



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**

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FIRST PHASE ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HERITAGE ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSED REALIGNMENT OF THE N8 NATIONAL ROAD BETWEEN THE R26/N8 INTERSECTION & MASERU BRIDGE BORDER POST, LADYBRAND, FREE STATE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The N8 national road provides a vital link between Lesotho and South Africa. To improve the road connection, the South African National Road Agency LTD, is planning the realignment of a section of the N8 Ladybrand and the Maseru Bridge Border Post.

The realignment will start from the existing N8/R26 intersection and will follow the S836 gravel road to tie in along the N8 between Ladybrand and the Maseru Bridge. The length of the realignment is approximately 13 kilometres.

The whole region is part of intensive agricultural land, which has been cultivated for decades. Scars left by road building are also visible.

No archaeological, cultural or any historical remains were found along the route.

It is clear that the new developments will have no impact on any cultural heritage and historical remains in the area.

Further planning of the proposed project may continue, and no mitigation measures will be needed.

INTRODUCTION & DESCRIPTION

Enviroworks Environmental Consultants from Bloemfontein had been commissioned by the National Roads Agency to compile the Environmental Impact Assessment for the proposed developments.

A list of the names and particulars of effected farm owners is enclosed herewith (See ANNEXURE 1).

Scope and Limitations

SANRAL is planning the realignment of a section of the N8 between the N8/R26 intersection near Ladybrand and the Maseru Bridge Border Post. The relocation of the road will start from the existing N8/R26 intersection and will follow the S836 gravel road to link-up with the N8 between Ladybrand and the Maseru Bridge. The realignment will be about 13 kilometres.

The area is part of intensive agricultural land, which has been cultivated for decades. Undisturbed spaces of soil contain a grass cover with scatters of indigenous shrubs. Borrow pits used during former spells of road building are also visible.

No limitations were experienced during site visit.

Methodology

1. Standard archaeological survey and recording methods were applied.
2. A survey of the literature was done to obtain information about the archaeology and cultural heritage of the area.
3. Sections of the route were inspected on foot and others were patrolled by vehicle.
4. The layout of the area was plotted by GPS and the coordinates transferred to Google Earth.
5. Surroundings and features were recorded on camera.

INVESTIGATION

SANRAL is investigating an alternative route for a portion of the N8 in order to improve the entry and exit approach at the Maseru Border Post. The travelling distance between Bloemfontein and Maseru will be shortened by approximately 13 kilometres. The proposed roadway will consist of an 11,4m wide undivided four-lane carriageway, inside a road reserve of 80m. Investigations are still in the Draft Scoping Phase at present.

The heritage investigation provided the opportunity to examine the route proposed for the realignment of the road. The area is part of intensive agricultural land, which has been cultivated for decades. Undisturbed spaces contain a grass cover with scatters of indigenous shrubs.

The route was examined on 7 March 2013. Officials from Enviroworks Environmental Consultants, Bloemfontein, guided us during the site visit.

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 developments. In many cases, planted and self-sown trees and other types of vegetation represent a major part of the historical landscape of human settlements in villages and towns, on farmyards or even deserted places in the open veld. These features should be recognised and taken into consideration during any cultural investigation.

The site 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).

Extensive farming activities in the Ladybrand area affected the environment over many decades. Various Archaeological and Heritage Impact Assessments in and around Ladybrand (Dreyer 2005, 2006a-c, 2007, 2010) and at the Maseru Border Post (Dreyer 2012), produced small collections of cultural material or historical material.

It is important to take note of the Anglo-Boer War (1900-1902) camping and skirmish sites in the Free State and Northern and Eastern Cape and the North West Province. Distinctive food cans and specific types of fired cartridge cases normally identify these sites. Historians and Anglo-Boer War experts are aware of military activities in the Brandwater Basin and along the Lesotho border towards Fouriesburg and Clarens.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The archaeological environment of the Free State is rich and diverse, representing a long time span during the human past. The area is exceptionally rich in terms of Later Iron Age living sites in the Ladybrand and Lesotho region (Maggs 1976). For various reasons, there is still a relative lack in research records, but certain Later Iron Age sites in the Caledon Valley, central and north eastern Free State, have produced important archaeological information (Maggs 1976, Dreyer 1992, 1996). These Iron Age sites date between 1660 AD and 1810 AD.

