

**Name:** Creation of small, open site museum at Hillside Dams Conservancy

**Location:** Adjacent to Aloe Garden, Hillside Dams, off Banff Road, Hillside, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.

**Objectives:** to build a small, three paneled, open site display to cover the history of the Bulawayo area and Hillside Dams in particular. Simple text in three official languages with many pictures.

#### **General Background**

The Hillside Dams were once a popular recreational area operated by Bulawayo City Council (BCC). However it has fallen on hard times what with financial difficulties, a lack of vision and application, and several serious criminal incidents. This has resulted in the existing facilities being allowed to deteriorate while the area is now shunned by most local residents.

The entire area, approximately 86ha., has been leased from the BBC by Mungrisdale Marketing (Pvt) Ltd who has conceded the conservancy area to an independent, broad-based Trust, the Hillside Dams Conservation Trust. This non-profit Trust has been tasked with the restoration of existing facilities and developing new, appropriate projects in the area in line with the defined aims of the Trust which place an emphasis on conservation, education and recreational pursuits all within a safe, well-run recreational area aimed principally at the residents of Bulawayo.

The conservancy includes a large section of natural vegetation as well as two dams built amongst the rocky kopjes at the beginning of the Twentieth Century. There are also several gardened sections, including what was once an impressive aloe garden. Several archaeological and fossil sites in the area are of a national, if not international importance. Previously there was a trim track on the east side of the conservancy while several youth organizations once used this area for camping and educational purposes.

#### **Project objectives**

While we appreciate the serious financial situation in which we find ourselves in Zimbabwe today, we are looking at practical assistance from companies and individuals with various skills and interests – we are not seeking financial contributions. It must be emphasized that this appeal is being made on behalf of the general Bulawayo Community and not simply ourselves.

A detailed Site Management Plan has been drawn up (Burrett 2007). This document provides some suggestions as to the way forward and sets out the ultimate objectives towards which we operate. It is a



**Proposed Site Museum area near Aloe Garden**

long to medium term policy which will be tackled by the Trust as and when the finances and skills are available. The focus of this specific proposal forms part of the overall plan.

The purpose of this document is to appeal for assistance in creating a small site museum/display at the Hillside Dams Conservancy. It is envisaged that this will be erected at the end of the road up to the Aloe Garden beyond the Tea Room. It would be a simple structure which will be built in the open area in front of the now derelict water pumping structure (the large, ugly concrete block that dominates this area). It should be

open to the north and consist of six panels. These will have laminated posters behind glass panels applied to them to cover the history of the Bulawayo and that of the Hillside Dams area. These will be given in each of the three official national languages. The displays should consist of simple text with many illustrations. These will be vetted by the relevant heritage authorities, the BCC and various historians. The displays will follow established international museum's practice.

We, the Hillside Dams Conservancy Trust are requesting your help in this project. We seek someone to help us out with:

- 1. Design of the museum in conjunction with our heritage consultant, Rob Burrett.**
- 2. The purchase of the required building materials (cement, sand, bricks, gum poles, thatching etc) for this structure**
- 3. The building of this same structure.**
- 4. The creation of the necessary text and illustrations for the final posters in English and vetting with the necessary authorities.**
- 5. The translation of these posters from English to good Ndebele and Shona versions.**
- 6. The final production of these posters**
- 7. The suitable mounting of these posters on the walls of the site museum.**
- 8. We will endeavor to ensure regular maintenance work and cleaning.**

Our estate manager (Mr. N. Scott) and heritage consultant (Mr. R. Burrett) will be available to discuss with the donor what needs to be done and to assist with anything that is required both before and during the work.

All assistance will be suitably acknowledged and companies will be able to use this for purposes of advertising or addressing issues of corporate responsibility. The museum will be named in accordance to the wishes of the donor with advertising/publicity signage with institutional logos at select locations would be most suitable.

**If you are able to assist please contact the Estate Manager, Hillside Dams Conservancy, Mr. Norman Scott or Neil Rix 011-402851.**