

From: "Peter Munns" <munnpeter@absamail.co.za>
To: "Jonathan Sharfman" <JSharfman@wc.sahra.org.za>
Date: 2008/09/14 07:42 PM
Subject: RE: Dorothea permit application

Dear Jonathan

Thank you very much for the response. I have made the necessary comments and welcome your positive and valued support.

Yours Sincerely,

Kind Regards

Peter Munns

Email : munnpeter@absamail.co.za or munnpeter@webmail.co.za

Cell : 083 264 3267 or 073 501 2278

Fax : 086 663 1750

P.O. Box 52583

Moore Road

Glenwood

Durban

4083

-----Original Message-----

From: Jonathan Sharfman [mailto:JSharfman@wc.sahra.org.za]

Sent: 09 September 2008 06:39 AM

To: Peter Munns

Subject: Dorothea permit application

Dear Mr Munns,

Your application for an excavation permit for the wreck of the Dorothea

has been circulated to SAHRA's Archaeology, Paleontology, Meteorites, Heritage Objects, Burials Permits Committee who have commented and made recommendations thereon. I would like to report the following to you:

The companies that you have listed for completion of the work are reputable and well established and have a good track record with regards to survey and diving. It would also appear that the various options that they have presented would be viable alternatives to excavating the wreck site. The Permit Committee has, however, expressed their concerns regarding archaeological methodology. Being concerned primarily with the protection of and management of cultural heritage, the Committee felt that it could not adequately judge this aspect of your proposal from what was provided. Specifically, the following points were raised:

1. In your application you state that the site has been destroyed by natural impact while the Subtech proposal states that the site is still visible from the air when sea conditions are favourable.

While your comments are welcomed, at the time of making the initial application in 1996 and more recently, I was relying on the research and development that had been done prior to meeting with anyone else. Our East Coast is extremely turbulent and it is natural to assume that more than 100 years of exposure to the elements of nature would certainly not have maintained the preservation of a wooden ship; that had been sunk by a cyclone in 1898. It defies all logic that your highly esteemed Committee can be convinced that the site is visible from the air on a clear day; and that a reputable and capable diving company is able to positively identify the Dorothea from the air. If they have the knowledge and capacity to salvage the sunken cargo, then the question is why they have not attempted to do so.

2. Although an archaeologist has agreed to work on the project, she has not provided an archaeological excavation strategy.

While the Committee has criticised the experience and performance to date of the archaeologist, the sad reality is that you have offered no assistance as

to who you insist is suitable enough to undertake this salvage; or that you will assist with the financial costs of retaining a highly qualified archaeologist who will complete this work at risk. We have the perfect opportunity to empower a person of the female gender with invaluable experience to enhance her career with practical experience; and yet you find her unsuitable and offer no alternatives.

3. Members of the Committee had concerns with regard to the conservation capabilities of the Local History Museum with regards to waterlogged finds and no clear conservation strategy was provided.

Your committee once again offer no demands or requests for suitably qualified museums prior to the application process. You demand the following at the time of submission:

* A historical museum in the area that will support the process of artefact recovery and recording. You fail to stipulate who is suitably qualified and valuable time has been wasted with the curator who must now be told he, and his museum, are unacceptable to your committee. Surely the curator of the historical museum is capable of performing his role as custodian of these artefacts.

* We have been extremely responsible in our research and development and sincerely believed that, in accordance with your application guidelines we have attempted to secure a team of specialists that can perform. You praise the companies we have gained the support from and then criticise the archaeologist that Subtech highly recommended.

* We pay for the Salvage licence from SARS and then we are advised that the permit may not be issued, due to prohibitive and restrictive conditions that are contentious and totally without merit or substance.

4. The archaeologist has little experience.

The Committee feels that, based on the potential significance of this site in terms of heritage and its possible links with Kurger, it is duty bound to ensure that any excavation that might take place should be done in accordance with the highest archaeological standards. These standards would ensure that none of the important historical and archaeological information contained on the wreck site would be lost.