The Later Iron Age phase brought people who cultivated crops, kept livestock, produced an abundance of pottery in a variety of shapes and sizes and smelted metals. Extensive stone walled enclosures characterised their permanent settlements. These living places are known from the prominent Sotho/Tswana settlements along the Renoster and Vals Rivers near Kroonstad and Bothaville. A number of Taaibos Korana and Griqua groups, remnants of the Later Stone Age peoples, managed to survive the assimilation by Sotho/Tswana tribes in the region and at Mamusa near Schweizer Reneke, for instance (Van den Berg 1996).

Dramatic climate changes resulted in a rapid population growth along the east coast. Increased pressure on natural resources and attempts to control trade during the early 19th century brought the emergence of powerful leaders to the area. The subsequent power struggles resulted in a period of instability in the central parts of Southern Africa. This period of strife or wars of devastation, known as the “difaqane” (Sotho/Tswana) or “Mfecane” (Nguni), affected many of the Black tribes in the interior. Attacks from east of the escarpment initiated by the AmaZulu impis of Chaka in about 1822, were carried on by the AmaNdebele of Mzilikazi and the AmaNgwane of Matiwane into the Free State, thus uprooting among others, the Batlokwa of Sekonyela and Mantatise and various smaller Sotho/Tswana tribes. On their turn, the Batlokwa drove off the Bafokeng of Sebetoane from Kurutlele near Senekal, who, in their effort to escape the pursuit by the AmaNdebele forces, eventually landed up in the Caprivi (Dreyer & Kilby 2003).

The marauding hordes affected the lives of several Batswana tribes living at Dithakong and at the mission station of Robert and Mary Moffat near Kuruman.

This period of unrest directly affected the peoples of the Free State and Lesotho, resulting in the displacement of scores of tribesmen, women and children. The stronger tribal groups, such as the AmaNdebele of Mzilikazi, assimilated many of these refugees. Early European missionaries and travelers ventured into the interior of the country during the 19th century (Dreyer 2001). The Rev James Archbell established the missionary at Thaba Nchu by 1834, while during the previous year, French missionaries settled at Thaba Bosiu in Lesotho. Across the N8 and opposite to the Maseru Border Post lies the farm Pinekloof 291. This locality contains the remains of the Platberg Wesleyan Mission station (also known as Makulukameng). People of mixed descent occupied the station, named after their former living place near the Vaal River, which they had to leave in 1833. Arbousset and Daumas, two French missionaries from Lesotho, visited the missionary at Platberg in 1836 (Arbousset & Daumas 1846).

The Later Iron Age archaeology of the Free State is characterised by a wide distribution of stone walled sites on the flat-topped ridges and hills. There is detail and consistency in the arrangement and design of the structures. People's expression of culture has left its imprint on the material environment. The settlement patterns display human perceptions with regard to social clustering, economic system and political organisation. Patterns culminate in the arrangement of huts, byres and middens in a particular order and in relation to one another. Spatial organisation in general is characterised by the central position of stock enclosures and the placing of the main living area on the perimeter of the settlement.

The classification of sites is based on the assumption that settlement layout is bound and prescribed by cultural perceptions. The identification of different ethnic groups is thus possible from the way in which these traditional peoples organised their different living places in terms of space and time. The result was directed by cultural preference (choice) and function. The importance of livestock, personal status, kinship, social organisation and the diverse roles of men, women and offspring have always been important in the understanding of settlement patterns.

The Later Iron Age classification of settlement patterns formulated by Maggs (1976), produced a standardised archaeological framework for the ordering of structures and sites characterised respectively by stock enclosures with connecting walls, in certain cases including corbelled huts (Type V), surrounding walls (Type N) and huts with bilobial courtyards (Type Z). Associated pottery assemblages with different decoration styles confirm the classification of sites based on layout (Maggs 1976:290). Different settlement patterns also produced huts of different materials in different styles.

The origin of the name Moordkop (Sesotho: Notsi = honeybee) for the hill overlooking Maseru and part of the farm could not be traced with certainty. There is a hill with the same name near Rustenburg (Du Plessis 1973:141), but clearly, it has no connection with the one near the Maseru border post. A considerable Later Iron Age living site is located on the plateau against the north-facing slope of the hill. A keen amateur archaeologist investigated the site several years ago. While the lady was living on the farm, she performed an extensive controlled surface collection of the potsherds (Spaña Hirschman-Davison, personal communication). The collection of ceramics is housed at the Archaeology Department, at the National Museum, Bloemfontein. The assemblage has never been studied properly and it is uncertain how the characteristic features will compare with major Late Iron Age collections from the Free State and Lesotho (Maggs 1976, Dreyer 1992).

