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ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND CULTURE HISTORICAL ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSED WATER RESERVOIR DAM AT ANNASDAL 668, VERKYKERSKOP, FREE STATE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A new water reservoir dam is planned at the farm Annasdal 668, near Verkykerskop, situated about fifty kilometres north of Harrismith, along the R722 road to Memel and Vrede, Free State.

No archaeological or other cultural material was found on the soil surface in the proposed area.

I conclude that the dam developments will have no effect on the cultural and historical heritage of the area.

I recommend that further planning of the residential project may continue.

INVESTIGATION

The dam site on the farm Annasdal 668 (Map 2) near the village of Verkykerskop was visited on 11 January 2008. Dr Johan du Preez from MDA Environmental Consultants, Bloemfontein, took me to the site.

The area was examined for possible archaeological and historical remains and to establish the potential impact on any cultural material that might be found. The Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) is done in terms of the National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA), (25 of 1999) and under the Environmental Conservation Act, (73 of 1989).

LOCALITY

Verkykerskop is situated about fifty kilometres north of Harrismith, along the R722 road to Memel and Vrede, Free State (Map 1).

The topography of the region is characterised by flowing undisturbed natural grass covered waves with several landmarks in the form of protruding hills (Fig.1) with kloofs flowing down the escarpment towards the east (Fig.2).

The vegetation is described as moist, sandy grassland.

The following GPS coordinate (Cape scale) was taken: (2729CD)
(SURVEYOR-GENERAL O.F.S. 1973).

Dam site 27°55'36"S 029°18'07"E Altitude 1770m (Figs.3-5).

FINDS

No archaeological or other cultural or historical material or stone-walling was found on the soil surface.

ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT

The planned developments will have no effect on the cultural and historical heritage of the dam site.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The dam building developments at Verkykerskop will have no major impact on the archaeological and cultural heritage of the area.

No obvious reasons could be found to delay the commencement of further planning.

I recommend that the developments at Verkykerskop could resume.

MITIGATION

No mitigation measures will be required in the case of the Verkykerskop dam.

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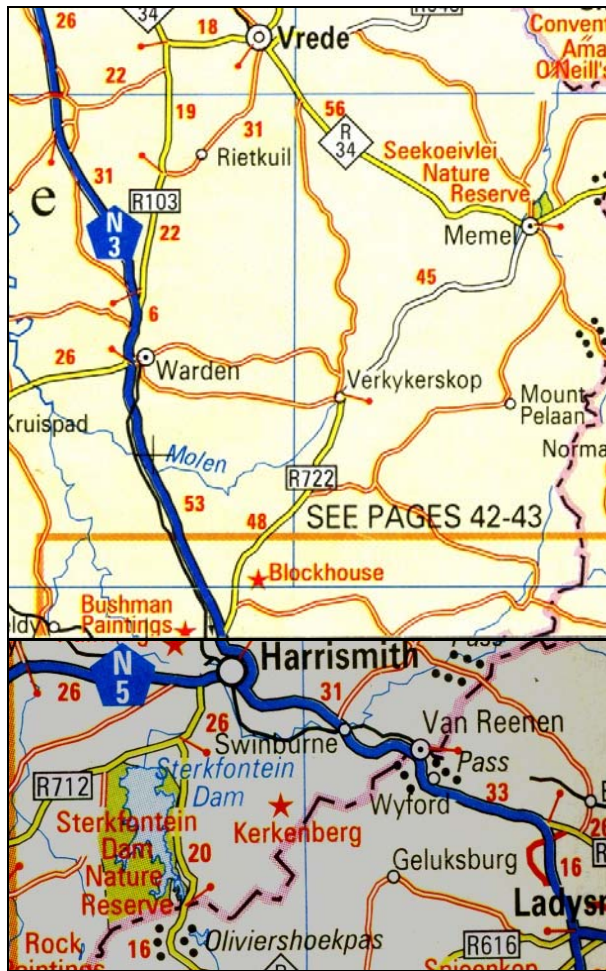
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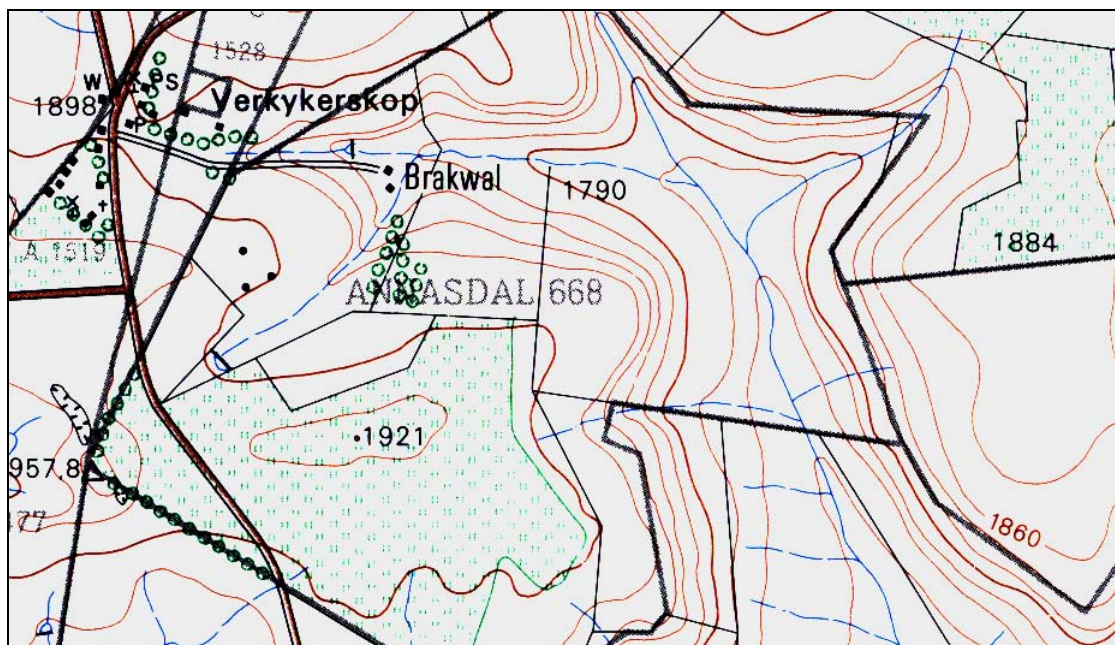
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LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS:



Map 1 Locality of Verkykerskop in relation to Harrismith and other town in the area.



Map 2 Extent of the proposed area of development at Verkykerskop (2729CD).



Fig.1 Tafelkop south west of Verkykerskop, Eastern Free State.



Fig.2 The landscape flows down in kloofs towards the escarpment.



Fig.3 Proposed dam-wall site from the east.



Fig. 4 Proposed dam-wall site from the west.



Fig.5 Valley down stream of the proposed dam-wall site.