

A PHASE 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSED SUBDIVISION AND REZONING OF PORTIONS OFF GARDEN LOT, PORTION 20 OF FARM NO. 397 SOUTH GORAH, KENTON-ON-SEA, NDLAMBE MUNICIPALITY, EASTERN CAPE.

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Date: October 2008

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Note: This report follows the minimum standard guidelines required by the South African Heritage Resources Agency for compiling Archaeological Heritage Phase 1 Impact Assessment (AHIA) reports.

SUMMARY

Purpose of the study

To conduct a Phase 1 Archaeological Heritage Impact Assessment of the proposed subdivision and rezoning of portions off Garden Lot, Portion 20 of farm No. 397, South Gorah, Kenton-on-Sea, Ndlambe Municipality, Eastern Cape; to evaluate the importance of the archaeological heritage sites, the potential impact of the development and to make recommendations to minimize possible damage to these sites.

The investigation

No archaeological sites were found on the property during the investigation. Most of the area is old ploughed fields and covered by dense grass. The remainder of the property is covered by impenetrable Thicket vegetation. Sites and/or material may be exposed during development.

Cultural sensitivity

The area investigated appears to be of low cultural sensitivity, but important material may be exposed after the top soil is removed (for example human remains).

Recommendations

If any concentrations of archaeological material are exposed during construction, all work in that area should cease and it should be reported immediately to the nearest museum/archaeologist or to the South African Heritage Resources Agency.

PROJECT INFORMATION

Status

The report is part of an Environmental Impact Assessment.

The type of development

A low, density development and will comprise no more than 7 units in total.

The Developer

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Terms of reference

The original proposal was to conduct a Phase 1 Archaeological Heritage Impact Assessment for the proposed subdivision and rezoning of portions off Garden Lot, Portion 20 of farm No. 397, South Gorah, Kenton-on-Sea, Ndlambe Municipality, Eastern Cape; to evaluate the importance of the archaeological heritage sites, the potential impact of the development and to make recommendations to minimize possible damage to these sites.

BRIEF ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**Literature review****Brief archaeological background**

The coast between Port Alfred and Cannon Rocks in general is rich in archaeological sites and material. The Albany Museum houses many collections of archaeological material and human remains from the Port Alfred area. Other archaeological sites reported from the area include tools which date from the Middle Stone Age (MSA) and date between 120 000 and 30 000 years old. Little is known of the very early prehistory of the region. The oldest evidence of the early inhabitants are large stone tools, called handaxes and cleavers, which can be found in the river gravels which capped the hill slopes in the region. These large stone tools are from a time period called the Earlier Stone Age and may date between 1 million and 250 000 years old). These large stone tools were later replaced by smaller stone tools called the Middle Stone Age (MSA) flake and blade industries. Evidence of MSA sites occur throughout the region and date between 120 000 and 30 000 years old. Fossil bone may be associated with MSA occurrences along the coast. Such a site was found recently at Kwaihoek, where Bartholomew Dias erected a stone cross in 1488, belonging to the important Howieson's Poort time period.

Hewitt (1921) and Rudner (1968) were the first amateur archaeologists to report on the KhoiSan sites and pottery found in the region. Rudner mentioned that remains of 40 Khoi pots were documented along the Port Alfred coast. Unfortunately, in a few decades many of these important archaeological features have been destroyed by the developments along the coastal.

The most common archaeological sites found in the area are shell middens (people refer to these as 'strandloper middens'). In general these shell middens date from the past 6 000 years (called the Later Stone Age) and consist of two types. Shell middens are relatively large piles of marine shell and they are in generally referred to as 'strandloper middens'. They are found mainly opposite rocky coasts, but also occur along sandy beaches if there was a large enough source of white mussel. These concentrations of shell represent the campsites of San hunter-gatherers (dating from as old as 6 000 years ago), Khoi pastoralists and KhoiSan (dating from the past 1 800 in the region) groups/communities who lived along the immediate coast and collected marine foods on a daily basis. A few pot shards associated with Early Iron Age mixed farmers were also found near Cannon Rocks and Kasouga River. This suggests that this part of the coast was also sporadically visited by these people between 1 600 and 1 000 years ago.

Shell middens are usually within 300 m of the high water mark, but can be found up to 5 km inland. Mixed with the shell and other marine food waste are terrestrial food remains, cultural material and often human remains are found buried in the middens. Also associated with middens are large stone floors which were probably used as cooking platforms (Binneman 2001, 2005).

