

# EXCAVATION OF SITE TO DETERMINE POSSIBLE GRAVES: ZITHULELE HOSPITAL, EASTERN CAPE

Our Ref:



an agency of the  
Department of Arts and Culture

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South African Heritage Resources Agency | 111 Harrington Street | Cape Town  
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CaseID: 19239

Date: Tuesday January 17, 2023

Page No: 1

## Final Comment

### In terms of Section 36(3) of the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999)

Attention: Prof. Anton van Vollenhoven

Archaetnos Culture & Cultural Resource Consultants

### Investigation into possible graves at the Zithulele Hospital - please see proposal attached

Achaetnos was appointed to conduct test excavation to confirm the existence of graves at Zithulele Hospital. Identified next-of-kin gave consent, a s36 permit was issued and thus test excavation was conducted. The hospital was identified by the National Department of Health as one of the rural hospitals that must be upgraded to a Level 1 District Hospital to supply much needed medical care to the communities around the hospital as well as the whole Eastern Cape Province. The site is situated on The Farm Zithulele Hospital No 196 situated in the Mbhashe Municipality, Administrative District of Xhora, Province of the Eastern Cape. The Test excavation report made the following findings and recommendations:

1. It was agreed with the families that the development on site may continue. This should therefore be allowed.
2. However, should any human remains be identified during work on site, work should immediately cease, and the area demarcated. An archaeologist should then be called in to investigate the find.
3. In such a case the families will also be informed.
4. It was also agreed with the Thabane family (the site that was not excavated) that one of the new hospital wings will be named after them, in this way commemorating the family. This should be implemented.

### Final comment

The Burial Grounds and Graves Unit of SAHRA acknowledged receipt of the submitted Test Excavation report. After careful consideration, the following final recommendations are proposed:

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1. Sites 1&2 must continue to be treated as graves until such time these have been investigated and proven otherwise. *In-situ* preservation of the said site(s) must include visible demarcation and a buffer-zone of at-least 30m where possible.
2. The site must be maintained and monitored regularly.
3. Should it be decided to conduct grave relocation in future, consultation as per the NHRA Regulations *Chapter IX* must be implemented and family consent must be sought for reburial.
4. Any previously unknown graves identified during the development project must be assessed by a qualified Archaeologist and a report submitted to SAHRA for review.

Should you have any further queries, please contact the designated official using the case number quoted above in the case header.

Yours faithfully

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Thingahangwi Tracy Tshivhase  
Heritage Officer: Permitting  
South African Heritage Resources Agency

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Ngqabutho Madida  
Acting Manager: Burial Grounds & Graves Unit  
South African Heritage Resources Agency

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## ADMIN:

Direct URL to case: <https://sahris.sahra.org.za/node/602777>

## Terms & Conditions:

1. This approval does not exonerate the applicant from obtaining local authority approval or any other necessary approval for proposed work.
2. If any heritage resources, including graves or human remains, are encountered they must be reported to SAHRA immediately.
3. SAHRA reserves the right to request additional information as required.