LOCALITY

The N8 main road provides a vital link between Lesotho and the Free State capital. The realignment of Section 12 (Km 52,96) to Section 13 (Km 11,12) of the N8 National Route between the R26/N8 intersection and Maseru Bridge will start at the existing N8/R26 intersection at the Hobhouse turn-off. From here the upgrading will follow the S836 gravel road, to link-up with the N8 from Ladybrand to Maseru. The length of the realignment will be approximately 13 kilometres.

The heritage investigation provided the opportunity to examine the route of the proposed realignment of the N8 road to Maseru (Map 1&2)

The following GPS coordinates (Cape scale) were taken (Map 4) (2927AD):

A	29°13'58"S 027°20'47"E	Altitude 1601m	(Fig.1).
B	29°14'18"S 027°22'04"E	Altitude 1618m	(Figs.2-4).
C	29°14'49"S 027°22'39"E	Altitude 1593m	(Figs.5&6).
D	29°15'23"S 027°24'01"E	Altitude 1572m	(Figs.7&8).

E	29°16'07"S 027°25'44"E	Altitude 1567m	(Figs.9-10) .
F	29°16'40"S 027°26'08"E	Altitude 1571m	(Fig.11).

FINDS

Charming sandstone buildings occur at Vinies along the S 836 road to Maseru (Fig.12). Some of the structures form part of the school nearby (Fig.13).

Features of specific interest are the very old sandstone fence posts still found along the route.

Heritage Impact Assessments (HIA) in the Ladybrand region, produced vague indications of stone-walling and stone-paving near Maseru bridge. An ash-heap containing a small collection of undecorated potsherds and porcelain and an engraved circle of about 1,5m around a centre hole was found on a sandstone block on the flood plain along the river (Dreyer 2012).

Township developments at Mauersnek outside Ladybrand produced remains of stone walling and a substantial amount of Late Iron Age potsherds on a midden (Dreyer 2010). An old cemetery with the graves of several British soldiers who died during the Anglo-Boer War, as well as other people who played a major role in the establishment of the town, was found near Leliehoek in Ladybrand (Dreyer 2007).

The present investigation did not produce any cultural or historical material or graves along the route.

RECOMMENDATIONS

There are no obvious reasons to delay further planning of the realignment of a section of the N8 near Ladybrand.

I recommend that the planning of the proposed new developments could continue.

MITIGATION

No mitigation measures will be required.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Emmerantia Marais from Enviroworks Environmental Consultants, Bloemfontein, accompanied us during the site visit.

