

**HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT ON THE
PROPOSED BLACKHURST MANOR DEVELOPMENT,
HOWICK, KWAZULU-NATAL**

FOR AFZELIA ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANTS

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INTRODUCTION

Umlando cc was contracted by AFZALEA Environmental Consultants to undertake a heritage impact assessment of the proposed Blackhurst Manor Development, on Remainder of Portion 1 of the Farm Tweedie Hall No. 11880, KwaZulu-Natal. The proposed development is situated on two hills overlooking the northwest part of the Midmar Dam (figures 1 - 2).

“The development will comprise a variety of residential opportunities, including sectional title and freehold ownership, as well as mixed use, tourism, hospitality, recreational, conservation, and agricultural land use zones” (BID Document)

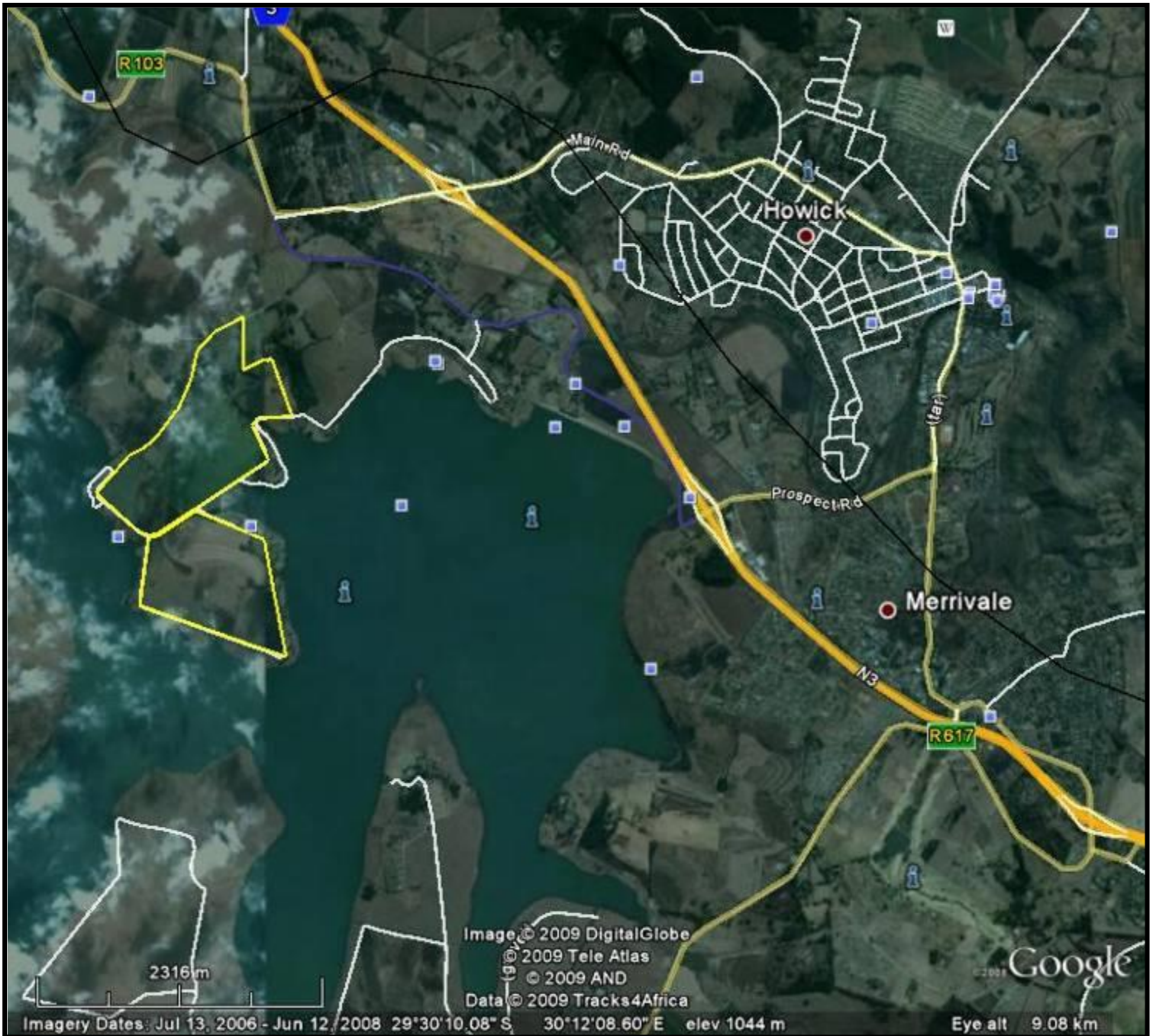
The types of impacts on the area will be:

- Houses and offices
- Infrastructures related to roads, sewerage, water, and electricity

The area is currently used as cattle pastures and mealie fields. The southern hill and parts of the northern hill has been extensively ploughed. There are several built structures in the study area and many of these are older than 60 years. These buildings are automatically are protected by the KZN Heritage Act of 1997. I was informed that the proposed development would not impact on the buildings.

The heritage survey was undertaken in June 2009 and one archaeological site was recorded. This site is of low significance and requires no further mitigation.

FIG. 1: GENERAL LOCATION OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT¹



¹ Study area outlined in yellow

FIG. 2: CLOSE-UP OF THE STUDY AREA



METHOD

The method for heritage assessment consists of several steps. The first step forms part of the desktop assessment. Here we would consult the databases from both Umlando and the Natal Museum, as well registers for declared buildings, monuments and graves. These databases contain most of the known heritage sites in KwaZulu-Natal. Consulting with the relevant authorities will also cover known battlefields and historical sites. We also consult with an historical architect, palaeontologist, and an historian where necessary.

The initial archaeological survey (i.e. fieldwork) consists of a foot survey of the study area. The survey results will define the significance of each recorded site, as well as a management plan. All sites are grouped according to low, medium and high significance for the purpose of this report. Sites of low significance have no diagnostic artefacts or features. Sites of medium significance have diagnostic artefacts or features and these sites tend to be 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 and/or extensively sampled. Those sites that are extensively sampled have high research potential, yet poor preservation of features.

Defining significance

Heritage 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.

8. Other Heritage Significance:

8.1. Palaeontological sites

8.2. Historical buildings

8.3. Battlefields and general Anglo-Zulu and Anglo-Boer sites

8.4. Graves and/or community cemeteries

8.5. Living Heritage Sites

8.6. Cultural Landscapes, that includes old trees, hills, mountains, rivers, etc related to cultural or historical experiences.

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. This occurs in Phase 2. These test-pit excavations may require further excavations if the site is of significance (Phase 3). 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.

RESULTS

The desktop study noted no sites have been recorded within the study area. However, eight heritage sites, excluding buildings, have been previously recorded within a 10km radius of the study area. These sites consist of:

- Middle Stone Age
- Late Iron Age
- Howick Anglo-Boer War Concentration camp

There is thus reason to believe that heritage sites may occur in the study area.

BLA01

BLA01 is located on the southern hill of the study area. The site consists of an ephemeral scatter of stone tools across the northwestern slopes of hill. The stone tools date to either the late Middle Stone Age (MSA), or early Late Stone Age (LSA) – there are too few to make a proper assessment and they can fall into either category based on their size. Since these fields have been ploughed extensively, it is unlikely for the material to be in a primary context and it has little research value.

Significance: The site is of low significance.

Mitigation: No further mitigation is required.

GENERAL COMMENTS ON THE AREA

There are two other heritage issues related to the development: houses and boundary markers.