REFERENCES

- Binneman, J.N.F. 2001. An introduction to a Later Stone Age coastal research project along the south-eastern Cape coast. *Southern African Field Archaeology* 10:75-87.
- Binneman, J.N.F. 2005. Archaeological research along the south-eastern Cape coast Part 1: open-air shell middens. *Southern African Field Archaeology* 13&14:49-77.
- Hewitt, J. 1921 On several implements and ornaments from strandloper sites in the Eastern Province. *South African Journal of Science* 18:454-467.
- Rudner, J. 1968. Strandloper pottery from South and South West Africa. *Annals of the South African Museum* 49:441-663.

Museum/University databases and collections

The Albany Museum in Grahamstown houses collections and information from the region.

Relevant impact assessments

None nearby

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY

Area surveyed

Location data

The proposed development, subdivision and rezoning of portions off Garden Lot, Portion 20 of farm No. 397, South Gorah, is situated next to the R343 between Grahamstown and Kenton-on-Sea, some two kilometres from the holiday resort, Ndlambe Municipality, Eastern Cape (Maps 1 & 2).

Map

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION

Methodology

The survey was conducted by two people on foot. The property is covered by dense grass and patches of impenetrable Thicket vegetation, which made it difficult to find any archaeological sites/materials (Figs 1-4). The usual farming activities disturbed certain areas and a number of houses and other structures are also situated on the property.



Figs 1-4. Different views of the proposed property for development.

DISCUSSION

Although no visible sites were found on the property during the investigation, sites may be covered by the dense high grass, patches of woody thicket, shrubs and soil and will only be located once these have been removed. The adjacent coastal areas between Port Alfred and Cannon Rocks are rich in archaeological sites. The property is situated within 5 kilometres from the coast, and falls inside the maximum distance shell middens are expected to be found from the beach. (Binneman 2001, 2005).

RECOMMENDATIONS

If any concentrations of archaeological material (especially human remains) are exposed during construction, all work in that area should cease and it should be reported immediately to the nearest museum/archaeologist or to the South African Heritage Resources Agency, so that a systematic and professional investigation can be undertaken. Sufficient time should be allowed to remove/collect such material (See Appendix A for a list of possible archaeological sites that maybe found in the area).

GENERAL REMARKS AND CONDITION

Note: This report is a phase 1 archaeological heritage impact assessment/investigation only and does not include or exempt other required heritage impact assessments (see below).

The National Heritage Resources Act (Act No. 25 of 1999, section 35) requires a full Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) in order that all heritage resources, that is, all places or objects of aesthetics, architectural, historic, scientific, social, spiritual linguistic or technological value or significance are protected. Thus any assessment should make provision for the protection of all these heritage components, including archaeology, shipwrecks, battlefields, graves, and structures older than 60 years, living heritage, historical settlements, landscapes, geological sites, palaeontological sites and objects.

It must be emphasised that the conclusions and recommendations expressed in this archaeological heritage sensitivity investigation are based on the visibility of archaeological sites/features and may not therefore, reflect the true state of affairs. Many sites/features may be covered by soil and vegetation and will only be located once this has been removed. In the event of such finds being uncovered, (such as during any phase of construction work), archaeologists must be informed immediately so that they can investigate the importance of the sites and excavate or collect material before it is destroyed. The onus is on the developer to ensure that this agreement is honoured in accordance with the National Heritage Act No. 25 of 1999.

It must also be clear that Archaeological Specialist Reports (AIAs) will be assessed by the relevant heritage resources authority. The final decision rests with the heritage resources authority, which should grant a permit or a formal letter of permission for the destruction of any cultural sites.

APPENDIX A: IDENTIFICATION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL FEATURES AND MATERIAL FROM COASTAL AREAS: guidelines and procedures for developers

1. Shell middens

Shell middens can be defined as an accumulation of marine shell deposited by human agents rather than the result of marine activity. The shells are concentrated in a specific locality above the high-water mark and frequently contain stone tools, pottery, bone and occasionally also human remains. Shell middens may be of various sizes and depths, but an accumulation which exceeds 1 m² in extent, should be reported to an archaeologist.

2. Human Skeletal material

Human remains, whether the complete remains of an individual buried during the past, or scattered human remains resulting from disturbance of the grave, should be reported. In general the remains are buried in a flexed position on their sides, but are also found buried in a sitting position with a flat stone capping and developers are requested to be on the alert for this.

3. Fossil bone

Fossil bones or any other concentrations of bones, whether fossilized or not, should be reported.

4. Stone artefacts

These are difficult for the layman to identify. However, large accumulations of flaked stones which do not appear to have been distributed naturally should be reported. If the stone tools are associated with bone remains, development should be halted immediately and archaeologists notified.

