



When the Germiston Steam Locomotive Depot (where Reefsteamers are now based) was in full operation, it had no conventional vehicular road access. The depot was completely surrounded by railway tracks on all four sides. All supplies, equipment and fuel were brought to the loco depot by rail. People accessed the depot via one of two pedestrian underpasses. (Which still exist.) A legacy left by this unusual operation is that the Depot does not have conventional tarred road access.

Since the Depot was closed, a pair of access railway tracks were removed as well and they were converted into a roadway, which was cut out through to Knights Road. However, it can be an unpleasant drive if the road is muddy, and people in the vicinity use the area for illicit dumping.

However, a NEW road has recently been opened and it is called 'Lawton Drive.' It is a slightly longer route, but the road is in better condition. It is also NOT open to the public so there is no dumped rubbish to negotiate. However, the route isn't very obvious for the first time User as it has several junctions and it is unlit at night, so I include a set of step-by-step photographs to accompany the Reefsteamers map.

In the photos, I used my 'bakkie' (pick-up) as a pointer. Although 'Moose' the Ranger is a large tyred, high-ground-clearance vehicle, the road is easily negotiable by a modern low-slung motor car. You will be able to drive right up to and through the entrance gates.
(Lee D. Gates)



At the sharp 90 degree intersection between Knights Road and Stanley Street (Both on Route 39), turn in at the signposted entrance for the Transnet Diesel Depot.

The Transnet sign will be to the right of the entrance. If you are driving South \ East, you will pass the Transnet Tanker depot to your right and you should proceed straight on up this road. The picture shows what you will see.

If you are driving West \ North, you need to turn LEFT to enter this road. You will have passed a long low mine dump on your left and then see a white-on-green street sign saying 'Knights Road.' Your car will be facing the red and white chevron board visible in the above picture.



Here is the sign that marks the main outer entrance.

It is misleadingly labeled 'Welcome to Germiston.'

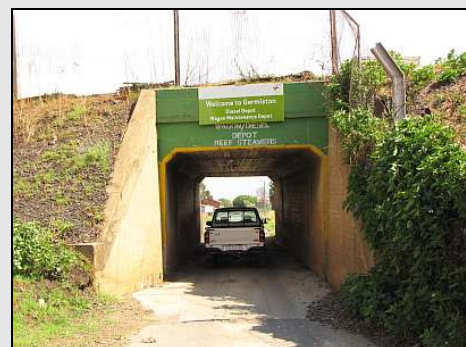
As the sign is on the wrong side of the road, (We drive on the left!), the name on the fourth, lowest line 'Reefsteamers Depot' is partially obscured by a stop sign depending upon your angle of approach.

The sign is not lit at night.



Proceed straight past the 'Germiston Diesel Depot' sign and go on through the tunnel. Do NOT turn left into that gravel track – it will lead you to onto a bypass road and then a onto mine dump.

There is no guard house on the approach road as the Diesel Depot's entrance is behind the tunnel.



The tunnel is clearly labeled for 'Reefsteamers' stenciled in just above the yellow painted arch.

Note that the tunnel is only one vehicle wide. Tall vehicles, such as split-deck tourist coaches, will need to make prior arrangements to use the bypass road.



Proceed straight after going through the tunnel and drive towards the gates at the end of the road. The road to the left is a bypass road for tall vehicles that can't fit through the tunnel.



Just before you get to the main gates of the Diesel Depot (With the blue guard's hut), turn left and leave the tarred road. To the right of this scene is a football field.



Turn right immediately after you pass the corner of the green palisade fence. You will see a straight dirt road that runs parallel to that fence. There are no junctions, so just follow your radiator and keep driving straight on.



The road will take you through several clumps of trees and you will see the Transnet car ports to the right. Eventually, the dirt-top road will take a gentle curve to the left.



The gently curving road will take you past an open storage yard full of wagon bogies and axles. You will now be driving about 30 degrees to the line of the original fence.



When you pass the bogie and axle yard, the road takes a sharper turn to the left and you will now be driving parallel to the left of a set of derelict railway tracks.



Keep driving next to the tracks and drive on past the derelict scale house and several dumped railway wagons.



To the right, just after the last cantenary pole and a set of track buffers, there is a concrete block level crossing.

HOW TO GET TO REEFSTEAMERS ALONG LAWTON DRIVE.



At this point, if you look to the right, you will clearly see our depot in the mid-distance behind a four-track railway line.



After going over the level crossing (lower left of picture) the road makes an S-bend first to the left and then the right.



After the S-bend, the road straightens out and goes gently downhill. To be safe, keep your speed down on this section and stay to the left. The short sloped road leads into The Dip – a short but fairly steep downhill section.

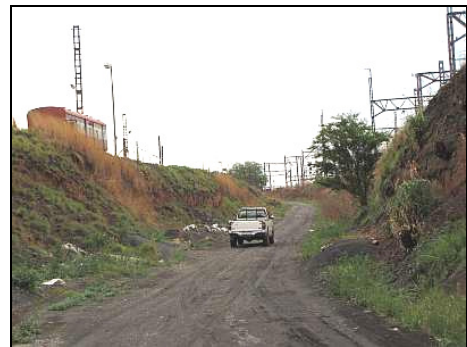


The Dip leads into a 4-way intersection with the original approach road. You need to turn right and drive on behind the embankment to the right in the photo.

Please swing wide to the left into the flattened turning area (left in the pic) before turning right. Do NOT cut the corner around the embankment as it is very loose and is steep.



When you turn right you will see two tunnels that pass under the railway tracks. Both lead out into the same road. You get a good view of The Dip and The Kink here.



When passing through the tunnels you will now be moving uphill in a cut between the depot and the railway tracks. You will either see the caboos (pictured) or stored locos



Continue driving uphill past the subway on the left. The entrance gate is beyond the tree on the gently curving road.



The entrance gate will be found at the end of the electric fence and in line with the green storage container.