

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR PROPOSED
CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW CEMETERY AT CALVINIA, NAMAKWA
DISTRICT, NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE**

(Assessment conducted under Section 38 (8) of the
National Heritage Resources Act No 25 of 1999)

Prepared for:
Van Zyl Environmental Consultants cc
P O Box 567
Upington
8800
Tel: 072 222 6194
Email: ibvanzyl@telkomsa.net

August 2009



Prepared by

Lita Webley & David Halkett
Archaeology Contracts Office
Department of Archaeology
University of Cape Town
Private Bag
Rondebosch
7701

Phone (021) 650 2357
Fax (021) 650 2352
Email: Lita.Webley@uct.ac.za

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Archaeology Contracts Office was appointed by Van Zyl Environmental Consultants cc to undertake an Archaeological Impact Assessment for the construction of a new cemetery at Calvinia, Namakwa District, Northern Cape Province.

The proposed cemetery is located about 3 km west from Calvinia, directly north of the R355 road to Loeriesfontein. The Hantam Mountains are located to the north of the planned facility. The Oorlogskloof River and cultivated lands are found to the south of the road.

The Hantam Mountains to the north of Calvinia has not been subjected to any archaeological research programmes or surveys in the past and virtually nothing is known of this area.

The ground slopes gently southward and there are numerous small rivulets which cross the area, none more than about 30cm deep. The soil comprises decomposing shales, which give a blackened appearance to the soil. The terrain is covered in knee-high indigenous vegetation. Visibility is good.

A foot survey was conducted on the 31 July 2009. Despite a careful survey of the area, no archaeological material (including stone artefacts, pottery, etc) was identified. There are a few scatters of very recent 20th century glass, tin and ceramics, confirming that the area has functioned as an informal rubbish dump.

There are no structures or any evidence of previous burials. In the unlikely event, that prehistoric human remains are uncovered while excavating a grave, SAHRA will need to be notified. They will need to advise on the correct course of action.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Archaeology Contracts Office was appointed by Van Zyl Environmental Consultants cc to undertake an Archaeological Impact Assessment for the extension of the Calvinia Cemetery, Namakwa District, Northern Cape Province.

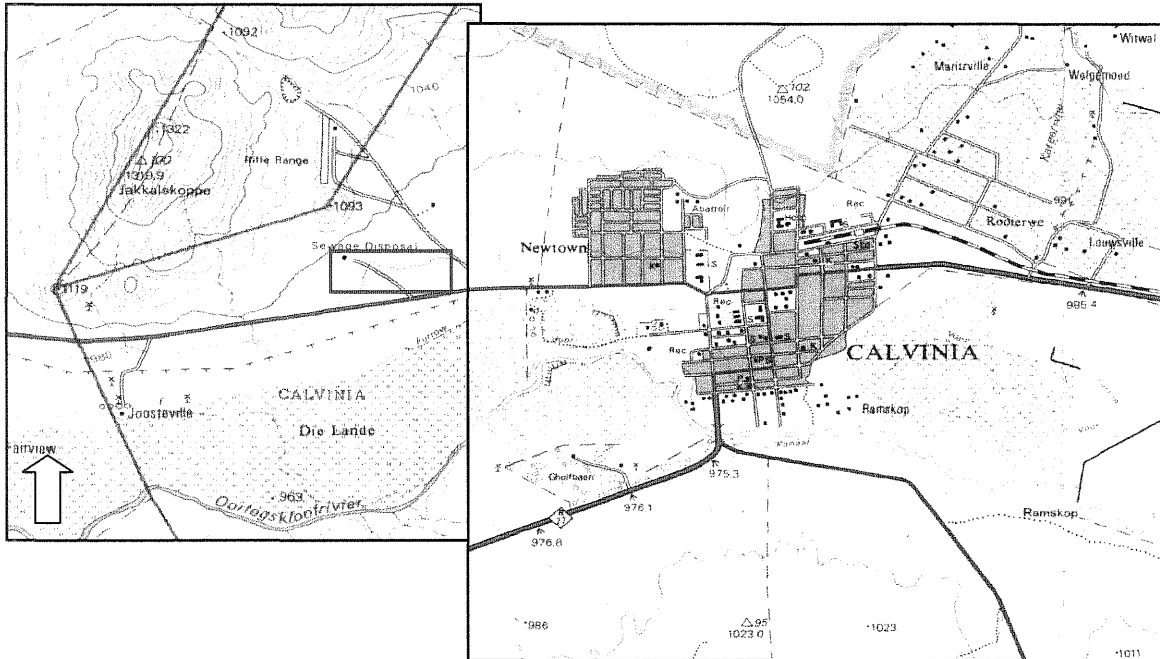


Figure 1: 1:50 000 map sheets of 3119 BC (Toringskop) and 3119 BD (Calvinia) showing the approximate location of the extension of the sewage works and the proposed cemetery.

