MILLENIUM HERITAGE GROUP (Pty) Ltd

PHASE 1

HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

RELATING TO THE PROPOSED NANDONI ESTATES AND PRIVATE HOSPITAL PROJECT, THULAMELA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY OF THE VHEMEBE DISTRIC OF THE LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides the results of a heritage impact assessment (HIA) study for the proposed Nandoni estates and private hospital project near Mutoti village, Thulamela Local Municipality of the Vhembe District, in the Limpopo Province. The study area is located roughly 10 kilometers northeast of Thohoyandou Central Business District (CBD). Desktop study of the region has confirmed that different communities occupied the Luvuvhu River Valley at different periods, with majority of the finds classified as isolated surface occurrence and mostly date to the Late Stone Age (Van Schalkwyk, 2007). The Iron Age occupation of the Luvuvhu River Valley seems to have taken place on significant scale and at least three different phases of occupation have been identified. Site dating to the Early Iron Age have been identified by Edwin Hanisch in 1995/6 during the Cultural Resource Management (CRM) program for the Nandoni Dam. The site is located roughly 1kilometer south of the proposed area situated on the bank of the Luvuvhu River. Preliminary ceramic analysis shows that this site equates to the Garonga Phase of the Early Iron Age and should have a date of AD 750-1000. It is commonly believed that these are the people who produce discrete ceramics styles and motif that represent the Kalundu and the Urewe traditions and subsequently this phase represent transition from the Early Iron Age to Late Iron Age period. The archaeology of these sites is not well understood mean while another site similar to this was documented in the Garonga Nature Reserve. The last period of occupation is consisted of Vha- Venda who were joined later by the Shangaans in the early 1800. Their presence is well defined by historical, recent past homesteads and marked burial grounds distributions throughout the valley. The current landscape is characterized by undulating plains currently covered by natural vegetation and several graminoids species. There are several areas where vegetation has been

cleared while gravel access roads transverse across the study area. Naledzi Environmental Consultants CC requested Millennium Heritage Group (Pty) Ltd, an independent heritage consulting company to assess the heritage sensitivity of the area proposed for estates and private hospital. A multi-stepped methodology was used to address the terms of reference. To begin with, a desktop study was carried out to identify any known heritage sites and their significance and the presence of burial grounds. This involved consulting previous contract archaeology reports filed on SAHRIS, research reports and academic publications. Finally, the study was guided by the National Heritage Resources Act of 1999 and SAHRA Minimum Standards for Impact Assessment. Desktop study was followed by fieldwork. I am confident that the entire study area was covered by this survey. Based on the current information obtained for the area during the initial site visit the following conclusions were reached:

The survey identified fourteen (14) marked graves scattered throughout the proposed development footprint and are considered to be under immediate threat due to the nature of the proposed project. It has been established that the recent bulldozing activities in preparation for parking spaces during the Royal Garden festival (September 2018) led to burial grounds disturbances, where some grave dressings were partially cleared off by the earth moving machine. Generally, these graves are clearly marked by oval parked stones out line, parked cairn of stones while others are indicated by granite tombstones as grave dressings.

1. It should be borne in mind that the total number may rise due to identification of unmarked graves by relevant family members, some of the old structures

foundations may have babies or infants graves as understood from Vha-Venda and Shangaan cultural practice.

Graves are protected and graded within the matrix of medium to high significance. It is strongly highlighted that project related activities (Engineering aspects such as gravel roads and storm water drainage system) will have negative impacts to these graves and we strongly recommend these graves to be relocated to the nearest local cemetery before the commencement of the proposed project. The exhumation process is regulated by various legislations, regulations and administrative procedures. This task is undertaken by Forensic archaeologist and reputed undertakers who are acquainted with all administrative procedures and relevant legislations that have to be adhered to whenever human remains are exhumed and relocated. This process also includes social facilitations process with 60 days' statutory notice period for grave older than sixty years. Permission of exhumations and relocation have to be obtained from the decedents of the deceased, the National Department of Health, the Provincial Department of Health, The Premier of the Province and the Local Police.

We advise that proposed work should cease if any of the following are uncovered during the construction phase of the project:

- Human remains
- Concentrations of Stone tools/ceramics or faunal remains
- Stone walling's or any sub- surface structures

If any of the above is uncovered, SAHRA should be notified so that an archaeologist/paleontologist can investigate further. From an archaeological and cultural

heritage resources perspective, should the recommendations be followed there are no objections to the proposed project and we recommend to South African Heritage Resources Authorities (SAHRA) or Provincial Heritage Resource authority to approve the project as planned.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

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1. INTRODUCTION

Ront Trading commissioned pre-development Heritage Impact Assessment studies for the proposed Nandoni estates and Private Hospital project at Ha- Mutoti village near Nandoni Dam (Figure 1). The study area is located roughly 10 kilometers Northeast of Thohoyandou Central Business District, within the Thulamela Local Municipality of the Vhembe District, Limpopo Province. To ensure that the proposed development meets the environmental requirements in line with the National Environmental Management Act 107 of 1998 as amended in 2010, they appointed Naledzi Environmental Consultants CC who then appoint Millennium Heritage Group (PTY) LTD to undertake archaeological impact assessment of the proposed project.

