

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF THE  
PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT IN CLIFFDALE**

**FOR KERRY SEPPINGS ENVIRONMENTAL  
MANAGEMENT SERVICES CC**

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## INTRODUCTION

Umlando cc was contracted by Kerry Seppings Environmental Management Specialists (KSEMS) cc, to undertake a heritage survey of a proposed development in Cliffdale, KwaZulu-Natal.

The area is located to the southwest of the N3, in an area that is very disturbed by industrial activity (fig. 1). Much of the area is on a steep slope, while a portion is on a relatively flat area.

A desktop study noted that several sites have been previously recorded in the general vicinity. There is a strong likelihood that sites could occur in the affected area. One archaeological site was recorded in the affected area. No further mitigation is required. The developer will need to apply to Amafa KZN for a permit to damage the recorded site.

## 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. These databases contain most of the known heritage sites in KwaZulu-Natal. This database does; however, tend to be restricted to archaeological and palaeontological sites. Consulting with the relevant authorities will also cover known battlefields and historical sites. We also consult with an historical architect and an historian where necessary.

The initial archaeological survey (i.e. fieldwork) consisted of a foot survey where the selected affected area occurs. 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, 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 and/or extensively sampled. Those sites that are extensively sampled have high research potential, yet poor preservation of features. We attempt to recover as many artefacts from these sites by means of systematic sampling, as opposed to sampling diagnostic artefacts only.

### **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.

**8. Other Heritage Significance:**

8.1. Historical buildings

- 8.2. Battlefields and general Anglo-Zulu and Anglo-Boer sites
- 8.3. Graves and/or community cemeteries
- 8.4. Living Heritage Sites
- 8.5. 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.

A Phase 2 may yield enough material so that further excavations are not required. However, if significant material occurs in the archaeological deposit then it is likely that a Phase 3 will be required.

## **RESULTS**

One archaeological site was recorded in the affected area. The site INCH001 probably extend over a larger area, however the current developments in that specific area have damaged the site extensively. Figure 2 illustrates the location of the survey and INCH001.

INCH001 consists of an extensive scatter of pottery sherds and a few grinding stones. The sherds are relatively thick and weathered. One decorated sherd was observed. The decorations place the sherd in the Early Iron Age, and probably dating to the Mzonjani or Msuluzi Phase of the Early Iron Age. These occur between 1 700- 1 500 years ago, and 1 500 – 1 300 years ago,

respectively. The decorations are oblique grooves that can occur in any of these two phases; however, since the site is in the interior, it probably dates to the Msuluzi Phase.

These sites tend to be large villages with a main kraal, and several subsidiary buildings and homesteads. Unfortunately, these have been damaged due to industrial activity. The area that does not appear to have been damaged is too small to warrant further mitigation.

Slag does occur on the site, but it appears to belong to modern industry.

Significance: The site is of low significance, as any mitigation would only result in an increase of decorated pottery samples.

Mitigation: No further mitigation is required. Any earthmoving activity should be made aware potential artefacts and/or human skeletons that may occur.

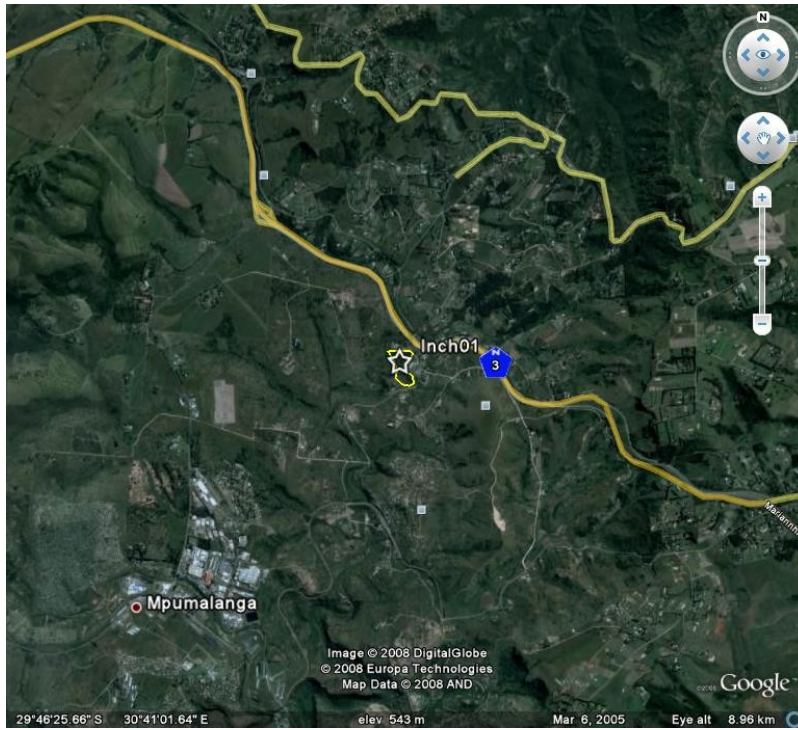
## **CONCLUSION**

An archaeological survey of a proposed development in Cliffdale yielded one previously unrecorded site. The site probably dates between 1 500 and 1 300 years ago. The area has been extensively damaged due to commercial and industrial activity.

The developer will need to apply to Amafa KZN for a permit to damage the rest of the site.

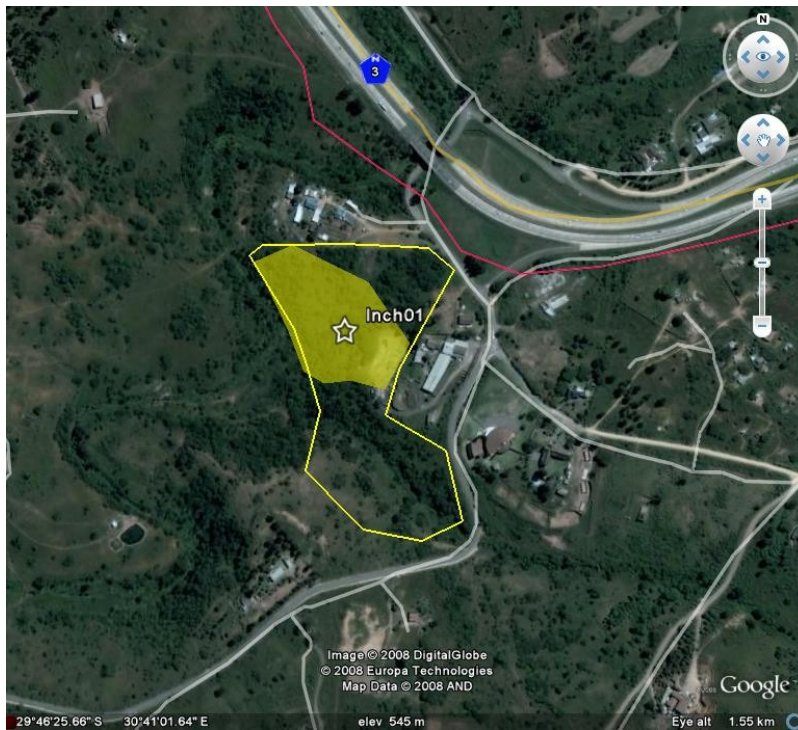
FIGURE 1: LOCATION OF THE PROPOSED AREA

2:



FIGURE

LOCATION OF INCH001



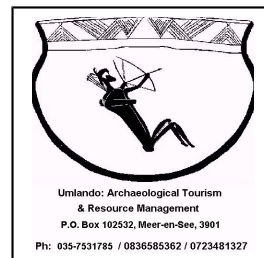
1

<sup>1</sup> Yellow line = proposed development area; shaded yellow = extent of site

**APPENDIX A  
SITE RECORD FORM**



**UMLANDO ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE RECORD FORM**



**SITE CATEGORY:** (X where applicable)

Stone Age  
Early Iron Age: x  
Late Iron Age  
Historical Period:

Recorder's Site No.: ICNH001

Official Name:

Local Name:

Map Sheet: 2930

Map Reference: S 29°46'23.9 , E 30°40'58.00" (alt = 536m)

**DIRECTIONS TO SITE: SKETCH OR DESCRIPTION.**

From Marianhill Toll plaza, drive north for 16km, take the Mpumalanga turnoff and follow the road for 3km. Take a left that is bit of tar then a gravel road, and keep to main gravel road for 4.5km All of the twists and turns will bring you next to some type of church on the right, and a building with trucks on the left. Take first left (before going under the N3) into a parking lot of a business premises. Site is on 'level' area overlooking the river

**SITE DESCRIPTION:**

Type of Site: Surface, may contain deposit but it is extensively damaged.

Merits conservation: No

Threats: yes

What threats: Possible development

**RECORDING:**

Graphic record: Digital

**RECORDER/INFORMANT**

Name: Gavin and Louise Anderson

Address: PO Box 102532, Meerensee, 3901

Date: 14 April 2008

Owner:

References:

**DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND ARTEFACTUAL CONTENT.**

Extensive scatter of pottery (probably Msuluzi) and grinding stones. Industrial slag in area as well as other modern debris.