



Archaetnos Culture & Cultural  
Resource Consultants  
BK 98 09854/23

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**A REPORT ON A CULTURAL HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR THE  
PROPOSED DENEYSVILLE EXTENTION TOWNSHIP DEVELOPMENT ON A  
PART OF THE REMAINING EXTENT OF PORTION 3 OF THE FARM  
KNOPPIESFONTEIN NO 94, FREE STATE PROVINCE**

For:

***KoJoCo Eiendomme BK  
POSBUS 756  
MEYERTON  
1960***

**REPORT: AE966**

by:

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## SUMMARY

Archaetnos cc was appointed by KoJoCo Eiendomme BK to conduct a cultural heritage impact assessment on a part of the remaining extent of portion 3 of the farm Knoppiesfontein 94. This is for a township development in Deneysville in the Heilbron district of the Free State Province.

In the area impacted upon by the proposed development one site of cultural heritage significance was found, dating to the Historical Age. The report gives a discussion of the site and also gives an indication of the methodology followed. It also indicates how to deal with any archaeological material that may be unearthed during construction activities in the future.

**The site is of a low cultural significance. Therefore this report is seen as suitable mitigation measures in this regard. It is concluded that the proposed development may continue and the site may be demolished.**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Archaetnos cc was appointed by KoJoCo Eiendomme BK to conduct a cultural heritage impact assessment on a part of the remaining portion of portion 3 of the farm Knoppiesfontein 94. This is in Deneysville in the Heilbron district, Free State Province.

The area is earmarked for a township development which will be called Deneysville extension. The client indicated the boundaries of the area to be investigated 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 be found.
7. In this particular case certain areas had a thick grass cover which made archaeological visibility difficult.

#### **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 Oral histories**

People from local communities are interviewed in order to obtain information relating to the surveyed area. It needs to be stated that this is not applicable under all circumstances. When applicable, the information is included in the text and referred to in the bibliography.

### **5.4 Documentation**

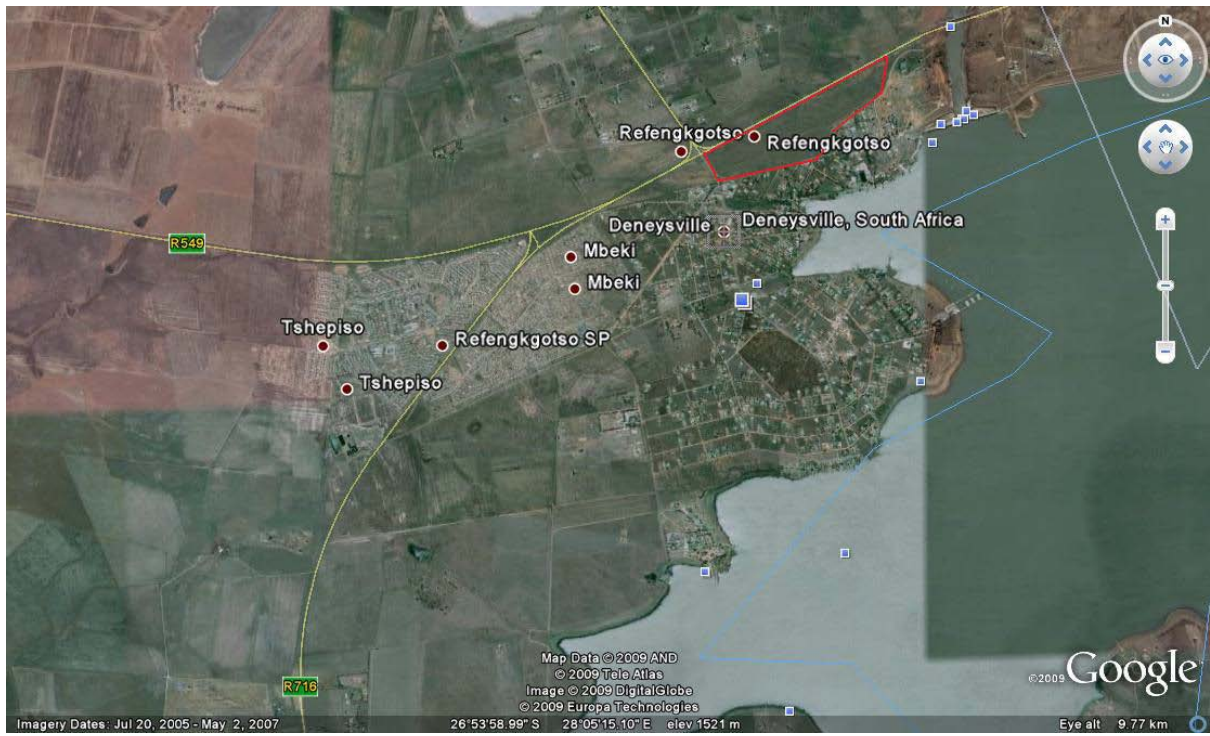
All sites, objects features and structures identified were documented according to the general minimum standards accepted by the archaeological profession. Co-ordinates of individual localities were determined by means of the Global Positioning System (GPS). The information was added to the description in order to facilitate the identification of each locality.

