

**A CULTURAL HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF
THE PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MFOLOZI
BRIDGE AND ASSOCIATED ROAD WORKS NEAR
MTUBATUBA, NORTHERN KWAZULU-NATAL.**



**ACTIVE HERITAGE cc.
FOR: ROYAL HASKONING DHV**

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

EIA	Early Iron Age
ESA	Early Stone Age
HISTORIC PERIOD	Since the arrival of the white settlers - c. AD 1820 in this part of the country
IRON AGE	Early Iron Age AD 200 - AD 1000 Late Iron Age AD 1000 - AD 1830
IIA	Intermediate Iron Age
ISA	Intermediate Stone Age
LIA	Late Iron Age
LSA	Late Stone Age
MSA	Middle Stone Age
NEMA	National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998 and associated regulations (2006).
NHRA	National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act No. 25 of 1999) and associated regulations (2000)
SAHRA	South African Heritage Resources Agency
STONE AGE	Early Stone Age 2 000 000 - 250 000 BP Middle Stone Age 250 000 - 25 000 BP Late Stone Age 30 000 - until c. AD 200

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A first phase cultural heritage survey was conducted of the proposed Mfolozi Bridge and associated roadworks near Mtubatuba, northern KwaZulu Natal. No heritage sites were located during the ground survey. There is no known archaeological reason why the development may not proceed as planned. However, it should be noted that the general area is rich in archaeological sites as well as more recent grave sites in the locales of rural settlements. Construction work may expose material and attention is drawn to the South African Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act No. 25 of 1999) and the KwaZulu-Natal Heritage Act (Act no 4 of 2008) which, requires that operations that expose archaeological or historical remains should cease immediately, pending evaluation by the provincial heritage agency.

1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE PROJECT

Table 1. Background information

Consultant:	Frans Prins (Active Heritage cc) for Royal Haskoning DHV
Type of development:	Royal HaskoningDHV Consulting Engineers was requested by the Department of Transport KwaZulu-Natal to investigate and report on the requirements for a new river crossing over the Mfolosi River at Esiyembeni in the Mtubatuba Municipality. The request for a new bridge and link road was initiated by Cllr. F. M. Mathe of Ward 15, Mtubatuba, to bring together the historically important communities of the Isizwe-saka-Mpukunyoni (Somkhele) and the Isizwe-sakwa-Mthethwa who live on opposite sides of the river from each other
Rezoning or subdivision:	Rezoning
Terms of reference	To carry out a Heritage Impact Assessment as subcontracted by Royal Haskoning DHV
Legislative requirements:	The Heritage Impact Assessment was carried out in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998) (NEMA) and following the requirements of the National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act No. 25 of 1999) (NHRA) and the KwaZulu-Natal Heritage Act, 1997 (Act No. 4 of 2008)

1.1. Details of the area surveyed:

The footprint is situated adjacent to the Mfolozi River approximately 25 to the west of Mtubatuba, in northern KwaZulu-Natal (Figs 1 & 2). The secondary gravel road the L1791 that is situated on the southern bank of the Mfolozi River provides access to the Novunula community. Since Novunula is an important community centre for the Mthethewa people, the absence of road access from the north of the Mfolozi River makes the town somewhat isolated. North of the River lies the district of Esiyembeni which is populated by the Mpukunyoni community. This area is sandwiched between the game reserve and Somkhele Coal Mine. The area can also be accessed by several roads coming off Main Road P235 linking Mtubatuba and Hlabisa, the main one being the D857. The communities of the Mpukunyoni and Mthethwa are both located alongside the south-eastern border of the Mfolozi Game Reserve, but they are split by the Mfolozi River which flows eastwards between them.

District Road D857 serves the lightly populated northern side and numerous feeder roads lead off it to access various small communities in the hinterland. One of the feeder roads – the L1744, is located next to the border of the game reserve and it forms a loop that reaches down towards the Mfolozi River almost directly opposite Novunula on the southern side which is served by the feeder road L1791 off the D873. The proximity of these two feeder roads on each side of the Mfolozi River makes this a practical location for considering a new crossing point over the river (Figs 2, 3, 5, 6).

