

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY AT THE KOELWATERS SITE, PORT
EDWARD, KWAZULU-NATAL**

For Jeff Reardon

By

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22 June, 2012



ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF THE PROPOSED KOELWATER CARAVAN AND HOTEL SITE, PORT EDWARD

The Institute for Cultural Resource Management was subcontracted by Environmental Planning and Design in March 1999 to undertake an archaeological survey of the new development at Koelwaters Caravan Park and surrounding areas. No new archaeological sites were recorded during the course of the survey.

The terms of reference for this contract are:

- Identify and assess archaeological sites in the affected area in terms of archaeological significance;
- Propose management plans for each site

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. Intrasite 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.

Methodology

Those areas with dense bush and/or grass could not be surveyed. If paths went through these areas then I surveyed alongside these paths. Certain types of site tend to occur in certain locations and I used this as a method of site detection. For example, shell middens are very common near rocky outcrops on the beach.

Results

No new archaeological sites were recorded in the affected area. However, three areas are significant and warrant discussion.

Tragedy Hill is of high archaeological significance. Human remains, spears, and ceramics have been previously recorded on this hill. If any new earthworks, paths or walkways occur on Tragedy Hill, then archaeological mitigation would be required. Apart from village settlements occurring in the dunes, the rocky outcrops (and thus archaeological shell middens) make this area highly significance.

The second area of significance is that of the São João (or St. John). The São João was wrecked in 1552 near the mouth of the lagoon. The wreck is of high archaeological and cultural significance. Furthermore, it is illegal for members of the public to collect items from this wreck without permission from the National Monuments Council, or Amafa aKwaZulu-Natali in KwaZulu-Natal. I suggest that Amafa aKwaZulu-Natali is contacted regarding a management plan for this wreck, even if it is not directly affected by the development. The wreck may be indirectly affected by access to the beach.

The third area that has archaeological potential is the northern hill near the mouth of the lagoon. If any development should occur on this hill, then a full survey should be undertaken. This will only be possible after the vegetation has been removed.

Conclusion

The ICRM was approached by Environmental Planning and Design to undertake an archaeological survey of the Koelwaters site.

No new archaeological sites were recorded, however, I have noted three areas, and two archaeological sites, of high archaeological sensitivity occur besides the affected area.