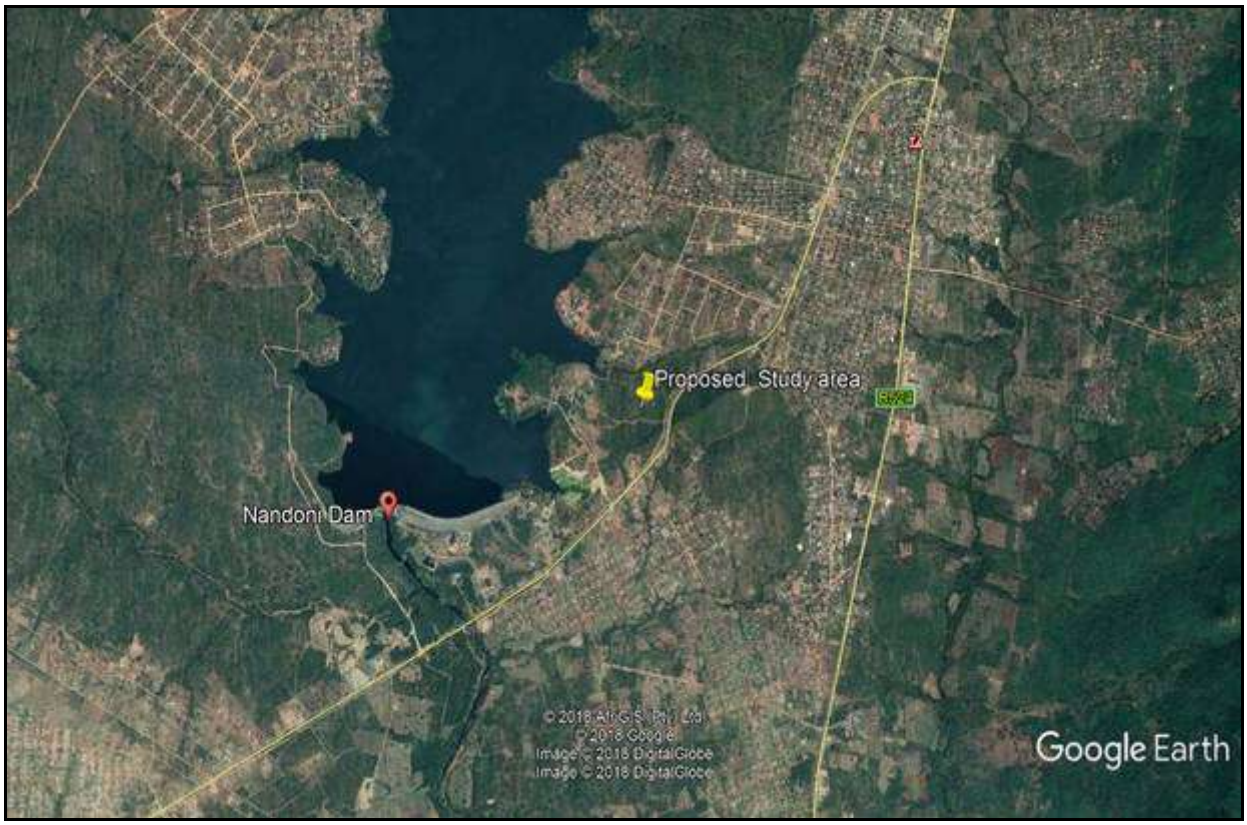

Figure 1: Google layout of the proposed development

To comply with relevant legislations, the applicant Ront Trading requires information on the heritage resources that occur within or near the proposed site for development and their significance. The objective of the study is to document the presence of archaeological, paleontological and historical sites of significance and to inform and provide guidance on the proposed development. The study contributes to the preservation of heritage resources, by ensuring that where possible, the development footprint is altered. In cases, where this is not possible, the heritage resources will be documented through mitigation to preserve them by record. This will enable the developer to advance development activities and at the same time minimizing potential impact on archaeological and heritage sites. Heritage Impact Assessments are conducted in line with the National Heritage Resources Act of 1999 (Act No. 25 of 1999). The Act protects heritage resources through formal and general protections. Furthermore, the Act provides that certain developmental activities require authorization from relevant heritage authorities. The National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA - Act No. 25 of 1999) protects all built structures and features older than 60 years (Section, 34), archaeological sites and materials (Section 35) and graves and burial sites (Section, 36). In addition to heritage legislation, the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) has developed minimum standards for impact assessment. While these local standards are operational, they are strengthened and complemented by the International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) guidelines for assessing impacts on heritage resources, both cultural and natural. In addition, the Burra Charter of 1999, requires a cautious approach to the management of sites and firmly establishes that the cultural significance of heritage places must guide all decisions when it comes to dealing with heritage. To comply with relevant legislation, the applicant requires information on the heritage resources, that occur in the area proposed

for development and their significance. This will enable the Applicant to take pro-active measures to limit the adverse effects that the development could have on such heritage resources.

2. RELEVANT LEGISLATION

Two sets of legislation are relevant for the purposes of this study in as far as they contain provisions for the protection of tangible and intangible heritage resources including burials and burial grounds.

2.1. The National Heritage Resource Act (25 of 1999)

This Act established the South African Heritage Resource Agency (SAHRA) as the prime custodian of the heritage resources and makes provision for the undertaking of heritage resources impact assessments for various categories of development as determined by Section 38. It also provides for the grading of heritage resources (Section, 7) and allocates the responsibility and functions for managing different categories of heritage to the State, Provincial and Local authorities, depending on the grade of heritage resources (Section, 8). In terms of the National Heritage Resource Act 25, (1999) the following is of relevance:

Historical remains

Section 34 (1) No person may alter or demolish any structure or part of a structure, which is older than 60 years without a permit issued by the relevant Provincial Heritage Resources Authority.

Archaeological remains

Section 35(3) Any person who discovers archaeological and paleontological materials and meteorites during development or agricultural activity must immediately report the find to the responsible heritage resource authority or the nearest local authority or museum.

Section 35(4) No person may, without a permit issued by the responsible heritage resources authority-

- destroy, damage, excavate, alter, deface or otherwise disturb any archaeological or paleontological site or any meteorite;
- destroy, damage, excavate, remove from its original position, collect or own any archaeological or paleontological material or object or any meteorite;
- trade in, sell for private gain, export or attempt to export from republic any category of archaeological or paleontological material or object or any meteorite; or
- bring onto or use at an archaeological or paleontological site any excavation equipment or any equipment which assist with the detection or recovery of metal or archaeological material or object or such equipment for the recovery of meteorites.

Section 35 (5) When the responsible heritage resource authority has reasonable cause to believe that any activity or development which will destroy, damage or alter any archaeological or paleontological site is underway, and where no application for a permit has been submitted and no heritage resource management procedures in terms of section 38 has been followed, it may

- serve on the owner or occupier of the site or on the person undertaking such development an order for the development to cease immediately for such period as is specified in the order
- carry out an investigation for obtaining information on whether an archaeological or paleontological site exists and whether mitigation is necessary;
- if mitigation is deemed by the heritage resources authority to be necessary, assist the person on whom the order has been served under paragraph (a) to apply for a permit as required in subsection (4); and
- recover the cost of such investigation from the owner or occupier of the land on which it is believed an archaeological or paleontological site is located or from the person proposing to undertake the development if no application for a permit is received within two weeks of the order being served.

Subsection 35(6) the responsible heritage resource authority may, after consultation with the owner of the land on which an archaeological or paleontological site or meteorite is situated; serve a notice on the owner or any other controlling authority, to prevent activities within a specified distance from such site or meteorite.

