

Archaeological Heritage Impact Assessment

**Two Portions of Erf 2861 and the Whole of Erf 6422, Mossel Bay,
Magisterial District Eden, Western Cape Province: Proposed
Asazani/Zinyoka Subsidised Housing Project**

Prepared for:

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Executive Summary

On 15 and 16 May 2008, an archaeological heritage impact assessment was undertaken by CHARM cc as commissioned by Francois Theron of CSM Consulting Services (PTY) LTD on two portions of Erf 2861 and the whole of Erf 6422, Mossel Bay, Magisterial District Eden, Western Cape Province (Figures 1 to 3).

The main limitations to the study on Erf 6422 included restricted ground visibility due to dense vegetation and thick grass cover. In the case of Erf 2861, most of the study area is covered by closely-packed informal settlement dwellings rendering only a small portion of the ground surface visible for detection of archaeological traces.

No archaeological occurrences were recorded on either Erf 2861 or Erf 6422. Due to the limitations mentioned above, the lack of any observable archaeological finds does not preclude their existence. Although neither of the areas surveyed may be considered archaeologically sensitive the possibility of items of material culture or even human burials being recovered does exist. In particular the high ground of Erf 3961, where sandstone ridges breach the surface and quartzitic cobbles are common, could contain a residue of Stone Age artefacts. For these reasons the areas in question should be monitored during any developmental work.

It is therefore recommended that when the development goes ahead, Erven 2861 and 6422 be monitored by suitably qualified individuals during any earth moving or construction activities.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This project involves the study of two separate areas, namely Erf 2861 and Erf 6422. Erf 2861 is currently the site of two informal settlements, known as Asazani and Zinyoka, whilst Erf 6422 is vacant land.

A subsidised low cost housing project, funded through the Upgrading of Informal Settlements Programme, in terms of which the two existing informal settlements (overlooking Diaz Strand) on Erf 2861 will be formalized. An additional 'Greenfields' portion of land (Erf 6422) will be allocated by the Municipality and developed to accommodate the surplus families.

Francois Theron of CSM Consulting Services (Pty) Ltd, acting as Project Manager on behalf of the Mossel Bay Municipality, appointed the Centre for Heritage and Archaeological Resource Management (CHARM cc) to conduct an Archaeological Heritage Impact Assessment (AHIA) on the two portions of Erf 2861 currently occupied by informal settlements and on Erf 6422. These Erven are located above Dias Strand, Mossel Bay, Magisterial District Eden, Western Cape Province (Figures 1 to 3).

Although no final layout plans were available it is understood that the two portions of Erf 2861 will be developed as houses and flats whilst Erf 6422 will be developed as subsidised housing.

1.2. Purpose and Scope of the Study

Objectives of the Archaeological Heritage Impact Assessment are:

- To assess the study area for traces of archaeological and heritage-related materials;
- To identify options for mitigation in order to minimize potential negative impacts; and
- To make recommendations for mitigation.

Terms of Reference (ToR):

- a) Locate boundaries of the study area.
- b) Conduct a foot survey of the study area to identify and record archaeological and heritage-related resources.
- c) Assess the impact of the proposed development on archaeological and heritage-related materials.
- d) Recommend mitigation measures where necessary.
- e) Prepare and submit report to Francois Theron of CSM Consulting Services (Pty) Ltd that meets standards required by Heritage Western Cape in terms of the National Heritage Resources Act, No. 25 of 1999.

1.3 Study Area

Two portions of Erf 2861 (named Asazani and Zinyoka), Mossel Bay, Magisterial District Eden, Western Cape Province which are situated on the high ground above Louis Fourie Drive and overlooking Disa Strand (Figures 1 to 3). The two portions zoned for development are separated by a Primary School Building and a steep valley which bisects the cliff line.

Also, Erf 6422 located on a level area to the south-west of Erf 2861 and adjacent to Bill Geffrey Road (Figure 3). The Erf 6422 study area is 10.6918 hectares in extent. At the time of writing the areas of the two portions of Erf 2861 were not available. Likewise, the client was unable to supply coordinate data for either Erf 2861 or Erf 6422.

1.4 Approach to the Study

To the best of our knowledge, no archaeological or heritage related work has been conducted on the affected property or in its immediate vicinity. Mossel Bay and the coastline stretching to Dias Strand have a rich heritage of archaeological and historical sites. These include open air shell middens, Stone Age cave deposits and a range of significant buildings.

