



Amafa aKwazulu-Natali
195 Jabu Ndlovu Street
PIETERMARITZBURG 3200
Telephone 033 3946 543
bernadetp@amafapmb.co.za

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Attention Bernadet Pawandiwa

Dear Ms Pawandiwa

**Application for Exemption from a Phase 1 Heritage Impact Assessment for the Dannhauser Housing Project,
Dannhauser Local Municipality, KwaZulu-Natal**

Project description

The Dannhauser Local Municipality proposes a 'residential township' development of 1000 housing units as a residential extension to the town of Dannhauser. The site identified is located within Erf 511 of the town lands, and is 69,0419 ha in extent. The current zoning is agricultural.

Survey protocol

1. Visual inspection of the proposed development footprint
2. Interview local residents in the area and,
3. Documentation of any visible surface anomalies.

Site assessment and recommendations

eThembeni staff inspected the site on 08 May 2015. The site is located on previous agricultural land and ploughing scars are clearly visible on satellite imagery. Fig.1. The land cover comprises unimproved grassland characterised by a hard topsoil, termite mounds and dolerite extrusions. The underlying geology is predominantly dolerite with shales exposed in the southern down slope part of the site. The survey area is subject to unmanaged grazing and is traversed by numerous foot paths. Surface visibility at the onset of winter was excellent.

Findings

1. Artifacts

No exposed artefacts were found during the survey.

2. Interviews

- “Lucky” – a cattle herder who resides on one of the three homesteads present within the development footprint, claimed to have no knowledge of any graves within the focus area, however he pointed out that he suspects the presence of graves on the other side of the boundary fence, north to north-west of the site.
- A second resident informant, who in passing, enquired as to our presence, volunteered that he did not know of any graves within the greater focus area.

3. Architecture

Three homesteads exist along the borders of the site and comprise subsistence agricultural structures, mud-walled rectangular houses and rondavels. These have no historical significance.

4. Stone Circle [1]

A stone circle was observed outside of the development boundary along the north-west boundary. Fig.2. This is the basal signature of an age indeterminate cattle byre. The stone walls have been removed, either culled in the past for reconstruction elsewhere off site, or historically more recently, during field clearance for agriculture. It has no other associated cultural features or apparent archaeological deposits and is consequently of low heritage significance.

- Co-ordinates: S 28°01'04.6 – E 030°02'21.6.
- Northern-western corner, approx. 20m from the northern boundary fence
- Circle is approximately 14m in diameter
- Circle wall is approx. 0.5m wide.
- Basal vegetation seems to be *in situ* and concomitant with the surrounding grassland.

5. Two other areas of deflated stone accumulations were observed. These both appear to be the consequence of field clearance for agriculture and are of low heritage significance.

On the basis of the historically recent agricultural ploughing disturbance and the observations of our field inspection, we believe that a Phase 1 HIA for this project is not justified. Accordingly, on behalf of the client, Dannhauser Local Municipality, we are applying for exemption from an HIA for the project.

Please could you convey Amafa's decision on this matter to the appointed Environmental Practitioner, Mr. Sipelele Dlamini, of **SPHE Consulting Services**, sphe300@yahoo.com.

Yours sincerely



Len van Schalkwyk
(Principal Investigator).



FIG 1. DANNHAUSER HOUSING PROJECT BOUNDARIES



FIG 2. STONE CIRCLE EXTENT



FIG 3. STONE CIRCLE EXTENT AS SEEN FROM SATELLITE IMAGERY