

# Archaeological Impact Assessment Report

**Project Title:** Darling Fresh Chicken Breeder Farm

**Project Location:** Bergrivier 'B' Municipality, West Coast District Municipality, Western Cape.

**Farm Number:** 137/7 Picketberg    **Size:** 52.12 ha

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**Environmental Consultant:** Cape Lowlands Environmental Services cc

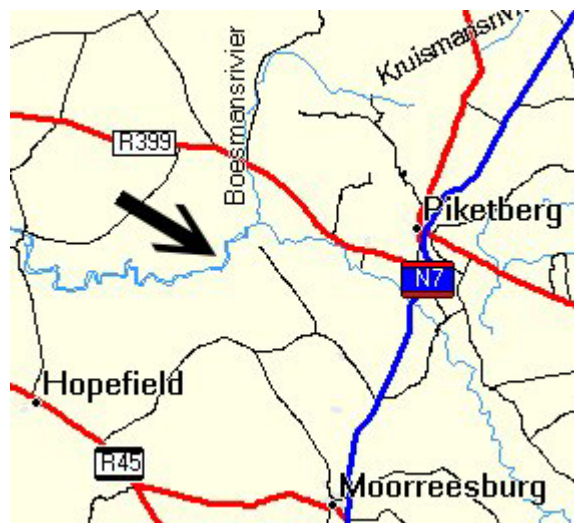
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**Registered owner:** Darling Fresh Chickens Pty Ltd (Reg no. 2006/019569/07)

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**Date:** 16 March 2007



**Figure 1. Location**

## **Executive Summary**

The property, Darling Fresh Chicken Breeder (Langspruit) Farm, No. 137/7, Piketberg, was surveyed for archaeological, palaeontological and other cultural resources. The development, housing for poultry, will be on ploughed farmland land and this minimises the cultural impact. The soils, acid sands supporting fynbos and the formation of ferricrete (koffieklip, are unfavourable for the preservation of bone and shell and no palaeontological remains were recorded. There are Stone Age artefacts present in this landscape but these appear to be part of the regional scatter and the significance is rated as low. There is a simple traditional stone two-roomed dwelling on the property that is conservation worthy but will not be directly affected by the proposed developments.

## **Background Information**

This report is part of an EIA. The application is develop facilities for housing poultry on a farm located near Piketberg (Figure 1). The property is zoned as Agriculture 1 and rezoning is not required. The development is part of the intensification of land use in the area.

## **Description of the property**

The property (33°55'06.6"S; 18°32'30.0"E) is north of and in part bounded by the Berg River, 34 km from Piketberg (Figure 1). It is ploughed land with islands of fynbos vegetation. All developments will exclude these fynbos islands. Apart from a modern agricultural store, there is one dwelling, a simple two-room structure, on the south-eastern part of the property near the river (marked 'House' in Figure 2).

## **Archaeological and palaeontological potential**

The valleys of the Berg and other local rivers would have been a focus for past Stone Age hunter-gatherer and herder activities. In this situation archaeological sites of any age and historical sites could occur. The important Pleistocene palaeontological site of Elandsfontein, west of Hopefield, is associated with deep calcareous sands conditions that do not pertain in this area and there is not the same potential for fossil preservation here.

## **Methodology**

The development requires the construction of rearing (x 8) and layer houses (x 16) in two and four clusters respectively on different parts of the property. The rearing clusters are 190 x 45 m and the layer clusters 100 x 112 m in size. The separation is necessary for disease control. Although only six clusters will be developed 10 possible locations have been identified. Each location was traversed and positions are recorded on a GPS plot (Figure 2). Exposures of the subsurface in nearby dams and cuttings were examined to evaluate the potential for buried occurrences. Although the total area of the farm is large

the identification of the possible locations of facilities allowed the survey to focus on limited areas.

### **Observations**

The locations are in the mid slope and upper slope positions in the valley between 40 and 60 m asl. None are on the top peneplain surface, here above 60 m, and none are in the bottom slope and flood plain positions, possibly the more sensitive in terms of archaeological remains. All locations show similar soil profiles with weathered Malmesbury shales overlain by ferricrete (koffieklip) and capped by sandy soil. All locations are ploughed ground with the depth of ploughing restricted by the subsurface ferricrete layer. The soil profile and the fynbos vegetation indicate an acid substrate that is not favourable for the preservation of bone and shell and no palaeontological remains were recorded. However, stone artefacts can survive in this soil. None of the locations showed that ploughing exposed stone artefacts or pottery in the surficial sands. Isolated artefacts out of context were recorded in some of the dam disturbances. The large dam/quarry site near location Ls 2 (marked dam on Figure 2) is more than 100 m sq of disturbed area with good exposures of ferricrete and only a single stone artefact was noted in the area. In another dam exposure (marked Sil 1 on Figure 2) a large silcrete flake and two other flakes were noted. Scattered stone artefacts would be expected in such a landscape.

The 'House' marked in Figure 2 is a vacant flat roofed dwelling comprising two rooms, an external chimney and built in stone (shale) in traditional style (Figure 3). The end wall has developed a major structural crack needing attention. The external plaster is in reasonable but the internal plaster is in poor condition because of the inadequacies of the roofing. The style of this worker's cottage suggests an age older than 60 years and therefore any modification would require approval of Heritage Western Cape. The heritage value of the structure is in the fabric, the use of local shale packed slabs in the walling, and in the traditional design. The proposed developments on the property are some distance from the structure and should not directly impact on it.