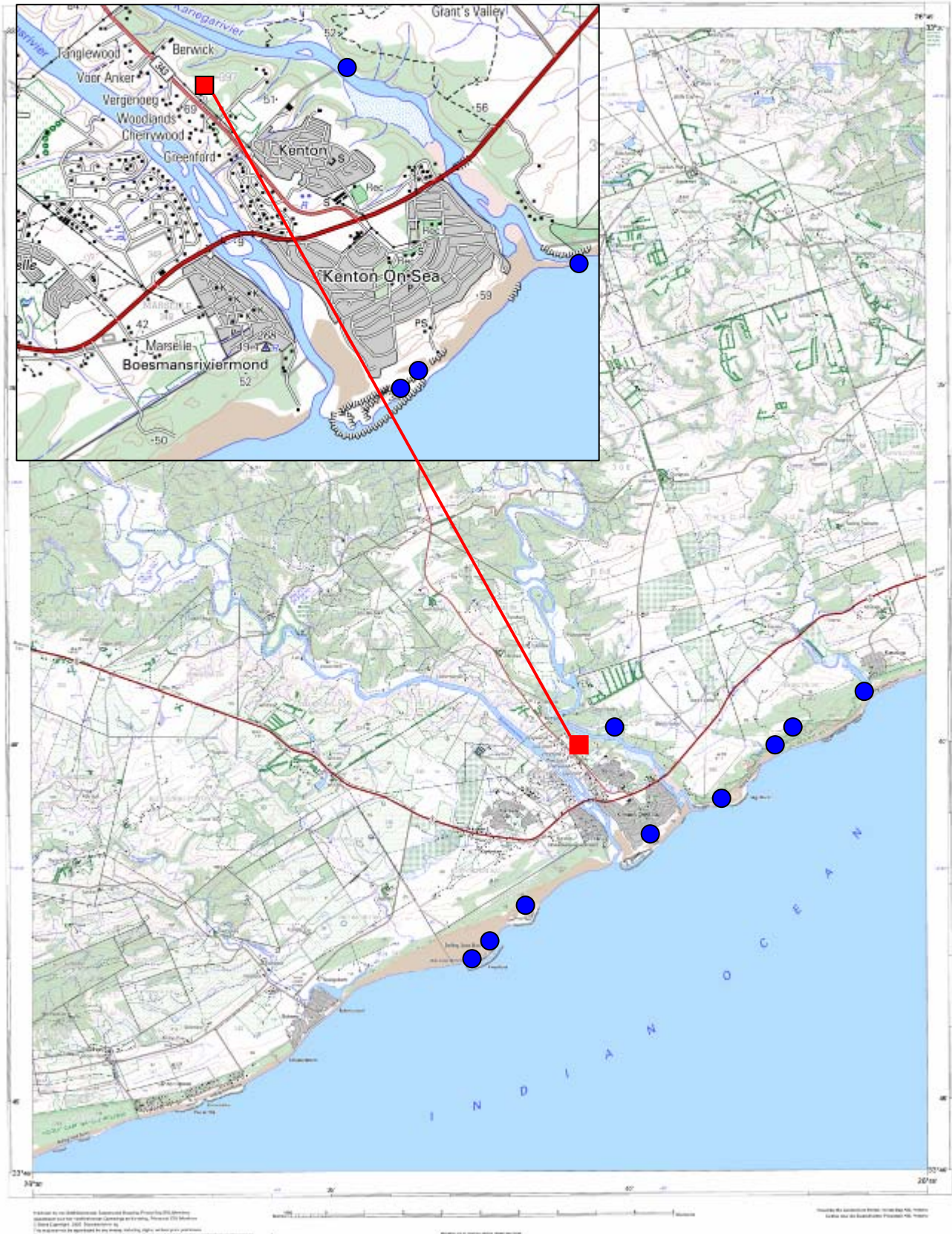
5. Stone features and platforms

These occur in different forms and sizes, but easily identifiable. The most common are an accumulation of roughly circular fire cracked stones tightly spaced and filled in with charcoal and marine shell. They are usually 1-2 metres in diameter and may represent cooking platforms for shell fish. Others may resemble circular single row cobble stone markers. These occur in different sizes and may be the remains of wind breaks or cooking shelters.

6. Historical artefacts or features

These are easy to identify and include foundations of buildings or other construction features and items from domestic and military activities.

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Map 1. 1:50 000 maps indicating the location of the proposed development. The blue dots indicate the location of archaeological sites.



Map 2. Aerial photographs indicating the location of the proposed development (top insert courtesy CSS).