A" 433, WEPENER, FREE STATE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Leisure residential developments are planned at the farm Annex Elderslea "A" 433, Wepener, Free State. The land borders on the Caledon River near the town of Wepener.

Archaeological remains in the form of circular, half-circular and rectangular stone-walled structures were found along the ridge. Some of the walls are heavily robbed leaving only a stone base.

A single lower grinding stone was found on the surface. No other cultural remnants, such as ash heaps or potsherds to confirm the origin of the walls were found.

Mitigation measures are necessary in the case of the stone-walls. I recommend that the planning of the proposed developments could continue, but that the stone-wall structures should be avoided. Care should also be taken not to destroy the walls during the building phase.

INTRODUCTION AND DESCRIPTION

INVESTIGATION

The site for the proposed leisure residential developments at the farm Annex Elderslea "A" 433, Wepener, was visited on 8 November 2006. Dr Johan du Preez and Karissa Scott from MDA Environmental Consultants, Bloemfontein, accompanied me to the site.

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).

LOCALITY

The site proposed for the development of twelve leisure residential units is at the farm Annex Elderslea "A" 433, Wepener, Free State (Map 1).

The placing of the units is indicated on Map 2.

The proposed area lies on the Caledon River near the town of Wepener.

The area has a dense grass cover which hampered the surface investigation.

The following GPS coordinates (Cape scale) were taken (2926DD) (Surveyor-General 1973):

West 29°45'12"S. 026°59'11"E Altitude 1417m (Figs.1&2).

□ 7mx7m 29°45'13"S. 026°59'12"E Altitude 1418m (Fig.13).

○ 22m 29°45'16"S. 026°59'14"E Altitude 1417m (Figs.4&6).

E ∪ 10m 29°45'18"S. 026°59'14"E Altitude 1413m (Fig.8).

□ 21mx9m

Long Wall 31m 29°45'03"S. 026°59'18"E Altitude 1419m (Fig.11).

Bore hole 29°45'02"S. 026°59'19"E Altitude 1427m (Fig.3).

□ 6mx5m 29°45'06"S. 026°59'27"E Altitude 1421m (Fig.14).

□ = rectangular stone structure.

○ = circular stone structure.

∪ = half-circular stone structure.

RESULTS

FINDS

Several individual stone structures (Fig.7) and clusters of low stone walls (Fig.5) were found in the area. Some of the walls have been heavily robbed (Fig.14).

The structures are either circular or half-circular and rectangular (Fig.14).

A dense vegetation cover hampered the investigation (Fig.1).

A single flat lower grinding stone (Fig.15) was found amongst the stone-walls.

No other archaeological or any cultural remains were found at the site.

DISCUSSION

The origin of the stone structures is not clear. The buildings could represent two separate phases of occupation. An earlier occupation could date from a Later Iron Age settlement, while the rectangular walls could represent a time of European involvement. No further proof the latter could, however, be found.

The lower grinding stone together with the construction method visible in the stone-walls (Fig.9) indicate erection and by early Black people.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The residential developments the farm Annex Elderslea "A" 433, Wepener, will without doubt have an impact on the stone-walls.

RECOMMENDATIONS

I recommend that further planning and development of the proposed residential developments could proceed, but that care should be taken to avoid the stone walls in the site layout.

It is also stressed that care should be taken not to destroy or damage the walls during the building phase.

Future residents should be informed about the stone-walls and people should be discouraged to use any stone from the area for garden layout.

MITIGATION

Concerning the area for the proposed developments, mitigation measures will only be required in the case of the stone-walls.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank Dr Johan du Preez and Karissa Scott from MDA Environmental Consultants, Bloemfontein, for taking me to the site.

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY:

DEACON, J. 1992. Archaeology for Planners, Developers and Local Authorities. Cape Town: National Monuments Council.

DREYER, J. 1996. Introduction to Free State Iron Age Archaeology. In: Guide to archaeological sites in the Free State and Lesotho. Southern African Association of Archaeologists (SA3), 14th Biennial Conference, Bloemfontein, Post-conference tour 5-8 July 1996. Bloemfontein: National Museum.

DREYER, J. 2000. Mountains and Rivers of the Free State - Manual for field research / Berge en Riviere van die Vrystaat – Handleiding vir veldnavorsing. Bloemfontein: University of the Free State, Department of Anthropology, Occasional Paper No. 2.

