

PHASE 1 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND “GREENING” OF THE AREA BETWEEN THE ROYAL KHALANGA LODGE AND VALOYI VATSHONGA CULTURAL VILLAGE IN NWAMITWA AREA, TZANEEN LOCAL MUNICIPALITY WITHIN MOPANE DISTRICT

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Executive Summary

This report addresses the Proposed Development and “Greening” of the area between the Royal Khalanga Lodge and Valoyi Vatshonga Cultural Village in Nwamitwa Area, Tzaneen Local Municipality within the Mopane District.

- A literature study and pedestrian survey of the project area was undertaken;
- Consultation was undertaken with the Traditional Authority;
- The study identified no significant heritage resources within the project area

No significant heritage resources were observed in the project area and consultations revealed no spiritual significant place in the area. In view of the above no recommendation for mitigation measures are proposed, other than for possible archaeological chance finds.

From a heritage resources management perspective there is no objection towards the proposed development.

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1. INTRODUCTION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

1.1 Introduction

The author was contracted by the Environmental Assessment Practitioner; Jacana Environmental, to undertake a Phase 1 Heritage Impact Assessment of the proposed Development and “Greening” of the area between the Royal Khalanga Lodge and Valoyi Vatshonga Cultural Village in Nwamitwa Area, Tzaneen Local Municipality within Mopane District. The Royal Khalanga Lodge and Valoyi Vatshonga Cultural Village

The “greening” of the area between Khalanga Lodge and Valoyi Vatsonga Cultural Village is an approved community project under the Environmental Protection and Infrastructure Programmes supported by the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE).

1.2 Terms of reference and scope of work

Undertake a Heritage Impact Assessment and submit a specialist report, which addresses the following:

- A desktop and field assessment to gather information on heritage resources within the proposed development area;
- Identify possible archaeological, cultural and historic sites within the proposed development area;
- Evaluate the potential impacts of construction and maintenance of the proposed development on archaeological, cultural and historical resources;
- Recommend mitigation measures to ameliorate any negative impacts on areas of archaeological, cultural or historical importance; and
- Identifying key uncertainties and risks.

2. PROJECT AND TERRAIN DISCRIPTION

2.1 Project location and description

The proposed development is situated within Ward 12 of the Greater Tzaneen Local Municipality (GTM) within the Mopane District Municipality (MDM) of Limpopo Province. Coordinates: S23°43'36.93" E30°25'18.92”.

The development is situated in the Nwamitwa area next to the road R3248 to Nkambako on a portion of the Remaining Extent of farm Mamitwas Location 461 LT, between the Royal Khalanga Lodge and the Valoyi Vatshonga Cultural Village.

The project development area falls within the jurisdiction of the state under Traditional Council custodianship, in this case the Valoyi Royal Council (Chief Nwamitwa Traditional Council).

The development includes the establishment of picnic facilities and park furniture, braai areas with roofed seating and braai facilities, swimming pools, playground facilities for children, hawkers’ stands, park circulation pathways, eco-friendly ablution facilities, park fencing and gates, parking for vehicles and buses/taxis. The area of development is approximately 4 hectares in size.

Additional infrastructure for the project will consist of the following:

- Boreholes and reservoirs/tanks,
- A new septic tank with a package treatment plant,
- Three fire hydrants,
- Storm water run-off,

2.2 Terrain description

The proposed development is situated within the Savanna Biome, the Lowveld Bioregion and falls within the Granite Lowveld vegetation type (SVI3). An abundance of Marula and Apple leaf trees were noted on the development footprint, varying from very young to mature adults. Only two Jackal-berry trees were noted, both of good size.

The site is on the urban edge of the rural town of Nwamitwa. No cultivation is undertaken on the site (currently or historically) and the area is used for informal grazing only. Shallow rock outcrops are evident throughout the development area. Parts of the development footprint are severely overgrown with *Dichrostachys cinerea* (Sickle bush) and *Lantana camara* (Lantana). The closest watercourse is the Nwanedzi River situated approximately 2 km to the south.

3. RELEVANT LEGISLATION

Two sets of legislation are relevant for this study with regard to the protection of heritage resources and graves.

