

**PHASE 1 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT  
FOR THE CATA/MNYAMENI AREA  
EAST LONDON, EASTERN CAPE**

**For: Lukhozi Engineering Consultants**

**PHONE: +27 (0)43 721 1321**

**SEPTEMBER 2008**

***Knight Piésold***  
CONSULTING

**Knight Piésold (Pty) Limited  
Consulting Engineers  
& Environmental Scientists**

**P O Box 383  
Westville  
3630**

**Tel: +27 31 266 8072**

**Fax: +27 31 266 4668**

**e-mail: [ebecker@knightpiesold.com](mailto:ebecker@knightpiesold.com)**

## CONTENTS

1.	INTRODUCTION	3
2.	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	3
3.	HERITAGE RELEVANCE OF THE CATA/MNYAMENI AREA	5
4.	LEGISLATION	5
5.	METHODOLOGY	5
6.	POTENTIAL HERITAGE RESOURCES	6
6.1	Site 1: Cata	6
6.2	Site 2: Mnyameni	7
7.	RECOMMENDATIONS AND WAY FORWARD	8
7.1	Processes to be followed in the event of discovery	9
7.2	General conditions of authorisation	9
8.	CONCLUSIONS	10
9.	RESOURCES	10

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Knight Piésold Consulting has been requested to undertake a Heritage Impact Assessment as part of an Environmental Impact Assessment Process for the proposed Cata/Myameni Borrow Pits project in the East London Municipal area, Eastern Cape. The purpose of the Heritage Impact Assessment is to identify any heritage resources or areas of cultural relevance that may be impacted on by the development proposal. Such resources or areas are considered protected in terms of the National Heritage Resources Act (No. 25 of 1999), and any proposals that may disturb or destroy these heritage resources would therefore be subject to the necessary application processes or procedures as decided by the relevant heritage authorities. The following document provides information with regard to the location of possible heritage resources and the proposed recommendations on the way forward.

**TABLE 1: PROJECT AND CLIENT DETAILS**

<b>PROJECT NAME</b>	Cata/Mnyameni Dams (7 Dams)
<b>CLIENT</b>	Knight Piésold Rivonia on behalf of Lukhozi Engineering
<b>NATURE OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT</b>	Reuse of two existing borrowpits for road upgrade project
<b>SURROUNDING LANDUSE</b>	Rural
<b>COORDINATES OF SITES SURVEYED</b>	
<b>SITE 1: Cato Borrowpit Site</b>	S 32° 39' 10.1"    E 27° 06' 14.4"
<b>SITE 2: Mnyameni Borrowpit Site</b>	S 32° 36' 10.0"    E 27° 03' 57.0"
<b>JURISDICTION</b>	Amathole District Municipality, East London, Eastern Cape

## 2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project area is situated along the Gxulu River basin, next to the Keiskammahoek area. The borrow pits under investigation have both been mined at some point in the past under permit approval by the local municipality, however under new legislation, approval has to be obtained by the relevant Environmental Authority before mining can commence. In terms of this approval, the current investigation is aimed at determining the environmental and heritage impacts to the two sites, given that the borrow pits will be reopened and extended for mining activities. The borrow pits are both located in close proximity to rural settlement areas, as well as the waterworks access roads that the excavated material will service.

Currently the areas proposed for borrow pit development are already disturbed in terms of previous mining activities undertaken by the local municipality. The dirt roads in the area are of poor quality and inadequately maintained as a result of funding constraints. The main objective of mining the borrow pits is to utilize the material for the upgrade of poorly maintained water work roads that provide access to the Cata and Mnyameni dams.

The Cata and Mnyameni Dams provide the surrounding villages with water (Plate 1), and the access roads to the dams are no longer considered of a suitable standard given the current traffic volumes. It is therefore proposed to upgrade the existing roads by resurfacing and improving the road camber, which would require the excavation of material from the old borrowpits. The dams are also to provide water to local irrigation schemes, for example the Keiskammahoek Irrigation Scheme that consists of 854 HA (online data). The water demands of the Keiskammahoek Irrigation Scheme exceed the water availability from the Cata and Mnyameni dams and therefore the upgrade of the whole water supply area is of a necessity.