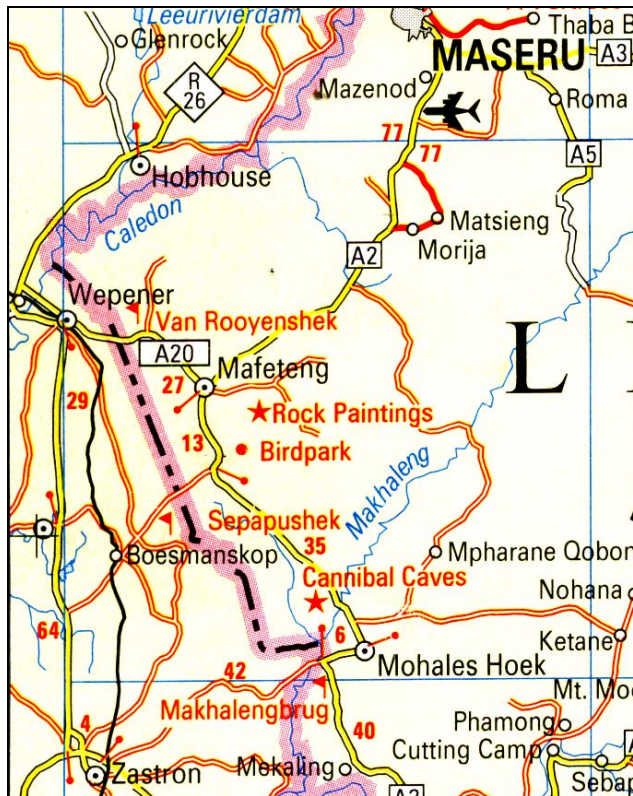
HUMPHREYS, A.J.B. 1986. Searching for the past. Cape Town: David Philip.

MAGGS, T.M. 1976. Iron Age Communities of the Southern Highveld. Pietermaritzburg: Natal Museum.

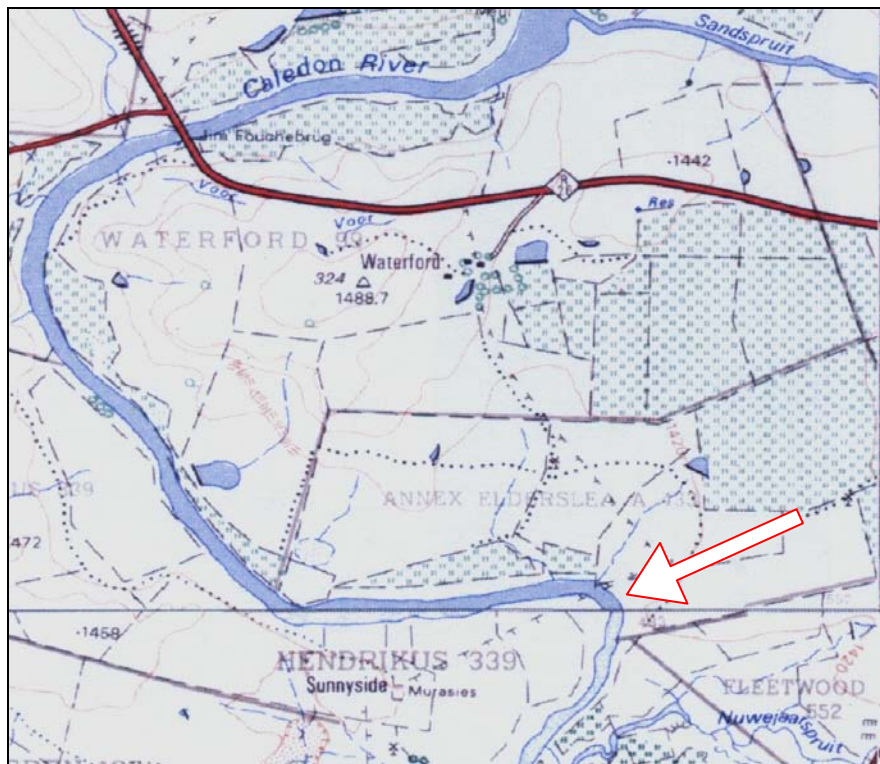
PISTORIUS, J.C.C. 1994. Eskom Archaeological Site Identification Guide. Johannesburg: Eskom.

SURVEYOR-GENERAL O.F.S. 1973. Index of Orange Free State Farms. Bloemfontein.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS:



Map 1 Weperer and Zastron in relation to other towns along the Free State–Lesotho border.



Map 2 Placing of the of the proposed leisure residential development at the farm Annex Elderslea “A” 433, Weperer (2926DD).



Map 3 Layout of the proposed leisure residential development at the farm Annex Elderslea "A" 433, Wepener.



Fig.1 View across the site at the farm Annex Elderslea "A" 433, Wepener.



Fig.2 View across the site at the farm Annex Elderslea "A" 433, Wepener.



Fig.3 The windmill at the site at Annex Elderslea "A" 433, Wepener.



Fig.4 Stone-wall at Annex Elderslea "A" 433, Wepener.



Fig.5 Cluster of stone-walls at Annex Elderslea "A" 433, Wepener.



Fig.6 Stone-wall at Annex Elderslea "A" 433, Wepener.



Fig.7 Circular stone-wall at Annex Elderslea "A" 433, Wepener.



Fig.8 Stone-wall at Annex Elderslea "A" 433, Wepener.



Fig.9 Detail of the construction of a stone-wall at Annex Elderslea "A" 433, Wepener.



Fig.10 Stone-walls on the water edge at Annex Elderslea "A" 433, Wepener.



Fig.11 Stone-walls at Annex Elderslea "A" 433, Wepener.



Fig.12 Cluster of stone-walls at Annex Elderslea "A" 433, Wepener.



Fig.13 Rectangular stone-wall foundation at Annex Elderslea "A" 433, Wepener.



Fig.14 Heavy stone robbing is visible at some walls at Annex Elderslea "A" 433, Wepener.



Fig.15 Lower grinding stone at Annex Elderslea "A" 433, Wepener.