

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY AT HLUHLUWE NATURE RESERVE,
KWAZULU-NATAL

c/o Carol Murphy
For KwaZulu-Natal Nature Conservation Services

By
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INTRODUCTION

The Institute for Cultural Resource Management was contracted by KwaZulu-Natal Nature Conservation Services to undertake an archaeological survey of three areas in the Umfolozi Game Reserve:

1. Ncengeni Gate;
2. Umbondwe Picnic site; and,
3. Mambeni Gate

These areas differed from the original proposed areas, by including a substantially larger area. Nonetheless, the main proposed areas were surveyed and the results are presented below. The proposed development included the development of an existing picnic spot, the new gate entrance and market, and a camp site near the White Umfolozi.

The terms of reference for the survey were to:

1. identify archaeological sites in the affected areas;
2. assess the impact of development on these sites; and,
3. suggest mitigation to reduce the negative impact on these sites

All archaeological and historical sites are protected by the National Monuments Act of 1969 which makes it an offence to alter in any way such sites without a permit from the National Monuments Council (NMC). As from 1 April 1998, the KwaZulu-Natal Heritage Act of 1997 will replace the current heritage legislation in KwaZulu-Natal. The new heritage compliance agency, Amafa aKwaZulu-Natali, may require an assessment of the impact of any development on heritage resources, where such an assessment is not required by other legislation. The NMC and its successor in KwaZulu-Natal (Amafa) may hold developers responsible for any damage accrued to a site in cases where they have deviated from the permit requirements. It is the responsibility of the developers to apply for a permit should development have a negative impact on archaeological or historical sites.

The geographical location of the archaeological sites are given in Appendix A, and these are to be treated with confidentiality.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES: DESCRIPTION AND MITIGATION

The assessment can be divided into two main groups: (a) the archaeological survey, and (b) a desk top analyses. The main desktop analyses was undertaken after the survey, since I had only received the locations of the affected area when I began the field survey. Those sites recorded in 1978 were done without a cultural resource management framework. That is, they were not assessed in terms of conservation management. Consequently,

many of these would need to be reassessed in terms of significance. I have suggested possible mitigation where the field notes have been informative.

Field Survey

The archaeological sites fit into three main time periods:

1. Middle Stone Age (MSA),
2. Late Stone Age (LSA), and,
3. Historical Period.

The MSA dates between 120 000 to 30 000 years ago; the LSA dates from 30 000 to 100 years ago, and the Historical Period dates from *c.* AD 1829 onwards. The Stone Age sites can be referred to generally as people with a hunter-gatherer socio-economy, while the Historical Period sites are associated with people undertaking an agriculturist socio-economy.

The Historical Period settlements probably belong to those people who had been removed from the land when the Hluhluwe Reserve was initially started. Given the current attitude in community inter-relations and recognition, these archaeological sites may be valuable assets, since they acknowledge the presence and history of communities that have been previously ignored and/or denied.

All of the sites are open scatters of artefacts, however, their significance and potential archaeological value varies. The tall grass and dense vegetation made survey and site identification difficult.

Umbondwe Picnic Site

No archaeological sites were located in this area.

Mambeni Gate

No archaeological sites were located in this area. The vegetation was however too dense to undertake a full survey.

Ncengeni Gate

A total of 46 sites have been recorded in the 2831CB 1:50 000 map section of the Umfolozi Reserve in 1978. I have only given those in the affected area, and/or in close proximity to the affected area. Those sites with a 2831CB prefix refer to the 1978 survey of this area, while those with the HLU prefix refer to my survey in July 1998.

HLU1

This is an extensive scatter of artefacts near a wallow pit. The site has both a MSA and Historical Period component.

The LSA scatter consists of a few stone flakes in an open scatter. These flakes are standard LSA flakes and are of low archaeological significance.

The scatter of Historical Period artefacts appears to be concentrated in distinct areas suggesting that subsurface features may still exist. The artefacts include lower and upper grindstones and pottery fragments. There is a potential archaeological deposit at this site.

Significance and mitigation:

It initially appears as if this site is of medium significance, because of the potential deposit and subsurface features. If this area is to be affected in any manner, then several test pits should be excavated by an archaeologist to fully assess the significance of this site. In addition, the site would need to be accurately mapped.