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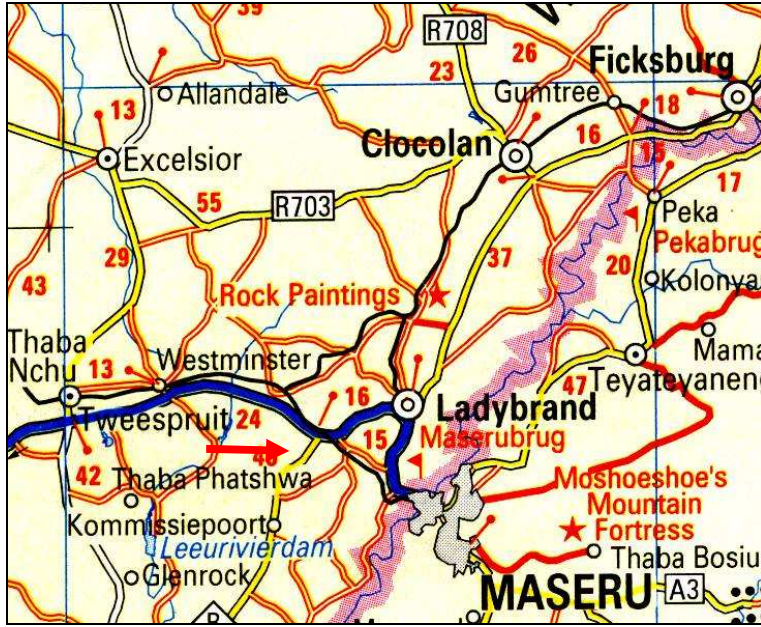
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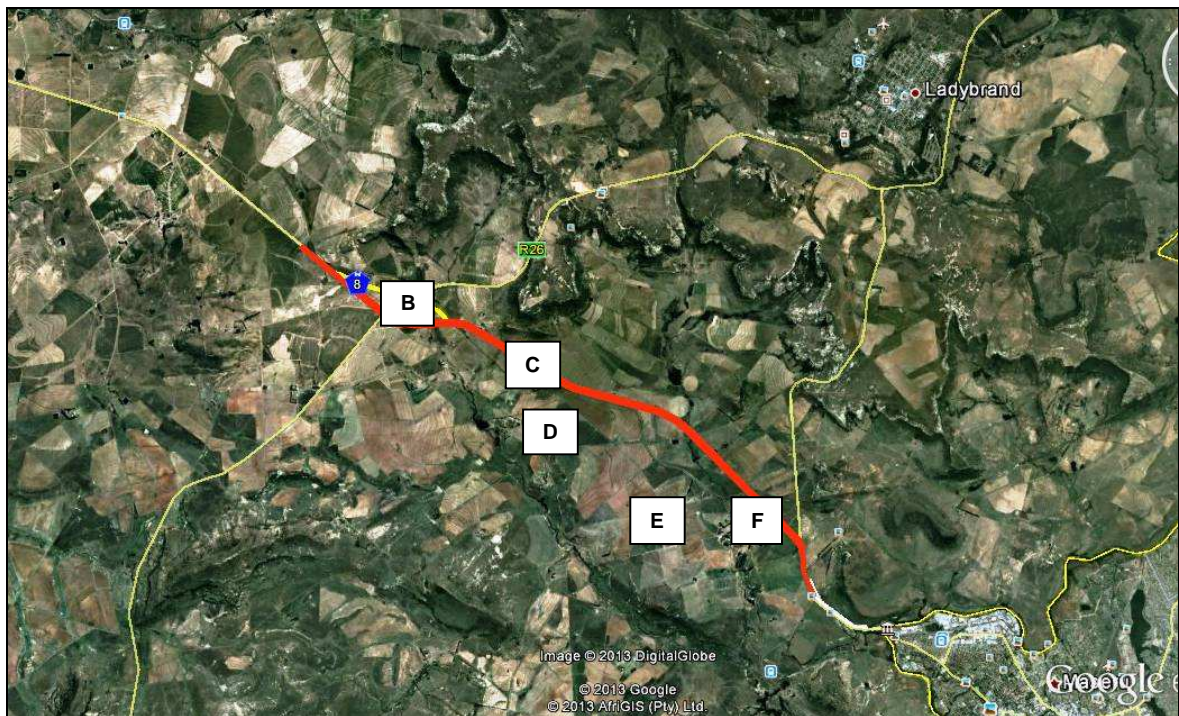