The existing cemetery is located in the town of Calvinia, but the proposal is to construct a new cemetery outside of town. The proposed cemetery is located about 3 km west from Calvinia, directly north of the R355 road to Loeriesfontein. The Hantam Mountains are located to the north of the planned facility. The Oorlogskloof River and cultivated lands are found to the south of the road.

The co-ordinates of the cemetery are given as:

A	31° 27' 51.26"	19° 44' 46.88"
B	31° 27' 53.28"	19° 44' 45.29"
C	31° 28' 02.23"	19° 44' 46.65"
D	31° 28' 01.17"	19° 44' 55.87"
E	31° 27' 57.76"	19° 44' 55.45"

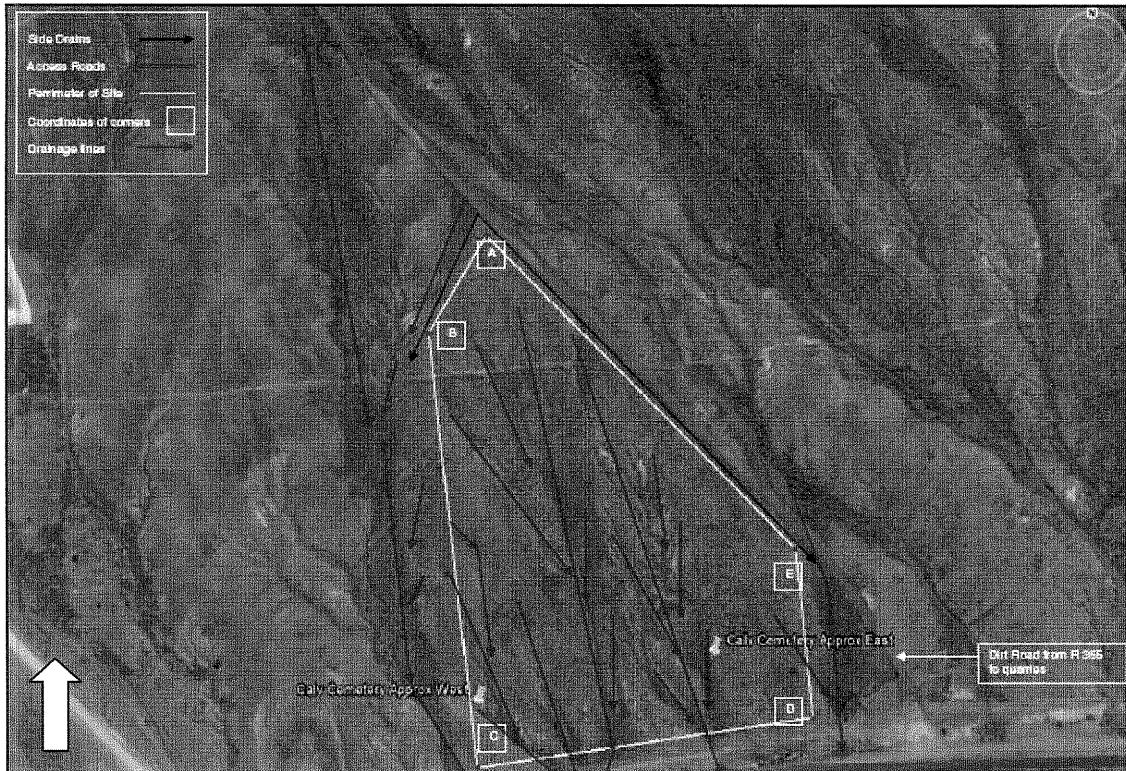


Figure 2: Aerial view of the proposed cemetery extension after Van Zyl Environmental Consultants cc (2009). The blue arrows indicate the drainage rivulets.

2. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The aim of the archaeological impact assessment was to:

- Identify archaeological heritage resources at an early stage during the development;
- Determine the significance of any archaeological resources discovered during the survey;
- Determine whether the development would have a negative impact on these heritage resources;
- If the no-go option is not feasible, then make recommendations for mitigation.

3. LEGISLATION

The National Heritage Resources Act, No 25 of 1999 (Section 38 (1)) makes provision for a compulsory notification of the intent to development when any development exceeding 5000 m² in extent, or any road or linear development exceeding 300m in length is proposed. Section 38 (8) of the NHRA relates to impact assessments undertaken as part of an Environmental Impact Assessment.

The NHRA provides protection for the following categories of heritage resources:

- Landscapes, cultural or natural (Section 3 (3))
- Buildings or structures older than 60 years (Section 34);
- Archaeological Sites, palaeontological material and meteorites (Section 35);
- Burial grounds and graves (Section 36);

- Public monuments and memorials (Section 37);
- Living heritage (defined in the Act as including cultural tradition, oral history, performance, ritual, popular memory, skills and techniques, indigenous knowledge systems and the holistic approach to nature, society and social relationships) (Section 2 (d) (xxi)).

