



Archaetnos Culture & Cultural
Resource Consultants
BK 98 09854/23

**A REPORT ON A CULTURAL HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR THE
PROPOSED HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AT EXTENSION 89 ELLISRAS ON THE
FARM ONVERWACHT 503 LQ, LEPHALALE, LIMPOPO PROVINCE**

For:

WSP

REPORT: **AE864**

by:

Dr. A.C. van Vollenhoven (LAKAD.SA.)

December 2008

Archaetnos
P.O. Box 31064
WONDERBOOMPOORT
0033
Tel: **083 29146104**/083 459 3091
Fax: 086 520 4173
E-mail: antonv@archaetnos.co.za

Members: AC van Vollenhoven BA, BA (Hons), DTO, NDM, MA (Archaeology) [UP], MA (Culture History) [US], DPhil (Archaeology) [UP], Management Diploma [TUT]
AJ Pelsers BA (UNISA), BA (Hons) (Archaeology), MA (Archaeology) [WITS]

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Archaetnos cc was appointed by WSP on behalf of Exxaro Coal (Pty) Ltd. to conduct a cultural heritage impact assessment for the proposed residential development at Ellisras extension 89 in the town of Lephale. The site is situated on the farm Onverwacht 503 LQ in the Limpopo Province.

The basic terms of reference for the project was to identify all objects, sites, occurrences and structures of an archaeological or historical nature (cultural heritage sites) located on the property and to assess the significance of these. The possible impact of the proposed development on these cultural remains also had to be recorded and suitable mitigation and management measures proposed.

The methodology used included a survey of literature in order to obtain background information regarding the area. A field survey was conducted in accordance with generally accepted HIA practices and the location/position of any site was determined by means of a Global Positioning System (GPS). Added to this a description of each find is given.

In order to place these finds in context a description of the environment is given. This is followed by a short indication of past human activities in the area, including the different phases of the human past.

The fieldwork undertaken revealed two sites of cultural heritage significance. Both are from the historical era and one of them is in a bad state of decay. Both are of a low cultural significance.

The final recommendations are that the development may continue and that this report is seen as ample mitigation in this regard. During construction activities the client should however be on the lookout for the subterranean presence of archaeological features. Should something be unearthed an archaeologist should immediately be contacted to investigate the find.

CONTENTS

	page
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
CONTENTS.....	3
1. INTRODUCTION	4
2. TERMS OF REFERENCE	4
3. CONDITIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS	4
4. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS	5
5. METHODOLOGY	7
6. DESCRIPTION OF THE AREA.....	7
7. DISCUSSION.....	9
8. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	12
9. REFERENCES	12
APPENDIX A.....	14
APPENDIX B	15

1. INTRODUCTION

Archaetnos cc was appointed by WSP on behalf of Exxaro Coal (Pty) Ltd. to conduct a cultural heritage impact assessment for the housing development on Ellisras extension 89 on the farm Onverwacht 503 LQ. This is situated in the town of Lephalale in the Limpopo Province.

The client indicated the area where the proposed development is to take place, and the survey was confined to this area.

2. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Terms of Reference for the survey were to:

1. Identify all objects, sites, occurrences and structures of an archaeological or historical nature (cultural heritage sites) located on the property (see Appendix A).
2. Assess the significance of the cultural resources in terms of their archaeological, historical, scientific, social, religious, aesthetic and tourism value (see Appendix B).
3. Describe the possible impact of the proposed development on these cultural remains, according to a standard set of conventions.
4. Propose suitable mitigation and management measures to minimize possible negative impacts on the cultural resources.
5. Recommend suitable mitigation and management measures should there be any sites of significance that might be impacted upon by the proposed development.
6. Review applicable legislative requirements.

3. CONDITIONS & ASSUMPTIONS

The following conditions and assumptions have a direct bearing on the survey and the resulting report:

1. Cultural Resources are all non-physical and physical man-made occurrences, as well as natural occurrences associated with human activity. These include all sites, structure and artifacts of importance, either individually or in groups, in the history, architecture and archaeology of human (cultural) development. Graves and cemeteries are included in this.
2. The significance of the sites, structures and artifacts is determined by means of their historical, social, aesthetic, technological and scientific value in relation to their uniqueness, condition of preservation and research potential. The various aspects are not mutually exclusive, and the evaluation of any site is done with reference to any number of these aspects.