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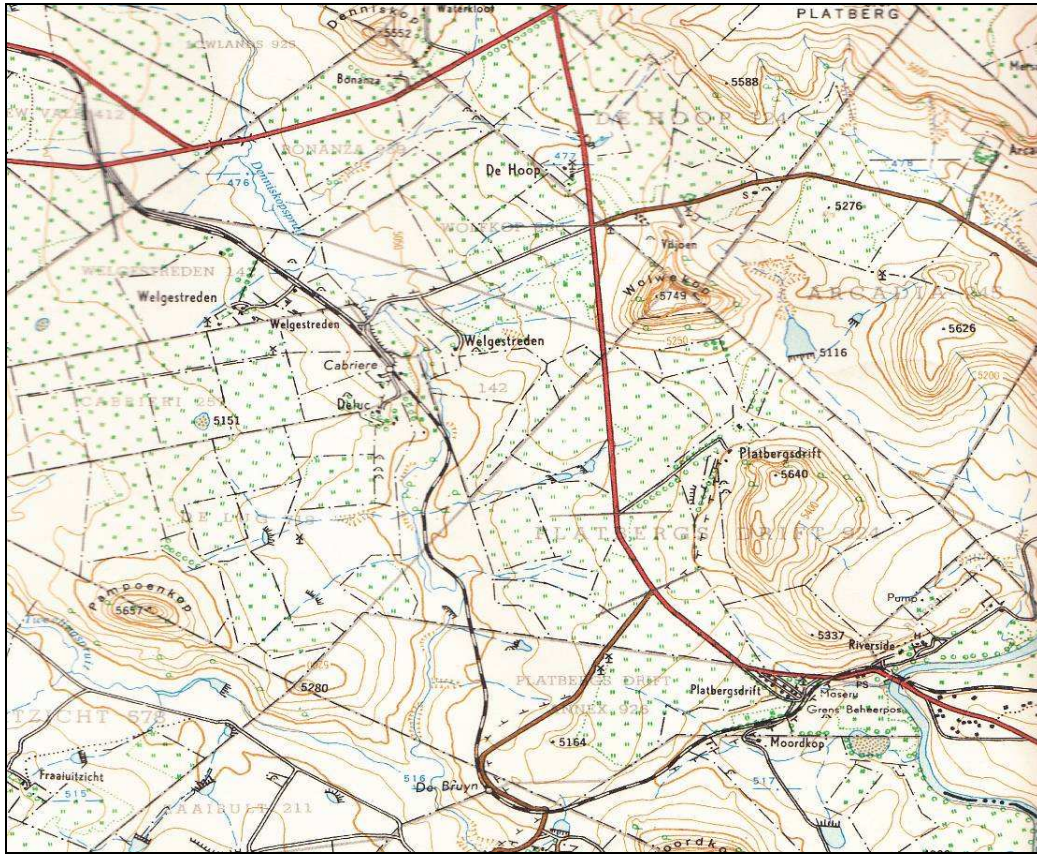
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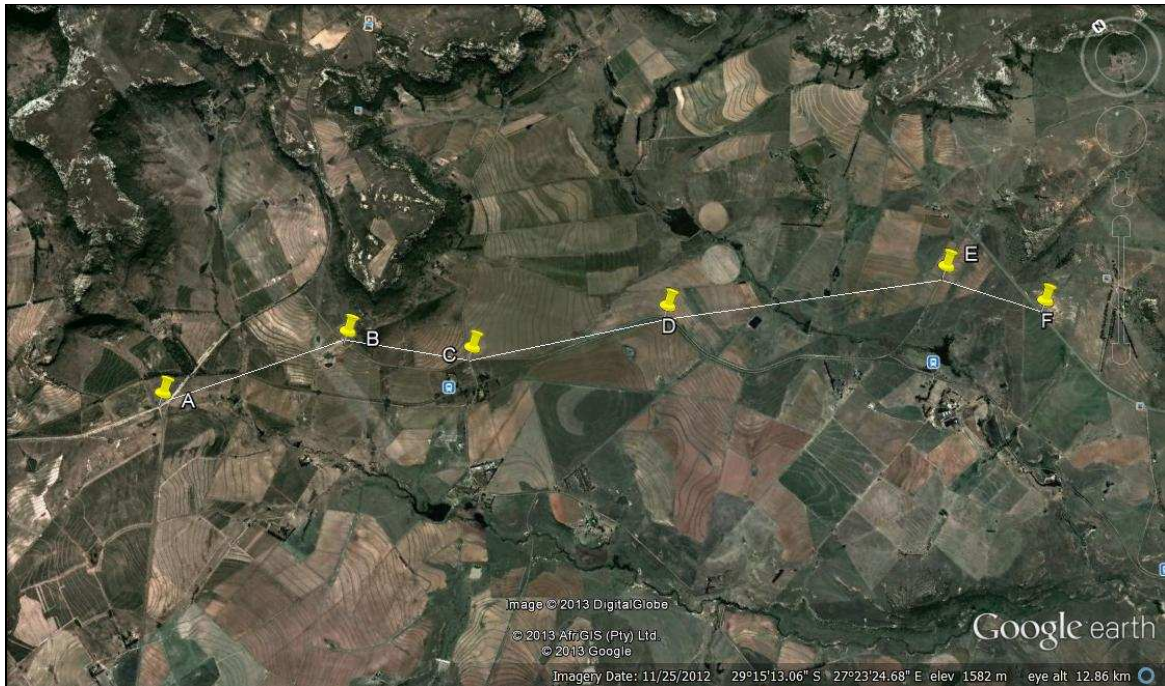
Map 1 Maseru along the Lesotho border in relation Ladybrand.



