

ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

PROPOSED RESORT DEVELOPMENT ON REMAINDER PORTION 8 OF FARM ELANDSKLOOF NO. 59 NEAR VILLIERSDORP, WESTERN CAPE

Prepared for

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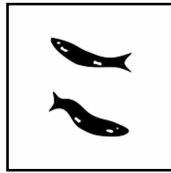
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Executive summary

ACRM was appointed to conduct an Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) for a proposed development on Portion 8 of Elandskloof Farm No. 59, near Villiersdorp in the Western Cape.

The proposed site comprises terraced grazing lands/old apple orchards. It slopes from west to east and the substrate is crumbly brown clay and some shale. The fields are covered in Kweek and Kikuyu grass. There are no significant landscape features on the proposed site. Most of the surface stone has been removed from the fields.

The development will comprise the construction of eight small guest cottages. The footprint area for the cottages is less than 1.0ha in extent.

The purpose of the study is to assess the sensitivity of archaeological resources in the affected area, and to determine potential impacts on such resources.

A field assessment of the proposed development site was undertaken on 20th April 2015.

The following observations were made:

A thin scatter (n = 15) of Early and Middle Stone Age implements were encountered in the grazing lands. These comprised some angular chunks, several flakes and miscellaneous retouched/utilised pieces, and a round core. No formal tools such as handaxes, points or cleavers were found.

Significance of the archaeological resources

The very small numbers, isolated and disturbed context in which they were found mean that the archaeological remains documented during the study have been graded as having low (Grade 3C) significance.

Conclusion

The study has shown that the proposed construction of eight small guest cottages will not impact on important archaeological heritage.

Indications are that the receiving environment is not a sensitive archaeological landscape.

Recommendations

1. No further archaeological mitigation is required.
2. In the unlikely event of any unmarked human remains being uncovered during construction work, these must immediately be reported to the archaeologist (Jonathan Kaplan 082 321 0172), or Heritage Western Cape (Guy Thomas 021 483 9685).

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1. INTRODUCTION

ACRM was appointed by Tommy Brümmer Town Planners to conduct an Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) for a small resort development on Portion 8 of Elandskloof Farm No. 59, near Villiersdorp (Caledon District) in the Western Cape (Figures 1 & 2).

A number of existing buildings (including labourer's cottages) on the farm have been converted into tourism accommodation facilities, and the proposed construction of eight new, small guest cottages therefore seeks to maximise the existing resort activities that currently take place on the farm (Figure 3).