3.1 The National Heritage Resources Act (25 of 1999) (NHRA)

This Act established the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) and makes provision for the establishment of Provincial Heritage Resources Authorities (PHRA). The Act makes provision for the undertaking of heritage resources impact assessments for various categories of development as determined by Section 38. It also provides for the grading of heritage resources (Section 7) and the implementation of a three-tier level of responsibilities and functions for heritage resources to be undertaken by the State, Provincial authorities and Local authorities, depending on the grade of the Heritage resources (Section 8).

In terms of the National Heritage Resources Act (1999) the following is of relevance in terms of the general protection of heritage resources:

Historical remains

Section 34(1) No person may alter or demolish any structure or part of a structure, which is older than 60 years without a permit issued by the relevant provincial heritage resources authority.

Archaeological remains

Section 35(3) Any person who discovers archaeological or palaeontological objects or material or a meteorite in the course of development or agricultural activity must immediately report the find to the responsible heritage resources authority or to the nearest local authority or museum, which must immediately notify such heritage resources authority.

Subsection 35(4) No person may, without a permit issued by the responsible heritage resources authority-

- (a) destroy, damage, excavate, alter, deface or otherwise disturb any archaeological or palaeontological site or any meteorite;
- (b) destroy, damage, excavate, remove from its original position, collect or own any archaeological or palaeontological material or object or any meteorite;
- (c) trade in, sell for private gain, export or attempt to export from the republic any category of archaeological or palaeontological material or object, or any meteorite; or
- (d) bring onto or use at an archaeological or palaeontological site any excavation equipment or any equipment which assist with the detection or recovery of metals or archaeological material or objects, or use such equipment for the recovery of meteorites.

Subsection 35(5) When the responsible heritage resources authority has reasonable cause to believe that any activity or development which will destroy, damage or alter any archaeological or palaeontological site is under way, and where no application for a permit has been submitted and no heritage resources management procedures in terms of section 38 has been followed, it may-

- (a) serve on the owner or occupier of the site or on the person undertaking such development an order for the development to cease immediately for such period as is specified in the order;
- (b) carry out an investigation for the purpose of obtaining information on whether or not an archaeological or palaeontological site exists and whether mitigation is necessary;
- (c) if mitigation is deemed by the heritage resources authority to be necessary, assist the person on whom the order has been served under paragraph (a) to apply for a permit as required in subsection (4); and
- (d) recover the costs of such investigation from the owner or occupier of the land on which it is believed an archaeological or palaeontological site is located or from the person proposing to undertake the development if no application for a permit is received within two weeks of the order being served.

Subsection 35(6) The responsible heritage resources authority may, after consultation with the owner of the land on which an archaeological or palaeontological site or meteorite is situated; serve a notice on the owner or any other controlling authority, to prevent activities within a specified distance from such site or meteorite.

Burial grounds and graves

Subsection 36(3)

- (a) No person may, without a permit issued by SAHRA or a provincial heritage resources authority-
- (c) destroy, damage, alter, exhume, remove from its original position or otherwise disturb any grave or burial ground older than 60 years which is situated outside a formal cemetery administered by a local authority; or
- (d) bring onto or use at a burial ground or grave referred to in paragraph (a) or (b) any excavation equipment, or any equipment which assists in detection or recovery of metals.

Subsection 36(6) Subject to the provision of any law, any person who in the course of development or any other activity discovers the location of a grave, the existence of which was previously unknown, must immediately cease such activity and report the discovery to the responsible heritage resources authority which must, in co-operation with the South African Police Service and in accordance with regulations of the responsible heritage resources authority-

- (a) carry out an investigation for the purpose of obtaining information on whether or not such grave is protected in terms of this Act or is of significance to any community; and

- (b) if such grave is protected or is of significance, assist any person who or community which is a direct descendant to make arrangements for the exhumation and re-interment of the content of such grave or, in the absence of such person or community, make any such arrangement as it deems fit.

Culture Resource Management

Subsection 38(1) Subject to the provisions of subsection (7), (8) and (9), any person who intends to undertake a development* ...

must at the very earliest stages of initiating such development notify the responsible heritage resources authority and furnish it with details regarding the location, nature and extent of the proposed development.