3. Cultural significance is site-specific and relates to the content and context of the site. Sites regarded as having low cultural significance have already been recorded in full and require no further mitigation. Sites with medium cultural significance may or may not require mitigation depending on other factors such as the significance of impact on the site. Sites with a high cultural significance require further mitigation (see Appendix B).
4. The latitude and longitude of any archaeological or historical site or feature, is to be treated as sensitive information by the developer and should not be disclosed to members of the public.
5. All recommendations are made with full cognizance of the relevant legislation.
6. It has to be mentioned that it is almost impossible to locate all the cultural resources in a given area, as it will be very time consuming. Developers should however note that the report should make it clear how to handle any other finds that might occur.
7. It should be noted that in this particular case the vegetation was reasonably dense in certain areas making archaeological visibility difficult.

4. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Aspects concerning the conservation of cultural resources are dealt with mainly in two acts. These are the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999) and the National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998).

4.1 The National Heritage Resources Act

According to the above-mentioned law the following is protected as cultural heritage resources:

- a. Archaeological artifacts, structures and sites older than 100 years
- b. Ethnographic art objects (e.g. prehistoric rock art) and ethnography
- c. Objects of decorative and visual arts
- d. Military objects, structures and sites older than 75 years
- e. Historical objects, structures and sites older than 60 years
- f. Proclaimed heritage sites
- g. Grave yards and graves older than 60 years
- h. Meteorites and fossils
- i. Objects, structures and sites of scientific or technological value.

Archaeology, palaeontology and meteorites

Section 35(4) of this act states that no person may, without a permit issued by the responsible heritage resources authority:

- a. destroy, damage, excavate, alter, deface or otherwise disturb any archaeological or palaeontological site or any meteorite;

- b. destroy, damage, excavate, remove from its original position, collect or own any archaeological or palaeontological material or object or any meteorite;
- c. trade in, sell for private gain, export or attempt to export from the Republic any category of archaeological or palaeontological material or object, or any meteorite; or
- d. bring onto or use at an archaeological or palaeontological site any excavation equipment or any equipment that assists in the detection or recovery of metals or archaeological and palaeontological material or objects, or use such equipment for the recovery of meteorites.
- e. alter or demolish any structure or part of a structure which is older than 60 years as protected.

The above mentioned may only be disturbed or moved by an archaeologist, after receiving a permit from the South African Heritage Resources Agency.

Human remains

In terms of Section 36(3) of the National Heritage Resources Act, no person may, without a permit issued by the relevant heritage resources authority:

- a. destroy, damage, alter, exhume or remove from its original position of otherwise disturb the grave of a victim of conflict, or any burial ground or part thereof which contains such graves;
- b. destroy, damage, alter, exhume or remove from its original position or otherwise disturb any grave or burial ground older than 60 years which is situated outside a formal cemetery administered by a local authority; or
- c. bring onto or use at a burial ground or grave referred to in paragraph (a) or (b) any excavation, or any equipment which assists in the detection or recovery of metals.

Human remains that are less than 60 years old are subject to provisions of the Human Tissue Act (Act 65 of 1983) and to local regulations. Exhumation of graves must conform to the standards set out in the **Ordinance on Excavations (Ordinance no. 12 of 1980)** (replacing the old Transvaal Ordinance no. 7 of 1925).

Permission must also be gained from the descendants (where known), the National Department of Health, Provincial Department of Health, Premier of the Province and local police. Furthermore, permission must also be gained from the various landowners (i.e. where the graves are located and where they are to be relocated) before exhumation can take place.

Human remains can only be handled by a registered undertaker or an institution declared under the **Human Tissues Act (Act 65 of 1983 as amended)**.

Unidentified/unknown graves are also handled as older than 60 until proven otherwise.

