



Archaetnos Culture & Cultural
Resource Consultants
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**A REPORT ON A HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR PROPOSED
OPENCAST COAL MINING OPERATIONS FOR THE KLIPPAN
COLLIERY ON THE FARM KLIPPAN 452 JS (EMACHIBINI),
WONDERFONTEIN, MPUMALANGA**

For:

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REPORT: AE855

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SUMMARY

Archaetnos cc was requested by Umcebo Mining (Pty) Ltd to conduct a Heritage Impact Assessment for proposed (expanded) opencast coal mining operations as part of their Klippan Colliery on the farm Klippan 452 JS. A number of graves were identified and reported to the archaeologists, and these will be impacted on by the development.

The fieldwork undertaken revealed no other objects, features or sites of any archaeological or historical heritage significance on the property. **The proposed development can therefore continue once the mitigatory measures(exhumation and relocation of the graves), put forward in the conclusions and recommendations, have been implemented.**

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1. INTRODUCTION

Archaeos cc was requested by Umcebo Mining (Pty) Ltd to conduct a Heritage Impact Assessment for proposed (expanded) opencast coal mining operations as part of their Klippan Colliery on the farm Klippan 452 JS. A number of graves were identified and reported to the archaeologists, and these will be impacted on by the 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

A survey of literature, to place the archaeological sites identified during the survey in context, was not undertaken in this case.

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, while the area's parameters were determined by 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

The proposed development area is located on the farm Klippan 452 JS, in the Wonderfontein area of Mpumalanga. It is located between Middelburg (west), Belfast (east) and Carolina (south) in the Eastern Highveld and approximately 10km to the south of the N4.

Most of the area have been disturbed through agricultural activities in the recent past (ploughing and cattle grazing) [**Figure 1**], while recent mining activities also played a role.



Figure 2: General view of the survey area

7. DISCUSSION

During the survey no objects, features or sites of archaeological or historical (cultural heritage) significance were identified in the area. Agricultural activities, such as ploughing and the planting of grazing, in the recent past would have disturbed any heritage resources in the area if they did exist. A previous HIA study in the development area (**See Pistorius n.d.**) on two neighboring farms (Wonderfontein 428 JS & Kaalplaats 453 JS) identified no sites of heritage significance within the area to be impacted, although it was mentioned that 4 grave sites do exist outside the area. With the expansion of the opencast mining operations Klippan 452 JS are also under threat of development and a HIA was therefore commissioned by the client.

The two grave sites that were located and recorded during the fieldwork were initially identified by the client, and because the mining operations will impact on them, it was decided that the graves located on them will have to be investigated, exhumed and relocated. As a result social consultation was undertaken and completed by Zenzele Funerals prior to the HIA being completed. The HIA report will therefore serve as further motivation for the exhumation and relocation to be permitted, as well as for the permitting of the proposed mining operations to be conducted once the necessary mitigation measures has been completed successfully.

Grave Site B

This site is located at **S 25.87750° & E 29.88015°**. The grave site is located right next an existing mining road and farm fence (see **Figure 2**). It contains **26** graves, mostly demarcated with packed sandstone dressing and some with cement and bricks. Only one grave has a formal headstone with a legible inscription (**Figure 3**), namely that of Jabula Elias Skhosana who died on 10/18/1977.

The graves are orientated in both a N/S and E/W direction.



Figure 2: Grave Site B



Figure 3: The grave of Jabula Elias Skhosana on Grave Site B

Grave Site A

Grave Site A is located next to the mine road, between the road and farm fence (**Figure 4**). It contains **41** graves and is located between **S 25.88064° S & E 29.87892°**. Most of the graves are demarcated with sandstone and ferricrete stones, while there are some of brick. Two of the graves have granite and three cement headstones with legible inscriptions. The oldest grave (date of death) dates to 1943, while the most recent is 1992 (**Figure 5 & 6**). All the graves have an E/W orientation.



Figure 4: Grave Site A – Note the location of the site between the road and fence



Figure 5: The oldest grave on Grave Site B (1943)



Figure 6: The most recent grave on the site (1992)

8. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion it is possible to say that the Heritage Impact Assessment of the area was conducted successfully. Besides the two grave sites no other heritage resources of either archaeological or historical significance were identified. If any such did exist they would have been destroyed or disturbed by the extensive agricultural activities that have been conducted in the area in the recent past.

The development (opencast coal mining) will impact on the grave sites, and because of their significance the graves contained on them will have to be investigated, exhumed and relocated. All possible alternatives have been looked into and this will be the most viable option. Social consultation regarding these graves have been completed and consent have been given by the descendants that could be located to carry out the planned relocations.

It is therefore recommended that the proposed opencast coal mining operations on the farm Klippan 452 JS, as part of the expanding Klippan Colliery, can continue once the recommended mitigation measures have been conducted. However, the subterranean presence of archaeological or historical objects, features or sites should also always be considered. If any of these are uncovered during any construction work or other development activities a professional archaeologist should be called in to investigate.

REFERENCES

Aerial view of location of development area and site distribution (Appendix C): produced on Google Earth

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

Pistorius, J.C.C. n.d. A Phase 1 Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) Study for Portion 10 of the farm Wonderfontein 428 JS and the remainder of Kaalplaats 453 JS for the New Proposed Steelcoal Open Cast Coalmine in the Mpumalanga Province of South Africa. Unpublished Report prepared for African EPA.

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 –Location of the survey area and Grave sites



