



Archaetnos Culture & Cultural  
Resource Consultants  
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**INPUT FOR SCOPING REPORT RELATING TO THE HERITAGE IMPACT  
ASSESSMENT FOR THE DORSTFONTEIN WEST EXPANSION PROJECT NEAR  
KRIEL IN MPUMAMALNGA**

For:

***GCS (PTY) LTD***

**REPORT: AE847a**

by:

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## 1. Introduction

This report deals with the results of a baseline (desktop) study relating to the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for the Dorstfontein West Expansion Project. It also gives an indication of the Plan of study for the EIA report. The project will expand existing mining operations at the Dorstfontein Coal Mine near Kriel in the Mpumalanga Province.

## 2. Plan of study

This work will be done during September and October 2008. The Plan of study for the EIA (HIA) report consists of the following:

- ***Terms of reference***
  - Identify all objects, sites, occurrences and structures of an archaeological or historical nature (cultural heritage sites) located on the property (see Appendix A).
  - Assess the significance of the cultural resources in terms of their archaeological, historical, scientific, social, religious, aesthetic and tourism value (see Appendix B).
  - Describe the possible impact of the proposed development on these cultural remains, according to a standard set of conventions.
  - Propose suitable mitigation measures to minimize possible negative impacts on the cultural resources.
  - Recommend suitable mitigation measure should there be any sites of significance that might be impacted upon by the proposed development.
  - Review applicable legislative requirements.
- ***Conditions and assumptions***
  - 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.
  - 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.
  - 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).

- 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.
- All recommendations are made with full cognizance of the relevant legislation.

- ***Methodology***

- A survey of literature will be done in order to obtain background information regarding the area. Sources consulted in this regard will also be indicated in the bibliography.
- A field survey will be conducted according to generally accepted HIA practices and will be 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 will be determined by means of a Global Positioning System (GPS), while photographs will also be taken where needed.
- All sites, objects features and structures to be identified will be documented according to the general minimum standards accepted by the archaeological profession. Coordinates of individual localities will be determined by means of the Global Positioning System (GPS). The information will be added to the description in order to facilitate the identification of each locality.
- Reporting, including -
  - Description of the area
  - A short history of human culture (including and defining the Stone Age, Iron Age and Historical era)
  - Discussion of each individual site found – attention will be given to the cultural significance of each (including uniqueness and scientific importance), possible mitigation measures and management measures.
  - Rating of impacts
  - Conclusions
  - Recommendations
  - References
  - Appendices

### **3. Discussion of baseline information**

The geographical area around the town of Kriel is not known as an area containing prehistoric sites. No Stone Age sites are for instance indicated on a map contained in a historical atlas of this area (Bergh 1999: 4). The closest known Stone Age occurrence is that of rock art close to the Olifants River to the south of Witbank (Bergh 199: 5).

Iron Age sites have been identified to the south of the area, around Bethal (Bergh 1999: 6-7). These all are dated to the Late Iron Age. It is also known that the early trade routes did not run through this area (Bergh 1999: 9). However one should bear in mind that many of these areas may not have been surveyed before.

The type of environment around Dorstfontein definitely is suitable for human habitation. There is ample water sources and good grazing. One would therefore expect that Iron Age people may have utilized the area. This is the same reason why white settlers later on moved into this environment.

At the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Phuthing, a South Sotho group, stayed to the east of where Dorstfontein is situated. During the Difaquane they fled to the south (Bergh 1999: 10-11; 109). The first white traveler to visit these surroundings was Robert Scoon in 1829. The first Voortrekker groups of Hans van Rensburg and Louis Tregardt also passed close to this area (Bergh 1999: 13-14). The first white farmers only settled here during the late 1850's. By the 1890's this area was inhabited by many white farmers (Bergh 1999: 18-20). During the Anglo Boer War the highveld areas saw much action consisting of various skirmishes between Boer and Brit. It however is not possible to indicate how close these came to the farm Dorstfontein (Bergh 1999: 54).

#### **4. Conclusion**

From the desktop data it can be concluded that the chances of finding Stone Age sites is very slim. However one can always expect to find loose stone tools. These will probably be out of context and therefore not of any major cultural significance.

Chances to find Iron Age sites and occurrences are slightly higher. If so, the significance of such finds can only be determined once it has been positively identified.

During the HIA survey one would most probably find historical structures dating to the first white farmers in the area. These will include ruins and foundations of houses and other outbuildings on a farm as well as possible cattle kraals. Again significance can only be determined on identification of such features.

Graves always is a distinct possibility and it is known that many graves were identified at Dorstfontein East, on the farm Welstand (Pistorius 2008). Graves always is of a high cultural significance due to the religious and social context thereof. If such sites are identified it will undoubtedly have to be dealt with in accordance with ethical guidelines and legislation in this regard.

#### **5. Sources**

Bergh, J.S. (ed.), 1999. **Geskiedenisatlas van Suid-Afrika. Die vier noordelike provinsies.** (J.L. van Schaik, Pretoria).

Pistorius, J.C.C. 2008. **A phase 1 heritage impact assessment ( HIA) study for Total Coal South Africa (TCSA) proposed new expansion of the Dorsfontein Coal Mine (DCM) near Kriel on the eastern highveld in the Mpumalanga Province of South Africa.** (Unpublished report, Pretoria).