



Archaetnos Culture & Cultural
Resource Consultants
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**A REPORT ON A CULTURAL HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR THE
PROPOSED NUNGU AKASIA WITFONTEIN PROJECT ON PORTION 95 (A
PORTION OF PORTION 12) OF THE FARM WITFONTEIN 301 JR, GAUTENG
PROVINCE**

For:

LANDSCAPE DYNAMICS ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANTS

REPORT: **AE822**

by:

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SUMMARY

Archaetnos cc was requested by Landscape Dynamics Environmental Consultants to conduct a cultural heritage impact assessment for the proposed Nungu Akasia Witfontein project on portion 95 (a portion of portion 12) of the farm Witfontein 301 JR, Gauteng Province. The project entails a township development on the indicated property.

The fieldwork undertaken revealed only no features, sites or objects of cultural heritage significance on the property. **The proposed development can therefore continue.**

CONTENTS

	page
SUMMARY	2
CONTENTS.....	3
1. INTRODUCTION	4
2. TERMS OF REFERENCE	4
3. CONDITIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS	4
4. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS.....	5
5. METHODOLOGY	7
6. DESCRIPTION OF THE AREA.....	7
7. DISCUSSION.....	9
8. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	10
9. REFERENCES	11
APPENDIX A.....	12
APPENDIX B	13

1. INTRODUCTION

Archaetnos cc was requested by Landscape Dynamics Environmental Consultants to conduct a cultural heritage impact assessment for the proposed Nungu Akasia Witfontein project on portion 95 (a portion of portion 12) of the farm Witfontein 301 JR, Gauteng Province. This is for a township development on the indicated property.

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.
7. In this particular case the vegetation was dense and the grass cover high, which may have the result that nothing of cultural significance was identified.

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 was undertaken in order to obtain background information regarding the area. Sources consulted in this regard are indicated in the bibliography.

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 in Akasia to the north of the Magaliesberg in the Gauteng Province (Figure 1). It currently is used as a nursery and therefore most of the area is developed and disturbed.

On the northern side of the property plant are grown in tunnels and palm trees are grown. The southern side of the property has two large earth dams which probably are used to water the seedlings. A GPS measurement was taken here, being 25°39'35"S and 28°08'02"E (Figure 2). This area is also overgrown with long grass making archaeological visibility extremely difficult (Figure 3).

The topography of the area is relatively flat and even. A stream also cuts through the property on the southern side. It seems as if this area has been utilized for agricultural purposes in the past. Therefore it also is disturbed making the possibility to find anything of heritage value in situ very scarce.

The house and outbuildings on the property is not older that 60 years and therefore has no heritage significance. A few large eucalyptus trees to the northeast indicate the existence of early white farmers.

The area does not give the impression of having been suitable for human occupation during prehistoric times especially due its closeness to the mountain which would have provided ample shelter. It needs to be mentioned however that the natural grass cover would have provided ample food for livestock. One can therefore assume that the environment has been utilized in the past.

