



Archaetnos Culture & Cultural  
Resource Consultants  
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**A REPORT ON A CULTURAL HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT ON  
PORTION 14 OF THE FARM STERKfonteIN 318 KT,  
BURGERSFORT/STEELPOORT AREA, LIMPOPO**

For:

***PLAN-2-SURVEY AFRICA  
TOWN AND REGIONAL PLANNERS***

**REPORT: AE839**

by:

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## SUMMARY

Archaetnos cc was requested by Plan-2-Survey Africa Town and Regional Planners to conduct a Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment on Portion 14 of the farm Sterkfontein 318 KT for a proposed residential and business development.

The fieldwork undertaken revealed some features of very low archaeological and cultural heritage significance on the property, but although these will be impacted on by the proposed development, the development can continue. The documentation undertaken during the survey is deemed as sufficient enough mitigation.

**Therefore, the development on portion 14 of the farm Sterkfontein 318 KT can continue. However, the subterranean presence of any archaeological and/or historical objects, features or sites should always be taken into consideration. Should any of these be uncovered in the course of the development, professional archaeologists must be called in to investigate before development can progress.**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Archaetnos cc was requested by Plan-2-Survey Africa Town and Regional Planners to conduct a Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment on Portion 14 of the farm Sterkfontein 318 KT for a proposed residential and business development.

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 measures to minimize possible negative impacts on the cultural resources.
5. Recommend suitable mitigation 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.

#### **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

None was undertaken for this study (see Discussions & References)

### 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.

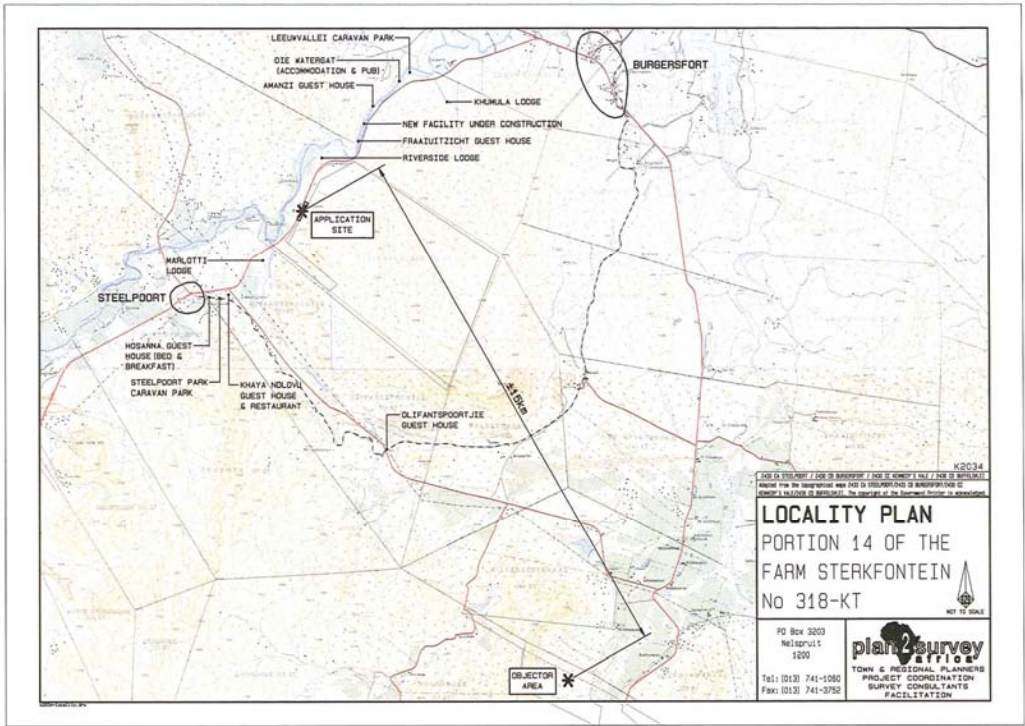
### 5.3 Documentation

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

The proposed development area is located on portion 14 of the farm Sterkfontein 318 KT. It is situated in the Steelpoort/Burgersfort area of the Limpopo Province (**Figure 1**). The R555 between Steelpoort and Burgersfort borders the site on its western section.

The area has been disturbed to some degree (**Figure 2**) by recent construction work, while a brick and precast wall borders the area to the north and game fence on its eastern side. Although portions of the area has a flat topography (northern section), most of the area is located on the slopes of a low hill, with some rocky outcrops running through the area.



**Figure 1: Location of development area**



**Figure 2: Existing development in the area**





**Figure 3: General view of the survey area**

## 7. DISCUSSION

During the survey (HIA) no sites or features of any cultural heritage significance were identified on the property. The only features found were two sections of low stone walling (**Figure 4**), possibly dating to the Late Iron Age (LIA). Although the new development will impact negatively on these, the features have very low significance. The stone walls are located between **24.70924 S 30.24157° E** and **24.70951 S 30.24149° E**.



**Figure 4: A section of low stone walling on the site**

## 8. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion it is possible to say that the assessment of the area was conducted successfully. Although no significant archaeological and historical cultural heritage sites were identified, two sections of low stone walls were recorded in the proposed development area. Although these will be directly impacted upon by the development, the features have no cultural heritage or archaeological significance. The survey and the recording of these features are deemed sufficient enough mitigation.

**Therefore, the development on portion 14 of the farm Sterkfontein 318 KT can continue. However, the subterranean presence of any archaeological and/or historical objects, features or sites should always be taken into consideration. Should any of these be uncovered in the course of the development, professional archaeologists must be called in to investigate before development can progress.**

## 9. REFERENCES

Locality Plan Portion 14 of the Farm Sterkfontein 318 KT: Map provided by client –  
Plan2Survey Town and Regional Planners

**Distribution of sites: produced on Google Earth**

Knudson, S.J. 1978. **Culture in retrospect.** Chicago: Rand McNally College Publishing Company.

## 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.

Appendix C – Distribution of sites on portion 14 of Sterkfontein 318 KT