Several built structures in the study area are older than 60 years. These range from farmhouses, kraals, workshops, and labourers' houses. Fig. 3 indicates the location of some of the labourers houses, while others occur further north along the road. The development does not propose to damage any built structures, and we did no record them. However, the developers need to be made aware that labourers' houses and general stonewalled kraals are protected by the heritage act, and may not be disturbed without a permit.

The second heritage issue relates to historical farm boundaries, in the form of trees. These trees form part of the cultural landscape and should be protected, regardless of their 'alien' status, and if they have not been declared alien invasive species. The trees in the study area have been used by humans to divide the landscape and are thus related heritage. I would not support any activity that promotes the removal of these old trees. These trees are older than 60 years and **may** be protected in terms of their historical value.

MANAGEMENT PLAN

The MSA/LSA site is of little research value, and is of low significance. The site may thus be damaged/destroyed by the development. **No further mitigation is required for the MSA/LSA site.** The developer will need to apply for a permit from Amafa KZN to damage/destroy the site.

I suggest that the development conducts an audit of all of the buildings in the study area. A qualified architect historian should undertake this audit. The advantage of this audit is that it will form a base line of known buildings prior to development. If there is a dispute about the types of buildings and/or damage to them after the development, then the developers will have accredited documentation regarding the status of these structures. This audit would note which structures have low significance, and may be removed at a later stage if necessary.

Any construction activity near the houses must note that historical artefacts may occur. All rubbish dumps that are exposed need to be reported and assessed for their historical value.

The trees used for farm boundaries are visible on aerial photographs and can be studied at any time. These trees should not be removed.

CONCLUSION

A heritage impact assessment was undertaken for the proposed Blackhurst Manor development, Howick. Heritage sites have been previously recorded in the general area and there was reason to believe that sites may occur in the study area. One MSA/LSA was recorded in the study area. This site is of low significance and does not require any further mitigation. The developer will need to apply for a permit to destroy this site from Amafa KZN.

I noted that there are several buildings older than 60 years, as well as historical landmarks in the form of trees. These form part of the cultural landscape and should be preserved.

I suggested that the development undertakes an audit of all known built structures to counter any possible disputes regarding damages to the structures at a later stage. This audit does not have to be detailed, and will allow the developer to make an informed decision to demolish specific buildings that are less than 60 years old. This study would be an additional study to this heritage survey.

FIG. 3: LOCATION OF SOME OF THE LABOURERS HOUSES IN THE STUDY AREA²

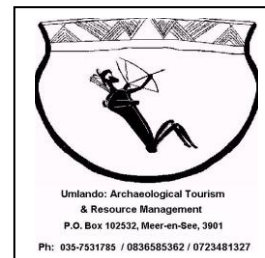


² Outlined in white

APPENDIX A

SITE RECORD FORMS

UMLANDO ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE RECORD FORM



SITE CATEGORY: (X where applicable)

Stone Age: MSA/LSA

Early Iron Age:

Late Iron Age

Historical Period:

Recorder's Site No.: BLA01

Official Name: Remainder of Portion 1 of the Farm Tweedie Hall No. 11880

Local Name:

Map Sheet:

Map Reference: 29°30'22.58"S 30°10'14.09"E (alt = 1077m)

DIRECTIONS TO SITE: SKETCH OR DESCRIPTION.

From Pmb take R103 from Howick, passing the Midmar Dam wall. Follow this road and take the P548 turnoff to the right to Tweedie Hall. Development area begins at the Blackhurst farm sign, on the right hand side.

SITE DESCRIPTION:

Type of Site: Surface.

Merits conservation: No

Threats: yes

What threats: Possible development

RECORDING:

Graphic record: None

Digital pictures:

Tracings :

Re-drawings:

Recorder/Informant:

Name: Gavin and Louise Anderson

Address: PO Box 102532, Meerensee, 3901

Date: 1 June 2009

Owner: private

References: see report.

Description of site and artefactual content.

Ephemeral scatter of late MSA or early LSA tools – not quite either so probably eLSA.. Made on dolerite.