Burial grounds and graves

Section 36 (3) No person may, without a permit issued by SAHRA or a provincial heritage resources authority:

(i) destroy, damage, alter, exhume, remove from its original position or otherwise disturb any grave or burial ground older than 60 years which is situated outside a formal cemetery administered by a local authority; or

(ii) bring onto or use at a burial ground or grave any excavation equipment, or any equipment which assists in detection or recovery of metals.

Subsection 36 (6) Subject to the provision of any person who during development or any other activity discover the location of a grave, the existence of which was previously unknown, must immediately cease such activity and report the discovery to the responsible heritage resource authority which must, in co-operation with the South African Police service and in accordance with regulation of the responsible heritage resource authority-

(I) carry out an investigation for obtaining information on whether such grave is protected in terms of this act or is of significance to any community; and

if such grave is protected or is of significance, assist any person who or community which is a direct descendant to decide for the exhumation and re-interment of the contents of such grave or, in the absence of such person or community, make any such arrangement as it deems fit.

Cultural Resource Management

Section **38(1)** Subject to the provisions of subsection (7), (8) and (9), any person who intends to undertake a development*…

- must at the very earliest stages of initiating such development notify the responsible heritage resources authority and furnish it with details regarding the location, nature and extent of the proposed development.

development means any physical intervention, excavation, or action, other than those caused by natural forces, which may in the opinion of the heritage authority in any way result in a change to the nature, appearance or physical nature of a place, or influence its stability and future well-being, including:

(i) Construction, alteration, demolition, removal or change of use of a place or a structure at a place;

(ii) Any change to the natural or existing condition or topography of land, and

(iii) Any removal or destruction of trees, or removal of vegetation or topsoil;

place means a site, area or region, a building or other structure

structure means any building, works, device or other facility made by people and which is fixed to the ground.

2.2. The Human Tissue Act (65 of 1983)

This act protects graves younger than 60 years, these falls under the jurisdiction of the National Department of Health and the Provincial Health Department. Approval for the exhumation and reburial must be obtained from the relevant provincial MEC as well as relevant Local Authorities.

3. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The terms of reference for the study were to undertake a Heritage Impact Assessment for the proposed project and submit a specialist report, which addresses the following:

- Executive summary
- Scope of work undertaken
- Methodology used to obtain supporting information
- Overview of relevant legislation

- Results of all investigations
- Interpretation of information
- Assessment of impact
- Recommendation on effective management measures
- References

4. TERMINOLOGY

The Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) referred to in the title of this report includes a survey of heritage resources as outlined in the National Heritage Resources Act,1999(Act No25 of 1999) Heritage resources, (Cultural resources) include all human-made phenomena and intangible products that are result of the human mind. Natural, technological or industrial features may also be part of heritage resources, as places that have made an outstanding contribution to the cultures, traditions and lifestyle of the people or groups of people of South Africa.

The term 'pre – historical' refers to the time before any historical documents were written or any written language developed in an area or region of the world. The historical period and historical remains refer, for the project area, to the first appearance or use of 'modern' Western writing brought to South Africa by the first colonists who settled in the Cape in the early 1652 and brought to the other different part of South Africa in the early 1800s.

The term 'relatively recent past' refers to the 20th century. Remains from this period are not necessarily older than sixty years and therefore may not qualify as archaeological or historical remains. Some of these remains, however, may be close to sixty years of age and may soon, qualify as heritage resources.

It is not always possible, based on the observation alone, to distinguish clearly between archaeological remains and historical remains or between historical remains and remains from the relatively recent past. Although certain criteria may help to make this distinction possible, these criteria are not always present, or when they are present, they are not always clear enough to interpret with great accuracy. Criteria such as square floor plans (a historical feature) may serve as a guideline. However circular and square floors may occur together on the same site.

The 'term sensitive remains' is sometimes used to distinguish graves and cemeteries as well as ideologically significant features such as holy mountains, initiation sites or other sacred places. Graves are not necessarily heritage resources if they date from the recent past and do not have head stones that are older than sixty years. The distinction between 'formal' and 'informal' graves in most instances also refers to graveyards that were used by colonists and by indigenous people. This distinction may be important as different cultural groups may uphold different traditions and values regarding their ancestors. These values should be recognized and honored whenever graveyards are exhumed and relocated.

The term 'Stone Age' refers to the prehistoric past, although Late Stone Age people lived in South Africa well into the historical period. The Stone Age is divided into an Early Stone Age (3Million years to 150 000 thousand years ago) the Middle Stone Age (150 000 years ago to 40 years ago) and the Late Stone Age (40 000 years to 200 years ago).

The term ‘Early Iron Age’ and Late Iron Age respectively refers to the periods between the first and second millenniums AD.

The period covered by the term ‘Late Iron Age’ also includes the 17th and the 19th centuries and therefore includes the historical period.

Mining heritage sites refers to old, abandoned mining activities, underground or on the surface, which may date from the pre-historical, historical or relatively recent past.

The term ‘study area’ or ‘project area’ refers to the area where the developers wants to focus its development activities (refer to plan)

Phase I studies refer to survey using various sources of data in order to establish the presence of all possible types of heritage resources in a given area.

Phase II studies include in-depth cultural heritage studies such as archaeological mapping, excavating and sometimes laboratory work. Phase II work may include documenting of rock art, engravings or historical sites and dwellings; the sampling of archaeological sites or shipwrecks; extended excavation of archaeological sites; the exhumation of bodies and the relocation of grave yards, etc. Phase II work may require the input of specialist and require the co-operation and the approval of SAHRA.

5. METHODOLOGY

Sources of information

i. Desktop studies

A desktop study was performed to gain information on the heritage resources in the area. Very few previous Heritage impact assessment reports were consulted, (Mathoho 2015,

Mathoho 2016, Archaeo- Info-2000) The general archaeology within the study area took place since the Stone Age time as represented by some remarkable scattered distribution of stone tool most found on the lower lying areas dominated by agricultural activities (Cultivated lands) and erosion gullies. The presents of stone tools in such disturbed areas is a true reflection that early humans lived here, discontinuously, for thousands of years, from the Middle to the Late Stone Age periods. Majority of these finds are classified as isolated surface occurrences, and mostly are judged to have a low significance and they require no mitigation measures. Iron Age occupation of the Luvuvhu River valley seems to have taken place on a significant scale, with two different phases of occupation (Early and later periods) well represented. The last period of pre-colonial occupation consisted of Vha- Venda who settled and practice metal working on stone-walled sites. E.g. MUT 26. At present it is not clear, but, judged on the pottery found here; these sites might even date to early historic times.

ii. Field surveys

To identify sites on the ground and to assess their significance, a dedicated field survey was performed to the site of the proposed development (Fig 1). The fieldwork was performed by Mr. Mathoho Eric on the 14th of October 2018. The fieldwork followed systematic inspections of predetermined linear transects which resulted in the maximum coverage of the entire site. The sampling method selected was the stratified random technique. Consultations with local communities also pointed to known sites. Standard archaeological observation practices were followed. The proposed site location was recorded by hand held GPS and plotted on 1:50 000 topographical maps. The general

condition of the terrain were photographed with a Canon 1000D Camera. No archaeological or historical site was identified.