### **Sources of risk**

There is a risk that the foundations for structures may uncover stone artefacts but the risks are considered low. The risks of uncovering palaeontological remains given the acid substrates are negligible.

### **Statement of significance and field rating**

The significance of the archaeological resources on the property is rated as low.

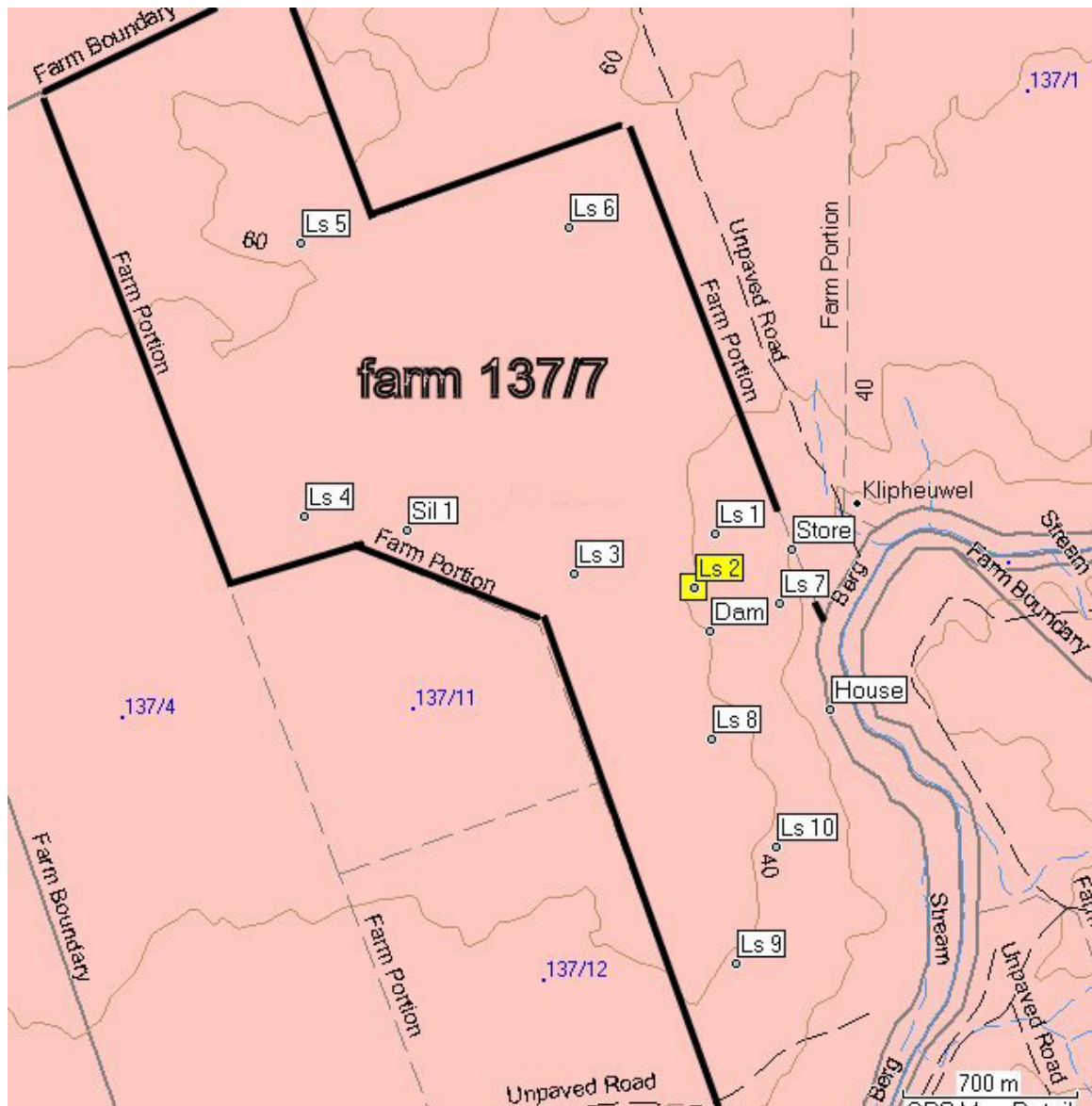
### **Recommended mitigations**

No mitigations are recommended with the proviso that should development by chance uncover any archaeological, palaeontological or other cultural remains, including human

remains, that Heritage Western Cape be notified ( Mr N Ndlovu, Senior Heritage Officer – Archaeologist, Private Bag X9067, Cape Town 8000, Tel: 021 483 9687, Fax: 021 483 9842, email: nndlovu@ pgwc.gov.za ).

## Conclusions

The survey of the farm 137/7 (Figure 4) showed no significant archaeological or palaeontological resources that warranted mitigation. The only dwelling, a worker's cottage, is conservation worthy



**Figure 2.** Farm 137/7 showing the 10 possible sites (Ls 1-10) from which six will be chosen for development. House refers to the conservation worthy worker's cottage. Dam and Sil 1 to artefact finds mentioned in the text



**Figure 3.** Worker's cottage on the property - note the crack in the end wall.



**Figure 4.** Landscape view of 137/7 showing cultivated lands and fynbos.