**Plate 1: An example of one of the villages that benefit from water received from the Cata and Mnyameni dams.**

### **3. HERITAGE RELEVANCE OF THE CATA/MNYAMENI AREA**

The area is located close to the town of Keiskammahoek in close vicinity of the Gxulu River below the Amatola Mountains. The area played an important role in the time of the Frontier Wars between 1846 and 1853 (amahlati.co.za). Castle Eyre that is located on the outskirts of the area was built in 1852 according to historical records (online data). The town is an important commercial centre for timber and agricultural activities. Historically the local communities have been removed from their original occupational sites for the development of dams and agricultural activities that resulted in the loss of land. The outcome was that the local people commenced with the claim of land rights and compensation was paid in 1999 (Online).

### **4. LEGISLATION**

Under current Legislation, Heritage Resources located within the Eastern Cape are protected in terms of the South African Heritage Resources Act (No. 25 of 1999). The following heritage resources are under the protection of the National Heritage Act and were a focus in this investigation:

- 1) *Structures: Any structures which are older than 60 years*
- 2) *Burial Grounds and Graves;*
- 3) *Battlefields and public monuments and memorials;*
- 4) *Archaeology, rock art, palaeontology, battlefields and meteorite sites*
- 5) *Objects (pottery, stone tools, spear heads etc.)*

### **5. METHODOLOGY**

A site survey was necessary to provide insight into the type of environment, location of the site, the surrounding activities and the possible social problems that may occur if the proposed access road is upgraded and the old borrow pits are reopened:

- A project orientation process was undertaken at a desktop level to better understand the nature of the activity and the extent of the development proposal.
- A review of the project documentation and technical reports provided better insight into the nature of the proposed activity.
- A site meeting with Lukhozi Engineering and Knight Piésold Consulting was held on the 2<sup>ND</sup> of September 2008. The objectives of this meeting were for the project team to meet together onsite to better understand the receiving environment.

- A site investigation was undertaken on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of September 2008, and required a detailed reconnaissance foot survey, where a qualified heritage practitioner assessed the potential for heritage resources to be impacted on by the route proposed and/or the construction activities necessary to upgrade the access road. Two decommissioned borrowpits were accessed by four wheel drive vehicles and a foot survey was completed to determine if any heritage objects were located at the surface level. Areas that possibly could yield information with regard to grave sites were inspected closely. The position of the Cata/Mnyameni dams access road and borrowpit areas in relation to the existing homesteads and cultivated land areas assisted in the determination of where possible graves could be.
- A desktop investigation into the history of the area including an internet search and consultation with any relevant authorities.
- The compilation of the report and the determination of a way forward.

## **6. POTENTIAL HERITAGE RESOURCES**

### **6.1 Site 1: Cata**

The site proposed for further excavation is a decommissioned borrowpit that has been left unrehabilitated after the previous sand mining activities. As a result the borrowpit site itself did not present any known heritage resources. However as the proposed activities may impact a slightly bigger area given that the borrowpits would be accessed by large machinery and that construction may require overnight storage areas for such machinery, it was necessary to also investigate the immediate surrounding areas for their heritage resource potential. Based on Archaeological Records of the area, Stone Age deposits (Stone Tools etc) may potentially occur and were therefore the focus of the footsurvey. Other possible heritage resources relating to cultural or community activities in the area such as ritual sites and graves were also a focus of the investigation given the proximity of a homestead to the borrowpit.

Following the foot survey it was determined that no known heritage resources were evident on the surface, and there is therefore no objection in terms of heritage resources to the proposed borrowpit activities at this site provided the recommendations below are followed.



**Plate 2: Typical topography of areas surrounding the Cato Dam**

## **6.2 Site 2: Mnyameni**

The site proposed for further excavation is a decommissioned borrowpit that has been left unrehabilitated after the previous sand mining activities. As a result the borrowpit site itself did not present any known heritage resources. However as the proposed activities may impact a slightly bigger area given that the borrowpits would be accessed by large machinery and that construction may require overnight storage areas for such machinery, it was necessary to also investigate the immediate surrounding areas for their heritage resource potential. Based on Archaeological Records of the area, Stone Age deposits (Stone Tools etc) may potentially occur and were therefore the focus of the foot survey. Other possible heritage resources relating to cultural or community activities in the area such as ritual sites and graves were also a focus of the investigation given the proximity of the community to the borrowpit.

