

Archaeological Assessment of Bosjes Phase 2, Farm 218 Witzenberg

Report prepared for Farmprops 53 (Pty) Ltd

December 2017



ACO Associates cc
Archaeology and Heritage Specialists

Prepared by

John Gribble

ACO Associates CC
8 Jacobs Ladder
St James
7945
Phone 021 7064104

Executive Summary

ACO Associates cc was appointed by Farmprops 53 (Pty) Ltd to undertake an archaeological assessment of Phase 2 of the Bosjes Estate development on Boesmansvallei, Farm 218, Witzenberg. The farm is located on the eastern side of the Breede River Valley, between Worcester and Wolseley in the Western Cape.

The survey area is a piece of previously cultivated land and is heavily transformed. It lies between the historical farm complex and the Chapel precinct.

A walkover survey was conducted by ACO Associates on 4 December 2017.

Findings: Despite good ground visibility the survey identified no archaeological material on the site and the archaeological potential of the survey area is assessed to be very low. The impact of the proposed development on archaeological sites or remains on this site will thus be negligible, and the likelihood of sites or material being found during earthworks extremely low.

In archaeological terms the proposed activity is considered acceptable and no mitigation is proposed.

Table of Contents

1	Introduction	4
2	Terms of Reference	5
3	Legislation.....	5
4	Background to the Area	6
4.1	Archaeological Background.....	6
5	Method.....	7
5.1	Restrictions.....	8
6	Findings	10
7	Mitigation	10
8	Conclusion.....	10
9	References	11

Figure 1: Map showing location of Farm 218 (blue polygon) within the Breede River Valley and in relation to Worcester (bottom right) (Image source: Google Earth). 4

Figure 2: Survey area (red polygon) and locations of the Chapel and historic farmhouse. Note the construction camp on the site in this image dated February 2016 (Image source: Google Earth)..... 5

Figure 4: Detail from Leonard Guelke's mapping of Cape Colony land grants (1657-1750) showing the grant of De Liefde in 1722 (red circle). Bosjes lies to the south-east of De Liefde and off the map (Courtesy: Department of Geography, University of Waterloo)..... 7

Figure 5: Survey tracks, 4 December 2017. 8

Plate 1: The survey area looking south-west from the top of the slope. The Chapel is the white building in the distance. 8

Plate 2: Survey area looking north-west. The boundary fence is on the left and Chapel in in the middle distance. 9

Plate 3: Survey area looking north-east. The historical farmhouse is the gables building in the middle distance. Note the grassed area on the right which was not surveyed. 9

1 Introduction

ACO Associates cc was appointed by Farmprops 53 (Pty) Ltd to undertake an archaeological assessment of Phase 2 of the Bosjes Estate development on Boesmansvallei, Farm 218, Witzenberg.

The proposed development will comprise the creation of an extensive landscaped garden on fallow land between the farmhouse and Chapel precincts within which will be located a shop and a deli, both mostly subterranean, complementing the existing tourist and leisure facilities on the farm.

The extent of the proposed development (approximately 18,500 m²) triggers section 38(1) of the National Heritage Resources Act (No. 25 of 1999) which requires the completion of an archaeological assessment. Graham Jacobs is undertaking the general HIA of which this report is a specialist component.

Boesmansvallei is located on the eastern side of the Breede River Valley, between Worcester and Wolseley in the Western Cape (see **Error! Reference source not found.**). Current land use is a mix of agriculture and leisure facilities.

