

# Exemption of a Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment for a proposed new overhead installation of a Vodacom optic fibre cable along provincial road reserves in the vicinity of Lephalale, Limpopo Province\*.

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Site: Lephalale, Limpopo Province

Map Ref.: 1:50 000 topographical map 2327DA Ellisras

Centroid coordinates 23°41'15.10"S 27°41'3.25"E

Proposed development calls for the overhead (aboveground) installation of 27 km – long Vodacom optic fibre cable along provincial road reserves in the vicinity of Lephalale, Limpopo Province (**Fig. 1 - 3**). In most areas, the optic fibre cable will be mounted on I-Section Poles either 9 metres or 11 metres high. The following will furthermore apply:

1. The 9m poles will be planted at a depth of 1.5 m and a hole will be opened for this purpose with the dimensions of 0.35m x 0.35m (= 0.1225m<sup>2</sup> or 0.147 m<sup>3</sup>);
2. The 11m poles will be planted at a depth of 1.7m and a hole will be opened for this purpose with the dimensions of 0.45m x 0.45m (= 0.2025m<sup>2</sup> or 0.3038 m<sup>3</sup>);
3. Poles will be planted at intervals ranging between 80 and 280 metres;
4. The crossing over the watercourse will be undertaken by overhead installation with a maximum of 3 I-Section Poles within the watercourse or within 100 metres of the watercourse.

Lephalale, formerly called Ellisras (named after the pioneer families Ellis and Erasmus), was established in 1960. The town grew mainly due to extensive coal mining after the discovery of deposits through irrigation drilling in the 1920s. Middle Stone Age sites are known from sedimentary deposits close to the Lephalala River east of the town and around some pans located along the river. There are also numerous rock art sites found in the region to the east and south of Lephalale, including engravings at Nelsons Kop to the west as well as to the north of Lephalale and paintings on the farm Grootfontein 501. Iron Age sites have been identified 50 km to the north-west at the Boikarabelo Coal Mine. This area is associated with BaHurutshe, a Tswana group. There is also reference to a site located some 20km to the north of the mine, with pottery that is associated with *Mambo facies* ceramics and a single Late Iron Age site with *Lestibogo facies* ceramics located to the west, dating to between AD

1500-1700 (Huffman 2007). One of the earliest published records to mention this area is Thomas Baines, an explorer who passed through the area in the early 1870s. In his writing he does not mention any settlements in the area where Lephalale is located today (Baines 1877).

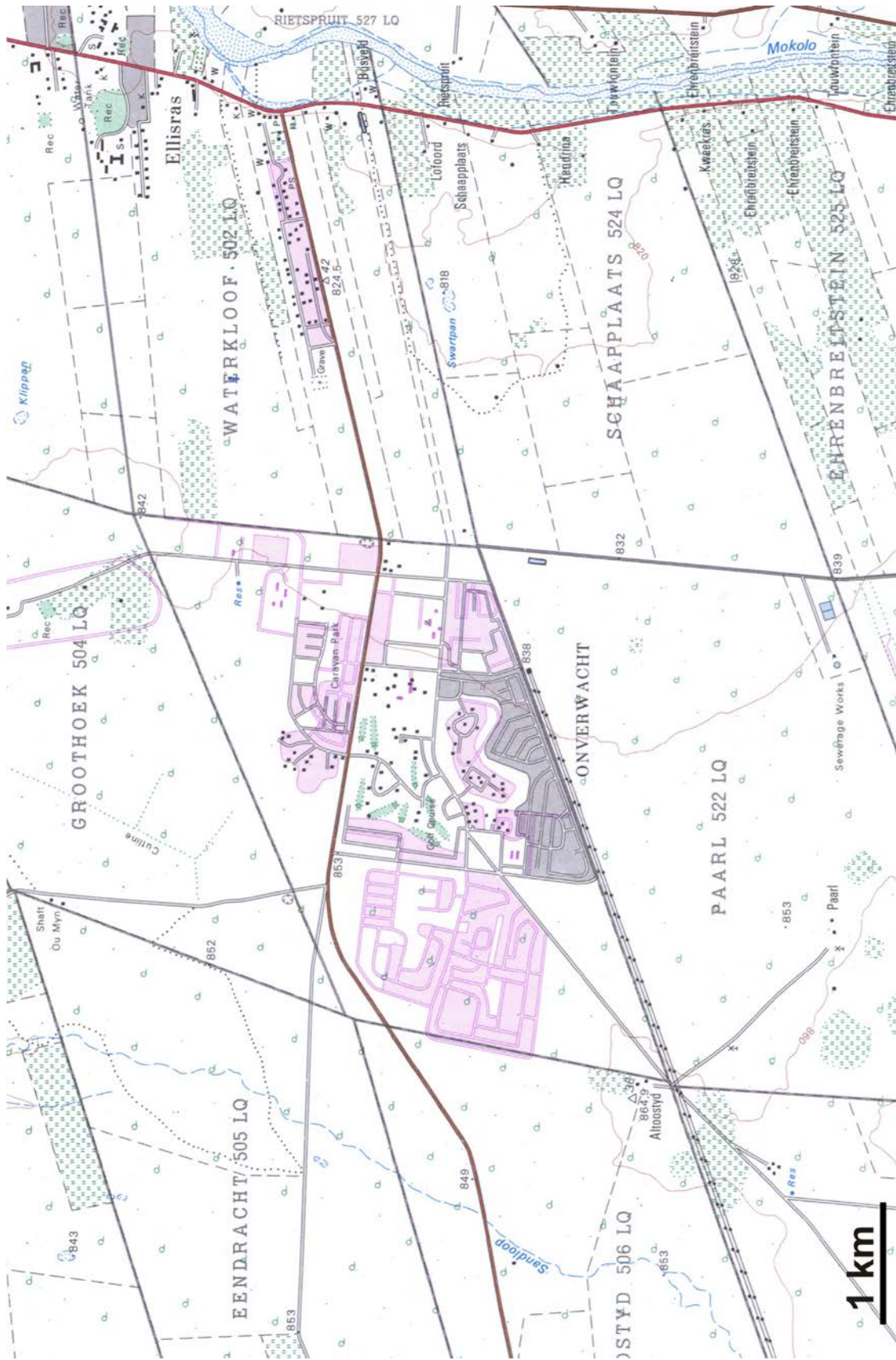
The proposed project is regarded as a low impact development that will take place on degraded terrain in a built-up area, and on land formerly altered by industrial and farming activities. Potential archaeological impact that may result from the installation of the overhead fibre optic is considered to extremely low. It is recommended that the proposed development is exempt from a Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L Rossouw', written in a cursive style.

