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## **SAMORA MACHEL PLANE CRASH SITE MONUMENT & PUBLIC PARTICIPATION REPORT:**

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## Table of content

1. Introduction	3
2. Purpose of the site visit	3
3. Significance and status of a site	3
4. Methodology of the site visit	4
5. Assessment	5
6. Recommendations	6
7. Public participation report back	7
8. Welcome and Introductions	8
9. Discussions	8
10. Conclusions	9



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## **1. Introduction**

Sections 50 of National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999 give provision for the designation of the heritage inspectors. Section 50(7) state that the heritage inspectors, may at all reasonable time enter upon any land or premises for the purpose of inspecting any heritage resources protected in terms of the provision of the NHRA, or any other property in respect of which the heritage resources authority is exercising its functions in terms of the Act.

## **2. Purpose of the site visit**

The site visit was conducted as part of the public participation for the declaration process of the site, monitoring and evaluation of the Samora Machel crush site in Mbuzini. The site visit was to ensure that proper public participation takes place and maintenance needed of the site is assessed where necessary. Main objectives are to identify challenges, risk and possible maintenance of the heritage resources in the country. Section 5 (1) (a) of the NHRA clearly state that, heritage resources have lasting value in their own right and provide evidence of the origins of South Africa society and as they are valuable, finite, non-renewable and irreplaceable they must be carefully managed to ensure their survival.

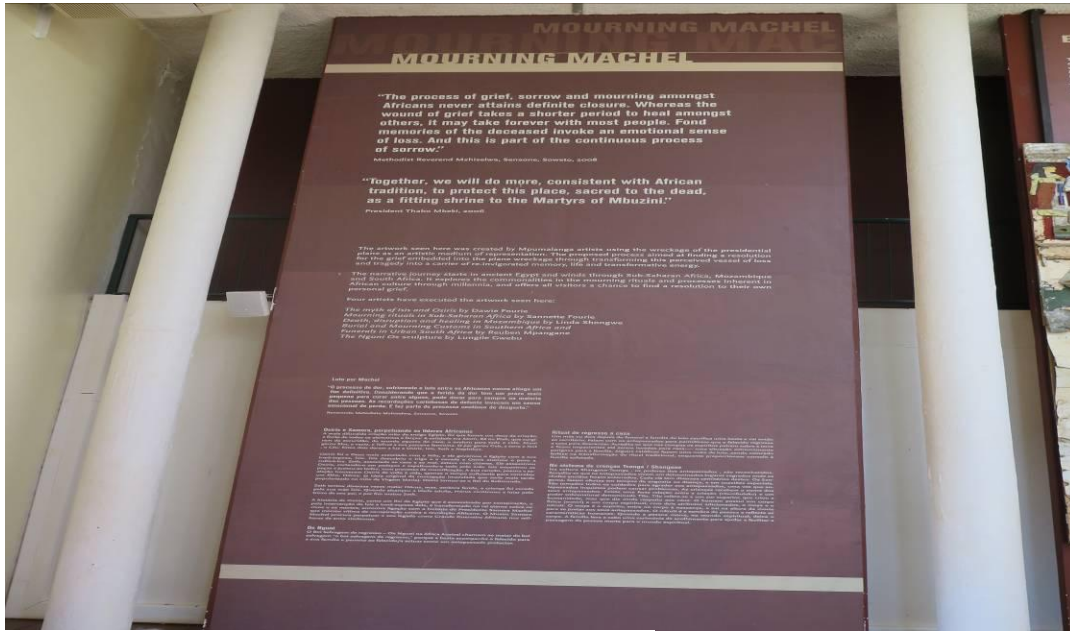
## **3. Significance and status of a site**

Samora Machel crush site is located in Lebombo mountains Mbuzini village, an area outside Nelspruit Mpumalanga Province, in the border of South Africa and Mozambique. A monument was unveiled in 1999 to commemorate the victims of plane crash that was carrying the Mozambique president, Samora Machel. As a tribute by the South African Government to an outstanding African Leader the memorial site was upgraded in 2006. Among other facilities erected are an exhibition area and an amphitheatre.