4.2 The National Environmental Management Act

This act states that a survey and evaluation of cultural resources must be done in areas where development projects, that will change the face of the environment, will be undertaken. The

impact of the development on these resources should be determined and proposals for the mitigation thereof are made.

5. METHODOLOGY

5.1 Survey of literature

A survey of literature was undertaken in order to obtain background information regarding the area. Sources consulted in this regard are indicated in the bibliography.

5.2 Field survey

The survey was conducted according to generally accepted HIA practices and was aimed at locating all possible objects, sites and features of cultural significance in the area of proposed development. If required, the location/position of any site was determined by means of a Global Positioning System (GPS), while photographs were also taken where needed.

The survey was undertaken on foot and by 4 x 4 vehicle.

5.3 Documentation

All sites, objects features and structures identified were documented according to the general minimum standards accepted by the archaeological profession. Co-ordinates of individual localities were determined by means of the Global Positioning System (GPS).The information was added to the description in order to facilitate the identification of each locality.

6. DESCRIPTION OF THE AREA

Extension 89, Ellisras is a planned development in the central part of the town of Lephalale (Figure 1). It is flanked by existing residential areas on all sides.

The relief of the area is basically flat. The environment is very disturbed and pioneer species such as sickle bush, weeds and grass dominate the vegetation. Some medium to large sized trees were also identified (Figure 2).

It seems as if a part of the area may have been ploughed in the past which would have had a negative effect on cultural resources. An area has also been cleared and is currently been used by the ZCC as church. The area is also used for illegal dumping adding to the disturbance thereof.