Map 2 Proposed route from N8 Ladybrand to R26 Maseru Bridge (2927AD).



Map 3 Route from N8 Ladybrand to R26 to Maseru Bridge, Ladybrand (2927AD).



Map 4 Route from N8 Ladybrand to R26 to Maseru Bridge, Ladybrand GPS points indicated.



Fig.1 Point A at the R26 Hobhouse turn-off along the N8 to Ladybrand.



Fig.2 Point B along the S836 gravel road to Maseru.



Fig.3 Point B along the S836 gravel road to Maseru.



Fig.4 Point B along the S836 gravel road to Maseru.



Fig.5 Point C along the S836 gravel road to Maseru.



Fig.6 Point C along the S836 gravel road to Maseru.



Fig.7 Point D along the S836 gravel road indicating the new route to Maseru.



Fig.8 Point D along the S836 gravel road indicating the new route to Maseru.



Fig.9 Point E along the S836 gravel road indicating the new route to Maseru.



Fig.10 Point E along the S836 gravel road indicating the new route to Maseru.



Fig.11 Point F along the N8 road from Ladybrand to Maseru.



Fig.12 Sandstone building at Vinies near Point C along the S836 road to Maseru.



Fig.13 School buildings at Vinies along the S836 road to Maseru.

ANNEXURE 1

ERF/PTN	FARM		OWNERS	CONTACT INFORMATION
REM	BANKFONTEIN NO 411		Gertruida Wouterina Lategan	PO Box 18, Ladybrand, 9745
PTN 1	BONANZA NO 959		Ladybrand Bonanza Farm CC - Gordon James Aldworth Bentley	PO Box 350, Ladybrand, 9745 - 0832281907 or 051-9242020
REM	BONANZA NO 959		Gordon James Aldworth Bentley	PO Box 350, Ladybrand, 9745 - 0832281907 or 051-9242020
REM	Damfontein No. 488	3512/1890	Johannes Theodorus Pienaar van Zyl	PO Box 725, Ladybrand, 9745 - 051-9242624 (h) - 0835644921
REM	Damplaats No. 55	SG 2450/1872	Fragment Trust	no contact info available
REM	DE MOLEN NO 953		Silvia Gwendolyn Stander	34 Hugenate Circle, Ladybrand, 9745 - PO Box 177, Ladybrand, 9745 - 0824127799 or 051- 9242049
REM	DIE PLAN NO 957		Theodorus van Wyk	PO Box 173, Ladybrand, 9745 - 0826519211 or 051-9241647

REM	EXTENTION VENIES NO 758		Versamelkop CC - Carel Erasmus Fourie	PO Box 217, Ladybrand, 9745 - 0832762873 or 051-9240710
REM	Ferndale No. 1097	SG 1173/2002	Antonie du Toit	082 449 0828 apdutoit@icon.co.za
PTN 2	GELUK NO 954		Hester Louisa Wessels	18 Erasmus Street, Ladybrand, 9745 - PO Box 151, Ladybrand, 9745 - 051-9242666
PTN6	Holfontein No. 32	1133/1998	not yet registered	
REM	LIBERTAS NO 956		Theodorus van Wyk	PO Box 173, Ladybrand, 9745 - 0826519211 or 051-9241647
REM	LOWLANDS NO 925		Andries Johannes Jakobus Botha	PO Box 57, Ladybrand, 9745 - 40 Union Street, Marquard, 9610 - 0832595807 or 051-9241125
REM	Marelja No. 1079	791/1990	not yet registered	
REM	Newlands no 42	SG 258/1881	Johannes Theodorus Pienaar van Zyl	no contact info available
PTN 3	Newlands no 42	SG 1946/1950	Hester Louisa Wessels	PO Box 151, Ladybrand, 9745 - 18 Erasmus Street, Ladybrand, 9745 - 051-9242666
PTN 1	Newlands no 43	SG 668/1936	PJ Gouws Family Trust	no contact info available
PTN 1	NEWVALE NO 412		Congregational Union Church Aid of Missionary SOC of South Africa	
PTN 4	NEWVALE NO 412	sg 706 / 2004	Versamelkop CC - Carel Erasmus Fourie	PO Box 217, Ladybrand, 9745 - 0832762873 or 051-9240710
PTN 2	NEWVALE NO 412		Not yet registered	
PTN 3	NEWVALE NO 412		Not yet registered	
REM	NEWVALE NO 412		Gordon James Aldworth Bentley	PO Box 350, Ladybrand, 9745 - 0832281907 or 051-9242020
REM	PALMYRA NO 153		Louis Albrecht de Jager	PO Box 317, Ladybrand, 9745 - 153 Palmyra, Ladybrand, 9745 - 0726112787 or 051-9242074
REM	PLATBERGS DRIFT NO 924		Eternal City Trading 649 CC - Kolisang Mochesane Lepholisa	74 Depserton Crescent, Lavender Hill, 7945 - 051-9242198 or 0834377250
REM	SCHOOL SITE NO 828		Free State Provincial Government	

REM	VENIES NO 518		Transnet LTD	Dave Wyngaard 035-9067581 Willy Joubert 035-9067487
REM	VENIES NO 758			
REM	WELGESTREDEN NO 142		Gertruida Wouterina Lategan	PO Box 18, Ladybrand, 9745
REM	WOLFKOP NO 1108		Not yet registered	