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Picture 1: Samora Machel Crash memorial plaque

The site was previously graded as grade 2 site. Currently the site is graded as Grade 1 site as it has a national significance status for both South African and Mozambique. Samora Machel was renounced African leader and had great influence within Southern African countries and a world at large. His death came as a shock and loss not only to Mozambique citizens, but to the rest of African continent.

#### 4. Methodology of the site visit

The site visit took place on the 20<sup>th</sup> February 2016 in Lembobo Mountains. The site inspection started at 09:00 firstly involving a tour in the museum. This was complemented by pictures taken and observing plane remains stored in the museum. Secondly a walk around monument precinct followed before attending a public participation engagement with the community members. With the aid of the monument staff members various





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areas of significance was pointed, such as where the old monument used to be situated. Pictures were taken of scattered plane remains and the funnels that represent the 35 lives lost during the crash.



Picture 2; some of the remains of the plane kept in the museum



Picture 3: scattered remains of the plane in the mountain

## 5. Assessment

Many stakeholders including the Barberton museum representatives raised concern about the design of the museum as it is not suitable to accommodate large number of people.



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The design is congested and the material used to build the museum is already



picture 4: interior of the museum

wearing down. The funnels that represent 35 lives lost are already rusty and corroding. The harsh climatic condition characterised by strong winds, hot sun and sometimes rain makes it difficult to find materials that can withstand all this conditions. The fence has already fallen down, because of structural problems.



Picture 5: fallen fence and interior of the museum



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## 6. Recommendations

Overall, the monument is still in good shape. Constant monitoring is required to assess the damages caused by climatic conditions. The fence needs to be rebuilt. The following is recommended that the Department of Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation and the Nkomazi Municipality adequately maintain and manage the site:

- ✓ A fund to be established to annually repair the site due to unfavourable climatic condition existing on the site.
- ✓ Continuous monitoring of the site in cooperation with the municipality and tribal authority.
- ✓ Finalise the management agreement with the municipality who are paying for the present staff members.
- ✓ Need to finalize a comprehensive Conversation Management Plan (CMP) to guide any repairs and maintenance.

## 7. Public participation report back

The public participation started at 10:30 on the 20<sup>th</sup> February 2016 and attended by various parties including; tribal authority representatives, councillor of the Mbuzini village, representatives of Department of Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation-Mpumalanga, municipality representatives, representatives of the



Barberton museum, SAHRA officials and members of the public



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Picture 6 & 7: members of the public who attended the public participation

## **8. Welcome and Introductions**

The representative of the tribal authority of Mbuzini village welcomed all members who attended the meeting. The program director who was the councillor of Mbuzini introduced SAHRA officials and other dignitaries. After brief introductions he handed to SAHRA to explain the business of the day.

Ms Nkosazana Machete, Heritage Inspectorate, Grading and Declaration manager gave a brief meaning of the declaration process and the outcome of the final declaration of the Samora Machel plane crash site to the all present at meeting. She further outlined where SAHRA get mandate to declare the sites in terms of National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999. Community members where afforded opportunity to ask questions and clarity.





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## **9. Discussions**

During questions and clarity session, many community members raised concern regarding the economic benefit which can be derived from official declaration of a Samora Machel crash site as National heritage site in terms of NHRA. The community members alleged that there were graves identified during the construction of the memorial and the tribal authority did nothing about the discovery. It was agreed that whoever have a proof of the existence of the graves should consult tribal authority in order to resolve any misunderstanding in terms of management and conservation of such graves. Community members and other representative who were present shown enthusiasm for the proposed declaration of the site, as they feel the monument will be in good hands if managed by SAHRA.

## **10. Conclusions**

At the end of the day all parties present, agreed that the declaration of the Samora Machel crash site should go ahead as SAHRA planned. They also requested that SAHRA should involve them in any project that will generate employment and other economic benefits as part of the management process of the site.