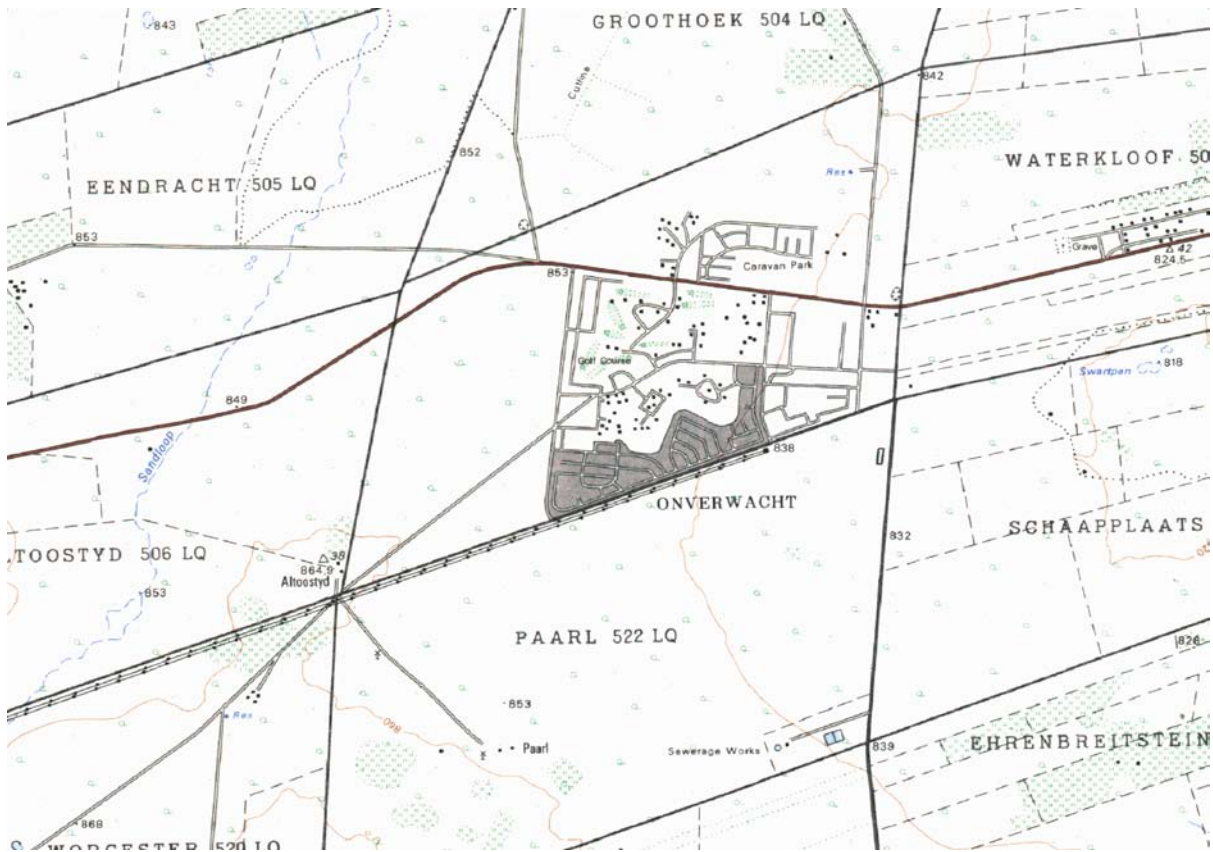


Figure 1 Map indicating the location of Ellisras extension 89.



Figure 2 General view of the surveyed area.

7. DISCUSSION

During the survey two sites of cultural heritage significance were located. This report indicates suitable mitigation measures with regards to the proposed development activities.

In order to enable the reader to better understand the finds, it is necessary to give a background regarding the different phases of human history.

7.1 Stone Age

The Stone Age is the period in human history when lithic material was mainly used to produce tools (Coertze & Coertze 1996: 293). In South Africa the Stone Age can be divided in three periods. It is however important to note that dates are relative and only provide a broad framework for interpretation. The division for the Stone Age according to Korsman & Meyer (1999: 93-94) is as follows:

Early Stone Age (ESA) 2 million – 150 000 years ago
Middle Stone Age (MSA) 150 000 – 30 000 years ago
Late Stone Age (LSA) 40 000 years ago – 1850 - A.D.

Stone Age sites have been identified previously in the geographical area where the survey was done. Sites dated to the Middle Stone Age are known close to the Lephalala River to the east of the town (Bergh 1999: 4). Rock art are found in abundance in the geographical area to the east and south of the town (Bergh 1999: 5).

The environment of the surveyed area may have been suitable for Stone Age people, but no natural water exists and no natural shelter is available. The natural rock is not good for making stone tools. It is possible that Stone Age people may have moved through this area. Examples of Middle Stone Age tools were identified during the survey.

7.2 Iron Age

The Iron Age is the name given to the period of human history when metal was mainly used to produce metal artifacts (Coertze & Coertze 1996: 346). In South Africa it can be divided in two separate phases according to Van der Ryst & Meyer (1999: 96-98), namely:

Early Iron Age (EIA) 200 – 1000 A.D.
Late Iron Age (LIA) 1000 – 1850 A.D.

Huffman (2007: xiii) however indicates that a Middle Iron Age should be included. His dates, which now seem to be widely accepted in archaeological circles, are:

Early Iron Age (EIA) 250 – 900 A.D.
Middle Iron Age (MIA) 900 – 1300 A.D.
Late Iron Age (LIA) 1300 – 1840 A.D.

In an area around the Lephalala River some 200 Late Iron Age sites have been identified (Bergh 1999: 7). The lack of known sites closer to the town may only indicate that no research has been done in this area.

The type of environment on the surveyed area definitely is suitable for human habitation, but there are no natural water sources. One would therefore expect that Iron Age people may have utilized the area for grazing purposes. This is the same reason why white settlers later on moved into this environment. There also is a lack of building material. One would rather expect Iron Age people to have lived closer to the mountains and therefore it is no surprise that no Iron Age features have been identified during the survey.

7.3 Historical Age

The historical age started with the first recorded oral histories in the area. It includes the moving into the area of people that were able to read and write.

Early white travelers moved through this area during the 19th Century. The first of these was the expedition of Dr. Andrew Cowan and Lt. Donovan in 1808. This was followed by Coenraad de Buys in 1821 and 1825. David Hume visited the area in 1825 (Bergh 1999: 12, 117-118).

Hume again passed through the area in 1830. He was followed by William Cornwallis Harris in 1836 (Bergh 1999: 13). White settlers only moved to this area after 1850 (Bergh 1999: 15).

The sites identified during the survey date to the historical age.