4. BACKGROUND TO THE AREA

The Hantam Mountains to the north of Calvinia has not been subjected to any archaeological research programmes or surveys in the past and virtually nothing is known of this area. There are numerous web pages which report on the rock art of the Oorlogskloof Nature Reserve which is located 70 km south-west of the proposed cemetery. A literature search has only produced one published account, namely that of Mr. J Hollman who reported on numerous rock shelters containing rock art in the Koebee River valley, *about 40 km south of Oorlogskloof*. Mr. D Morris (2007) of the McGregor Museum has undertaken a contract survey for the upgrading of railway infrastructure north of Loeriesfontein and discovered a small shelter with a Middle Stone Age scatter on the Krom River (D Morris pers comm.). Thus, the literature would suggest that both Later Stone Age and Middle Stone Age sites and material might be expected in this general area.

5. DESCRIPTION OF THE AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The property is bounded by the R355 to the south and a gravel road running up to the rifle road to the east (Figure 2). The terrain is located at the bottom of the southern slopes of the Hantam Mountains, within the catchment of the Oorlogskloof River. The ground slopes gently southward and there are numerous small rivulets which cross the area, none more than about 30cm deep (Figure 2). The soil comprises decomposing shales, which give a blackened appearance to the soil. The terrain is covered in knee-high indigenous vegetation.

5.1 Limitations

There were no limitations to the survey. Visibility was good.

6. RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

The survey was conducted on foot on the 31 July 2009 by Lita Webley and David Halkett. GPS readings were obtained on the WGS84 datum, and track ways were recorded. Digital photographs were also taken of the site.

Despite a careful survey of the area, no archaeological material (including stone artefacts, pottery, etc) was identified. There are a few scatters of very recent 20th century glass, tin and ceramics, confirming that the area has functioned as an informal rubbish dump. There are no structures or any evidence of previous burials.

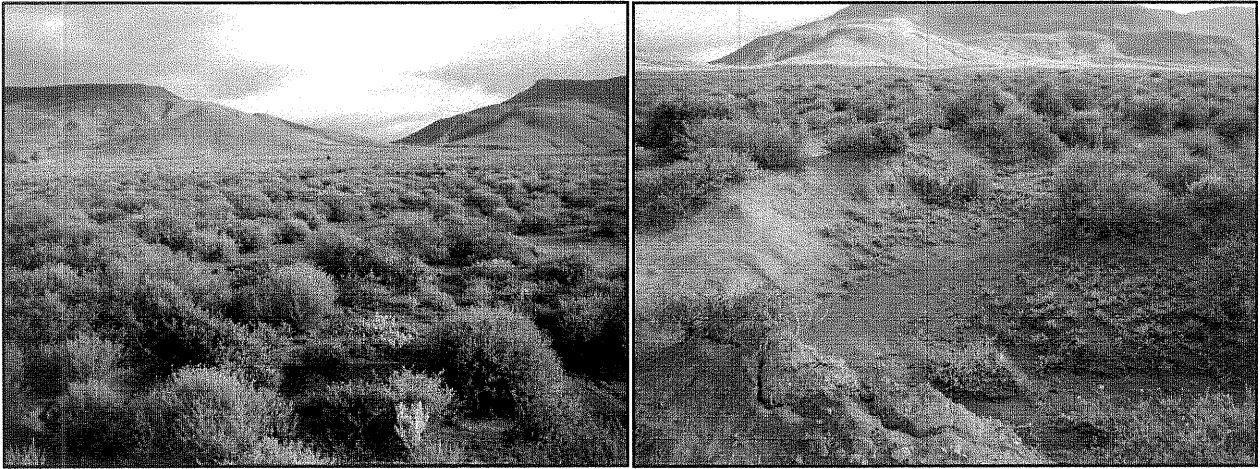


Plate 1: View toward the foothills of the Hantam Mountains, the location of the proposed cemetery in the foreground. Plate 2: An example of the little rivulets which cross the property.

7. DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A foot survey of the property failed to identify any archaeological material which might be impacted by the development of the area for a cemetery. The terrain consists of weathered shales which are not suitable for the manufacture of stone artefacts. There are no other exotic raw materials on the site. There is no evidence that the property was settled in the past.

There is more recent (20th century) evidence for the informal dumping of rubbish. However, the material is not older than 60 years and is therefore not protected.

There are no structures or buildings threatened by the cemetery. In the unlikely event, that prehistoric human remains are uncovered while excavating a grave, SAHRA will need to be notified. They will need to advise on the correct course of action.

8. REFERENCES

Hollman, J. 1993. Preliminary report on the Koebee rock paintings, Western Cape Province, South Africa. *South African Archaeological Bulletin* 48: 16-25.