Assumption and Limitations

It must be pointed out that heritage resources can be found in unexpected places, and that surveys may not detect all the heritage resources in each project area, particularly that beneath the ground. While some remains may simply be missed during surveys (observation) others may occur below the surface of the earth and may be exposed once development (such as the construction of the proposed facilities) commences.

6. ASSESSMENTS CRITERIA

This section describes the evaluation criteria used for determining the significance of archaeological and heritage sites. The significance of archaeological and heritage sites was determined based on the following criteria:

- The unique nature of a site.
- The amount/depth of the archaeological deposit and the range of features (e.g. concentration of stone tools, activity areas etc.).
- The wider historic, archaeological and geographic context of the site.
- The preservation condition and integrity of the site.
- The potential to answer present research questions.

6.1 Site Significance

The site significance classification standards as prescribed in the guidelines and endorsed by the South African Heritage Resources Agency (2006) and approved by the Association for Southern African Professional Archaeologists (ASAPA) for the Southern African

Development Community (SADC) region, were used in determining the site significance for this report.

The classification index is represented in the Table below that show grading and rating systems of heritage resources in South Africa.

FIELD RATING	GRADE	SIGNIFICANCE	RECOMMENDED MITIGATION
National Significance (NS)	Grade 1	-	Conservation; National Site nomination
Provincial Significance (PS)	Grade 2	-	Conservation; Provincial Site nomination
Local Significance (LS)	Grade 3A	High Significance	Conservation; Mitigation not advised
Local Significance (LS)	Grade 3B	High Significance	Mitigation (Part of site should be retained)
Generally Protected A (GP.A)	Grade 4A	High / Medium Significance	Mitigation before destruction
Generally Protected B (GP.B)	Grade 4B	Medium Significance	Recording before destruction
Generally Protected C (GP.C)	Grade 4C	Low Significance	Destruction

6.2 Impact Rating

VERY HIGH

These impacts would be considered by society as constituting a major and usually permanent change to the (natural and/or cultural) environment, and usually result in severe or very severe effects, or beneficial or very beneficial effects.

Example: The loss of a site would be viewed by informed society as being of VERY HIGH significance.

Example: The establishment of a large amount of infrastructure in a rural area, which previously had very few services, would be regarded by the affected parties as resulting in benefits with VERY HIGH significance.

HIGH

These impacts will usually result in long term effects on the social and /or natural environment. Impacts rated as HIGH will need to be considered by society as constituting an important and usually long-term change to the (natural and/or social) environment. Society would probably view these impacts in a serious light.

Example: The loss of a diverse vegetation type, which is common elsewhere, would have a significance rating of HIGH over the long term, as the area could be rehabilitated.

Example: The change to soil conditions will impact the natural system, and the impact on affected parties (e.g. farmers) would be HIGH.

MODERATE

These impacts will usually result in medium- to long-term effects on the social and/or natural environment. Impacts rated as MODERATE will need to be considered by the public or the specialist as constituting a unimportant and usually short-term change to the (natural and/or social) environment. These impacts are real, but not substantial.

Example: The loss of a sparse, open vegetation type of low diversity may be regarded as MODERATELY significant.

Example: The provision of a clinic in a rural area would result in a benefit of MODERATE significance.

LOW

These impacts will usually result in medium to short term effects on the social and/or natural environment. Impacts rated as LOW will need to be considered by society as constituting an important and usually medium-term change to the (natural and/or social) environment. These impacts are not substantial and are likely to have little real effect.

Example: The temporary changes in the water table of a wetland habitat, as these systems are adapted to fluctuating water levels.

Example: The increased earning potential of people employed because of a development would only result in benefits of LOW significance to people living some distance away.

NO SIGNIFICANCE

There are no primary or secondary effects at all that are important to scientists or the public.

Example: A change to the geology of a certain formation may be regarded as severe from a geological perspective but is of NO SIGNIFICANCE in the overall context.

6.3 Certainty

DEFINITE: More than 90% sure of a fact. Substantial supportive data exist to verify the assessment.

PROBABLE: Over 70% sure of a fact, or of the likelihood of an impact occurring.

POSSIBLE: Only over 40% sure of a fact, or of the likelihood of an impact occurring.

UNSURE: Less than 40% sure of a fact, or of the likelihood of an impact occurring.

6.4 Duration

SHORT TERM : 0 – 5 years

MEDIUM: 6 – 20 years

LONG TERM: more than 20 years

DEMOLISHED: site will be demolished or is already demolished

6.5 Mitigation

Management actions and recommended mitigation, which will result in a reduction in the impact on the sites, will be classified as follows:

- ✓ **A** – No further action necessary
- ✓ **B** – Mapping of the site and controlled sampling required
- ✓ **C** – Preserve site, or extensive data collection and mapping required; and
- ✓ **D** – Preserve site

7. Historical background a brief synthesis of the archaeology and heritage of the study area.

The Stone Age Periods

Conventionally speaking, the Stone Age period has been divided into the Early Stone Age (ESA) (3.5 million and 250 000 BP), the Middle Stone Age (MSA) (250 000 – 25000 BP) and the Later Stone Age (25000 – 2000 BP) (Phillipson 2005). Early Stone Age stone tool

assemblages are made up of the earlier Oldowan and later Acheulian types. The Oldowan tools were very crude and were used for chopping and butchering. These were replaced by Acheulian ESA tools dominated by hand axes and cleavers which are remarkably standardized (Wadley, 2007; Sharon, 2009). Evidence presented from Sterkfontein, Swartkrans and Makapansgat caves shows that the first tool making hominids belong to either an early species of the Homo or an immediate ancestor which is yet to be discovered here in South Africa (Phillipson 2005; Esterhuysen, 2007). Both the Oldowan and Acheulian industries are well represented in the archaeology of Northern Cape South Africa (Kuman et al. 2005; Sumner and Kuman 2014).