On 15 and 16 May 2008, an archaeological heritage impact assessment of the affected areas was undertaken by Tony Manhire and Winston Manginda as commissioned by Francois Theron of CSM Consulting Services (Pty) Ltd. The study area was reached and accessed by vehicle with the aid of maps and various data provided by Francois Theron.

The main limitations to the study included the inaccessibility of certain areas, thick vegetation cover, disturbance of the land surface and the erection of informal settlements.

Dealing with Erf 6422 first (Plates 1 to 6). Although the area is undeveloped, in the sense that there are no permanent structures, it has suffered repeated disturbance from human activity. Parts of the area are difficult to access due to fencing and a steep-sided, densely vegetated valley stretching along the north-western boundary which separates the area from any access roads. Much of the land surface is covered by thick grass and alien vegetation making detection of archaeological traces difficult.

Erf 2861 has its own set of problems. In all the documentation and maps the eastern portion is called Asazani (Plates 7 to 12) and the western portion called Zinyoka (Plates 13 to 18) and will be referred to as such in this report. However, the people living in the settlements claim that the names have been reversed and Asazani should be referred to as Zinyoka and vice versa. The correct nomenclature should perhaps be established before development proceeds.

Apart from difficulty of access the major problem in both portions is the densely clustered informal housing which occupies virtually all the level areas above the cliff slopes. This severely limits land surface visibility and renders detection of archaeological traces extremely difficult.

Records of the search included data fixed with a hand held GPS, an assessment of the viability of the survey with respect to accessibility, vegetation and visibility, notes on any materials found as well as their contexts. Comprehensive digital photographic records were maintained throughout the search process.

Given the limitations in the study areas regarding visibility and accessibility, this report estimates that the survey captured less than adequate information on the archaeological heritage present. Due to limitations and restrictions mentioned above, this survey provides only a preliminary window on archaeological and heritage related resources in the study area.

2. Results

No archaeological material was located during the foot survey of Erf 6422. The area in question consists of undulating grassland with bushes and occasional clumps trees. Outcropping ridges of sandstone occur in places. Being vacant land and judging by the discarded waste the area appears to function as an informal recreation area and a dumping ground. Although the poor ground visibility rendered the search less thorough than would be desired the conclusion is that there is low probability of any significant archaeological or heritage related material being present.

Similarly, no archaeological occurrences were recorded during the survey of Asazani and Zinyoka on Erf 2861. Here the problems of visibility were more intractable as virtually the whole study area is highly disturbed and obscured by close-together informal housing structures. Although unseen, the possibility exists of archaeological traces, in particular Stone Age artefacts, being present. This is considered in the next section below.

All archaeological and heritage related artefacts identified on the property are protected by the National Heritage Resources Act no. 25 of 1999. These materials may in no way be removed or disturbed without a permit from Heritage Western Cape.

3. Sources of Risk, Impact Identification, Assessment and Recommendation

Although no archaeological occurrences were identified on Erven 2861 and 6422 the survey was compromised by the inaccessibility and lack of visibility. As the general area has been occupied from the distant past and is still in use today there remains possibility that archaeological material and even human remains do exist. It is therefore recommended that Erven 2861 and 6422 be monitored by suitably qualified individuals during any earth moving or construction activities.

Figures and Plates (on following pages)



Figure 1. General location of study area – framed in black relative To Mossel Bay, Western Cape.



Figure 2. Enlarged area as **indicated** in Figure 1 showing the two study areas – **Asazani/Zinyoka** and Erf 6422.