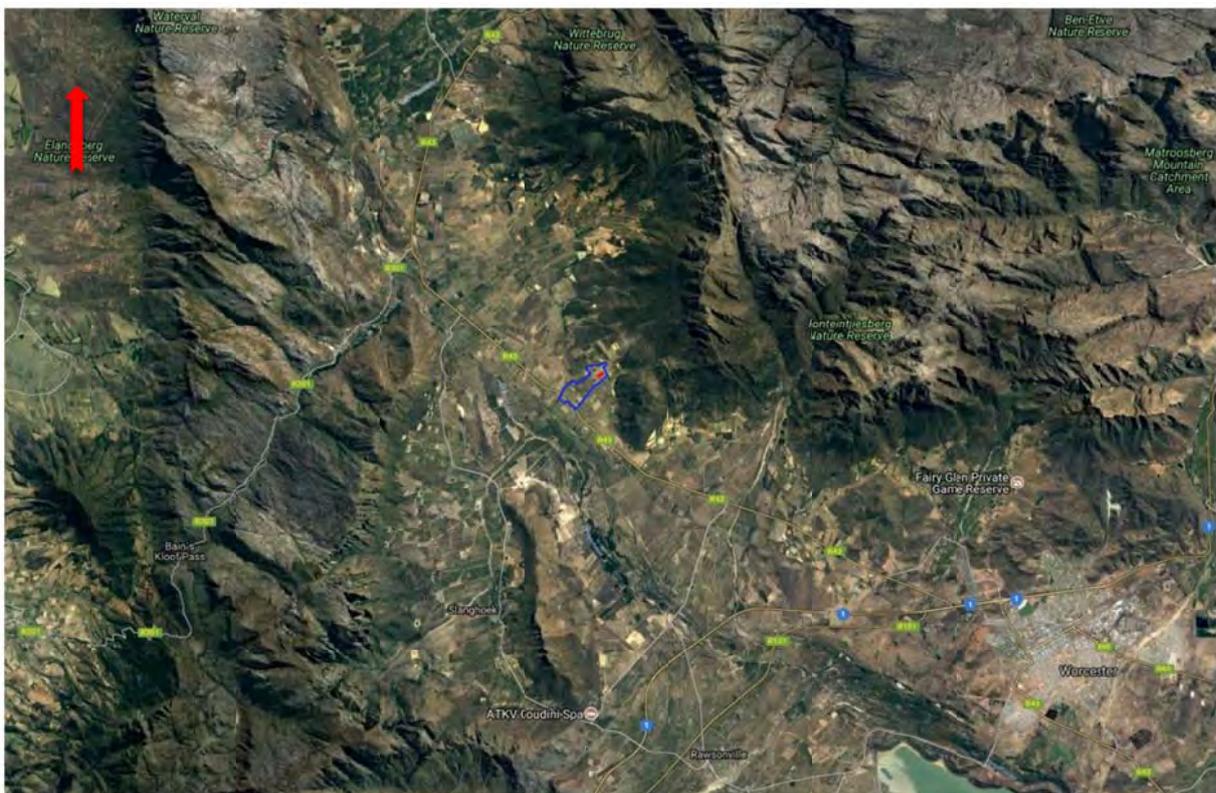


Figure 1: Map showing location of Farm 218 (blue polygon) within the Breede River Valley and in relation to Worcester (bottom right) (Image source: Google Earth).

The area surveyed and assessed for this report is a piece of previously cultivated land, approximately 1.87ha in extent, adjacent to recently planted vineyards and between the farm complex and the Chapel precinct (**Figure 2**). The survey area slopes from the north-east to the south-west, towards the Breede River which is approximately 3km distant.

The receiving environment is heavily transformed. In addition to previous agricultural use, the site was used during the construction of the Bosjes Chapel which was completed in 2016. The Google Earth satellite image in **Figure 2** below is dated February 2016 and shows what appears to be a construction camp on the site.



Figure 2: Survey area (red polygon) and locations of the Chapel and historic farmhouse. Note the construction camp on the site in this image dated February 2016 (Image source: Google Earth).

2 Terms of Reference

ACO Associates was appointed to conduct a site visit and walkover survey of the proposed development site and provide an assessment of the archaeological potential of the site.

3 Legislation

The National Heritage Resources Act (No. 25 of 1999) provides protection for the following categories of heritage resources potentially relevant to this report:

- 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

4.1 Archaeological Background

The upper reaches of Breede River Valley, within which Bosjes is located, have a long archaeological record: from the Early Stone Age (ESA), which in South Africa dates back more than 1.5 million years, to the occupation of the area since the 18th century by European settlers.

