

Archaeological Survey for the Beverly Farm Development

For Guy Nicolson Consulting CC

By

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INTRODUCTION

Guy Nicolson Consulting contracted the Institute for Cultural Resource Management to undertake an archaeological survey for the proposed development on Beverly Farm. The area is marked for future housing development. Sections of this development have been previously surveyed (Anderson 2002), and apparently excavated by eThembeni (I cannot presently locate this report). All the archaeological sites will thus be damaged if development is to occur in this area.

A total of eleven archaeological sites were recorded during the survey. Of these eleven sites, four will require further mitigation. The developer will need to apply to KwaZulu-Natal Heritage for a permit for the destruction/damage of these sites.

METHOD

All sites have been grouped according to low, medium and high significance for the purpose of this report. Sites of low significance have no diagnostic artefacts, especially pottery. Sites of medium significance have diagnostic artefacts and these are sampled. Sampling includes the collection of artefacts for future analysis. All diagnostic pottery, such as rims, lips and decorated sherds are sampled, while bone, stone and shell are mostly noted. Sampling usually occurs on most sites. Sites of high significance are excavated or extensively sampled. The sites that are extensively sampled have high research potential, yet poor preservation of features. I attempt to recover as many artefacts from these sites by means of systematic sampling, as opposed to sampling diagnostic artefacts only.

Significance is generally determined by several factors. However, in this survey, a wider definition of significance is adopted since the aim of the survey is to gather as much information as possible from every site. This strategy allows for an analysis of every site in some detail, without resorting to excavation.

Defining significance

In many instances the sugar cane was too dense to undertake a thorough survey. In this case, we surveyed along the tracks of the hills and noted the artefacts as they appeared. This method also allows for a general assessment of a site in most cases. If this type of assessment was not possible, the sites need to be resurveyed once the sugar cane has been burnt and cleared.

Archaeological sites vary according to significance and several different criteria relate to each type of site. However, there are several criteria that allow for a general significance rating of archaeological sites.

These criteria are:

1. State of preservation of:
 - 1.1. Organic remains:
 - 1.1.1. Faunal
 - 1.1.2. Botanical
 - 1.2. Rock art
 - 1.3. Walling
 - 1.4. Presence of a cultural deposit
 - 1.5. Features:
 - 1.5.1. Ash Features
 - 1.5.2. Graves
 - 1.5.3. Middens
 - 1.5.4. Cattle byres
 - 1.5.5. Bedding and ash complexes
2. Spatial arrangements:
 - 2.1. Internal housing arrangements
 - 2.2. Intra-site settlement patterns
 - 2.3. Inter-site settlement patterns
3. Features of the site:
 - 3.1. Are there any unusual, unique or rare artefacts or images at the site?
 - 3.2. Is it a type site?
 - 3.3. Does the site have a very good example of a specific time period, feature, or artefact?
4. Research:
 - 4.1. Providing information on current research projects
 - 4.2. Salvaging information for potential future research projects
5. Inter- and intra-site variability
 - 5.1. Can this particular site yield information regarding intra-site variability, i.e. spatial relationships between various features and artefacts?
 - 5.2. Can this particular site yield information about a community's social relationships within itself, or between other communities.
6. Archaeological Experience:
 - 6.1. The personal experience and expertise of the CRM practitioner should not be ignored. Experience can indicate sites that have potentially significant aspects, but need to be tested prior to any conclusions.
7. Educational:

- 7.1. Does the site have the potential to be used as an educational instrument?
- 7.2. Does the site have the potential to become a tourist attraction?
- 7.3. The educational value of a site can only be fully determined after initial test-pit excavations and/or full excavations.

The more a site can fulfill the above criteria, the more significant it becomes. Test-pit excavations are used to test the full potential of an archaeological deposit. These test-pit excavations may require further excavations if the site is of significance. Sites may also be mapped and/or have artefacts sampled as a form of mitigation. Sampling normally occurs when the artefacts may be good examples of their type, but are not in a primary archaeological context. Mapping records the spatial relationship between features and artefacts.

