

Archaeological Survey for the N2 Interchange and N2-M4 Link Road

For Chand Environmental Consultants

By

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INTRODUCTION

Chand Environmental Consultants appointed the Institute for Cultural Resource Management to undertake an archaeological survey of the proposed N2 Interchange and N2-M4 Link Road construction. The survey was undertaken on the 22 August 2003.

The original survey was undertaken by the Institute for Cultural Resource Management in 1996, however it did not record this affected area. Two archaeological sites were recorded in the affected area. One site requires further mitigation in terms of test-pit excavations. The developer will be required to apply to KwaZulu-Natal Heritage for a permit to damage both sites.

METHODOLOGY

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

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.

FINDS

CASR1

This site is on the eastern side of the Freeway and will be affected by the construction activities. The site extends for the length of the hill. The site has both an Early Iron Age and a Late Iron Age sequence, and an archaeological deposit.

There are at least five shell middens containing bone, limpets, brown mussels and oysters. Shell middens are important as they preserve organic remains in the acidic soil. A few faunal remains were observed on the surface of these middens.

The pottery can be attributed to the Msuluzi Phase of the Early Iron Age (1500 to 1300 years ago), and to a part of the Late Iron Age (LIA). Several granary floor (from daga) fragments were observed along the site. Several upper grinding stones were observed as well.

The site is probably one village (for the Msuluzi Phase) and a small settlement (for the LIA). These types of sites tend to have features that yield spatial information.

Significance: The site is of medium significance due to the potential spatial information, the occurrence of shell middens, stratigraphy and multiple occupations.

Mitigation: The site should have several test-pit excavations undertaken to determine the full potential of the site.

CASR2

This site is located on a small hill on the western side of the freeway. The site consists of a scatter of LIA pottery sherds.

Significance: The site is of low archaeological significance:

Mitigation: No further mitigation is required.

CONCLUSION

The archaeological survey recorded two archaeological sites. One of these sites require further excavation in terms of test-pit excavations. Test-pit excavations are used to determine the full potential of a site and may require further excavations.

The developer will need to apply to KwaZulu-Natal Heritage for a permit to damage/destroy these two sites.