Following the foot survey it was determined that no known heritage resources were evident on the surface, as the area is located in close proximity to forestry plantations where forestry activities would have already disturbed Archaeological Material or heritage resources. There is therefore no objection in terms of heritage resources to the proposed borrowpit activities at this site provided the recommendations below are followed.



**Plate 3: Typical topography of areas surrounding the Mnyameni Dam**

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS AND WAY FORWARD**

There are no heritage resource-based objections to the proposed borrowpit activities, but it is necessary to adhere to any conditions stipulated by the South African Heritage Resources Agency.

The following recommendations for this site are made:

- As the borrowpits are located next to rural homesteads and the surrounding areas may possibly be used by the community for ritual purposes, it is of importance that the Local Traditional Leaders are informed with regard to the activities that are proposed. Such notification and dialogue will reduce or prevent unnecessary conflict between the local community and the project team, and will ensure that the construction team is accepted by the community.
- The local community must be contacted prior to any excavation activities commencing to determine the existence of any sacred sites. Such sites are not to be disturbed in any way.

- Although no graves were identified in close proximity to the borrowpits, caution during the earthmoving activities is necessary, and the discovery of unmarked graves will require that activities cease until the relevant authorities have assessed the situation.
- It is also recommended that a monitoring process is put in place to ensure that heritage resources unearthed during excavations are not disturbed by earthmoving activities. Should heritage resources be discovered, the process described in Section 7.1 below is to be followed. It is advised that the local museums and Heritage Authorities assist with the monitoring programs.

## **7.1 Processes to be followed in the event of discovery**

In the event of uncovering new heritage resources during the borrowpit mining, the activities are to cease immediately and SAHRA Heritage as well as Knight Piésold Consulting are to be contacted immediately. A specialist (Archaeologist) will investigate the area and determine the sensitivity of the new finds. The specialist will in coordination of SAHRA Heritage make recommendations in terms of the rescue of new heritage resources and following the correct permit procedure. A monitoring process is required to be completed by SAHRA Heritage as well as the specialist to ensure that the permit conditions stipulated are followed correctly. The permit conditions are of importance because it prevents any further damages to the new heritage resources and guides the developer in avoiding any further disturbances of any other possible heritage resources.

## **7.2 General conditions of authorisation**

The following conditions should be included in the approval as well as in the Record of Decision (ROD):

- a) In the event of the uncovering of graves during development activities South African Heritage Resources Agency must be contacted immediately and development must cease until further decision making is finalised;
- b) In the event of uncovering of Heritage Objects Amafa South African Heritage Resources Agency must be contacted and development must cease until further decision making is finalised.

## **8. CONCLUSIONS**

The mining of the borrowpits will not impact on any known heritage resources. The borrowpits are already significantly disturbed by previous activities. Although the area may yield deposits of Stone Age Material, they would be out of context at the borrowpits because of previous activities. Heritage resources may be uncovered during the earthmoving activities and in such event the developer is required to follow the conditions provided as per SAHRA and the ROD. The Cata/Mnyameni area yields information that relates to tangible and intangible Heritage Resources and both of these are protected in terms of the Heritage Resources Act (No. 25 of 1999). Graves and areas of worship are sacred that require sensitivity during the development processes and the local community is to be consulted during all phases of the project.

## **9. RESOURCES**

amahlati.co.za

<http://www.dwaf.gov.za/Documents/Other/WMA/12/AmatoleKeilSPAUG04Sec1-4.pdf>

[http://land.pwv.gov.za/documents&publications/publications/sis%20strategy/11/11\\_43\\_42\\_55\\_7.htm](http://land.pwv.gov.za/documents&publications/publications/sis%20strategy/11/11_43_42_55_7.htm)