THE SITES

The significance and required mitigation for each archaeological site is summarised in Table 1.

BSE1

The site is located on a hill with two high points. The site has at least three shell middens consisting of *Perna perna* and *Ostridaea spp.* Several upper grinding stones (on quartzite) and utilised stones (on shale) were observed. There is evidence for metallurgy, in the form of fragments of slag and iron-ore. The pottery at this site is thin-walled and orange or brown in colour. No decorated sherds were observed, however the rims-necks appear to be undecorated.

The occurrence of shell middens at various locations suggest that a spatial component occurs at the site. There is an archaeological deposit at the site as well.

The site probably dates to the Late Iron Age (LIA).

Significance: The site is of medium archaeological significance.

Mitigation: Test-pit excavations should be undertaken to determine the full significance of the site.

BSE2

The site is on a kidney-shaped hill near BSE1. The site extends across the whole hill, however, the artefacts are concentrated along the northern part of the hill. Along the northern part of the site is a concentration of slag and iron ore. The middle and the southern parts of the hill tend to have pottery sherds, daga and grinding stones.

The grinding stones are mostly upper and lower grinding stones, however a few utilised stones were also observed. The pottery sherds vary in size, colour and thickness. One sherd was possibly decorated with a horizontal line below the lip. This may indicate an Early Iron Age (EIA) sherd. Other sherds tend to be thin-walled and thus suggest also a LIA occupation. This suggests that there is a multiple occupation at this hill.

Other artefacts include granary bin daga and scatters of marine shell.

Significance: The site is of medium archaeological significance because of its spatial component, multiple occupations and deposit.

Mitigation: Test-pit excavations should be undertaken to determine the full significance of the site.

BSE3

The site could be an extension of BED2 (Anderson 2002) and is located north-northeast from BED2. However, the artefacts appear to increase more to the north of the site, suggesting that there is a spatial boundary between the two sites. The site consists of pottery, marine shell and upper grinding stones.. The pottery is characteristic of the LIA and mainly in an orange-brown colour. The marine shell consists mainly of scatters of oyster fragments.

Significance: The site is of low significance.

Mitigation: No further mitigation is required.

BSE4

The site is located lower down the hill near BSE3. It is a separate site from BSE3. The Site consists of a variety of thin-walled sherds, a few upper grinding stones, fragments of slag.

Significance: The site is of low significance.

Mitigation: No further mitigation is required.

BSE5

The site is located northwest across the stream from BSE2, and on the top of the hill, and near the boundary of the development. The site is currently under dense grass and sugar cane and could not be properly surveyed. The site dates to the LIA.

The site consists of pottery fragments and one large concentration of slag. The slag concentration may be a smelting area.

Significance: The site is of unknown significance. The vegetation was too dense to make an accurate assessment.

Mitigation: The site should be reassessed after the sugar cane has been cut and/or cleared.

BSE6

The site is located at the top of a hill. The artefacts include thin-walled sherds mostly in orange-brown colour. The site probably dates to the LIA.

Significance: The site is of low significance.

Mitigation: No further mitigation is required.

BSE7

The site is located on the top of one of the tallest hills in the area. While the sugar cane was dense, the frequency of artefacts along the tracks suggest a high level of occupation at the site. The southern slopes had the highest frequency of artefacts. The site includes several grinding stones, iron ore fragments, marine shell and pottery. The site dates to the LIA and has an archaeological deposit.

The pottery sherds consist of a variety of types in orange, brown or black colours. All of the pottery is thin-walled and only undecorated sherds were observed. Upper and lower grinding stones occur at the site. These are made on quartzite or dolerite. Several shell middens occur along the northern side of the hill. The surface of the middens include oyster and mussels.

The dense sugarcane made a full assessment difficult, however, the observations suggest that more of the site will occur in the hill.