The proposed development will require the construction of a new local gravel linking road. The road is 2 km long and 6.0 m wide linking the L1791 off the D873 on the southern side and L1744 off the D857 on the northern side of the river. This route is identified as a future strategic road that will link two communities that have previously been separated by the Mfolozi River. The presence of a near-by coal mine will also attract regional traffic. Therefore the proposed Mfolozi River Bridge will be a 2-lane bridge which will be designed with the hydraulic requirements of a future Class 3 Minor Arterial route.

The co-ordinates for the proposed development (bridge together with the relevant road work) are as follows:

Start: S 28° 21' 04.17" E 31° 59' 46.04"

End: S 28° 22' 04.56" E 31° 59' 36.82"

2 BACKGROUND TO ARCHAEOLOGICAL HISTORY OF AREA

The greater Mtubatuba area has been relatively well surveyed for archaeological heritage sites by employees of the former Natal Parks Board as well as archaeologists associated with the then Natal Museum, the Ondini Cultural Museum and Amafa. It is especially the extensive surveys conducted by Penner (1970), and Hall (1980) to the south and west of the study area but also subsequent research by Feely (1980) and Anderson (2001) that has thrown light on the heritage resources of the area.

The available evidence, as captured in the KwaZulu-Natal Museum heritage site inventories, indicates that this area contains a wide spectrum of archaeological sites covering different time-periods and cultural traditions. One hundred and eight archaeological sites are listed for the greater Mtubatuba area. Most of these occur closer to the coast to the immediate east of the study area. Six Early Stone Age sites have been recorded within 20km from the study area. These sites date back to between 300 000 and 1.5 million years ago. Two of these sites also contain Middle Stone Age tools. Middle Stone Age sites are associated with anatomically modern people and dates back to approximately 40 000 to 200 000 years ago. The vast majority of Middle Stone Age sites in the greater Mtubatuba area are open-air sites. They therefore do not occur in archaeological context and have limited excavation value.

Around 1 700 years ago an initial wave of Early Iron Age People settled along the inland foot of the sand dunes on the coastal areas to the east of the study area. Here they settled on sandy but humus rich soils which would have ensured good crops for the first year or two after they had been cleared. These early agro-pastoralists produced a characteristic pottery style known as Matola. The Matola people also exploited the wild plant and animal resources of the forest and adjacent sea-shore. The communities seems to been small groups of perhaps a few dozen slash-and burn

cultivators, moving into a landscape sparsely inhabited by Later Stone Age San hunter-gatherers.

By 1500 years ago another wave of Iron Age migrants entered the area. Their distinct ceramic pottery is classified to styles known as “Msuluzi” (AD 500-700), Ndongondwane (AD 700-800) and Ntshokane (AD 800-900). Two sites belonging to these periods occur within 10km from the study area in association with Early Stone Age tools. (Maggs 1989; Huffman 2007).

An astonishing 82 Later Iron Age sites (belonging to the period 1200 AD – 1880 AD) has been recorded in the Hluhluwe Nature Reserve to the west of the study area. Some have also been recorded closer to the coast to the east of the study area (Anderson 2001). One later Iron Age site is situated approximately 5 km to the west of the footprint (Fig 1). The vast majority of these sites were inhabited by early Nguni-speaking agriculturists. These communities were the immediate ancestors of the present-day Zulu-speaking people of the area. Their ancestors migrated from the great lake region of Eastern Africa around 1100 years ago. The greater Hluhluwe-Imfolozi Park, to the immediate west of the study area, is particularly well known for its central situation relative to the development of the Zulu state of King Shaka Zulu in the early 1800's. Eighteen historical period sites that relate directly to the early formation of the Zulu Kingdom have been recorded in the area. Groups who were tributary to the Zulu state settled in the Mtubatuba area to the east. Here the historical occupation of the land can be traced back to the 1700s – if not earlier (Bryant 1905). People living in the study area were part of the Mpukunyoni tribe, originally a Thonga-speaking people, who had arrived in the area in 1770. One sub-group, the Mkwanzis, paid allegiance to Somkhele in the early 1900s. A Town in the area was named after this chief and later renamed Matubatuba, after Somkhele's son who succeeded him, indicating the significant presence of this group in the area. With the rise of the Zulu state to the south west of the study area people in the greater St Lucia/Mtubatuba area also adopted a Zulu ethnic identity. According to oral history the local tribes people in the area remained loyal to the Zulu king throughout the colonial period. The Mtethwa people in the study area regarded themselves as part of the Zulu Nation since the early formation of the Zulu state in the 1820's. Oral history suggests that the local population allowed the Dukuduku forest to be used as a refuge during some of the skirmishes with the British. However, the area also fell under British colonial administration with the conquest of the Zulu state in 1879. By 1887 the pressure on

the British government to give white settlers access to the fertile lands in Zululand had grown with the growth of the sugar industry in the province, resulting in the allocation of farms on the Mfolosi-Matubatuba flood plain in 1910. Pressure on the land continued with the discovery of anthracite in Somkhele, which led to the establishment of a mine, the building of a railway line in 1903 and the settlement of workers in the area. After World War 2, the government offered whites farmland in the Monzi area. In about 1964, government began a new effort to remove more people from the area to clear space for commercial agriculture. In addition, the Mfolosi-Hluhluwe corridor declaration began to clear the forest of people for conservation purposes. In 1973/74, more people were removed when the western bank of St Lucia was cleared for forestry purposes and between 1974 and 1979 a missile range was established at St Lucia, resulting in more forced removals. Development of the area has included cultivating the Mfolosi flats as well as building a golf court (Afra Report 2003).

3 BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF THE SURVEY

3.1 Methodology

A desktop study was conducted of all the relevant archaeological databases housed in the KwaZulu-Natal Museum. In addition, the available archaeological literature covering the greater Mtubatuba area was also consulted. The SAHRIS website was studied and relevant heritage impact assessment reports consulted. Aerial photographs of the area were studied to identify potential Iron Age and historical period sites. A ground survey of the footprint, following standard and accepted archaeological procedures, was conducted. Particular care was taken to identify potential graves in the environs of rural settlements adjacent to the footprint.

3.2 Restrictions encountered during the survey

3.2.1 Visibility

Visibility was good.

3.2.2 Disturbance

No disturbance of any potential heritage features was noted.

3.3 Details of equipment used in the survey

GPS: Garmin Etrek

Digital cameras: Canon Powershot A460

All readings were taken using the GPS. Accuracy was to a level of 5 m.

4 DESCRIPTION OF SITES AND MATERIAL OBSERVED

4.1 Locational data

Province: KwaZulu-Natal

Towns: Mtubatuba, Ulundi

Municipality: Mkhanyakude District Municipality

4.2 Description of the general area surveyed

No archaeological sites occur on the footprint. Some contemporary homesteads occur adjacent to the access road on the south bank of the Mfolozi River (Fig 4). However, none of these had associated graves that occur on the footprint or the close environs thereof. The area is also not part of any known cultural landscape.

4.3 4.3 Heritage Sites Identified

No heritage sites were identified as such.

5 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (HERITAGE VALUE)

As there are no heritage sites on the study area the area is not significant in terms of heritage values (Table 3)

Table 3. Evaluation and statement of significance.

Significance criteria in terms of Section 3(3) of the NHRA		
	Significance	Rating
1.	Historic and political significance - The importance of the cultural heritage in the community or pattern of South Africa's history.	None.
2.	Scientific significance – Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of South Africa's cultural heritage.	None.
3.	Research/scientific significance – Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage.	None.
4.	Scientific significance – Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class of South Africa's cultural places/objects.	None.
5.	Aesthetic significance – Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by a community or cultural group.	None.
6.	Scientific significance – Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.	None.
7.	Social significance – Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.	None.
8.	Historic significance – Strong or special association with the life and work of a person, group or organization of importance in the history of South Africa.	None.
9.	The significance of the site relating to the history of slavery in South Africa.	None.

5.1 Field Rating

The field rating criteria as formulated by SAHRA (Table 4) does not apply to the footprint as no heritage sites or features have been identified on the footprint.

Table 4. Field rating and recommended grading of sites (SAHRA 2005)

Level	Details	Action
National (Grade I)	The site is considered to be of National Significance	Nominated to be declared by SAHRA
Provincial (Grade II)	This site is considered to be of Provincial significance	Nominated to be declared by Provincial Heritage Authority
Local Grade IIIA	This site is considered to be of HIGH significance locally	The site should be retained as a heritage site
Local Grade IIIB	This site is considered to be of HIGH significance locally	The site should be mitigated, and part retained as a heritage site
Generally Protected A	High to medium significance	Mitigation necessary before destruction
Generally Protected B	Medium significance	The site needs to be recorded before destruction
Generally Protected C	Low significance	No further recording is required before destruction

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

The proposed Mfolozi Bridge and associated road works may proceed in terms of heritage values as no heritage sites or features are in any danger of being destroyed or altered.

7 UNCERTAINTIES, GAPS AND ASSUMPTIONS

Although no heritage sites were located on the footprint it should be pointed out that the greater area is relatively rich in archaeological sites and features. It is also possible that “invisible” graves may occur in association with rural homesteads situated along the proposed road leading towards the Mfolozi Bridge. Such potential grave sites occur on the southern bank of the Mfolozi River. It would be wise to avoid existing homesteads and allow a buffer of at least 15m around these. Construction activities may expose grave sites and archaeological artefacts not visible on the surface.

The KwaZulu-Natal Heritage Act requires that operations exposing archaeological and historical residues should cease immediately pending an evaluation by the heritage authorities.

8 MAPS AND PHOTOGRAPH

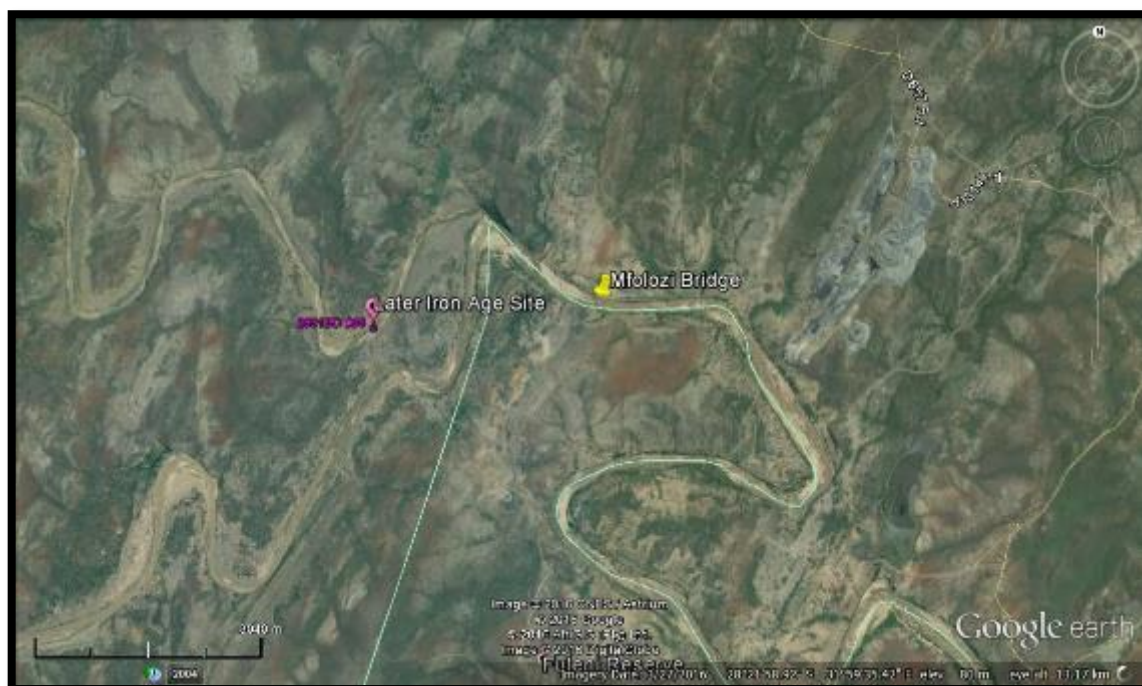


Figure 1. Google aerial photograph showing the location of the proposed Mfolozi Bridge near Mtubatuba in northern KwaZulu-Natal.



Figure 2. Google aerial photograph showing the proposed Mfolozi Bridge and associated road works (source: Royal Haskoning DHV).

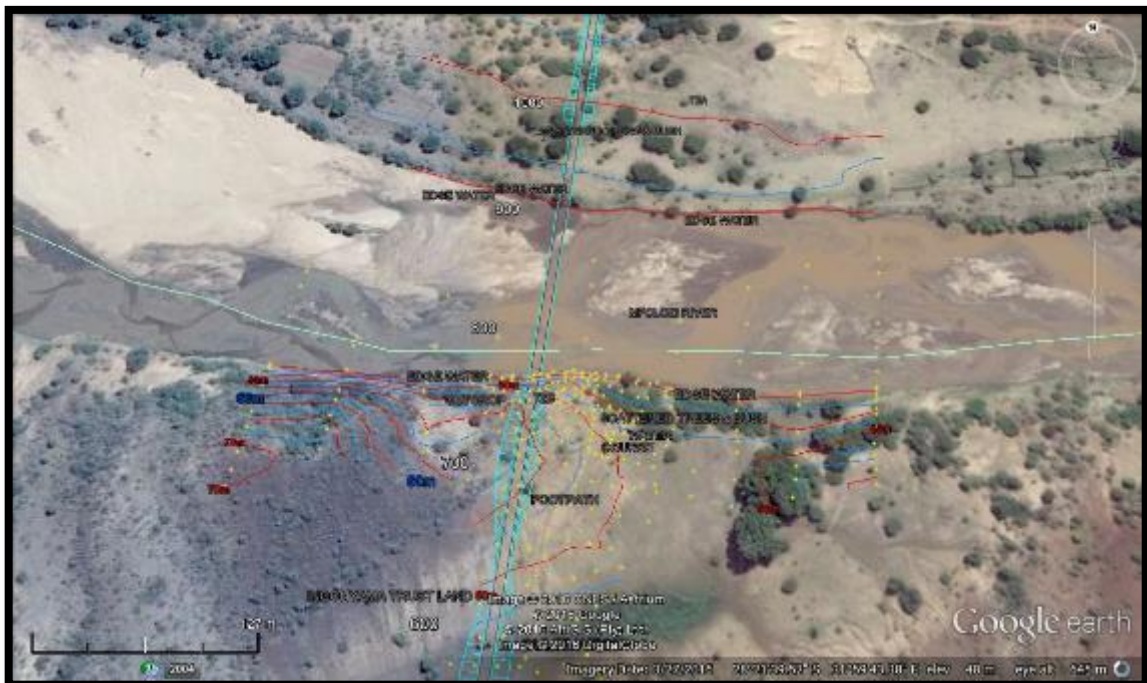


Figure 3. Google aerial photograph showing the location of the proposed bridge spanning the Mfolozi River (Source: Royal Haskoning DHV).



Figure 4. Google aerial photographs showing the location of Zulu homesteads adjacent to the proposed road upgrade on the southern bank of the Mfolozi River. No graves occur on the footprint (Source: Royal Haskoning DHV).



Figure 5. Photograph showing the proposed crossing point spanning the Mfolozi River.



Figure 6. The Mfolozi River: no heritage sites occur on the footprint.

9 REFERENCES

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