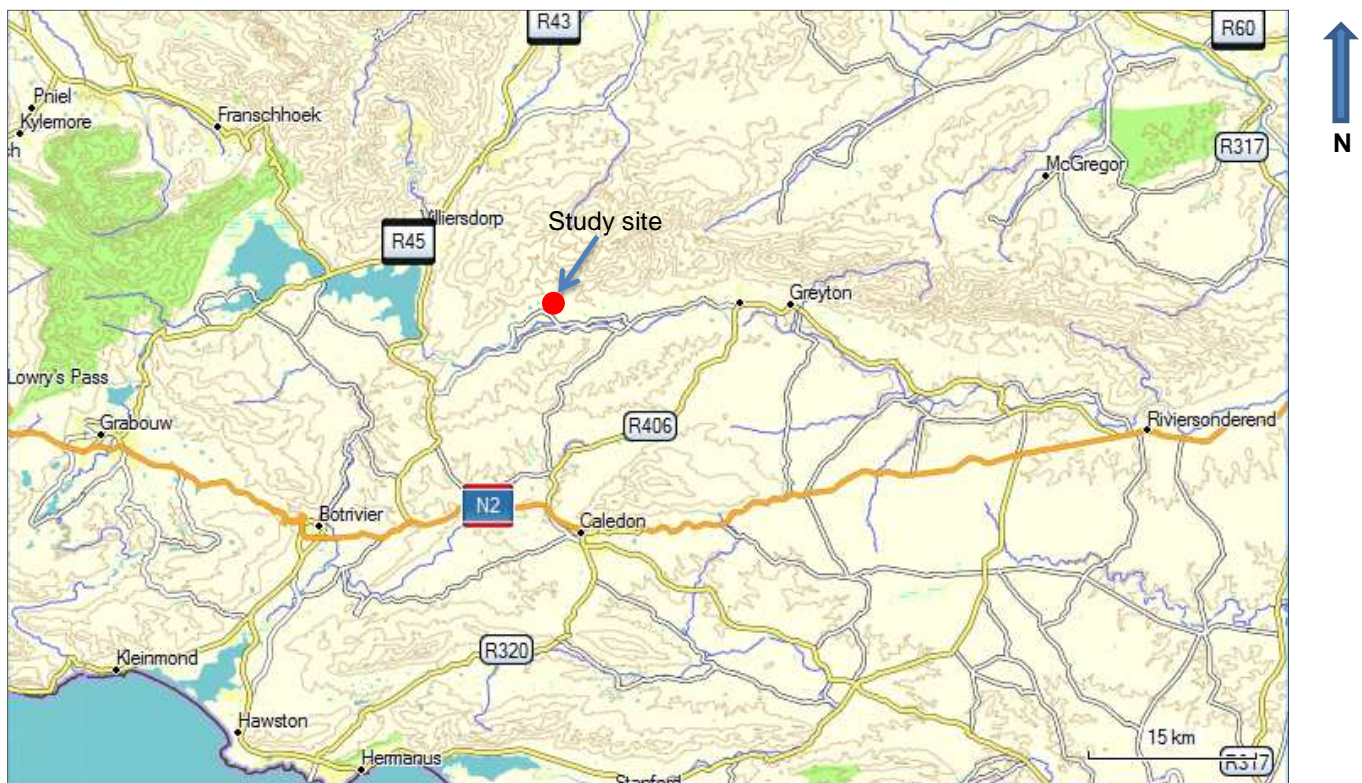


Figure 1. Locality Map illustrating the location of the study site in a regional context

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Figure 2. Google aerial photograph illustrating the location of the study site in relation to Villiersdorp & Greyton

