



COBUS DREYER

Pr.Archaeologist/Heritage Specialist

**P.O. Box 12910
BRANDHOF 9324
Bloemfontein
dreyerj@telkomsa.net**

**Tel: 051-444 1187
Fax: 051-444 4395
Cell: 083 357 7982**

10 March 2008

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.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

I thank Dr Johan du Preez from MDA Environmental Consultants, Bloemfontein, for taking me to Verkykerskop.

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY:

BRINK, J.S. & HOLT, S. 1992. A small goat, *Capra hircus*, from a Late Iron Age site in the eastern Orange Free State. Grahamstown: Albany Museum, Southern African Field Archaeology 1(2):88-91.

CUSTOS, Nasionale Parke Tydskrif. Kom delf saam in parke se kultuurgeskiedenis. Pretoria: National Parks Board, July 1994.

DEACON, J. 1992. Archaeology for Planners, Developers and Local Authorities. Cape Town: National Monuments Council.

DREYER, J. 1992. A report on the archaeology of the Qwaqwa museum site. Grahamstown: Albany Museum, Southern African Field Archaeology 1(2):80-87.

DREYER, J. 1996. Introduction to Free State Iron Age Archaeology. In: Guide to archaeological sites in the Free State and Lesotho. Southern African Association of Archaeologists (SA3), 14th Biennial Conference, Bloemfontein, Post-conference tour 5-8 July 1996. Bloemfontein: National Museum.

DREYER, J. 1999. Batlokoa History: Report on an archaeological survey of stone-walled sites in the north-eastern Free State. Grahamstown: Albany Museum. Southern African Field Archaeology 8(1):46-56.

DREYER, J. 2001. Thomas Arbousset and Francois Daumas in the Free State: Tracing the exploratory tour of 1836. Pietermaritzburg: Natal Museum. Southern African Humanities 13:61-96 (formerly Natal Museum Journal of Humanities).

DREYER, J. 2002. EIA report: Archaeological assessment of the proposed tourist accommodation facilities in the Golden Gate Highlands National Park. Bloemfontein: Enviroworks Environmental Consultants.

DREYER, J. & KILBY, S. E. 2003. Sebetoane's long march: a history of the Makololo (1823-1851). Anthropology Southern Africa 26(1&2):1-15 (formerly South African Journal of Ethnology).

HAWKINS, E.B. 1982. The story of Harrismith. Ladysmith: Westcott Printing.

HUMPHREYS, A.J.B. 1986. Searching for the past. Cape Town: David Philip.

MAGGS, T.M. 1976. Iron Age Communities of the Southern Highveld. Pietermaritzburg: Natal Museum.

PISTORIUS, J.C.C. 1994. Eskom Archaeological Site Identification Guide. Johannesburg: Eskom.

STEYTLER, F.A. 1932. Die geskiedenis van Harrismith. Bloemfontein: Nasionale Pers.

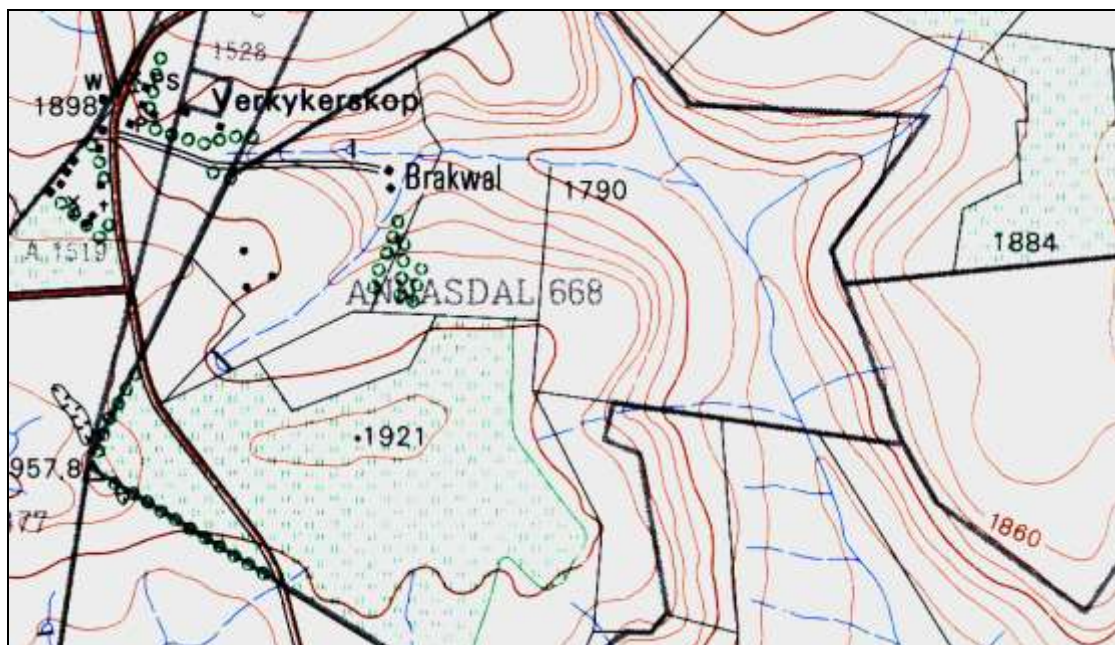
SURVEYOR-GENERAL O.F.S. 1973. Index of Orange Free State Farms. Bloemfontein.

VAN RENSBURG, A.P.J. 1968. Golden Gate – Die geskiedenis van twee plase wat 'n Nasionle Park geword het. KOEDOE 11, 1968: 83-138. (674)

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.