Your reasons for denying the approval of the permit based on the inexperience of both the curator and the archaeologist will be explained to them in due course. Your committee also assumes that the possible links to Kruger are sufficient grounds to deny the issuing of this permit. If your committee are familiar with the history of South Africa, then they should know that the Kruger Millions were an issue that surfaced in 1904. If your department is so concerned about preserving the past, and then I would entertain a public/private partnership that is funded totally by your department of Arts, Culture, and Tourism. Please refrain from speculation and the habit of guessing whether the cargo belonged to Kruger, or anyone else; as there is insufficient evidence and proof to justify the reasons for the highest of archaeological standards. We have attempted to satisfy your committee at every level in the absence of any support or guidance prior to submitting our application.

On a technical level, the Committee noted that you did not provide co-ordinates for the site. If the site is the traditional Dorothea wreck site, it may fall within the St Lucia nature reserve. This would mean that it would be necessary for a permit from the reserve to be issued before any permit from SAHRA could be valid.

28.06.52
33 33.49

Your information is correct and there was only one Dorothea that was wrecked on that stretch of coastline. The coordinates are 28 07 .40 South and 32 33 .80 East. I am a Director on the local Ezemvelo Wildlife Heritage sites for Umfolozi and Hluhluwe. I am more concerned about our heritage sites than the average South African; and have served on this board for more than three (3) years. In addition to this is the fact that the support of Mr. Graham Charter, CEO of the Natal Sharks Board, was gained more than ten (10) years ago in this salvage operation. There are no shortcuts to this salvage operation and no expense has been spared in the preparation and planning. This attention to detail should be respected and applauded for the commitment and dedication that it took to prepare the foundation for what is believed to be a potentially successful salvage operation.

The companies that you have listed for completion of the work are reputable and well established and have a good track record with regards to survey and diving. It would also appear that the various options that they have presented would be viable alternatives to excavating the wreck site. The Permit Committee has, however, expressed their concerns regarding archaeological methodology. Being concerned primarily with the protection of and management of cultural heritage, the Committee felt that it could not adequately judge this aspect of your proposal from what was provided. Specifically, the following points were raised:

1. In your application you state that the site has been destroyed by natural impact while the Subtech proposal states that the site is still visible from the air when sea conditions are favourable.

This has been commented on and your criticisms are unfounded; as the Subtech company's assumptions are unfounded and unproven.

2. Although an archaeologist has agreed to work on the project, she has not provided an archaeological excavation strategy.

In the absence of your permit there is little chance that we would contract and retain the services of a qualified archaeologist, who would be providing a professional opinion on how the salvage and recovery operation should be planned, supervised, and controlled. Is it not practical, feasible, and sensible that the vast salvage experience of your committee could be best used in providing the methods to be used? In addition to this, we would have really welcomed the names and contact details of the people and companies that the committee have no problem using. We would also welcome all the financial support that SAHRA can make available to us.

3. Members of the Committee had concerns with regard to the conservation capabilities of the Local History Museum with regards to waterlogged finds and no clear conservation strategy was provided.

At the time of making our application, we were advised to gain the support of the local historical museum. Your concerns that neither the curator, nor the museum, has the necessary skills and experience have no bearing on our application; as we had no say in setting the standards of your curators or museums. Your comments will be brought to the curator's attention, once you have provided your recommendations.

4. The archaeologist has little experience.

The Committee feels that, based on the potential significance of this site in terms of heritage and its possible links with Kurger, it is duty bound to ensure that any excavation that might take place should be done in accordance with the highest archaeological standards. These standards would ensure that none of the important historical and archaeological information contained on the wreck site would be lost.

Once again, this issue has been dealt with and your reluctance to provide this archaeologist the opportunity to gain practical experience defies all

logic. Your assumption that the cargo is linked to Kruger is also unproven and unsubstantiated with historical literature and facts. There is only urban legend and hearsay upon which you base your desired archaeological standards. If this wreck was of such high interest value, then your committee should be bending over backwards to assist this salvage operation.

On a technical level, the Committee noted that you did not provide co-ordinates for the site. If the site is the traditional Dorothea wreck site, it may fall within the St Lucia nature reserve. This would mean that it would be necessary for a permit from the reserve to be issued before any permit from SAHRA could be valid.

the Committee has suggested the following in terms of this application:

Since the Committee is reluctant to issue an excavation permit based on the current application, it has agreed to issue a pre-disturbance survey permit. This permit would allow you to further investigate the site to determine its condition etc. This would also give the archaeologist an opportunity to develop an excavation strategy. Furthermore, an detailed examination of the site would allow the Museum to develop a conservation strategy and prepare itself for receiving of artefacts should an excavation permit be issued at a later date.