ESA stone tools, characterised by hand axes, large cores and modified cobbles, are ubiquitous on the gravel terraces of the rivers of the south-western Cape. Such material is a common occurrence in the Berg River Valley on the other side of the Slangkopberge from Bosjes (see for example Kaplan 2004a, Webley 2008, 2009, Hart and Orton 2006, Gribble, 2017) and has been noted in a number of archaeological studies conducted in the upper Breede River Valley in the vicinity of Bosjes.

ESA lithic material has been reported from surveys on the Letodi Private Nature Reserve (Kaplan 1994) near Wolseley, at the sites of a proposed 132/66 kV substation (Kaplan 2004b) and dam on Romansrivier (Kaplan 2008b), on the farm De Liefde (No. 2/323) north west of Bosjes (Kaplan 2007), on the Schalkenbosch Estate outside Tulbagh (Kaplan 2004), on gravel banks alongside the Skilpadrug River at the proposed site of a borrow pit between Tulbagh and Wolseley (Kaplan 2008a), on Portion 5 of Weltevreden (No. 235) (Kaplan 2005), on the farms Waverley (No. 380) and Gou Kyk (No. 366) outside Wolseley (Kaplan 2009), and on the site of the Breede Valley Shell Ultra City (61/379 of farm De Mond van Hartebeest) (Orton 2008). Lastly, a handful of ESA lithics were found on the farm Witte Elseboom (No. 3/214) which lies almost opposite Bosjes on the western side of the R43 (Kaplan 2007).

ESA material is usually given a low archaeological significance rating because it is seldom in primary context and nothing beyond the stone artefacts tends to survive (Webley 2008). This has certainly been the case in previous studies in the upper Breede River Valley referred to in writing this report. All of the ESA material reported above was found in small quantities and low densities and appears to be associated with river terrace gravels. Almost all was documented in highly disturbed contexts and its significance was invariably assessed to be low.

The presence of later pre-colonial archaeological material is reported in only two of the cases listed above: at Palmiet Valley south-west of Wolseley (Kaplan 2002) and Waverley, east of Wolseley (Kaplan 2009) where small numbers of Middle Stone Age lithics were noted. The only Later Stone Age archaeological site reported in the surveys cited above is a well-preserved rock art site on the farm Gou Kyk, which is adjacent to Waverley (Kaplan 2009).

The Upper Breede River Valley was formally settled by European farmers from the early 18th century. Leonard Guelke's mapping of freehold land grants at the Cape between 1657 and 1750 shows farms in the vicinity of Wolseley granted by 1714, and the farm De Liefde, approximately 11km northwest of Bosjes, occupied by Coenraad Scheepers by early 1722 (Department of Geography, University of Waterloo, 1987) (**Figure 3**).

5.1 Restrictions

The land was readily accessible and surface visibility was good with only a thin covering of stubble and vegetation across the site (see **Error! Reference source not found.** and **Plate 2**). An area in the extreme north east of the survey area is grassed and was thus also not surveyed (see **Plate 3**).



Figure 4: Survey tracks, 4 December 2017.



Plate 1: The survey area looking south-west from the top of the slope. The Chapel is the white building in the distance.



Plate 2: Survey area looking north-west. The boundary fence is on the left and Chapel in in the middle distance.



Plate 3: Survey area looking north-east. The historical farmhouse is the gables building in the middle distance. Note the grassed area on the right which was not surveyed.

6 Findings

No archaeological material was encountered during the survey of the site.

The substrate of the survey area is a greyish clay and visible on the surface were cobbles of a fairly fine-grained sandstone-like raw material which may have been brought to the surface by ploughing. These cobbles are relatively soft, unlike the quartzite on which the ESA material reported elsewhere in the valley is generally made, and while a number of stone flakes were noted during the survey, these were all fresh and were probably caused by ploughing.