7.4 Discussion of sites identified during the survey

Site 1

This is a rectangular concrete structure of more or less 1m x 1m. It may have been used as a dam, feeding trough or something similar (Figure 3).

GPS: 23°40'53"S
27°42'24"E

It is difficult to determine whether the structure is older than 60 years (and therefore are protected by law), as there is nothing else giving context thereto. It also is not a very unique structure and therefore is given a **low** cultural significance.

The proposed residential development will have an impact, but this report is seen as ample mitigation. The structures may therefore be demolished during the development.



Figure 3 Remains at site no 1.

Site 2

Site 2 consists of the remains of an old house. It must have been quite a large building as the concrete floor, which is still in tact, covers a large area. No walls or roof exist any more, but heaps of building material next to the structure probably represents the former walls (Figure 4).

GPS: 23°40'54''S
27°42'17''E

The remains probably are older than 60 years and therefore are protected by law. However the very bad state thereof and the fact that it is not very unique give to it a **low** cultural significance.

The proposed housing development will have an impact, but this report is seen as ample mitigation. The structures may therefore be demolished during the development activities.



Figure 4 Remains of a house at site no 2.

8. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion it can be stated that the assessment of the area was conducted successfully. In the surveyed area two sites have been found. None of these is deemed to be of high cultural significance. The final recommendations are as follows:

- There are no areas to be avoided during development activities.
- For site no 1 and 2 this report is seen as ample mitigation and the sites may be demolished during development.
- It should be noted that the subterranean presence of archaeological and/or historical sites, features or artifacts are always a distinct possibility. Care should therefore be taken when any work commences that if any of these are accidentally discovered, a qualified archaeologist be called in to investigate.

9. REFERENCES

- Bergh, J.S. (red.). 1999. **Geskiedenisatlas van Suid-Afrika. Die vier noordelike provinsies.** Pretoria: J.L. van Schaik.
- Coertze, P.J. & Coertze, R.D. 1996. **Verklarende vakwoordeboek vir Antropologie en Argeologie.** Pretoria: R.D. Coertze.
- Huffman, T.N. 2007. **Handbook to the Iron Age: The Archaeology of Pre-Colonial Farming Societies in Southern Africa.** Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press.
- Knudson, S.J. 1978. **Culture in retrospect.** Chicago: Rand McNally College Publishing Company.
- Korsman, S.A. & Meyer, A. 1999. Die Steentydperk en rotskuns. Bergh, J.S. (red.).

- Geskiedenisatlas van Suid-Afrika. Die vier noordelike provinsies.** Pretoria: J.L. van Schaik.
- Republic of South Africa. 1983. **Human Tissue Act** (Act 65 of 1983). Pretoria: The Government Printer
- Republic of South Africa. 1998. **National Environmental Management Act** (no 107 of 1998). Pretoria: The Government Printer.
- Republic of South Africa. 1999. **National Heritage Resources Act** (No 25 of 1999). Pretoria: the Government Printer.
- Republic of South Africa. 1980. **Ordinance on Excavations (Ordinance no. 12 of 1980)**. Pretoria: The Government Printer.
- Van der Ryst, M.M. & Meyer, A. 1999. Die Ystertydperk. Bergh, J.S. (red.). **Geskiedenisatlas van Suid-Afrika. Die vier noordelike provinsies.** Pretoria: J.L. van Schaik.

APPENDIX A

Definition of terms:

Site: A large place with extensive structures and related cultural objects. It can also be a large assemblage of cultural artifacts, found on a single location.

Structure: A permanent building found in isolation or which forms a site in conjunction with other structures.

Feature: A coincidental find of movable cultural objects.

Object: Artifact (cultural object).

(Also see Knudson 1978: 20).

APPENDIX B

Cultural significance:

- Low A cultural object being found out of context, not being part of a site or without any related feature/structure in its surroundings.

- Medium Any site, structure or feature being regarded less important due to a number of factors, such as date and frequency. Also any important object found out of context.

- High Any site, structure or feature regarded as important because of its age or uniqueness. Graves are always categorized as of a high importance. Also any important object found within a specific context.