



Africa Maxongo

29 September 2021

Eastern Cape Heritage Resources Authority

East London

5200

Confirmation Request: Requirement for Desktop Palaeontological Specialist Study

Dear Madam,

Isipho Environmental Consultants has been appointed by Zutari South Africa (Pty) Ltd to provide environmental sub-services for the SANRAL Stone Crescent Embankment Stabilisation Works along the National Route 2 near Grahamstown in the Eastern Cape.

The project is located approximately 10 km south of Grahamstown, on the National Route 2 Section 13, km 42.5 to 43.5, opposite Stone Crescent Hotel (33°21'28.0"S 26°29'17.9"E). The site itself comprises a fill embankment immediately adjacent to the national route on the Left-hand side (Refer to Figure 1). The site falls in ward 14 of Makana Local Municipality and Sarah Baartman District Municipality in the Eastern Cape Province. Properties that will be affected by this project are Zyfer Fonteyn 253 (Portion 0, 11 and 12RE) and Palmiet Rivier 305 (Portion 34, 36).

The study area is located on the left side of the northbound carriageway of National Route 2 Section 13, approximately between km 42.5 and km 43.5. The study area is close to Makhanda (Grahamstown) in the Eastern Cape where the road embankment is showing signs of slope instability that could be aggravated by scour during a flood event along the Berg River, which is a tributary of the Palmiet River to the Southwest. Various stabilisation options could be implemented, depending on the level of risk and site conditions.



Figure 1: Locality Map

Requirement for Palaeontological Desktop Study

It was determined while creating a case ID (17211) on SAHRIS that the project area is located in an area of moderate palaeontological sensitivity and a desktop Palaeontological assessment is required as indicated in **Figure 2** below.

As the EAP on the project, we would like to confirm if indeed the palaeontological study is necessary for this area, considering the following information:

1. The majority of the works will take place in the existing road reserve and very little work will be done outside the reserve.
2. The road reserve and adjacent properties are already disturbed by previous developments such as construction of N2 Road and associated works such as the existing retaining walls, gabions and water features constructed near the proposed site.
3. The stabilization works are required in an area where the river cuts underneath the road and causing SANRAL to have to construct stabilization structures along the river and road. Given the fact that excavations have previously taken place in the proposed site, it is likely that any heritage resources may have been disturbed and thus this development poses a low risk to palaeontological resources.

In light of the information presented above, we would like to request the ECPHRA to grant a concession and allow SANRAL to proceed with the Basic Assessment Process without conducting a Palaeontology Desktop Study.

The Basic Assessment Report will be made available to authorities including ECPHRA and IAPs for review before it is submitted to the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and Environment for decision making.

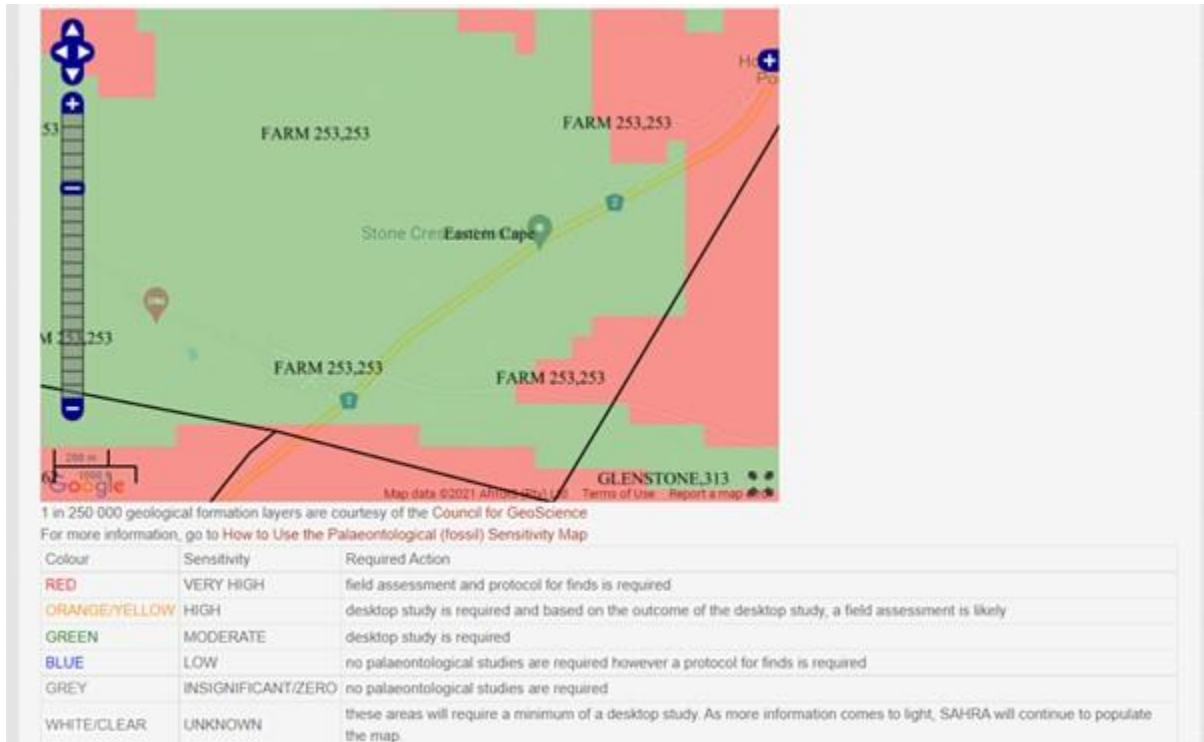


Figure 2: Palaeontological sensitivity (SAHRIS, 2021)

Please do not hesitate to contact Isipho Environmental Consultants should you have any queries or concerns.

Kind Regards,



Andisiwe Xuma