





# 05 Heritage Recommendations

In South Africa all heritage resources are legislated as belonging to the people of South Africa and those who hold title to such heritage structures are deemed to be their custodians. All heritage structures, places and objects form part of the National Estate.

The researchers have developed heritage recommendations, based on the National Heritage Resources Act (25 of 1999, NHRA) of the Republic of South Africa. These are presented as guidance to the current custodians and owners of the residue of the NZASM endeavour and to inform policy for the pertinent heritage resources authorities—national, provincial and local.

## NZASM Places & Structures: Statement Of Significance

Only those 'places', 'structures' or 'objects' associated with the NZASM are assessed on terms of their significance leading to a general statement of significance. For the significance of the individual places structures and object covered by this report refer to Chapter 3.

## Assessment

The Act (25 of 1999) defines: 'place' which includes—

- (a) a site, area or region;
- (b) a building or other structure which may include equipment, furniture, 35 fittings and articles associated with or connected with such building or other structure;
- (c) a group of buildings or other structures which may include equipment, furniture, fittings and articles associated with or connected with such

- group of buildings or other structures; 40
- (d) an open space, including a public square, street or park; and
- (e) in relation to the management of a place, includes the immediate surroundings of a place; 'structure' as any building, works, device or other facility made by people and which is fixed to land, and includes any fixtures, fittings and equipment associated therewith;

In assessing the heritage value of the NZASM built residue, we report to Clause 3.3 of the National Heritage Resources Act (25 of 1999) of South Africa. This outlines the criteria for assessment of significance:

- (a) its importance in the community, or pattern of South Africa's history;

The NZASM endeavour set the trajectories of rail transport in the interior of South Africa hence determining patterns of land occupation, settlement, industrial development and provisioning of infrastructure which persist into the present and will be determinant in future.

- (b) its possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage;

The built residue of the NZASM endeavour is particular in its aesthetic and technology and while there are multiple artefactual elements extant, these should be seen as a single ensemble of a single endeavour. As such they are unique and rare as an example of an industrial undertaking of the late C19.

**05.1 (left):** An arched culvert (NZASM\_SL\_020), built by the NZASM, but today out of service and located in the Stone Arch Estate in Germiston. The community of the housing estate cherish it as a identity-giving heritage resource.

**05.2 (right):** The NZASM housing percent (NZASM\_SEL\_003-027) in Volksrust, Mpumaplanga. This ensemble, along with the abandoned and ruins station, hold much potential as a historic vector for development.



*(c) its potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage;*

The extant material residue speaks of labour, technology, land-use and occupation which are all source for multiple aspects of study by a wide range of disciplines and expertise.

*(d) its importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class of South Africa's natural or cultural places or objects;*

The residue demonstrates various class activities and patterns of land-use and occupation as well as dislocation of various classes of peoples, in particular indigenous labour and railway workers, artisans and professionals.

*(e) its importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by a community or cultural group;*

The built residue demonstrates in particular two aesthetic aspects of late C19 structures. The buildings relate to an adapted and often stripped late C19 eclecticism associated with railways architecture. The engineered structures demonstrate late C19 technology and steel and masonry structural techniques.

*(f) its importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period;*

The NZASM endeavour is generally and widely regarded as a enormous technical feat: in the rapidity and efficiency with which it was delivered; the high degree of technical and construction craftsmanship which it demonstrates; as well as

the ingenuity used to traversing some of the most difficult terrain in South Africa.

*(g) its strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons;*

Various groups are represented—from indigenous labour (often unrecorded) to various historical and cultural organisations or groupings, both local and international—who engaged in the various historical episodes contemporaneously associated with the NZASM, or currently as owners, occupants, users or interest groups.

*(h) its strong or special association with the life or work of a person, group or organisation of importance in the history of South Africa; and*

The NZASM's employees—from highly skilled and gifted engineers and architects, contractors, labourers, through to the labouring classes—are all reflected in the achievement. Their histories, as well as historical episodes in which rail infrastructure played a vital role, such as the South African War, various rail disasters, and such like, are all associated with the extant residue of the endeavour.

*(i) sites of significance relating to the history slavery in South Africa.*

[Note: the authors suggest that 'slavery' is too narrow a focus of the Act and that 'unfair labour practice' broadens the consideration as well as making it more widely applicable in the South African context.]

The Act of the *Volksraad* of the ZAR (Act 4 of 1885) whereby black labour was press-ganged into



**05.3:** The Volksrust Station (NZASM\_SEL\_002), a former National Monument, now Provincial Heritage Resource.



service is an aspect highlighted in the provisioning of the NZASM rail infrastructure.

A generic Statement of Significance for the entire built residue of the NZASM Endeavour reads:

These structures, being part of the larger NZASM endeavour, are good extant examples of their type. Their importance is in their associations with South Africa's community, heritage, and is considered uncommon, rare and endangered; it has the potential to yield information for understanding; as objects they demonstrate principal characteristics; have particular aesthetic characteristics; demonstrate a high degree of technical achievement; have strong and special associations with both historic and contemporaneous communities; have a special association with the life and work of an important organisation and its associated persons; and are significant in revealing labour practices of the time; all as they relate to the culture of South Africa and her international cultural historic affiliates.

The international significance of the NZASM endeavour is highlighted by an the 1996 Cultural Agreement *Agreement between the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Republic of South Africa on cooperation in die fields of Education and Science, Arts and Culture, Health, Welfare and Sport*; and the 2004 intergovernmental *Programme of Implementation: Accommodate Cultural Diversity. The challenge of common cultural heritage. (Implementation Framework on the Common Cultural Heritage of South Africa and the Netherlands)*. [See: <http://culturalheritageagency.nl/en/cultural-heritage/>

shared-cultural-heritage/shared-cultural-heritage-programme ]

### Recommendation

It is recommended that there be serial declarations of the line trajectories including the remnant artefactual remains of 'structures' as Provincial Heritage Resource sites. These rail line trajectories cross provincial boundaries so most would be cross-provincial continuations of declarations.

### Considerations

There are elements, invariably stations, buildings or bridges, that are declared Provincial Heritage Resources (previously National Monuments).

All other residue is either subject to the so-called *sixty-year clause* (34 of the NHRA) where still functional, occupied or within a living urban context. These can be considered as structures of architectural importance. If ruinous in the veld, these are of archaeological importance as these are over one hundred years old (where *archaeological* means in 2.2(a) of the Act *material remains resulting from human activity 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.*)

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***The afore-going recommendations are presented in the hope that they will contribute to the proactive management of these heritage resources.***



**05.4:** The well at Koekemoerspruit Bridge (NZASM\_SWL\_022) being inspected by Fisher on 2016 04 06. This unique structure deserves designation as a listed heritage resource.