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Map of Lephale (portion of 1:50 000 scale topographic map 2327DA Ellisra).s

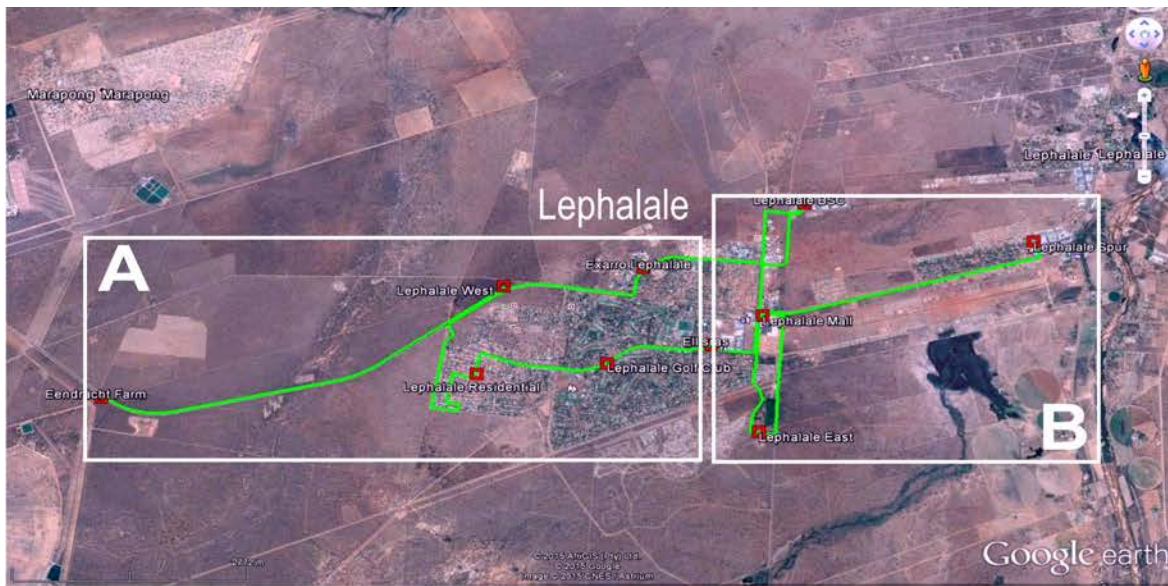


Figure 2. Aerial view of the proposed optic fibre route (green line).



Figure 3. View of the road reserve along the proposed route.

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