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05 June 2015

**Attention      Bernadet Pawandiwa**

Dear Ms Pawandiwa

**Application for Exemption from a Phase 1 Heritage Impact Assessment  
Comrie Dam Expansion  
Donnybrooke, Sisonke District Municipality, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa**

**Project description**

Sappi Saiccor is proposing to expand their Comrie Dam, located approximately 7km north east of Donnybrook, KZN (see Fig.1). The proposal is to raise the dam wall by 4.5m which will result in the inundation of an additional area of approximately 10 ha.

In terms of the National Heritage Resources Act, a Heritage Impact Assessment is required in terms of Section 38(1c): *Any development or other activity which will change the character of a site (i) exceeding 5 000m<sup>2</sup> in extent.*

However, the area of proposed inundation lies entirely within an extant wetland and the immediate land use surrounding the dam site comprises long term commercial afforestation, which has fundamentally transformed the previous mist-belt grasslands and attendant landscape.

**Site location**

The proposed development site is located within the Sisonke District Municipality. The relevant 1:50 000 map sheet is 2929 DD, Donnybrooke. The coordinates of the project are as follows:

Dam Wall	29°52'30.94"S	29°55'34.57"E
Full Supply Level	29°52'01.78"S	29°54'32.53"E

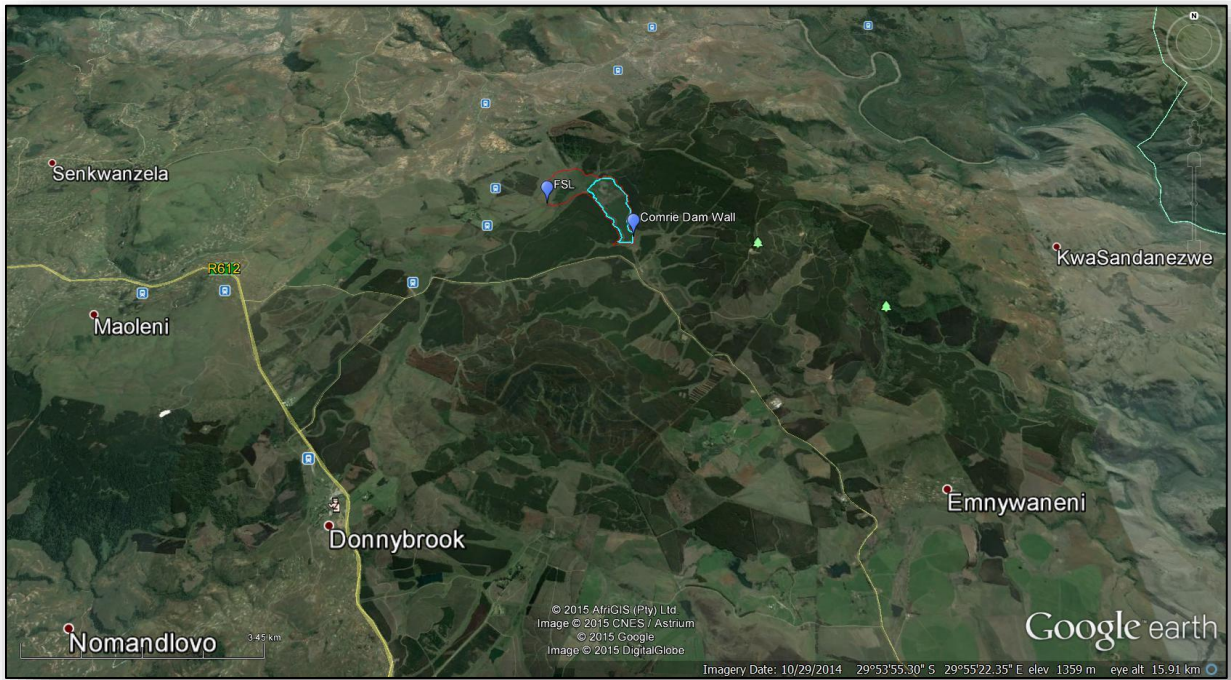


FIGURE 1 GOOGLE EARTH IMAGERY INDICATING PROJECT LOCATION.