The Middle Stone Age dates to between 250 000 ago and 25 000 years ago. In general, Middle Stone Age tools are characterized by a size reduction in tools such as hand axes, cleavers, and flake and blade industries. The period is marked by the emergence of modern humans and was accompanied by change in technology, behavior, physical appearance, art, and symbolism (Phillipson 2005). A variety of MSA tools includes blades, flakes, scraper and pointed tools that may have been hafted onto shafts or handles and used as pear heads. Surface scatters of these flake and blade industries occur widespread across southern Africa (Klein 2000; Thompson & Marean, 2008).

The assemblages contain bifaces as well as blades, prepared core and Levalloisian unifacial points (Beaumont &Vogel 2006). Residue analyses on some of the stone tools indicate that these tools were certainly used as spear heads (Wadley, 2007). From about 25 000 BP, stone tool assemblages generally attributed to the Later Stone Age emerged. This period is marked by a reduction in stone tool sizes. Typical stone tools include

microliths and bladelets. Later Stone Age stone tools were recovered throughout the Province (Forsman 2011). This period is also associated with the development of rock art whose distribution is known across southern Africa (Deacon and Deacon 1999; Phillipson 2005).

HISTORY AND HERITAGE

Cultural Resource Management survey programs conducted for the development of Nandoni dam has recorded the existence of cultural material finger print remains from different periods. Archaeologically the proposed study area lies within the asserted traditional territories with density of archaeological sites most of which are located on higher elevations along the water source such as Luvuvhu River and its tributaries.

The studies shed light on the understanding of pre- history and historical part south of the Soutpansberg Mountain, aerial photographic survey and the layout of the study area showed that the region starting from the western end had major concentration of recent to historical settlements, with various scattered iron production sites along the main rivers. Recent studies classified these settlements and activity areas mainly comprised of four basic units, namely: homesteads, terraces, livestock enclosure and Iron production sites.

The general archaeology within the study area took place since the Stone Age time as represented by some remarkable scattered distribution of stone tool most found on the lower lying areas dominated by agricultural activities (Cultivated lands) and erosion gullies. The presents of stone tools in such disturbed areas is a true reflection that early humans lived here, discontinuously, for thousands of years, from the Middle to the Late Stone Age

periods. Majority of these finds are classified as isolated surface occurrences, and mostly are judged to have a low significance and they require no mitigation measures.

Iron Age people moved into southern Africa by c. AD 200, entering the area either by moving down the coastal plains, or by using a more central route. It seems more likely that the first option was what brought people into the study area. From the coast they followed various rivers inland. Being cultivators, they preferred the rich alluvial soils to settle on. One of the earliest dated sites is located near Tzaneen (Silver Leaves). This sequence owes much to the work undertaken by Menno Klapwijk, in the Tzaneen area, specifically at the site referred to as the earliest site component of the Iron Age period i.e. Silver Leaves site. The site was occupied in the third century, being dated by radiocarbon to circa 280 AD. Similar dates also came from Eiland sites discovered few kilometres south east of Tzaneen in the then Northern Transvaal. On both sites, direct evidence of cultivation was extremely limited, but impressions of *Pennisetum millet* seeds were discovered. This was the principal evidence of the earliest Iron Age penetration with the then dominant crop being brought in and introduced to the area (Klapwijk 1974).

Another archaeological evidence of great significance was the discovery of an archaeological site near the present town of Lydenburg in the Mpumalanga Province. The Lydenburg archaeological assemblage consists of the remains of the well- known seven terracotta heads (Lydenburg heads). The site was radiocarbon dated AD 470 becoming the oldest African Iron Age artwork ever found below the equator (Inskeep & Maggs 1975).

Iron Age occupation of the region seems to have taken place on a significant scale and at least three different phases of occupation have been identified. Sites dating to the Early Iron Age are found in the Luvuvhu River valley. These settlements seem to have been followed at a slightly later date by settlements linked to the Eiland Phase of the EIA (c. AD 1000). The last period of pre-colonial occupation consisted of Vha- Venda who settled on stone-walled, sites at the foot on the mountains. At present it is not clear, but, judged on the pottery found here; these sites might even date to early historic times. As this was a period of population movement, conflict and change, in large part set the scene for the current population situation within the study area. Considering the time period that they were occupied, they also feature in the early historic period.

Approximately 69 archaeological sites were recorded alongside the Luvuvhu river valley, during the impact assessment program of the proposed Nandoni dam 1993-1997. Sites location and distributions varied considerably, some were geo-referenced on promontory hills, ridges while others were noted on flat flood plains. One of the interesting site excavated in the study area, was Mut2/2 site, an Early Iron Age site located on river bluff, promontory ridge situated approximately 600m west of the current dam wall. Archaeological excavations yielded evidence of the early traded pieces of porcelain. Research analysis shows that Porcelain pieces originated in Mesopotamia, unfortunately the early trade route network is not known, with possibilities link to Middle East via Mozambique ports.

Another site with extra ordinary information was MUT26 ;(iron smelting site) excavated on rocky granite out crop on the bank of the Mahebe River, characterized by dry stone walls

with livestock enclosures, archaeological excavations revealed that this site, was occupied more than one period, from the early iron smelting to historical period. Archaeological evidence from this site was represented by exposed hut floors, grain bin foundation and lapa floor with burnt dark brown and gray soil, and high slag concentration. Archaeological excavation of MUT26 exposed remnants of smelting furnace roughly triangular in shape with three tuyere inlets on three corners. Similar furnace have been found elsewhere in Phalaborwa area (Mathoho 2012).The site (MUT26) was destructed by the proposed concrete quarry activities for the proposed dam construction.

To attain more understand of relative chronology of these archaeological sites, a description of pottery from different sites was carried out. The most dominant method of classifying ceramics in southern Africa is that of Huffman (2007) which combines different shape profiles with decoration techniques and motifs. Due to heavy vessel fragmentation and the small number of samples from our sites, general descriptions of the ceramics were given. Although largely descriptive, this approach identify and characterise ceramic traditions making it possible to relate ceramics from our sites to sequences established elsewhere in northern South Africa. The ceramic analysis revealed that sites excavated ranged from the Early Iron Age to the Historical period. The ceramics from Mut 26 (Dovheni iron production site) were highly fragmented making it difficult to reconstruct the shape profiles. When cleaned, it became clear that some of the pottery fragments were decorated with designs formed by red ochre and graphite burnishing, cross hatched and fine lines of incisions which appeared on some of the recovered potsherds. These designs are typical of Letaba facies which have been dated elsewhere to between AD1600 and 1840 (Huffman 2007).

