

<b>Archaeological Site Report</b>	<b>SiteNo</b>	9/2/282/0002
	<b>Site Name</b>	NZASM Tunnel, Doornhoek, Waterval Boven District
	<b>Date</b>	
	<b>Project</b>	
	<b>CaseNID</b>	
	<b>Coords</b>	-25.636408, 30.345542
Page No: 1	<b>SiteAutoID:</b> 26604	

Site Category: Transport infrastructure

**SiteComments:**

Archive Import History: In order to make the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek economically independent of the surrounding British Colonies, Paul Kruger did his best to promote a direct railway connection between the Portuguese harbour of Lourenço Marques and Pretoria. Consequently the Republic granted a concession in 1887 to the Nederlandsch Zuid-Afrikaansche Spoorweg Maatschappij (N.Z.A.S.M.) to build this railway from the Portuguese harbour. Work on the railway was commenced in 1891. Several routes from the Portuguese border were reconnoitered, but no convenient way could be found from the Lowveld up the steep escarpment of the Drakensberg to the Highveld plateau. Eventually it was decided, on the recommendation of Major J. Machado, to build the line from the Elands River up the slopes of the Elandsberg. Even this was a very steep route, involving a rise of 208 m in a distance of seven kilometres between Waterval Onder and Waterval Boven, and in some places, gradients of 1 in 20. Consequently it was decided to build rather more than three km of rack railway on which special locomotives, like those used in mountainous parts of Europe, could be operated. To reduce the gradient as far as possible, a tunnel was cut alongside the Elands River Falls about two km from Waterval Boven. Great care was exercised in cutting the tunnel. It was surveyed by two N.Z.A.S.M. engineers, Bouten and Sissingh, and built by contractors E. Warren and Royce under the supervision of the Chief of Roads and Works, C. van der Made. Boring began from both ends on 18th October, 1892. The work went well and the two work parties met underground on 9th September, 1893. The walls were then neatly lined with dressed stone and the rack railway was laid. . The tunnel and rack railway remained in service until 1908 when more powerful loco motives became available and a new line was constructed on the opposite side of the river. Proclaimed 1962" Visual Description: Beyond Waterval Boven the road winds down the steep slopes of the Elandsberg for eight km to Waterval Onder. This short length of road not only provides magnificent scenery, but takes the traveller through a region full of historical interest. Overlooking the picturesque Elands River Falls about two km from Waterval Boven, is the abandoned N.Z.A.S.M. railway tunnel where a small portion of the rack-railway that used to run through it may still be seen. Lower down there is an old stone bridge with five elegant arches crossing a stream expressively named the ' ' Dwaalheuwelspruit' ' , literally meaning 'Get-lost hill-stream'. The tunnel is nearly 400 metres long and rises through a height of 10,6 m. The workman- ship was of a high order. Colours: Site Features: Condition: Construction Date: 1891-1895c Materials: Catalogue: , No: , Significance Category:

Damage Types: