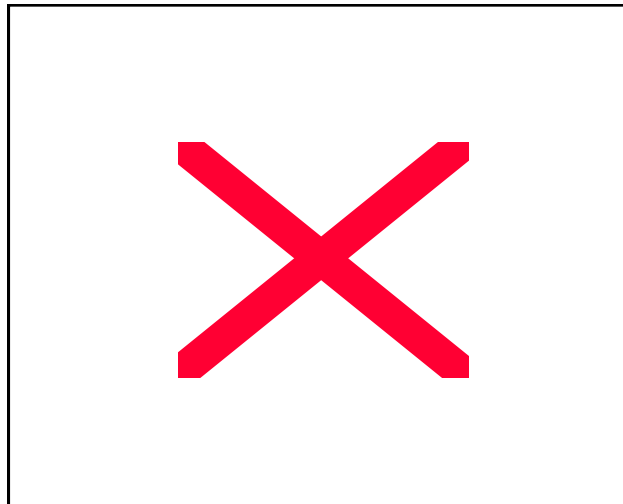


Archaeological Survey of Nzimakwe and Malangeni Housing Projects

**For
DA Thomas Development and Construction
and
Lee, Walker and Cele**

**By
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Introduction

DA Thomas Development and Construction, via Lee, Walker and Cele, contracted the Institute for Cultural Resource Management to undertake an archaeological survey of the areas to be affected by the proposed Malangeni and Nzimakwe Housing Projects. The Malangeni Housing Project is located near Sizela and the Nzimakwe Housing Project is situated near Port Edward. Both developments occur along the south coast of KwaZulu-Natal, and are located within 10km from the ocean.

A total of ten archaeological sites were recorded during the course of this survey. Of these ten sites, three should have further mitigation in the form of at least test-pit excavations.

All archaeological sites are protected by the KwaZulu-Natal Heritage of 1998. A permit for the damage, alteration and/or destruction of any archaeological site requires a permit from KwaZulu-Natal Heritage. The onus is on the developer, in this case DA Thomas Development and Construction, to apply for such a permit.

This report does not give the developer permission to continue with the archaeological component of the contract. Permission can only be granted by KwaZulu-Natal Heritage.

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.

Significance is generally determined by several factors.

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.

Findings

The assessment and mitigation of archaeological sites is summarised in Table 1. It is often difficult to date an archaeological site from the Late Iron Age and Historical Period, since both sites have a low density of artefacts, and few sites of these periods have been systematically excavated and radiocarbon dated. It is for this reason that I have grouped many of the sites as belonging to either of these two Periods. In addition to this, archaeological visibility ranged from very poor to good in the affected areas. It was thus not possible to undertake a complete survey/assessment in some of these areas (especially Nzimakwe). However, I do believe that both areas have been adequately covered in terms of an archaeological assessment.

Table 1: Archaeological sites located at Nzimakwe and Malangeni

Site name	Estimate Period ¹	Significance	Requires Mitigation	Required Mitigation
NZI1	LIA/HP	Low	No	None
NZI2	LIA/HP	Low	No	None
NZI3	LIA/HP	Low	No	None
MAL1	LIA/HP	Low	No	None
MAL2	MSA/LIA/HP	Medium	Yes	Test-pits
MAL3	MSA/LIA/HP	Low	No	None
MAL4	MSA/LIA	Medium	Yes	Test-pits
MAL5	LIA	Medium	Yes	Test-pits
MAL6	LIA/HP	Low	No	None
PSM1	LIA/HP	Low	No	None

¹ MSA = Middle Stone Age

LIA = Late Iron Age

HP = Historical Period

The Late Iron Age and historical Period of southern KwaZulu-Natal has been under-researched in the past. Only one Iron Age site has been previously excavated (Robey 19xx). This excavated site, named Mpambonyoni, yielded decorated pottery that is stylistically significantly different to the ceramics further north. Any archaeological site that thus has decorated ceramics along the KwaZulu-Natal south coast is important in that it can increase the knowledge of past human occupation in the area. More importantly these sites can show the relationship of Mpambonyoni to other site in KwaZulu-Natal. By 'relationship' I refer to both the physical (e.g. spatial attributes and decorated ceramics) and the social (e.g. political affinities) spheres of the past.

All sites with the prefix MAL refer to Malangeni, while those with the prefix NZI refer to Nzimakwe.

MALANGENI

MAL1

This site is located along the hills between the school, electricity transmission line and the tar road. The site is currently under sugar cane. The site consists of a series of artefact concentrations for ± 300 m along this hill. The archaeological deposit at these sites appears to be relatively shallow, or non-existent. Most of the artefacts also appear to be in a secondary context as a result of the sloping hill.

The artefacts at this site include pottery sherds and two lower grinding stones. The sherds vary in size, thickness, and colour. The sherds range from black, red-brown, orange-brown and brown in colour. Most sherds are thin-walled suggesting that they date at least to the LIA (Late Iron Age) or Historical Period.

Significance: The site is of low archaeological significance

Mitigation: No further mitigation is required.

MAL2

This site is located on the top of a hill opposite MAL1 and the tar road. The site consists of a scatter of Middle Stone Age (MSA) flakes and cores, and LIA/Historical Period pottery

sherds and grinding stones. MAL2 is interesting in that it consists of a long area of virtually no archaeological deposit, while at the end of the spur there is a thicker archaeological deposit. This suggests that most of the past human activity occurred along the edge of the hill. This may either be a result of the location of the living areas, or alternatively the discard area. Nonetheless, there is a definite spatial component to the use of this site and hill.

The pottery sherds are mostly red and orange-brown in colour, thin-walled and “smooth”. This suggests that the site may date rather to the LIA than the Historical Period. A few upper grinding stones were also recorded at the site.

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

Mitigation: Further mitigation would be required at this site. The mitigation should follow a two-phase approach. The first phase should include several test-pit excavations to determine the full potential of the site. **If the excavations yield material that is regarded as being significant then the second phase will be required. This will include more in depth excavations.**

MAL3

MAL3 is located on the spur to the southwest of MAL2. The site is located on a stony floor with little archaeological deposit. The artefacts include pottery sherds, grinding stone fragments, and MSA tools. The MSA material consists of flakes, cores and a blade.

Significance: The site is of low archaeological significance.

Mitigation: No further mitigation is required.

MAL4

This site is located on spur \pm 70 m east from MAL2. South with MAL2 part of the hill has a stony floor, while the northern side has an archaeological deposit. The archaeological deposit increase in density as one reaches the top of the hill. Pottery sherds, grinding

stones and MSA stone tools were observed on both parts of the site. The MSA tools included flakes and cores.

The side with the archaeological deposit had a high density of artefacts consisting mainly of pottery sherds and grinding stones. The sherds varied in thickness, and colour. The colour of the sherds is orange-brown and brown. One sherd had circular lip impressions. This suggests that the site may date to the LIA, rather than the Historical Period. Similar decorated sherds have been dated to the LIA in Richards Bay (Anderson2002), and at Blackburn (Davies 19xx).

Significance: The site is of medium significance due to the archaeological deposit, high density of sherds, and potential spatial information. The occurrence of the decorated sherd suggests that more would occur on the site. The site has the potential to be used as comparative material for Mpambanyoni.

Mitigation: Further mitigation would be required at this site. The mitigation should follow a two-phase approach. The first phase should include several test-pit excavations to determine the full potential of the site. **If the excavations yield material that is regarded as being significant then the second phase will be required. This will include more in depth excavations.**

MAL5

MAL5 is located on a small spur to the east of the Beacon Hill Road, and below the current house. The site has an archaeological deposit that appears to have a deep soil profile. The site consists of some iron ore and an extensive scatter of pottery sherds varying in size and thickness. Most of the sherds are brown in colour and are thin-walled. One sherd had comb-stamped decorations, and others had undecorated rims and lips. These diagnostic sherds suggest that the site may date to the LIA, however, it appears to be different to MAL4 pottery.