A large representative sample of undiagnostic and diagnostic ceramic were retrieved from surface collection at Mut2/2 site on the Luvuvhu River, on average, the pots were well made and fired. The decoration techniques include punctuates on the rim and multiple bands in the neck. The decoration is placed on the rim, the neck and on the shoulders/body. The decoration on the potsherds from Mut 2/2 closely resembles that observed on Early Iron Age sites in the region, particularly the Garonga phase of Silver Leaves (see Mathoho 2012). According to Huffman (2007: 133), Garonga ceramics combine the features of Mzonjani and Happy Rest. Huffman also places Garonga (AD750-900) third in a sequence that starts with Silver Leaves (AD300-450) and Mzonjani (AD450-750).The excavations yielded numerous and diverse materials of importance. The excavated ceramics were described and compared to the established typologies of Huffman (2007). For our area, the descriptions revealed the existence of not only Early Iron Age sites but also Late Iron Age and historical period ones. Given that the ceramics for early and later periods are different.

There are no doubt that some of the archaeological sites found here belongs to the pre-Vha-Venda nation, unfortunately the Vha-Venda history is so complex and subject of unending dispute amongst different parties and dynastic group that inhabit the territory. Writings of the early 1930s has placed Vha- Venda as composite people, who don't see themselves as cultural homogenous or political united nation. Oral traditions suggest that most of the important migrations to the territory known today as Venda came from the north of the Limpopo River among these migrations two are particularly significant in the history of the area (Stayt 1968, Loubser 1991).

Vha-Venda of today are descendents of various groups and previous studies coupled with old traditions agrees that there was at one stage an aboriginal population in the region called Vhangona whether this group had chief or tribal cohesion it is not recorded in the history, it was previously rare for a person prepared to admit that they are descendents of this despised race. The historic period started c. 1840s, with the arrival of the first white settlers. Elephant hunting and the ivory trade were the most important economic activities of Zoutpansbergers, who depended increasingly on African marksmen as elephant herds retreated north into the tsetse belt. Thus many African hunters were equipped with Guns while on expedition to raid settlement for black ivory. Negotiations between the trekkers and vha-Venda resulted in certain areas south of the soutpansberg becoming the border between cultural groups as influenced by the early trade routes system via Mozambique. Later, tension developed between these cultural groups, giving rise to armed conflict.

One of the better known incidents is the so-called the black ivory and indenture system and slavery in the Soutpansberg (1848 to 1869,) where young children were classed as inboekenlinge (the so called ‘apprentices’ another name of slavery) were acquired and traded most of which were captive from African villages distributed among Boer themselves. These captives were produced by wars waged to open up certain areas of the far north for white settlement. Therefore the clashes resulted mainly from African resistance to attempts by the Boers to enforce their newly acquired authority by demanding labor and tribute among Vha-Venda chiefs.. According to Boeyens (1994) Soutpansberg was, after all, an open frontier where the authorities of the whites was continually challenged, resulting in regular clashes and war with local communities.

Children were taken as spoils of war because they had export market value (slavery), because of this process Venda children's who were regarded as spoils of war from different Venda chiefdoms were displaced as far as Pretoria is concerned. The Soutpansberg was known from the coast as the major source of white ivory and other game products. Under the indenture system many such labour were obtained through capture or trade. According to instruction report received by Lydenburg military officers in November 1851, only children's who were found helpless at least half a day after a military clash could be taken and indentured, children from opposing African village chiefs, orphaned as a result of combat where taken by the Boers. Indenture system was disguised from slavery, in order not to transgress the legal aspects of the ZAR and confront the quilt question. Even president M.W. Pretorius, who took a strong public stand against slavery, participated occasionally in the illegal trade in African children.

For example Soutpansberg commandant J.H Jacobs led a patrol against Rasikhuthuma, son of the Venda chief Ramabulana, in 1855 after Joao Albasini had accused Rasikhuthuma of stock theft. In the attack on Tshitungulu, Rasikhuthuma strongholds subjects were shot and 76 cattle's, 108 sheep's and goats as well as 13 young African were captured and divided amongst the Boers commander. In the same year (November 1855) L.M. Bronkhorst raided Ramabulana where eleven people were killed and five children were taken and divided amongst the burgers. In 1860 J. du Plessies led a commando against chief Mashau, because reportedly he was disobedient, livestock's, women and children were taken as spoils of war. From this point raids were confined almost entirely to African from whom the Boers claimed tribute which is equated with indentured children.

In October 1863, Albasini dispatched Va-Tsonga force under Munene against Chief Rambuda, because he refused to pay tribute to the burgers and had closed the hunting trails through his territory. Munene force fails to defeat Rambuda but they managed to kill seventy-seven and abducted a number of women and children's.

On 15 July 1867 Schoemansdal was evacuated following a protracted conflict with the Vha- Venda. For two years the ZAR government tried to subdue the Vha-Venda by diplomatic and military means but abandoned their attempt at the end of 1869, the Boers were forced to assemble in laagers for their own protection, especially during the hunting season when many men were away in quest of ivory. One visitor reported that the number of white population within the soutpansberg region being 1800 between 1855-1856, with 260 families, but archaeological findings show that no more than 100 families, this show that the number decreases due to African resistance and conflict. Some of the African Chief such as Madzie, a Venda chief whose capital was situated in the mountains above Schoemansdal, he was reported to have been a regular supplier of labour to the white community. After the death of the Venda chief, Ramabulana, whites were involved in the succession dispute between his sons, Makhado and Davhana, caused conflict that spread to other part of the Soutpansberg. In August 1865, the Venda chief Magoro, who occupied a strong hold south of the Klein Letaba river, was besieged and attached by Va-tsonga, and the Boers who claimed that Magoro had colluded with Makhado, there by killing Chief Magoro and his subjects (Boeyens 1994).

8. SITE LOCATION AND PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed site is situated on the northern bank of the Nandoni dam, at Ha- Mutoti village on farm Mpapuli 278MT, within the Thulamela Local Municipality of The Vhembe District in the Limpopo Province. The study area is located roughly 10 kilometers north east of Thohoyandou Central Business District (CBD). The site is located on the following Global Positioning System Co-ordinates (GPS S22°.58', 00.09" & E 30°.35'.11.08").