I accept your offer to issue the pre-disturbance survey permit and would accept that this provides opportunity to develop an excavation and conservation strategy that sits well with your committee. However, in the event that we satisfy your committee that the strategy is in accordance with your undeclared and unspecified standards; then why would you not issue the excavation permit? You have offered no assistance in telling us who must do the conservation or excavation strategies; and neither have you given us reasonable explanations why we would not be issued with a permit. What you have done is the following:

1. Insisted that a salvage licence is obtained from SARS.
2. Requested the methodology and aims of the salvage without specific guidelines.
3. Criticised the ability and use of the local historical museum and curator.
4. Criticised the use of the archaeologist without sufficient grounds or assistance to source other services.

5. Delayed the process on the grounds that we must satisfy the committee that we will use the correct conservation and excavation strategies with more suitable museums and archaeologists. The identities of these service providers are presently unknown.

6. Insisted that we meet your vague criteria at great expense and further effort, in the hope that we satisfy your prohibitive and restrictive condition; and then still not be guaranteed of a salvage permit.

It should be noted that the issue of a pre-disturbance survey permit will in no way guarantee that an excavation permit will be issued.

Should you wish to appeal the decision of the Permit Committee, please contact me to provide you with the necessary lines of appeal.

Should you wish to proceed in the manner suggested by the Committee, please provide me with the necessary co-ordinates in order for us to proceed.

I look forward to hearing from you.

the Committee has suggested the following in terms of this application:

Since the Committee is reluctant to issue an excavation permit based on the current application, it has agreed to issue a pre-disturbance survey permit. This permit would allow you to further investigate the site to determine its condition etc. This would also give the archaeologist an opportunity to develop an excavation strategy. Furthermore, an detailed

examination of the site would allow the Museum to develop a conservation strategy and prepare itself for receiving of artefacts should an excavation permit be issued at a later date.

It should be noted that the issue of a pre-disturbance survey permit will in no way guarantee that an excavation permit will be issued.

Should you wish to appeal the decision of the Permit Committee, please contact me to provide you with the necessary lines of appeal.

Please advise me of your committee's criteria for not only granting my company the right to salvage the Dorothea, but the criteria that they use to aid, assist, encourage and recognise the commitment and dedication of people in the private sector ; who also have a right to enjoy the heritage of this country. Take away the controls, limitations and bureaucratic red tape and replace it with a spirit of support, cooperation and a sincere willingness to see other people enjoy their vision and dreams. People with courage in their hearts and new eras in their brains should never be stifled by people who never offer solutions; but continuously find problems. Please send me the names and the relevant qualifications held by the members of the committee who have chosen to strait-jacket the simple process of obtaining a permit.

Should you wish to proceed in the manner suggested by the Committee, please provide me with the necessary co-ordinates in order for us to proceed.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Warm regards,

Jonathan Sharfman

Jonathan Sharfman

Manager/Maritime Archaeologist
Underwater Cultural Heritage Unit
South African Heritage Resources Agency
212 Buitengracht Street
Cape Town
8000
Ph: +27 (0)21 424 5026
Fax: +27 (0)21 424 5027
Email: jsharfman@wc.sahra.org.za

~~~~~  
This message may contain information which is confidential,  
private or privileged in nature. If you are not the intended  
recipient, you may not peruse, use, disseminate, distribute or  
copy this message or file which is attached to this message.  
If you have received this message in error, please notify the  
sender immediately by e-mail, facsimile or telephone and  
thereafter return and/or destroy the original message.

Any views of this communication are those of the sender  
except where the sender specifically states them to be  
those of South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA).

Please note that the recipient must scan this email and any  
attached files for viruses and the like. SAHRA accepts no  
liability of whatever nature for any loss, liability, damage or  
expense resulting directly or indirectly from the access  
and/or downloading of any files which are attached to this

e-mail message.

-----