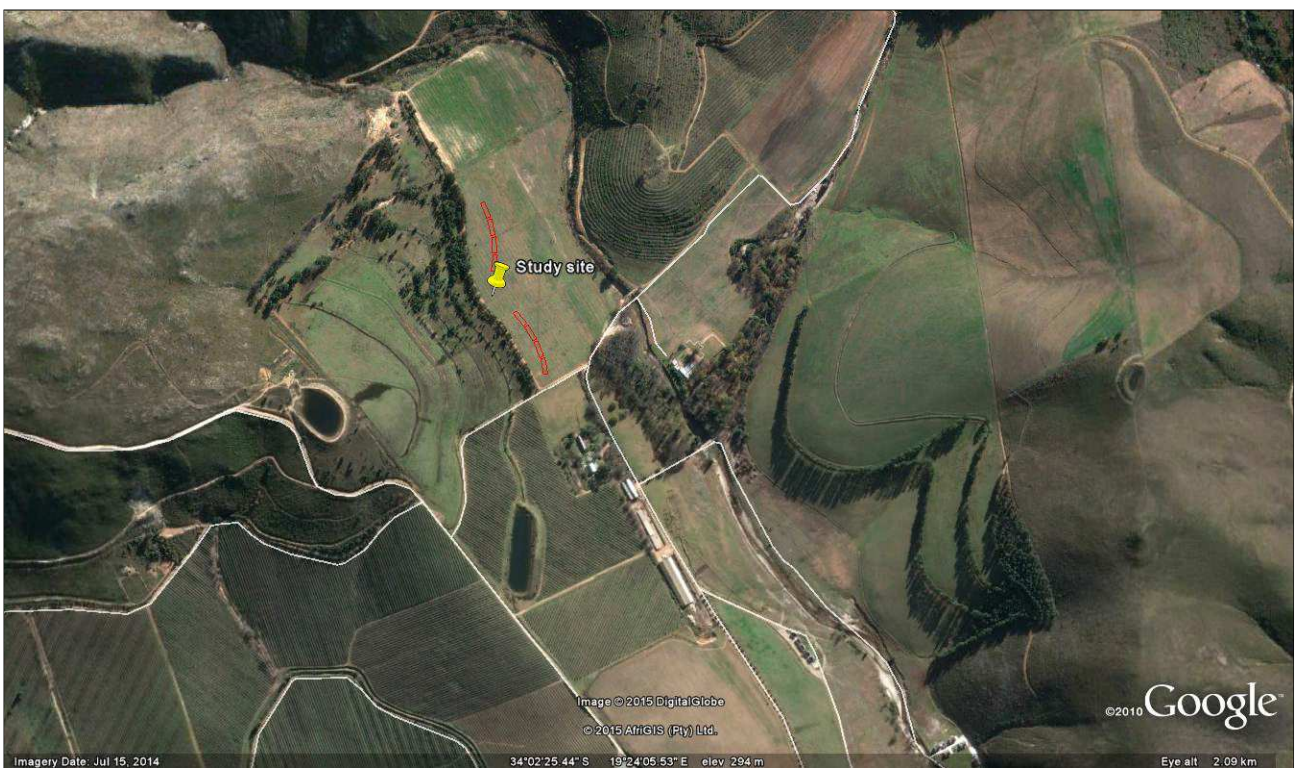


Figure 3. Close up aerial photograph of the study site and the proposed layout plan of the eight new guest cottages

2. HERITAGE LEGISLATION

The National Heritage Resources Act (Act No. 25 of 1999) makes provision for a compulsory Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) when an area exceeding 5000 m² is being developed. This is to determine if the area contains heritage sites and to take the necessary steps to ensure that they are not damaged or destroyed during development.

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)).

3. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The terms of reference for the study were:

- To determine whether there are likely to be any archaeological remains that may be impacted by the proposed development;
- To indicate any constraints that would need to be taken into account in considering the development proposal;
- To identify potentially sensitive archaeological areas, and
- To recommend any further mitigation or management action.

4. DESCRIPTION OF THE RECEIVING ENVIRONMENT

The site for the proposed development is located about 23 kms south west of Villiersdorp. Access to the Elandskloof Farm is via Divisional Road (DR 1313), off the R43 between Villiersdorp and the N2. Eight small guest cottages are planned in grazing lands that were previously old apple orchards (Figures 4-8). The proposed site slopes from west to east to the Elandskloof River which runs alongside the property at the bottom of the fields/gravel farm road. The grazing lands are terraced, and most of the surface stone has already been removed. Based on an investigation of a test pit, some diggings and erosion, the substrate is mainly crumbly brown clay and some shale. The

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only visible infrastructure is a concrete drinking trough alongside the fence line, and some old irrigation pipes (plastic & galvanized) lying around. The grazing lands are covered in kweek and kikuyu grass. There are no landscape features such as outcroppings of stone, on the proposed site.



Figure 4. Proposed guest cottages superimposed on Google Earth. Note the terraced fields



Figure 5. View of the study site facing north. Note the terracing

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Figure 6. View of the study site facing south



Figure 7. View of the study site alongside the tree line, facing north west



Figure 8. View of the study site alongside the tree line, facing north west

5. STUDY APPROACH

5.1 Method

The purpose of the study is to assess the sensitivity of archaeological resources in the affected area, and to determine potential impacts on such resources.

The significance of archaeological resources was assessed in terms of their content and context. Attributes considered in determining significance include artefact and/or ecofact types, rarity of finds, exceptional items, organic preservation, potential for future research, density of finds and the context in which archaeological traces occur.

The position of identified archaeological resources, were fixed by a hand held GPS unit set on the map datum WGS 84 (Figure 9).

The field assessment was undertaken by J. Kaplan of ACRM on 20 May, 2015.

A desk top study was done, which included searching the SAHRIS data base.

5.2 Constraints and limitations

There were no constraints or limitations associated with the study. Ground visibility was very good.

5.3 Identification of potential risks

Based on the results of the study, there are no archaeological risks associated with the proposed development.

5.4 Archaeology of the study area

Very few studies have been done in the area, but some archaeological remains have been encountered near Villiersdorp. For example, large numbers of patinated and highly weathered, Early Stone Age (ESA) tools including many handaxes, cleavers, retouched pieces, flakes, chunks and cores were documented on the northern bank of the Theewaterskloof Dam (Kaplan 2007a), a few kilometers south of Villiersdorp, while Yates (2005) documented large numbers of ESA tools, including retouched flakes, choppers, cleavers and handaxes, at the Gloria Cove resort on the western side of the dam. Yates (2005) noted that the majority of the tools were made on highly patinated flaked quartzite cobbles, most of which were confined to a cobble or pebble horizon alongside the edge of the dam, in a disturbed and degraded context. Orton (2014) encountered no archeological resources during a screening study for a low cost housing project in Villiersdorp.