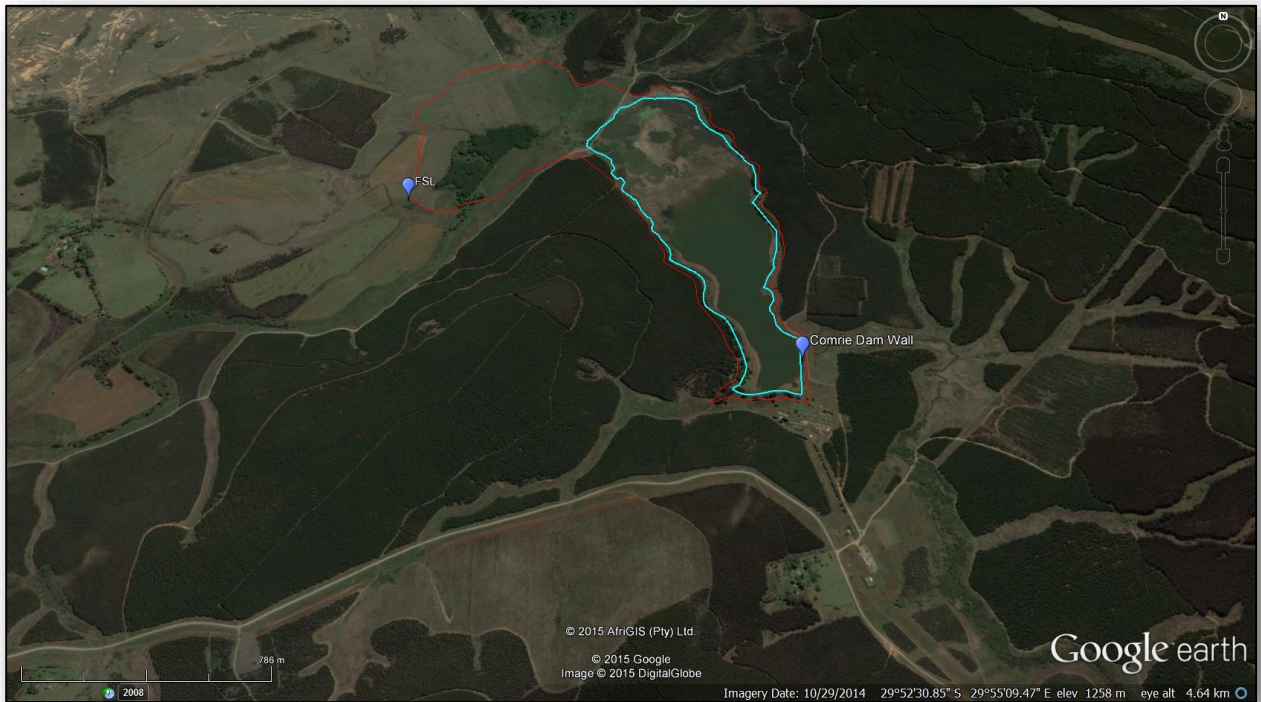


FIGURE 2 LOCATION OF PROPOSED PROJECT (SOURCE: GOOGLE EARTH).





**FIGURE 3 – 6 PHOTOGRAPHS OF PROPOSED PROJECT AREA AND DAM.**

### **Site assessment and recommendations**

A site inspection on 15 May revealed that the proposed development site has been subject to decades of severe environmental disturbance, including periodic flooding of the Sterkspruit River; road, bridge and power line constructions; and the operation of numerous commercial and light industrial premises (Figures 3-6).

The SAHRIS Palaeosensitivity Map indicates that the area has low sensitivity, requiring no palaeontological studies.

Accordingly, we request that Amafa grant an exemption from an HIA for this activity, allowing the project to proceed with no further heritage resource mitigation.

Please can you notify our client, The WSP Group, via their project leader, Ms Carla Elliot:  
[Carla.Elliott@wspgroup.co.za](mailto:Carla.Elliott@wspgroup.co.za)

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Len van Schalkwyk". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Len van Schalkwyk