## **6. DESCRIPTION OF THE AREA**

The surveyed portion is situated to the north of the town of Deneysville, with the town flanking it on the south. The Vaal Dam lies to the southeast (Figure 1). The topography of the area runs down to the southeast in the direction of the Vaal River and Vaal Dam.

It is clear that the area has been disturbed by past human activities. Signs of old ploughed fields were identified throughout the area. According to the town planner there also used to be an air strip here (Personal comment: D Erasmus). The grass cover is short in certain and quite long in others. Piles of stone in the south indicate clearance of an area for either a road or the air strip. Very few trees are found here, typical of the Highveld (Figure 2-3).





**Figure 1: Location of the proposed township development. Area marked in red**



**Figure 2: General view of the surveyed property.**



**Figure 3: Another view of the surveyed area indicating old ploughed fields.**

## **7. DISCUSSION**

During the survey one site of cultural heritage significance was located in the area to be influenced by the development. In order to enable the reader to understand archaeological features that may be unearthed during 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.

Many Stone Age occurrences have been identified close to the Vaal River. This mostly consists of ESA sites in and around Vereeniging. LSA tools have also been identified here and close to Sasolburg (to the northwest of the surveyed area) the Klipplaatdrif site is well known. Rock engravings were also identified in the area surrounding the surveyed one. These are associated with the LSA (Bergh 1999: 4-5).

However, no natural shelters were seen on the property and therefore it is possible that these people did not stay here for long times. The close vicinity to the Vaal River of course makes it a prime spot for hunting and obtaining water. Therefore one may assume that Stone Age

people probably would have moved through on their way to the river. No Stone Age material was found during the survey.

## **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.

Iron Age sites have been identified all around the town of Deneysville, but none very close thereto (Bergh 1999: 7). According to Huffmann (2007: 432) the Fokeng stayed here around the 1650's. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Khudu inhabited the land to the north of Deneysville (Bergh 1999: 10).

The good grazing and access to water in the area would have provided a good environment for Iron Age people although building material seem to be reasonably scarce. No Iron Age occurrences were identified during the survey.

## **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.

The first white people to move through this area were the Voortrekkers who moved across the Vaal River during the 1830's. These include the parties of Hans van Rensburg and Louis Tregardt. The fighting commando's who set out to battle with Mzilikazi also moved through this area (Bergh 1999: 14).

The site identified during the survey dates to this era in the history of South-Africa.

## **7.4 Discussion of sites identified during the survey**

### Site 1

The site consists of a number of foundations and fallen pillars made from concrete (Figure 4-7). Pieces of asbestos indicate that these may have been buildings with temporary walls.

GPS: 26°52'56"S  
28°06'19"E

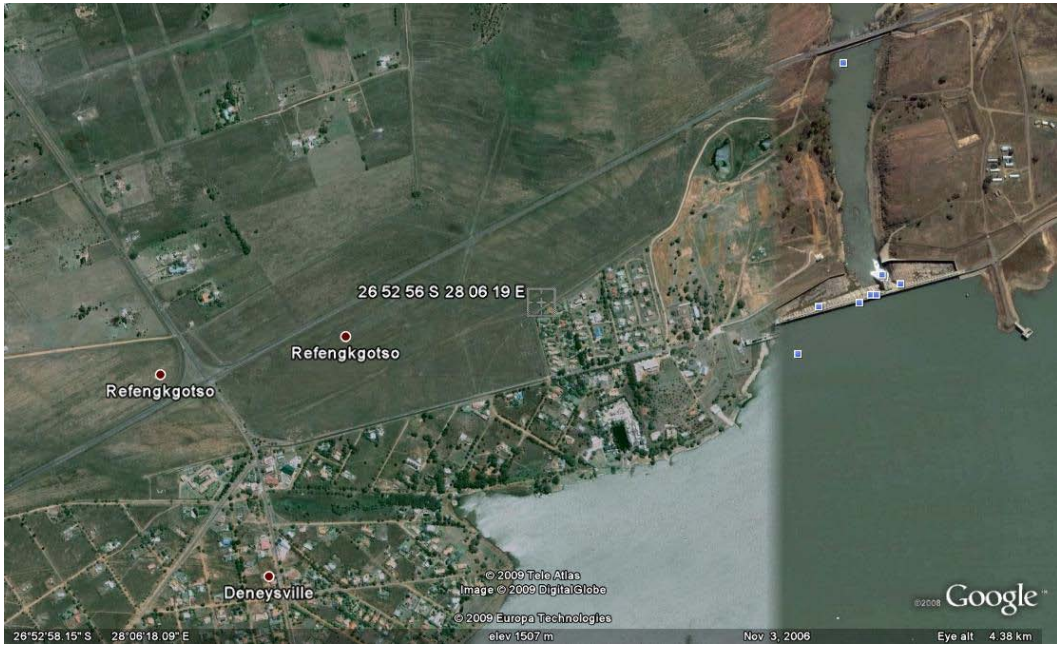
The most likely explanation at that these are the remains of buildings, hangers and other structures, associated with the air strip that used to be on the property. It is not older than 60 years and is therefore regarded as being of a **low** cultural significance.



