

SARAH BAARTMAN - SITE DEVELOPMENT

KHOISAN INPUT _____ CONCEPTUAL APPROACH

KHOISAN CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL _ EASTERN CAPE

We are firstly mindful of the people who have played a role or roles in the return of Sarah Baartman. Thus, for the sake of continuation and as a process we feel that such roleplayers should be part of the process. Eg, Dr. Yvette Abrahams – and that these people should act as the respected advisors and consultants from the KhoiSan point of view, so that traditional / Indigenous aspects are done justice to. The consultation and discussion on the site development we regard as a process and nothing less than a process and not a once off symbolic hit and run contact session whereafter the KhoiSan are dismissed out of the process.

We say this because of past experience and past dealings with certain government and local authorities. It has been our experience that such processes are not sustained. Our concern in this regard also is that timeous prior consultation and consent is not always adhere to.

The final outcome of whatever would be decided upon has practical value and importance especially in the light of Sarah Baartman's status as a National and International KhoiSan icon, hence we should do it correctly.

We welcome the ideas and plans to develop the gravesite since presently there are certain things that are disconcerting to us namely that:

- The gravesite is not enjoying the respect and reverence ~~due~~ of which it is deserving.
- Vandalising takes place or has taken place.
- The perimeter fencing presently around the grave should be removed.
- Education around the placing of wreaths etc needs to be done and the traditional stone placing cannot be done.
- The headstone, which is an upright stone should indicate the position of the head on the western side of the grave. Our ancestral mother Sarah's spirit cannot rest as it is situated now.

We wish to submit our general thoughts and ideas on what we felt should be done.

Structure and design security

Unobtrusive fencing =fencing(rocks and plants) =perimeter on the widest extend of the area should be created in color blending with the natural environment and plant life. Security is of utmost importance.

General design :

The profile of the place should be in keeping with the general character of the town and from its position or situation.

It should be impressive as a monument without being monumental.

It must not be a monstrosity that will invite negative comment and criticism.

It must be African and KhoiSan in character and not European.

Attention should be given to the softness and earthly texture of its landscaping,layout and design.

Rocks from specially selected areas should be incorporated in an aesthetic way.

KhoiSan Character

The KhoiSan character and theme should be most prevalent in the sens of bringing out the Ancient.A quotation of Lawrence van der Post...

It should at the same time be a living monument for the peoples.

It should very strongly depict the life of Sarah Baartman from her birth,life up to her return and interment.

Specific design

After consideration by the Eastern Cape KhoiSan peoples , we eventually decided that the specific design should not be harshly angular,it should not be too concrete.

Its height and profile should not be excessive to the extend that it appears ghastly--instead it should be prominent and be of stature while at the same time subdued in keeping with the character of the person that it want to honour.

Materials should be traditional and local with the necessary durability--sth as local slate for your walkways etc.

The place should be functional and contain other facets which would contribute to the essence of wanting it to be a living monument- such as a curio / artifacts shop.

Most specifically it must be built as a matfeshuis – main construction with other smaller matfeshuis or clay huts.

This main construction will depict the life and times of Sarah in written history and in pictures, in artifacts as well as other visual and audio material. It should contain a quarters for a permanent family to live on the premises and who will manage, maintain and protect the place.

Tourism :

The Sarah Baartman monument should not be a one-stop 2minute visiting place. It should rather be as a node which forms part of a tourism package. It has to be a destination and as such a tourism route- The Sarah Baartman Tourism Route should include other important historically important points such as the old Dower College, the tunnel etc.

Other histories such as the history of the town, the valley to be included as supplementary information and history which will contextualize and put into balance the Sarah Baartman story.

In terms of tourism being a part of the idea this will in our view contribute towards such aspects as sustainability, viability and profitability of the venture.

Procurement:

This is a matter of grave importance to us –that in the procurement process consideration be given to our local people for the work creation that is anticipated. Without the community and especially the Khoikhoi youth and skilled persons of the Gamtoos benefiting – would be a grave enidictment against the people who are planning and directing this plan.

Historical research:

Proper relevant and deeprooted research must be an ongoing process by carefully selected expertised persons.

Indigenous ceremonies and rituals:

This process of cleansing ceremonies is sacred rituals that must be conducted. As such it must be included on your timeframes.

Conclusion:

We trust that consultation would be done with the Khoisan peoples-not only on a local and provincial level but also on a national level in order that the process be taken forward and to its conclusion in a fair,decent and non-controversial way.

We hope that true partnerships with the KhoiSan would be established and maintained and be part of legal processes. That we would be and feel part of the process and be able to monitor , evaluate and make positive input from beginning to end.

Task team:

To be included legally as part of such a team.

We hope that in the spirit of the preamble to our constitution we would work together believing as it says: that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity.

Spokesperson for: KCHDC Eastern Cape


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G X Maleiba Senior Headperson