The current wallow pit, and other animal activities in the vicinity of the site have the ability to damage the potential archaeological deposit.

HLU2

This site has artefacts dating to the MSA, LSA and Historical Period. The MSA and LSA artefacts are stone tools common to both time periods.

The Historical Period artefacts include pottery shards, lower and upper grindstones, and possibly part of a wall. The site itself extends over both sides of the current dirt road and covers ± 80 m - 50 m radius. An archaeological deposit may exist at this site.

Significance and mitigation:

It initially appears as if this site is of medium significance, because of the potential deposit and thus subsurface features. If this area is to be impacted in any manner, then several test pits should be excavated by a qualified archaeologist to fully assess the significance of this site. In addition, the site would need to be accurately mapped.

HLU3

This site is located on the banks of the White Umfolozi River. The site consists of an agricultural field (seen by the location of the Kakiebos), and possible settlement near the road. The agricultural field is ± 50 m x 30 m in size. No artefacts were observed in this field, due to the dense vegetation. The artefacts to the east of the field consisted of two grindstones.

Significance and mitigation:

This site is of low archaeological significance and no further mitigation would be required.

HLU4

Site is located on a small ridge near the White Umfolozi River, and ± 50 m from the dirt road. Several upper and lower grindstones were observed, however, the vegetation was too dense to make a proper assessment.

The site appears to be the remains of a settlement similar to others found during the course of the survey.

Significance and mitigation:

The site appears to be of low archaeological significance, however, it would need to be reassessed once the vegetation is less dense. I do not, however, believe that further mitigation would be necessary.

HLU5

This site is located on the top of a spur and rock outcrop near the dirt road. Both MSA and Historical Period artefacts were observed.

The MSA component of the site consists of ephemeral scatters of stone tools, commonly associated with this time period.

The Historical Period component is more significant than the MSA component. The site extends for ± 150 m in length, and extends on both sides of the ridge. There are several dense concentrations of artefacts suggesting individual households. Alternatively the site is a large settlement consisting of related households.

Many upper and lower grindstones were observed, as well as several pottery sherds. There is a potential archaeological deposit at this site.

Significance and mitigation:

The site appears to be of medium archaeological significance. Two forms of mitigation are required for this site if it is affected in any manner. First, the site should be accurately mapped. Second, several test pit excavations should be undertaken if the site is to be impacted in any manner.

The site is currently being used as a lion capture area (according to the game guard), and care should be taken not to disrupt any potential subsurface features.

Desktop Survey

2831BC3

The site is on a fairly steep, south-easterly slope surrounded by *Acacia* trees. The site is dated to the Historical Period and consists of stone walling and The grindstones. It probably dates to the last human occupation of this area.

Significance and mitigation:

The site is of medium archaeological significance and would require further mitigation. Mitigation should be in the form of accurate mapping and test pit excavations.

2831BC10

The site is on level ground in an open area, and dates to the Historical Period. Several grindstones are scattered throughout the area.

Significance and mitigation:

The site would need to be resurveyed in terms of mitigation and management. However, I think a site mapping should suffice.

2831BC11

This site is located on a gentle slope in an open area. The site dates to the Historical period. The site includes a small midden (with pottery), several grindstones, and two grain pits.

Significance and mitigation:

This site is of medium-high significance. This site would need to be excavated and mapped, since it appears to have well preserved features and artefacts.

2831BC15

The site is located on open level ground and dates to the Historical Period. The site consists of several grindstones.

Significance and mitigation:

The site would need to be resurveyed in terms of mitigation and management. It may need to be mapped for archaeological features.

2831BC19

This site is an MSA quarry and/or factory site, located on the eastern slope of the Cengeni River. Several good examples of MSA stone tool technology were recorded at this site.

Significance and mitigation:

The site would need to be resurveyed in terms of mitigation and management.

2831BC20

This is an open site on the slope of a ridge between the Cengeni and Madlozi Rivers. The site dates to the Historical Period and consists of several grindstones and pottery sherds.

Significance and mitigation:

The site would need to be resurveyed in terms of mitigation and management. The site may require test pit excavations and mapping.

2831BC21

This is an open site located on the slope of a hill. The site consists of both MSA and LSA material as an open scatter.

