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# PRELIMINARY ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

For a the NR2 and NR5 Reservoirs – Levhuvu River  
Government Water Supply Scheme

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION.....	2
2. AIM .....	2
3. FIELDWORK .....	2
4. GEOGRAPHICAL/ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING .....	3
5. PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS .....	3
6. METHODOLOGY .....	3
7. RESULTS OF THE INVESTIGATIONS .....	5
7.1 NR2 RESERVOIR.....	5
7.2 NR5 RESERVOIR.....	6
8. RECOMMENDATIONS .....	6
8.1 NR2 RESERVOIR.....	6
8.2 NR5 RESERVOIR.....	6
9. CONCLUSION .....	6

**PRELIMINARY ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT ON  
THE PROPOSED NR2 AND NR5 RESERVOIRS AT JIMMY JONES  
205 LS, MAVHAMBE VILLAGE AND AT THE MALAMULELE  
MUNICIPAL DEPOT**

**1. Introduction**

Archaeo-Info was commissioned by the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF) to perform a Preliminary Archaeological Impact Assessment (P.A.I.A.) at the proposed sites for the NR2 and NR5 reservoirs. These two reservoirs formed part of the Luvuvhu River Government Water Scheme. The P.A.I.A. was conducted in accordance with Act 28 of 1969 and comprised the evaluation of the archaeological sensitivity of the two sites.

**2. Aim**

The aim of the P.A.I.A. was to ascertain the viability of the proposed construction of the two reservoirs and to determine the archaeological potential of the two sites. This was done to provide the client with information and recommendations, which could affect and assist the planning and development of the reservoirs in the Luvuvhu River Government Water Scheme. As with previous projects the investigators were also on the lookout for graves which could be affected by the construction.

**3. Fieldwork**

Archaeo-Info contacted Mr. Hennie du Preez at Genesis Consulting to determine the exact size and locations of the two proposed construction sites. The proposed sites were investigated on the 27<sup>th</sup> of January 2000 by a Principal Investigator (Marko Hutten) who was assisted by a fieldworker (Eric Mathoho).

#### **4. Geographical/Environmental Setting**

The two study areas concerned are situated in the Malamulele Municipal Depot grounds and on the farm Jimmy Jones 205 LS in Mavhambe village respectively.

The proposed NR2 reservoir will be situated in the town of Malamulele next to existing reservoirs on Municipality grounds. The site is located at 23°00'11"S 30°41'18"E (GPS *Magellan 2000 XL*).

The proposed NR5 reservoir will be situated in the rural village of Mavhambe on a small hill. The proposed location is next to an existing reservoir and also next to Shirilele High School. The site is located at 23°00'32"S 30°38'56"E (GPS *Magellan 2000 XL*).

#### **5. Previous Archaeological Investigations**

No information on Archaeological Impact Assessments could be found on the development of the Malamulele Municipal grounds and therefore it can be accepted that no previous Archaeological Investigations were performed in this area where the proposed NR2 reservoir will be situated.

The P.A.I.A. for the Nandoni dam performed by Mr. Edwin Hanisch and other second and third phase work done by Archaeo-Info were the only available archaeological information from the region where the proposed NR5 reservoir will be situated. As with previous projects for the Luvuvhu River Government Water Scheme, relevant anthropological studies were also consulted.

#### **6. Methodology**

The two study areas were surveyed using standard archaeological surveying methods. The areas were covered by foot and the investigators were on the

lookout for surface finds, plant growth anomalies and other indicators for archeological evidence. Test probes were done at intervals to determine subsurface occurrence of archeological material. Locals were also questioned and especially information on the identification of graves was required.

Standard archaeological documentation formats were employed in the description of sites. Using standard site documentation forms as comparable medium, it enabled the investigators to evaluate the relative importance of the sites found. All archaeological artifacts and the sites were photographically documented (Canon A1 SLR and Ricoh KR 10 SLR).

Furthermore, GPS (Global Positioning System) readings of all finds and sites were taken. This information was gathered using a *Magellan 2000 XL GPS* (coordinate system - WGS 84).

The importance of finds and sites was assessed by comparisons with published information as well as comparative collections. All sites or possible sites found were classified using a hierarchical system wherein sites were assessed using a scale of one to five on the basis of their importance (graves form their own category). The categories are as follows:

**Category 1.** Sites in this category are of such great international and/or national importance in terms of cultural heritage that they can not be disturbed or altered at any cost. No development will be allowed in such an area. It should be noted that sites in this category are very rare - e.g. - *Great Zimbabwe, Swartkrans, Mapungubwe*

**Category 2.** Although these sites are not unique in terms of their culture they are of such archaeological value that any decision concerning their destruction can only be taken after full scale excavations have been undertaken - e.g. -

*Thulamela.*

**Category 3.** These sites are of lesser importance than the first two categories, but should be fully documented before they are destroyed. This documentation would entail the excavation of certain parts of the site - e.g. - *Masorini*

**Category 4.** Sites in this category consist of scattered evidence of archaeological occupation. Sometimes dilapidated stone walling can occur. Surface scatters of cultural material are evident. A limited number of test trenches should be excavated in order that the cultural affinity and importance of the site can be established.

**Category 5.** Areas that consist only of a very loose scattering of cultural material on the surface. No structures are visible and little archaeological deposits are evident. The occurrence of cultural material could, for example, be due to erosion. Apart from the surface collection of cultural material, no further work needs be done on such sites.

**NB:** It is important that any archaeological site should be monitored during construction.

**Category 6: Graves.** The only archaeological aspect that could still be encountered during construction is the exposure of unmarked graves.

It should be noted that graves are subjects of great sensitivity and should be treated as such. Prompt and correct procedures will eliminate possible embarrassing situations for the developer.

## **7. Results of the Investigations**

### **7.1 NR2 reservoir**

The construction of the existing reservoirs and the development of the Malamulele Municipal grounds in the urban Malamulele area destroyed all archaeological evidence (if any were present). Nothing of archaeological value was found.

## **7.2 NR5 reservoir**

As with the NR2 reservoir the proposed area for the NR5 reservoir was badly damaged by the construction of the existing reservoir. The footpath and road to the school also could have had an affect on the possible archaeological evidence, but nothing of archaeological value was found. From the interviews with locals it was also clear that no graves were present in the study area.

## **8. Recommendations**

### **8.1 NR2 reservoir**

Nothing of archaeological value was found and no further archaeological work is recommended.

### **8.2 NR5 reservoir**

Nothing of archaeological value was found and no further archaeological work is recommended.

## **9. Conclusion**

The development and construction of the proposed NR2 and NR5 reservoirs can continue from an archaeological point of view. Archaeo-Info should be consulted on any alterations made to the original proposals for the reservoirs as this may influence the recommendations given in this report. Lastly, if any human remains

are uncovered during construction, work should cease and Archaeo-Info and the SAPS must be notified immediately to mitigate the situation.