



ALBANY MUSEUM

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20 July 2006

Dear Karen

HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSED LOCATION FOR THE SEWAGE WORKS AT NOLUKHANYO, BATHURST, EASTERN CAPE

Please find my attached report and invoice.

As the report explains, I was accompanied to the site by Mr Z Fredericks. He was unsure of the exact location of the pipeline and the sewage plant. We spent some time walking across the area. It is however, heavily vegetated which made a close examination of the ground difficult.

Nevertheless, there seems to be no evidence of archaeological or historical material which will be disturbed by the development and I am of the opinion that you may proceed. Mr Fredericks suggested that I might be interested in returning later in the year after bull-dozing has taken place. I don't think this is essential. I have specified that an archaeologist should be called if the soil clearance does uncover anything of significance.

Best wishes

Dr Lita Webley
Manager: Albany Museum

HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSED
LOCATION FOR THE SEWAGE WORKS AT NOLUKHANYO,
BATHURST, EASTERN CAPE.

Prepared By:

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National Heritage Resources Act (1999)

The National Heritage Resources Act of 1999 makes provision for a compulsory HIA when an area exceeding 5000 m² is being developed (National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999: page 55). This is to determine if the area contains heritage sites and to take the necessary steps to ensure that they are not damaged or destroyed during development.

With regard burial grounds and graves, Section 36 (3) of the Act clearly stipulates that no person may, without a permit issued by the relevant heritage authority or SAHRA, (a) destroy, damage or exhume the grave of the victim of conflict; (b) destroy, damage or exhume any grave or burial ground older than 60 years which is situated outside a formal cemetery administered by a local authority.

Subject to the provision of any other law, any person who in the course of development discovers the location of a grave, the existence of which was previously unknown, must immediately cease such activity and report the discovery to the relevant heritage authority which must, in co-operation with the South African Police Service and in accordance with the regulations of the responsible heritage authority, carry out an investigation to determine whether the grave is protected in terms of the Act or is of significance to any community.

Section 34 of the Act stipulates that no person may alter or demolish any structure or part of a structure, which is older than 60 years without a permit issued by the relevant provincial heritage resources authority.

Section 38 of the Act clearly indicates that any person constructing a road or similar linear developments exceeding 300m in length or developing an area exceeding 5000 m² in extent is required to notify the responsible heritage resources authority or SAHRA. SAHRA will in turn advise whether an impact assessment report is needed before development can take place.

Living heritage (defined in the Act as including cultural tradition, oral history, performance, ritual, popular memory, skills and techniques, indigenous knowledge systems and the holistic approach to nature, society and social relationships) is also given protection under the Act. Section 24 of the Act makes provision for provincial heritage resources authorities to maintain a register of heritage resources and to set up management plans for their preservation.

Introduction and Terms of Reference

Dr. Webley of the Albany Museum was approached by ILISO Consulting (Pty) Ltd and requested to undertake a first phase HIA assessment survey of the area targeted for the proposed sewage works at Nolutkanyo Residential area, Bathurst, Eastern Cape (Map Sheet 3326BD Trappe's Valley). The area is located adjoining the residential area and will have a main outfall pipe of 540m and the area of the site is 1.2ha. The area is under thick bush cover. Dr Webley was requested to survey the area for possible heritage sites prior to its development.

Background to the area

The area affected by development lies very close to Bailey's Beacon and the toposcope commemorating the division of land in the Bathurst area for farms for the 1820 Settlers. No farmhouses are indicated on the 1:50 000 map for the location of the sewage plant. However, this does not rule out a possibility that there may be ruined structures in the area, hidden in the dense bush, which may relate to the early European history of the area. A data search was undertaken. No archaeological sites have been recorded in the area by the Albany Museum, which is the Archaeological Data Recording Centre for the Eastern Cape.

No survey was undertaken of traditional cultural practices in the area affected by development. It is possible, even likely, that the inhabitants of the adjoining township will make use of the bush for certain traditional rites, such as male circumcision ceremonies. However, since the sewage plant will only cover a small area, it is unlikely to impact significantly on local landuse of the bush.

Survey method and Field report

Dr. Webley requested that she be accompanied by someone who could show her the location and the approximate borders of the site. She was met at 1pm on the 17 July 2006 by Mr Z. Fredericks, a technician who is responsible for overseeing the development of the project. This was the first time Mr Fredericks had visited the area. We consulted his maps with regard to the exact location of the outfall pipe and sewage plant area. Mr Fredericks noted that the sewage plant was required by law to be located at least 500m from the closest residential area. Mr Fredericks reported that someone had visited the site about 3 weeks ago, and cleared the bush for the pipeline and sewage plant. We walked across the area, looking for the bush clearance.

The site was surveyed on foot, walking along established footpaths, and through low scrub areas. We were unable to survey the entire area due to the impenetrable bush. We did locate a number of areas where the bush had been cleared, and we assumed that these were the locations for the pipeline and sewage plant. It was not possible to obtain a clear view of the soil surface, as the entire area was heavily vegetated.

No archaeological remains such as stone tools or fossilized bones were observed. There was also no evidence for any early dwellings, sheds, kraals, etc which could be related to the occupation of the area by 1820 Settlers or their descendants.

Significance of Impacts

No archaeological or historical sites were found in the area. However, it is quite conceivable that a site of significance could be buried under the surface of the soil.

The development of the area for the sewage works will result in very limited damage to the topography.

It is important to remember that archaeological and historical sites are non-renewable. Once destroyed, they cannot be returned to their original state. For this reason every effort must be made to monitor the site during earth-moving development.

Conclusions and Recommendations

All archaeological sites are protected by the National Heritage Resources Act (No 25 of 1999) and it is an offense to destroy, damage, excavate, alter, deface or disturb archaeological sites without a permit issued by the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA).

No significant archaeological sites, historical structures or graves were discovered during the survey. However, it is possible that sites may be buried under the soil and grass surface. For this reason every care should be taken during the bulldozing of the area.

Mr Fredericks suggested that Dr Webley re-visit the site after the bulldozer has cleared the area of vegetation and the soil surface is exposed and this seems to be the most prudent course of action.

I would recommend that development of the area can take place but that every care should be taken to avoid destroying sites which may be located beneath the soil surface. When leveling of the soil takes place, contractors should look for the following features:

1. Concentrations of stone artefacts.
2. Concentrations of fossilized bone.
3. Concentrations of blue and white china, pieces of iron, coins, etc.
4. Human remains including burials.
5. Stone structures which may relate to previous farming activities in the area.

If any of the above are discovered, development should stop immediately and an archaeologist should be called in.