Significance: The site is of medium archaeological significance due to the spatial component and archaeological deposit.

Mitigation: Test-pit excavations should be undertaken to determine the full significance of the site.

BSE8

The site is on the lower hill northwest of BSE7 besides the indigenous forest. The site consists of a scatter of pottery sherds probably dating to the LIA. The site may be an extension of BSE7.

Significance: The site is of low significance.

Mitigation: No further mitigation is required.

BSE9

The site extends over the whole hill, and is under dense sugar cane. The site has a large variety of artefacts over the hill indicating that an archaeological deposit and spatial pattern.

The pottery is thin-walled and in a variety of colours and sizes. Several upper and lower grinding stones were observed on dolerite or quartzite. Evidence for metallurgical activity on the site is in the form of iron ore, and slag. A possible furnace may also occur on the site. One large (± 30 cm in diameter) piece of granary (?) daga was observed along the side of the road. At least three shell middens were observed on this hill. These middens consisted of large surface scatters of oyster and brown mussels, suggesting that more middens may occur below the surface.

Significance: The site is of medium archaeological significance due to the spatial component and archaeological deposit.

Mitigation: Several test-pit excavations should be undertaken to determine the full significance of the site.

BSE10

The site is located on the top of a hill near afforestation plantation. The site consists of a scatter of pottery sherds probably dating to the LIA.

Significance: The site is of low significance.

Mitigation: No further mitigation is required.

BSE11

The site is located on small hill with steep slopes. The site consists of several thin-walled sherds probably dating to the LIA.

Significance: The site is of low significance.

Mitigation: No further mitigation is required.

CONCLUSION

Eleven archaeological sites were recorded in the proposed Beverly Farm development. Of these eleven sites, four require further mitigation in the form of test-pit excavations, and one site needs to be re-assessed. The site that requires re-assessment should be resurveyed once the sugar cane has been cut or burnt.

Most of the sites date to the Late Iron Age. The LIA is not well documented along the KwaZulu-Natal coastline, and sites that have the potential to yield such information tend to be regarded as having medium to high significance.

The developer is required to obtain a permit for the destruction and/or damage for all sites in the development area. This permit is obtainable from KwaZulu-Natal Heritage and is accordance with the KwaZulu-Natal Heritage Act of 1997.

Site Name	Age	Significance	Required Mitigation
BSE1	LIA	Medium	Test-Pits
BSE2	EIA/LIA	Medium	Test-pits
BSE3	LIA	Low	None
BSE4	LIA	Low	None
BSE5	LIA	Unknown	Resurvey
BSE6	LIA	Low	None
BSE7	LIA	Medium	Test-pits
BSE8	LIA	Low	None
BSE9	LIA	Medium	Test-pits
BSE10	LIA/HP	Low	None
BSE11	LIA	Low	None

References

Anderson, G. 2002. Archaeological survey of Beverly Sugar Estate. Archaeological Report for Guy Nicolson Consulting.

Site Name	Longitude	Latitude
BSE1	29 ⁰ 31' 20"	31 ⁰ 12' 43"
BSE2	29 ⁰ 31' 05"	31 ⁰ 12' 50"
BSE3	29 ⁰ 31' 21"	31 ⁰ 13' 00"
BSE4	29 ⁰ 31' 06"	31 ⁰ 13' 06"
BSE5	29 ⁰ 30' 41"	31 ⁰ 12' 28"
BSE6	29 ⁰ 30' 29"	31 ⁰ 12' 48"
BSE7	29 ⁰ 30' 47"	31 ⁰ 13' 08"
BSE8	29 ⁰ 30' 40"	31 ⁰ 13' 12"
BSE9	29 ⁰ 31' 12"	31 ⁰ 13' 28"
BSE10	29 ⁰ 30' 15"	31 ⁰ 12' 54"
BSE11	29 ⁰ 30' 05"	31 ⁰ 13' 04"

