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PRELIMINARY ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

For the Nandoni Eastern Pipelines – Part 1

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PRELIMINARY ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF THE NANDONI EASTERN PIPELINES - PART 1

1. Introduction

A Preliminary Archaeological Impact Assessment (P.A.I.A.) was performed by Archaeo-Info for the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (D.W.A.F.) on section of the proposed Eastern pipelines from the Nandoni Dam. The study was undertaken to evaluate areas of archaeological significance, which might occur on the proposed routes of the pipelines. The P.A.I.A. formed part of the Preliminary Environmental Impact Assessment (P.E.I.A.) of the Luvuvhu River Government Water Scheme and was conducted in accordance with Act 28 of 1969.

2. Aim

The aim of the P.A.I.A. was to determine the archaeological potential of the study area and how the proposed pipelines will affect it. The investigators surveyed the proposed routes of the pipelines within the given reserve to establish the viability of the placement of the pipelines from an archaeological point of view. As with previous projects in the Luvuvhu River Government Water Scheme, special attention was given to the identification and plotting of graves on the proposed pipeline routes.

3. Fieldwork

Archaeo-Info contacted the resident engineer, Mr. N. du Buisson of the Nandoni Dam on March 7, 2000 in an effort to determine the exact locations of the pipelines extending eastwards from the Nandoni Dam. After consulting with Mr. P. Ackerman of D.W.A.F. (Environmental and social services), they concluded that the routes were still uncertain and only section could be surveyed with some sense of certainty. Archaeo-Info decided to survey the proposed route from the

Nandoni Dam to Malamulele via Mavambe. This survey and report form the first part of the P.A.I.A. for the eastern pipelines. The rest of the pipelines will be surveyed as soon as their exact routes are known. The survey was conducted on March 8, 2000 and was performed by a Principal Investigator (Marko Hutten) and a Fieldworker (Desmond Mamugudubi), who had local knowledge of the study area and acted as an interpreter.

4. Geographical/Environmental Setting

The proposed route of the pipeline passed through the farms Molenje 204 LT, Mavambe 281 MT, Jimmy Jones 205 LT and Jerome 287 MT in the former homelands of Venda and Gazankulu. The survey commenced on the southern bank of the Luvuvhu river and followed the Mavambe/Mutoti road southwards all the way to the proposed NR5 reservoir location in the village of Mavambe. It was decided to survey the western side of the road with a 30 metre reserve as this was the side where the proposed Mutoti Water Treatment/Purification Plant will be situated and where existing pipelines in the Mavambe area were situated. The survey of the proposed Water Treatment/Purification Plant formed part of another project and was thus not included in this report.

From Mavambe the survey followed the Mavambe/Malamulele road up to the proposed NR2 reservoir location in the town of Malamulele.

The area was covered with typical thorny bushveld plant-growth and after the heavy rains it was very dense and overgrown. In the village of Mavambe and the town of Malamulele the study area had typical urban characteristics.

5. Previous Archaeological investigations

Mr. E.O.M. Hanisch of the University of Venda performed a P.A.I.A. for D.W.A.F. during 1998 for the Nandoni Dam. This P.A.I.A. covered certain areas through which the proposed pipeline will go. Archaeo-Info performed the P.A.I.A.'s for the proposed NR2 and NR5 reservoirs during February 2000. These

reports and other relevant anthropological studies were consulted during the investigations.

6. Methodology

The study area was surveyed using standard archaeological surveying methods. The area was covered by foot and the investigators were on the lookout for surface finds, plant growth anomalies and other indicators for archaeological evidence. Test probes were done at intervals to determine sub-surface occurrence of archaeological material. Locals were also questioned and especially information on the identification of graves was required. 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. Site Descriptions

All sites were discussed in the following section. Sites were attributed a reference code which consisted of an abbreviation (i.e. Nandoni Eastern Pipelines - NEP) and a numerical indicators which was attributed randomly. G.P.S. (Global Positioning System) coordinates were given for each site as well as a short description.

7.1 NEP 001

G.P.S. 22° 58' 46" S
30° 36' 53" E

Description:

This site was situated approximately 700m south of the Luvuvhu river and approximately 20 m west of the Mutoti/Mavambe road. The site comprised of a series of stone wall enclosures forming an elongated complex on a ridge coming from the Mahebe river (photo 1). The site measured approximately 30 m in width

and 120 m in length. There is a possibility of graves in this area, but it was impossible to identify any due to the dense bush and lush grass (photo 2).

This site was also identified and described by Mr. Hanisch in his P.A.I.A. for D.W.A.F. and it was referred to as Mut26. Mr. Hanisch did perform mitigationary work on Mut26, but to what extent this work was done, is still unknown because his report is still outstanding. Hanisch excavated a stone wall complex closer to the Mahebe river and his opinion was that it extended to the elongated site on top of the ridge. The permit for any excavations/alternations on Mut26 is still in Mr. Hanisch's name.

7.2 NEP 002

G.P.S. 23° 00' 20" S

30° 39' 02" E

Description:

Two graves were identified in Mavambe village north of the ridge where the proposed NR5 reservoir will be constructed (photo 3 & 4). According to informants some of the stands in the village do have graves and there were more graves alongside the above-mentioned ridge. These graves, however, were not identified because the informants did not know to which family they belonged.

8. Recommendations

Recommendations were given for each of the sites as outlined in the site descriptions. Each of the sites were attributed a category as described in the section on methodology and descriptions of the work to be done were given.

8.1 NEP 001

Category 5

The proposed pipeline will most probably miss the stone wall complex situated on the ridge. If this is not possible, Archaeo-Info should be contacted to make

arrangements with Mr. Hanisch as this site falls within the parameters of his permit as issued by the National Monuments Council (N.M.C). These arrangements will entail a discussion on the site, enquire from Mr. Hanisch what mitigational work was completed and a decision on how to handle the site within the requirements of the N.M.C.

8.2 NEP 002

Category 6

The handling of graves is the same as in the other projects of the Luvuvhu River Government Water Scheme. The graves should be marked with "danger tape". If graves are in the way of the proposed pipelines, it is recommended that the route of the pipeline should be adjusted to pass these graves. If it is not possible, arrangements should be made to move the graves according to the Grave Policy as approved by the Project Steering Committee and subject to the stipulations of the National Legislation.

9. Conclusion

The development and construction of the proposed pipelines extending to the east of the Nandoni Dam can continue from an archaeological point of view. The developers and construction team should take note of the graves on the proposed route and should move the lines accordingly. If this is not possible, the graves should be moved as stipulated by the Graves Policy and the National Legislation.

If human remains are uncovered during construction, as was the case 5 years ago during the construction of the existing pipelines near Mavambe, construction should cease and Archaeo-Info and the SAPS must be notified immediately to mitigate the situation.

If it is not possible for the pipeline to pass the stone wall complex NEP 001, Archaeo-Info should also be notified to make the necessary arrangements with Mr. Hanisch for construction to continue.