

CULTURAL AND HERITAGE IMPACT MITIGATION

Various factors have to be investigated and mitigated to prevent the loss of any artefacts that are part of the regions culture and heritage, and to ensure that local communities are not negatively impacted upon by the construction of the dam.

The KwaZulu-Natal Midlands has cultural and heritage importance and the project is documenting the "sense of place" as it will be impacted upon by the construction of the dam. The dam basin plays a part in the region's history in that it was formally occupied by settlers of English descent in the late 1800s and was primarily used as farming land. The dam basin also includes part of the main wagon trail that led from the ports to the interior of the country. The area has therefore experienced the movement of troops to the interior and historical events such as the Langalibalale rebellion, the Anglo-Zulu war, the Anglo-Boer war, and the Bambatha rebellion.

The presence of San / Bushman inhabitants is also evident in the dam basin as there are three rock paintings just below Inchbrakie Falls on the Mooi River, known as the Vaalekop Rock Art Site. This site will be inundated, but the rock containing the artwork will be removed and stored in the Natal Museum. The site will also be excavated to save any archaeological artefacts.



To date, 55 graves have been identified in the basin and will have to be relocated in consultation with families, heritage and archaeological specialists, as well as traditional spiritual leaders. The developer has taken the necessary measures to identify appropriate reburial sites and is consulting with the affected families and authorities on the processes to be adopted.