Generally the proposed study area covers roughly 90 hectares of undulating land in close proximity to the Nandoni dam purchase line. !0 of the total 90 hectares has been reserved for the demarcation of a Private Hospital and its associated infrastructures. Towards the south the proposed study area borders Royal Gardens, further north the site borders main tarred road from Ka- Mavambe to Thohoyandou CBD while to the west the area border a non-perennial stream. Several sections of the proposed study area have been cleared off the natural vegetation. This activities has partially damaged certain graves dressings. Previous Cultural resource management program conducted for the Nandoni Dam left these graves because they did not fall within the proposed dam purchase line. (Only those affected by the dam constructions and those that fall within the dam purchase line) were exhumed during the Nandoni Dam constructions.

The study area fall within the Lowveld bushveld complex, here the natural vegetation is comprised by a complex mosaic of sharply contrasting kinds dominated by subtropical moist thickets commonly associated with the lower lying area. Relative open savanna occur and form part of the river flood plains dominated by both deep soils. Shallow soil area is dominated by *Dichrostachys cineria* bush. Geological stratifications exhibits

variable geology with reddish or brown soils dominated by quartz, conglomerates, basalt, tuff, shale and siltstone of the Soutpansberg group (Mokolian Erathem). Rocky areas had miscellaneous soils which includes acidic dystrophic to methotrophic sandy to Loamy soils, Glenrosa and Mispah soil form are very common. The geology of the site has influence varied plant taxa which includes, *Tereminalia serecea, Catha edulis. Pilostigma thonningi, Schlerocary beria, Dichrostachys cineria, Acacia karroo, A, Nigrences, Berchemai zeyheri Bridelia Molis, ziziphus mucronata, flyeggea Virosa, Combretum collinum, Combretum molle*, *Papea capensis*

The proposed project entails the following elements:

- Demarcation of estate stands on 80ha of land with associated civil engineering aspects such as (streets, sewage, electricity and water pipelines and storm water drainage system
- Demarcation of a Private hospital and related infrastructures on the proposed 10 ha of land.

Figure 2: View of the study area towards the North

Figure 3: One of the sections where vegetation was cleared in preparation of parking space during the Royal garden festival (September 2018) this activities has disturbed some of the grave dressings.

Figure 4: View of the study area towards the south with Nandoni dam at the photo background

9. ASSESSMENT OF SITES AND FINDS

This section contains the results of the heritage sites/finds assessments. The phase 1 heritage scoping assessment program as required in terms of the Section 38 of the National Heritage Resource Act (Act 25 of 1999) done for the proposed demarcation of estates stands and a Private hospital project.

Find Assessments Results: ***the following heritage sites were geo-referenced in the study area.***

- **Site 1**: A cluster of two graves indicated by parked stone outline as grave dressing (GPS S22°.57.57.07 "& E 30°.34.57.04"). The graves are located on the western section of the main gravel road leading to the Royal Garden. The area has *Diospyros Mespiliformus* and clustered *agave sisalana* plant.

- **Site 2:** A cluster of two graves one indicated by granite tombstones while the second grave has been indicated by partly disturbed (bulldozed) stones grave dressings (GPS S22°.58.05.09 " & E 30°.35.07.03"). The tombstone has been in scripted Mbengeni William Muthelo, Born 1919, Died 1960, by wife and children. A *Schlerocarya berria* trees has been noted as a grave marking tree. The area has been fenced by welded metal bars

- **Site 3:** A cluster of three graves with grave dressings indicated by parked stones partly disturbed (bulldozed) (GPS S22°.58.05.05" & E 30°.35.09.07"). *Diospyros*

Mespiliformus and Schlerocarya berria trees has been noted as a grave marking tree.

- **Site 4:** A cluster of two graves with grave dressings indicated by parked stone outline partly disturbed (bulldozed) (GPS S22°.58.04.06" & E 30°.35.11.07"). Metal objects were noticed adjacent to the grave dressing.

- **Site 5:** A cluster of two graves one with grave dressings indicated by parked stone and a dead man's tree onto of the grave (GPS S22°.58.00.09" & E 30°.35.11.08"). The second grave has been indicated by constructed bricks, granite outline and headrest. The headrest has been in scripted Balibali Muthelo Thaweni, born 1842, and died 1933. The area has been fenced by welded metal bars

- **Site 6:** A cluster of three graves two of the three grave has been indicated by parked stones as grave dressings the third grave has been indicated by constructed bricks with granite outline and head rest. The headrest has been in scripted Nobela Nwapapayi Makhanani 1883-02-23 died 1967-08-18 (GPS S22°.58.05.05" & E 30°.35.09.07"). These graves are located on the western section of the study area near the flagged purchase line adjacent to the non-perennial stream.

No Stone or Iron Age sites were discovered. In general, the identified scattered burial grounds are considered and rated as high significance resources. Some of these graves

are older than 60 years and qualifies to be protected in terms of the South African Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999.

Graves are rated as cultural resource and are protected by law the following rating applies to the identified burial grounds.

Heritage Significance:		GP.A; High/Medium Significance
Impact	:	Negative
Impact Significance	:	High
Certainty	:	Probable
Duration	:	Permanent
Mitigation	:	C

10. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion, and within limitations, the study established that there are fourteen (14) graves (Burial Grounds) scattered throughout the project development foot print and are considered to be under immediate threat with the projects of this level. Recent clearings activities of the natural vegetation in preparation for parking spaces during the Royal Garden festival (September 2018) led to some burial grounds dressings disturbances. Few graves stone s dressings were partially cleared off by the earth moving machine. Generally, these graves are clearly marked by oval parked stones out line, parked cairn of stones while others are indicated by granite tombstones as grave dressings.

2. It should be borne in mind that the total number may rise due to identification of unmarked graves by relevant family members, some of the structures foundations may have been previously used as burial sites for babies and infants as part of Vha-Venda and Shangaan cultural practice.

Graves are protected and graded within the matrix of medium to high significance. It is strongly emphasized that project related activities (Engineering aspects such as gravel roads and storm water drainage system) will have negative impacts to these graves and we strongly recommend these graves to be relocated to the nearest local cemetery before the commencement of the project. The exhumation process is regulated by various legislations, regulations and administrative procedures. This task is undertaken by Forensic archaeologist and reputed undertakers who are acquainted with all administrative procedures and relevant legislations that have to be adhered to whenever human remains are exhumed and relocated. This process also includes social facilitations process with 60 days' statutory notice period for grave older than sixty years. Permission of exhumations and relocation have to be obtained from the decedents of the deceased, the National Department of Health, the Provincial Department of Health, The Premier of the Province and the Local Police.