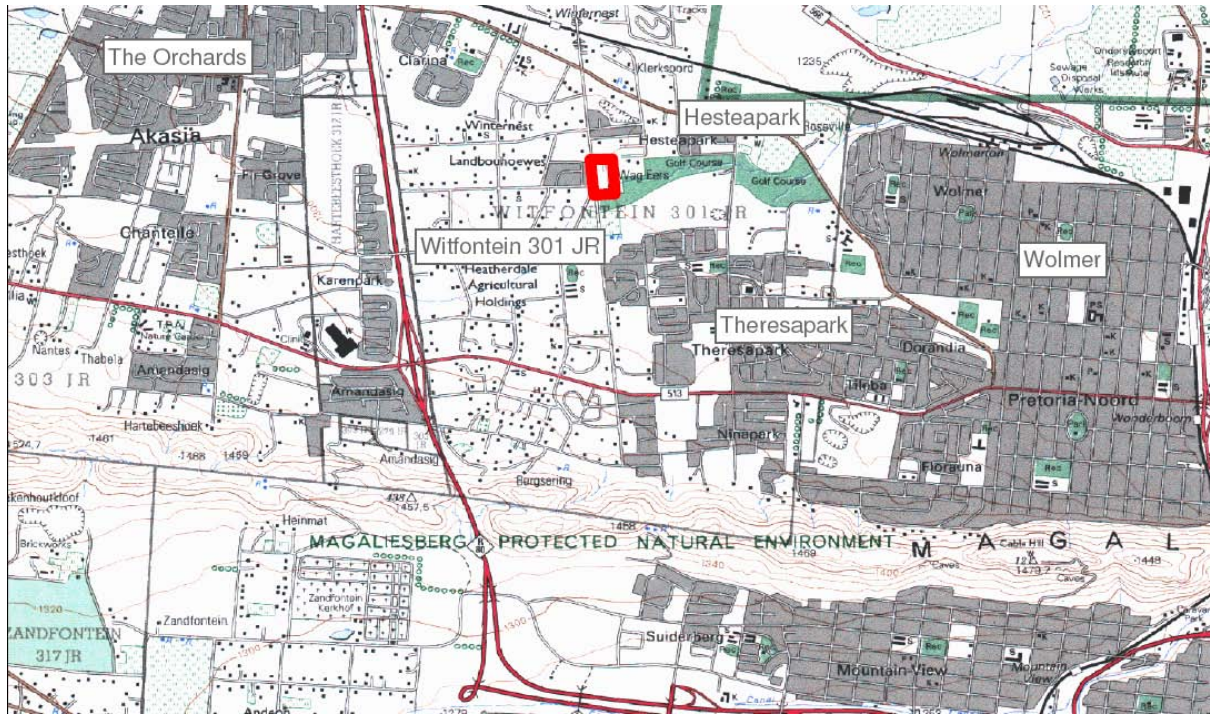


Figure 1 Locality map indicating the surveyed area.



Figure 2 One of the large earth dams on the property.



Figure 3 General view of the southern area of the surveyed property.

7. DISCUSSION

During the survey no features, sites or objects of cultural heritage significance was located. In order to enable the reader to better understand possible finds unearthed during future construction activities, it is necessary to give a background regarding the different phases of human history.

7.1 Stone Age

The Stone Age is the period in human history when lithic material was mainly used to produce tools (Coertze & Coertze 1996: 293). In South Africa the Stone Age can be divided in three periods. It is however important to note that dates are relative and only provide a broad framework for interpretation. The division for the Stone Age according to Korsman & Meyer (1999: 93-94) is as follows:

- Early Stone Age (ESA) 2 million – 150 000 years ago
- Middle Stone Age (MSA) 150 000 – 30 000 years ago
- Late Stone Age (LSA) 40 000 years ago – 1850 - A.D.

ESA, MSA and LSA material has been found on the Magaliesberg in the Akasia area in the past (Van Vollenhoven 2000: 150-151). Stone Age material is frequently found close to rivers and one may expect to find some stone tools here. The developer should therefore be on lookout for such occurrences.

7.2 Iron Age

The Iron Age is the name given to the period of human history when metal was mainly used to produce artifacts (Coertze & Coertze 1996: 346). In South Africa it can be divided in two separate phases according to Van der Ryst & Meyer (1999: 96-98), namely:

Early Iron Age (EIA) 200 – 1000 A.D.

Late Iron Age (LIA) 1000 – 1850 A.D.

Huffman (2007: xiii) however indicates that a Middle Iron Age should be included. His dates, which now seem to be widely accepted in archaeological circles, are:

Early Iron Age (EIA) 250 – 900 A.D.

Middle Iron Age (MIA) 900 – 1300 A.D.

Late Iron Age (LIA) 1300 – 1840 A.D.

Bergh (1999: 7) indicates that 125 Late Iron Age sites are known in the Pretoria area. Some LIA sites were also identified on the Magaliesberg in Akasia (Van Vollenhoven 2000: 152). Although no Iron Age site exists on the property some artifacts from this period may be unearthed during construction on the site.

7.3 Historical Age

The historical age started with the first recorded oral histories in the area. It includes the moving into the area of people that were able to read and write. Travelers visited this area as early as 1829 when the missionaries dr Robert Moffat and James Archbell and the trader David Hume visited the area (Van Vollenhoven 2000: 154).

White farmers started to utilize this area during the middle of the 19th century. The first farms to the north of the Magaliesberg were inspected in 1841 (Van Vollenhoven 2000: 158–160). The first owner of the farm Witfontein was JLJ Pretorius. It was registered in his name on 11 May 1860. The farm Witfontein is one of two on which the town of Akasia was established in the middle of the 1980's (Van Vollenhoven 2000: 167).

Although nothing of importance from this period was found, the subterranean existence thereof is possible and the developer should therefore be on the lookout for any such features.

8. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion it can be stated that the assessment of the area was conducted successfully. Nothing of cultural heritage significance was identified. The final recommendations therefore are as follows:

- No mitigation is necessary as nothing of cultural significance was found during the survey.
- The development can continue.
- It should however be noted that the subterranean presence of archaeological and/or historical sites, features or artifacts are always a distinct possibility. Care should

therefore be taken when development work commences that if any of these are accidentally discovered, a qualified archaeologist be called in to investigate.

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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.