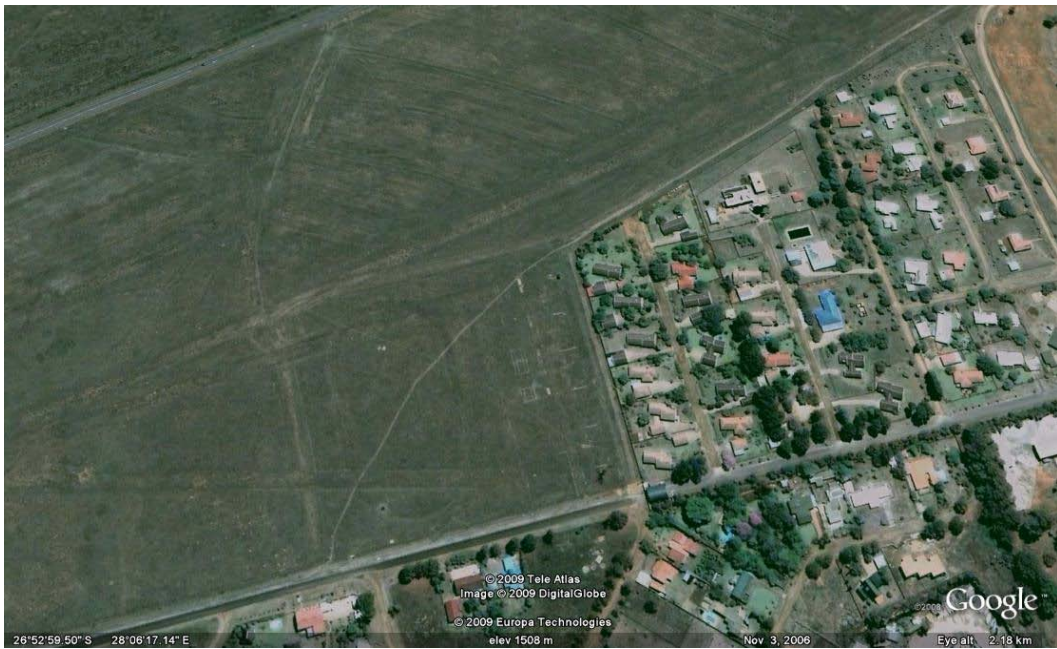
**Figure 4: Remains of concrete pillars at site no 1.**



**Figure 5: Concrete foundations at site no 1.**



**Figure 6: Location of site 1 on the surveyed property.**



**Figure 7: Close-up Google image of the site. Note the remains to the left of the houses. Also note the thick lines in the grass which probably is the remains of the old air strip.**

## 8. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion it can be stated that the assessment of the area was conducted successfully. Almost the entire area where the development is being planned has been disturbed by human activities in the past. Only one site was identified.

The final recommendations are as follows:

- The site that was found is of a low cultural significance. It may be demolished as part of the development activities. As it is younger than 60 years the developer does not need special permission from the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA).
- This report is seen as ample mitigation in this regard.
- The proposed development may continue.
- It should be noted that the subterranean presence of archaeological and/or historical sites, features or artifacts are always a distinct possibility. This includes graves. Care should therefore be taken when construction work commences that if any of these are accidentally discovered, a qualified archaeologist be called in to investigate.

## 9. REFERENCES

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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.