We advise that proposed work should cease if any of the following are uncovered during the construction phase of the project:

- Human remains
- Concentrations of Stone tools/ ceramics or faunal remains
- Stone walling's or any sub- surface structures

If any of the above is uncovered, SAHRA should be notified so that an archaeologist/paleontologist can investigate further. The recommendations provided and outlined on this report should be incorporated into the Management Plan and should be followed and adhered to, as graves has high significance value to family members and are protected by various legislations. From an archaeological and cultural heritage resources perspective, should the recommendations be followed there are no objections to the proposed project and we recommend to South African Heritage Resources Authorities (SAHRA) or Provincial Heritage Resource authority to approve the project as planned.

11. PROFESSIONAL DECLARATION

I, the undersigned Mr. Ndivhuho Eric Mathoho hereby declare that I am a Professional archaeologist accredited with the Association for South African Professional Archaeologists (ASAPA) and that Millennium Heritage Group (Pty) Ltd is an independent Consultants with no association or with no any other interest what so ever with any institution, organization, or whatever and that the remuneration earned from consulting work constitute the basis of company livelihood and income.

Mr. Mathoho Ndivhuho Eric

……..

Archaeologists and Heritage Consultants for Millennium Heritage Group (Pty) Ltd

ASAPA Member

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13. PHOTO ADDENDUM

Figure 5: Site 1

Figure 6: Site 2

Figure 7: site 3

Figure 8: Site 4

Figure 9: Site 5

Figure 10: Site 6.

14. Addendum 1: Definitions and Acronyms

Archaeological Material remains resulting from human activities, which are in a state of disuse and are in, or on, land and which are older than 100 years, including artefacts, human and hominid remains, and artificial features and structures.

Chance Finds Archaeological artefacts, features, structures or historical cultural remains such as human burials that are found accidentally in context previously not identified during cultural heritage scoping, screening and assessment studies. Such finds are usually found during earth moving activities such as water pipeline trench excavations.

Cultural Heritage Resources Same as Heritage Resources as defined and used in the South African Heritage Resources Act (Act No. 25 of 1999). Refer to physical cultural properties such as archaeological and paleontological sites; historic and prehistoric places, buildings, structures and material remains; cultural sites such as places of ritual or religious importance and their associated materials; burial sites or *graves* and their associated materials; geological or natural features of cultural importance or scientific significance. Cultural Heritage Resources also include intangible resources such as religion practices, ritual ceremonies, oral histories, memories and indigenous knowledge.

Cultural Significance The complexities of what makes a place, materials or intangible resources of value to society or part of, customarily assessed in terms of aesthetic, historical, scientific/research and social values.

Grave A place of interment (variably referred to as burial), including the contents, headstone or other marker of such a place, and any other structure on or associated with such place. A grave may occur in isolation or in association with others where upon it is referred to as being situated in a cemetery.

Historic Material remains resulting from human activities, which are younger than 100 years, but no longer in use, including artefacts, human remains and artificial features and structures.

***In Situ* material** *Material culture* and surrounding deposits in their original location and context, for example an archaeological site that has not been disturbed by farming.

Late Iron Age this period is associated with the development of complex societies and state systems in southern Africa.

Material culture Buildings, structure, features, tools and other artefacts that constitute the remains from past societies.

Site A distinct spatial cluster of artefacts, structures, organic and environmental remains, as residues of past human activity.

Acronyms

AIA	Archaeological Impact Assesment
EIA	Environmental Impact Assesment
EIA	Early Iron Age
EMP	Environmental Management Plan
MHG	Millenium Heritage Group(PTY) LTD
NEMA	National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No.107 of 1998)
NHRA	National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act No.25 of 1999)
SAHRA	South African Heritage Resources Agency
ESA	Early Stone Age
MSA	Middle Stone Age
LSA	Late Stone Age
IA	Iron Age
LIA	Late Iron Age
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and culturural Organization
WHC	World Heritage Conventions of 1972

ADDENDUM 2: Types and ranges as outlined by the National Heritage Resource Act (Act 25 of 1999)

The National Heritage Act (Act No 25 of 1999, Art 3) outlines the following types and ranges of the heritage resources that qualify as part of the national estate, namely:

(a) Places, buildings structures and equipment of cultural significance;

(b) Places to which oral tradition are attached or which are associated with living heritage;

(c) Historical settlement and townscapes

(d) Landscape and natural features of cultural significance;

(e) Geological sites of scientific or cultural importance

(f) Archaeological and paleontological sites

(g) Graves and burial ground including-

- (I) Ancestral graves
- (II) Royal graves and graves of traditional leaders
- (III) Graves of victim of conflict
- (IV) Graves of individuals designated by the minister by notice in the gazette;
- (V) Historical graves and cemeteries; and
- (VI) Other human remains which are not covered by in terms of the Human Tissue Act,1983(Act No 65 of 1983)

(h) sites of significance relating to the history of slavery in South Africa;

(i) movable objects, including-

- (I) object recovered from soil or waters of South Africa, including archaeological and paleontological objects and material, meteorites and rare geological specimens;
- (II) objects to which oral traditions are attached or which are associated with living heritage
- (III) ethnographic art and objects;
- (IV) military objects;
- (V) objects of decorative or fine art;
- (VI) object of scientific or technological interest; and

(VII) books, records, documents, photographs, positive and negatives, graphic, film or video material or sound recording, excluding those that are public records as defined in section1(xiv) of the National Archives of South Africa Act,1996(Act No 43 of 1996).

The National Heritage Resource Act (Act No 25 of 1999,Art 3)also distinguishes nine criteria for places and objects to qualify as 'part of the national estate if they have cultural significance or other special value… these criteria are the following:

(a) its importance in the community, or pattern of South Africa's history;
(b) its possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage;
(c) its potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage;
(d) its importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class of South Africa's natural or cultural places or objects;
(e) its importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by a community or cultural group;
(f) its importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period;
(g) its strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons
(h) Its strong or special association with the life or work of a person, group or organization of importance in the history of South Africa
(i) Sites of significance relating to the history of slavery in South Africa.