Significance: The site is of medium archaeological significance due to its archaeological deposit, decorated sherd (suggesting that more would occur on the site), and its comparative value with MAL3 and MAL4.

Mitigation: Further mitigation would be required at this site. The mitigation should follow a two-phase approach. The first phase should include several test-pit excavations to determine the full potential of the site. **If the excavations yield material that is regarded as being significant then the second phase will be required. This will include more in depth excavations.**

MAL6

MAL6 is located on the hill in front of the Housing Project Offices. The site is located on a mainly stony floor on both sides of the road, although some archaeological deposit does exist. The archaeological deposit is however ephemeral. The artefacts consist of thin-walled orange-brown and red pottery sherds.

Significance: The site is of low archaeological significance.

Mitigation: No further mitigation is required.

MAL7

MAL7 is located on top of the hill above MAL5. The site has been extensively damaged by the current water project that has cleared a large area of the hill, and removed an archaeological deposit. I noticed a few pottery sherds in the spoil heap of the excavations. This suggests that more artefacts would have occurred in the vicinity.

Significance: This site is now of low archaeological significance, as it has been damaged. I cannot assess the site in terms of its importance prior to the damage.

Mitigation: No further mitigation is required.

NZIMAKWE

The Nzimakwe survey was hampered by dense vegetation, resulting in poor archaeological visibility. To counter this problem, we surveyed along tracks, molehills, and other disturbed areas (some of which are a result of recent soil testing excavations).

According to the current landowner, a farmer's house used to exist in the area (near NZI2). This apparently dates to the 1920s. I am not qualified to assess this structure in terms of its historical and/or architectural significance.

NZI1

NZI1 is located near the freeway on top of the hill. It extends from the highest point of the hill, along the spur, and along the flattish area to the west. The site consists of an upper grinding stone and a scatter of brown thin-walled sherds.

Significance: the site is of low archaeological significance.

Mitigation: No further mitigation is required.

NZI2

NZI2 is also a scatter of sherds over a large area. This large area is a result of the dense vegetation, and we could only observe isolated sherds in the general vicinity. The sherds were reddish brown or black in colour.

Significance: the site is of low archaeological significance.

Mitigation: No further mitigation is required.

NZI3

NZI3 is located on the hill with the trigonometric beacon. Isolated sherds occurred along the top of the hill, and were visible in the disturbed areas, or areas of little grass.

Significance: the site is of low archaeological significance.

Mitigation: No further mitigation is required.

Discussion and Future Mitigation

The sites are significant for several reasons. The main factors are the occurrence of an archaeological deposit at each site, decorated pottery sherds and potential spatial information. Only one site along the south coast, Mpambanyoni, has been previously systematically excavated. This site yielded pottery decorations that have not been recorded at other sites in KwaZulu-Natal and date back to ± 900 years ago. The three new sites (MAL2, MAL4 and MAL5) may thus yield further information regarding the early settlement of Late Iron Age farmers along the south coast. In this way a better picture of

the prehistory of the area, and KwaZulu-Natal in general, may be obtained. Furthermore, the three sites can be used as comparative material to Mpambanyoni, and other LIA sites further north (Blackburn and Richards Bay), and in the interior in the Estcourt and Moor Park areas.

Most of the sites in both surveyed areas are of low archaeological significance and require no further mitigation. Three sites (MAL2, MAL4 and MAL5) are, however, significant and they require at least test-pit excavations. The aims of these excavations are to determine the full value of a site and whether further mitigation would be required.

The developer will be required to apply for a permit from KwaZulu-Natal Heritage in order to damage all of the recorded archaeological sites.