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05 April 2016

**Attention Bernadet Pawandiwa**

Dear Ms Pawandiwa

**Application for Exemption from Phase 1 HIA  
Mbhava-Mpethu Swayimane Water Supply Project  
Umgungudlovu District Municipality, KwaZulu-Natal**

**Project description**

In order to provide an assured supply of potable water to residents, the Umgungudlovu District Municipality is planning to extend the existing Swayimane Water Scheme (surveyed by eThembeni in 2003/4).

This is to be achieved by:

- upgrading the existing water supply scheme into the Ekupholeni, Emabheleni, Odlameni, Vumuthando, Cuphulaka, Mbhava and Mpethu Wards and,
- extending the network into currently un-serviced areas within these wards.

The bulk water source will be Umgeni Water's newly commissioned 6MI Bruyns Hill Reservoir (See SAHRIS Case ID 8400).

The existing pipeline network is aligned along roads and vehicular tracks and the proposed extension pipe-line reticulations will be installed according to the following criteria:

- The placing of the pipelines close to and along existing roads and tracks.
- Following contours.
- Following ridge lines which will limit impacts on wetlands and sensitive environments.

**Site assessment and recommendations**

eThembeni staff inspected the proposed pipeline alignment and reservoir localities on 23 and 24 March 2016 with a repeat visit on 08 April. The topography of the supply area is characterised by very steep and hilly terrain. The Swayimane catchment up-gradient is dominated by commercial sugarcane farming and rural homesteads practicing subsistence cropping with maize and *amadumbe* (yams). The lower slopes are characterised by an extensive road and track network connecting clusters of rural settlements. Subsistence agriculture is the primary economic activity and more traditional *imizi* have attendant cattle byres and small-stock pens.

No heritage resources were identified within the proposed alignments. All homesteads are serviced by graded local and district roads. Previous surveys within this middle part of the Umgeni Valley (van Schalkwyk, personal observations) have yielded no evidence of Early and Middle Iron Age sites in the vicinities of current settlement.

Graves occur in and immediately adjacent to historically more recent homesteads and are attended by next-of-kin. Where homestead abandonment has occurred through time, kin-folk retain a deep knowledge of these and their attendant graves, and avoid resettlement in their vicinity.

As residents, and both civic and traditional leadership, have endorsed this water supply scheme the issue of graves' sanctity must reside with the resident community. Suffice to state that in the event of unmarked or unrecognised graves being identified such may not be altered, damaged or moved without a permit issued by Amafa aKwaZulu-Natali.

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

Accordingly, we request that Amafa endorse pursuance of this civic project, allowing the project to proceed with no further heritage resource mitigation.

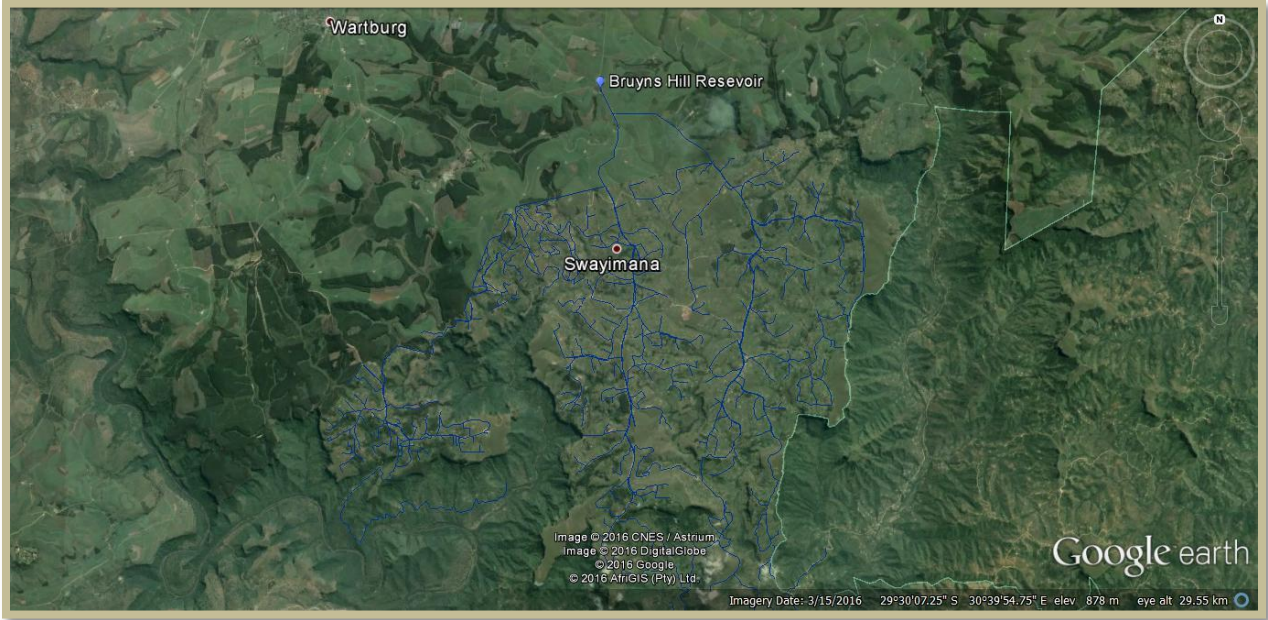
Please can you notify ourselves on behalf of our client, Mr Sipehelele Dlamini of SPHE Consulting Services, as to the decision of Amafa in this regard.

Yours sincerely



Len van Schalkwyk.  
Principal Investigator.

**Images of Study Area**



**Google Image of Project Area**



**Settlement and infrastructure**



**Pipeline alignments are to be within road and track reserves**