ESA tools including large angular flakes and chunks/cores were recorded between Greyton and Genadendal, and on the gravel road to Boesmanskloof (Kaplan 2006), while small numbers of ESA and MSA tools were found in old grazing lands and washed slopes on the Farm Blue Hippo a few kilometers north east of Greyton (Kaplan 2007b, 2013).

Historic records indicate that the valley, extending through to Greyton in the south would have been prime grazing lands for Khoekhoen groups during the last two millennia (Hart & Webley 2010).

6. RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

Fifteen stone implements, assigned to the ESA and MSA were recorded during the screening study (refer to Table 1 & Figures 10-12). The remains all occur in a heavily disturbed context.

The dispersed scatter of finds comprise mostly chunks/broken chunks, three MSA and ESA flakes/partially retouched flakes (Sites 280, 284 & 292), and a round prepared core (Site 286). A cortex flake with scraper retouch (Site 289) was also found. Some of the tools are heavily weathered and patinated. However, no formal tools such as handaxes, cleavers, or points were found. Most of the tools are made on rolled quartzite cobbles, mostly likely sourced from the Elandskloof River at the bottom of the grazing fields, or from surrounding mountain slopes.

6.1 Significance of the archaeological resources

The very small numbers, isolated and disturbed context in which they were found, mean that the archaeological remains documented during the study have been graded as having low (Grade 3C) significance.

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Figure 9. Google aerial photograph of the study site including track paths (in blue) & waypoints of archaeological finds. Note the terraced fields.

Site	Name of farm	Lat. & Long	Description of archaeological finds	Grading
	Farm 59/8 Elandskloof			
280		S34 02.412 E19 23.969	MSA quartzite flake	Low (3C)
281		S34 02.397 E19 23.953	Quartzite chunk	Low (3C)
282		S34 02.383 E19 23.940	Quartzite chunk	Low (3C)
283		S34 02.350 E19 23.915	Broken quartzite chunk	Low (3C)
284		S34 02.225 E19 23.872	X 2 quartzite chunks, 1 miscellaneous retouched ESA cortex flake	Low (3C)
285		S34 02.222 E19 23.882	Large broken quartzite chunk	Low (3C)
286		S34 02.224 E19 23.892	MSA quartzite prepared core	Low (3C)
287		S34 02.230 E19 23.897	Very large quartzite partially retouched flake	Low (3C)
288		S34 02.265 E19 23.892	Quartzite chunk	Low (3C)
289		S34 02.239 E19 23.881	Scraper retouched cortex flake on burnished quartzite	Low (3C)
290		S34 02.232 E19 23.881	Burnished flake/chunk	Low (3C)
291		S34 02.214 E19 23.870	Quartzite chunk	Low (3C)
292		S34 02.275 E19 23.901	MSA broken quartzite flake	Low (3C)

Table 1. The proposed Elandskloof Resort Development on Farm 59/8: Spreadsheet of waypoints & description of archaeological finds



Figure 10. Collection of tools recorded during the study. Scale is in cm



Figure 11. Collection of tools recorded during the study. Scale is in cm



Figure 12. Collection of tools recorded during the study. Scale is in cm

6.2 Graves

No visible graves were found on the proposed development site.

7. IMPACT STATEMENT

The study has shown that the proposed construction of eight guest cottages in grazing lands/old apple orchards on Farm 59/8, near Villiersdorp, will not have an impact of great significance on archaeological heritage.

The small number of tools, all occurring in a disturbed (*ex-situ*) context are comparable to similar observations made in the surrounding region, which are dominated by elements assigned to the ESA and MSA.

8. CONCLUSION

Indications are that the receiving environment is not a sensitive or threatened archaeological landscape.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. No further archaeological mitigation is required.
2. In the unlikely event of any unmarked human remains being uncovered during construction work, these must immediately be reported to the archaeologist (Jonathan Kaplan 082 321 0172), or Heritage Western Cape (Guy Thomas 021 483 9685).

10. REFERENCES

Hart, T. & Webley, L 2010. Heritage Impact Assessment, proposed floodwater alleviation measures along the Scholtz River, Greyton, Caledon District, Western Cape. Report prepared for Ecosense Environmental Consultants. Archaeology Contracts Office, Department of Archaeology, University of Cape Town.

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