Significance and mitigation:

The site would need to be resurveyed in terms of mitigation and management. It initially appears to be of medium-high significance. Few open LSA sites have been recorded and systematically sampled and/or excavated in KwaZulu-Natal, and this site may yield significant information.

2831BC23

This site is located on sandy soil near dolerite boulders. The site probably dates to the Historical Period . The site consists of pottery sherds, grindstones and stone features. The stone features that may be graves as well as stone-walling.

Significance and mitigation:

This site needs to be resurveyed in terms of mitigation management. If the stone features are graves, then community involvement may be required. The site would probably require test pit excavations and mapping.

2831BC28

This site is located near the Nqokotshane River. The site dates to the MSA and consists of an open scatter of stone tools. The stone tools are probably in a secondary context.

Significance and mitigation:

The site appears to be of low archaeological significance. No further mitigation would be required.

2831BC34

This site is located on a ridge and on both slopes. The site dates to the Historical Period and consists of a cattle byte on the south-eastern part of the ridge. Several pottery sherds and grindstones were recorded. These sherds varied in thickness and colour.

Significance and mitigation:

This site appears to be of medium-high significance. Few sites with this range of pottery have been recorded in this area. An archaeological deposit probably exists at this site. The site would need to be resurveyed and will probably require test-pit excavations and mapping.

2831BC37

The site is an open site located on a slope and probably dates to the Historical Period. The site consists of many grindstones and pottery sherds scattered over the slope. These probably indicate some form of settlement.

Significance and mitigation:

The site will need to be resurveyed in terms of mitigation and management. The site initially appears to be of medium archaeological significance and may require mapping and test-pit excavations.

2831BC39

The site is located on the slopes of a hill and dates to the Historical Period. The site consists of stone-walling, pottery sherds and grindstones.

Significance and mitigation:

The site may be of medium-high significance. The site would need to be resurveyed in terms of mitigation and management.

2831BC45

The site is located in the cliffs overlooking the White Umfolozi River. The site dates to the LSA, and is a rock shelter. Several rock art images are visible, however they are faint. The shelter may have an archaeological deposit.

Significance and mitigation:

The site appears to have low-medium significance. The site would need to be resurveyed in terms of mitigation and management.

I was also asked to comment on the land near Lookout Point # 27, that is currently owned by the community, in terms of archaeological potential. Given the high incidence of sites in the Umfolozi Reserve, as well as the topography of the area, there is a high probability that archaeological sites would occur on this land.

CONCLUSION

Five archaeological sites were located during the course of the archaeological survey, and a further thirteen had been previously recorded. All of the sites are located along the Ncengeni Gate corridor. I did not complete the survey of the corridor, since it requires at least seven days of field work. However, the location of five archaeological sites in a small area, as well as the previous survey, suggests that many other sites would be found in the vicinity of the corridor. No significant archaeological sites were located at Umbondwe Picnic site and Mambeni Gate.

Eighteen archaeological sites were noted in the affected areas. Of these eighteen, fifteen require further mitigation in the form of test pit excavations, mapping, and/or resurveying. Only once these sites have been partially excavated, can I comment on the potential archaeotourism aspect. If these sites do contain well preserved features, then they could be used as part of an open air interpretive centre.

APPENDIX A
Geographical co-ordinates of archaeological sites

SITE	Longitude	Latitude
UH1	28°21'20"	31°42'54"
UH2	28 22 03	31 43 16
UH3	28 22 16	31 43 22
UH4	28 21 55	31 43 11
UH5	28 21 39.5	31 42 56.5
2831CB3	28 17 55	31 43 45
2831CB10	28 21 35	31 42 40
2831CB11	28 21 40	31 42 20
2831CB15	28 19 30	31 43 05
2831CB19	28 21 20	31 42 40
2831CB20	28 21 20	31 43 10
2831CB21	28 21 45 28 22 05	31 43 15 31 43 30
2831CB23	28 22 25	31 43 25
2831CB28	28 20 50	31 43 10
2831CB34	28 19 60	31 44 10
2831CB37	28 19 25	31 43 50
2831CB39	28 18 00	31 44 05
2831CB45	28 22 25	31 43 15