The only humanly derived material noted during the survey was modern construction-related detritus consisting of brick fragments, pieces of wooden pallet and fragments of the black slate used as paving in the Chapel precinct.

Given the fairly consistent, if low density finds of ESA material on other farms in the vicinity of Bosjes, why should no similar material have been encountered on this piece of land? A possible explanation may be that the survey area is too distant and far upslope from the river and is underlain by stone raw material not best suited to flaking and use as tools.

Whatever the reason, the archaeological potential of the survey area is assessed to be very low.

7 Mitigation

The impact of the proposed development on archaeological sites or remains on this site will be negligible, and the likelihood of sites or material being found during earthworks extremely low.

8 Conclusion

In archaeological terms the proposed activity is considered acceptable and no mitigation is proposed.

9 References

Fransen, H. 2004. *The Old Buildings of the Cape*. Jonathan Ball. Johannesburg and Cape Town.

Gribble, J. 2017. *Archaeological Assessment of Erf 4722 Blouvillei, Wellington*. Report for Urban Dynamics Western Cape (Pty) Ltd.

Hart, T and Orton, J. 2006. *Heritage Assessment of the Proposed Olives Retirement Village, Blouvillei, Erven 1306 and 1307, Wellington*. Heritage investigation by the Archaeology Contracts Office of the University of Cape Town.

Kaplan, J. 1996. *Archaeological Survey: Letodi Private Nature Reserve*. Archaeological baseline study prepared for R.C. Hack, Mount Bain.

Kaplan, J. 2002. *Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment: Portion 25 of the farm Palmiet Valley No. 318, Tulbagh*. Report for EnviroAfrica.

Kaplan, J. 2004a. *Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment Pearl Valley Stage II Development, Drakenstein Valley*. Heritage investigation by the Agency for Cultural Resource Management.

Kaplan, J. 2004b. *Archaeological Assessment: Proposed construction of 132/66 kV substation and tie-in powerline in Romansrivier, Witzenberg Municipality*. Report produced for Eskom Land Development.

Kaplan, J. 2005. *Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment: Proposed resort development on the Portions 5 & 6 of the Farm Weltevreden No. 236, Tulbagh, Western Cape Province*. Report for Vitex 861 (Pty) Ltd.

Kaplan, J. 2007. *Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment: Proposed construction of chicken houses on Portion 4 of Portion 2 of the farm De Liefde No. 323, Tulbagh, Western Cape Province*. Report for EnviroAfrica.

Kaplan, J. 2008a. *Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment: Proposed borrow pit for the reconstruction of Trunk Road 22 and Main Road 305 between Gouda and Wolseley, Western Cape Province*. Report for CCA Environmental (Pty) Ltd.

Kaplan, J. 2008b. *Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment: The proposed construction of the Kliprivier Dam (Portion 21 of the Romansrivier Farm No. 320) Wolseley, Witzenberg*. Report for EnviroAfrica.

Kaplan, J. 2009. *Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment: Proposed expansion of agricultural land on the farms Waverley 380 and Gou Kyk 366, Wolseley, Western Cape Province*. Report for Cederberg Environmental Assessment Practice.

Orton, J. 2008. *Heritage Statement for proposed Breede Valley Shell Ultra City on Portion 61 of Farm De Mond van Hartebeest Rivier 379, Worcester Magisterial District, Western Cape*. Report for Sillito Environmental Consulting.

Webley, L. 2008. *Archaeological Impact Assessment For The Proposed Paarl Waterfront Development On Two Portions Of Erf 8431 In Paarl, Drakenstein Municipality, Western Cape*. Heritage investigation by the Archaeology Contracts Office of the University of Cape Town.

Webley, L. 2009. *Archaeological Impact Assessment: Dalsig Development on Portion 2 of the Farm 600 (Calais & St Omer), Paarl District, Western Cape*. Heritage investigation by the Archaeology Contracts Office of the University of Cape Town.