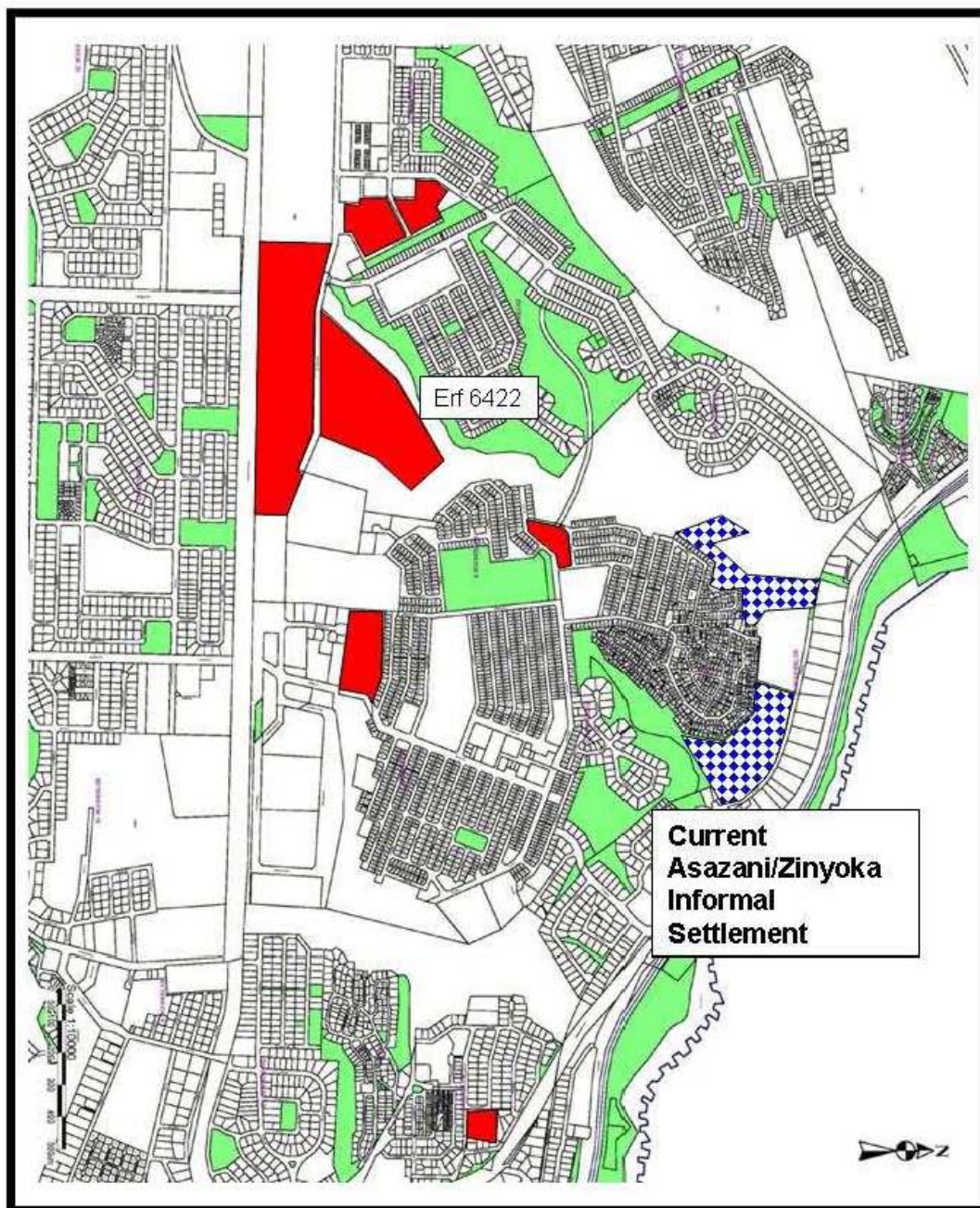


Figure 3. Plan of study area showing the relative positions of Asazani/Zinyoka and Erf 6422



Plate 1. View of eastern end of Erf 6422 showing grass coverage and alien vegetation



Plate 2. Southern boundary of Erf 6422 along Bill Jeffrey Road



Plate 3. View from western side of Erf 6422 towards Bill Jeffrey Road



Plate 4. Gully on north-western side of Erf 6422



Plate 5. View across Erf 6422 from north-western side



Plate 6. View towards Bill Jeffrey from north-western side of Erf 6422



Plate 7. Eastern corner of Asazani. Erosion of fynbos along the track leading to the settlement/dwellings



Plate 8. Asazani. Erosion gully and rubbish tip above the track leading to the settlement



Plate 9. View of the steep slope separating Asazani from Louis Fourie Rd.



Plate 10. View of the track leading into Asazani



Plate 11. Part of Asazani overlooking Diaz Strand



Plate 12. View of Asazani looking north-east from the top of the ridge



Plate 13. View from edge of Zinyoka towards Diaz Strand



Plate 14. The north-eastern corner of Zinyoka informal settlement



Plate 15. Zinyoka dwellings situated on the rocky edge



Plate 16. View of the eastern part of Zinyoka informal settlement



Plate 17. The Primary School located between Asazani and Zinyoka



Plate 18. Wide angle view of Zinyoka informal settlement