***‘development’** means any physical intervention, excavation, or action, other than those caused by natural forces, which may in the opinion of the heritage authority in any way result in a change to the nature, appearance or physical nature of a place, or influence its stability and future well-being, including-

- (a) construction, alteration, demolition, removal or change of use of a place or a structure at a place;
- (b) carry out any works on or over or under a place*;
- (e) any change to the natural or existing condition or topography of land, and
- (f) any removal or destruction of trees, or removal of vegetation or topsoil;

***‘place’** means a site, area or region, a building or other structure* ...”

***‘structure’** means any building, works, device or other facility made by people and which is fixed to the ground ...”

3.2 The Human Tissues Act (65 of 1983)

This Act protects graves younger than 60 years. These fall under the jurisdiction of the National Department of Health and the Provincial Health Departments. Approval for the exhumation and re-burial must be obtained from the relevant Provincial MEC as well as the relevant Local Authorities.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 Sources of information

The main sources of information were a pedestrian reconnaissance of the proposed project area, the SAHRIS database, Google earth and the Topographical maps 2330 CB and 2330 CD were studied.

The terrain was surveyed on foot where clearings, geotechnical pits, earthworks and other disturbances were carefully inspected.

4.2 Limitations and assumptions

Certain areas are covered in dense lantana shrub and sickle bush and could not be penetrated. However, the terrain is relatively small and any archaeological remains should overflow into open areas.

Secondly, archaeological material is often subterranean and may not be visible on the surface. Chance finds may occur.

4.3 Categories of significance

The significance of heritage sites is ranked into the following categories.

No significance: sites that do not require mitigation.
Low significance: sites, which <i>may</i> require mitigation.
Medium significance: sites, which require mitigation.
High significance: sites, which must not be disturbed at all.

The significance of specifically an archaeological site is based on the amount of deposit, the integrity of the context, the kind of deposit and the potential to help answer present research questions. Historical structures are defined by Section 34 of the National Heritage Resources Act, 1999, while other historical and cultural significant sites, places and features, are generally determined by community preferences.

4.4 Terminology

Early Stone Age:	Predominantly the Oldowan artefacts and Acheulian hand axe industry complex dating to + 1Myr yrs – 250 000 yrs. before present.
Middle Stone Age:	Various lithic industries in SA dating from ± 250 000 yrs. - 22 000 yrs. before present.
Late Stone Age:	The period from ± 22 000-yr. to contact period with either Iron Age farmers or European colonists.
Early Iron Age:	Most of the first millennium AD
Middle Iron Age:	10 th to 13 th centuries AD
Late Iron Age:	14 th century to colonial period. <i>The entire Iron Age represents the spread of Bantu speaking peoples.</i>
Phase 1 assessments:	Scoping surveys to establish the presence of and to evaluate heritage resources in a given area
Phase 2 assessments:	In depth culture resources management studies which could include major archaeological excavations, detailed site surveys and mapping / plans of sites, including historical / architectural structures and features. Alternatively, the sampling of sites by collecting material, small test pit excavations or auger sampling could be undertaken.
Sensitive:	Often refers to graves and burial sites, as well as ideologically significant sites such as ritual / religious places. <i>Sensitive</i> may also refer to an entire landscape / area known for its significant heritage remains.
NHRA	National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999)
SAHRA	South African Heritage Resources Agency
SAHRIS	South African Heritage Resources Information System

5. BASELINE INFORMATION

No significant research had been conducted within the direct project area. The baseline information is therefore mostly generic.

5.1 The Stone Age

The Stone Age covers most of southern Africa and the earliest consist of the Oldowan and Acheul artefacts assemblages. Oldowan tools are regularly referred to as “choppers”. Oldowan artefacts are associated with *Homo habilis*, the first true humans. In South Africa definite occurrences have been found at the sites of Sterkfontein and Swartkrans. Here they are dated to between 1.7 and 2 million years old. Bearing in mind the proximity of the Makapans Valley palaeontological site about 50km south-east of the project area it is possible that they may occur here. This was followed by the Acheulian technology from about 1.4 million years ago which introduced a new level of complexity. The large tools that dominate the Acheulian artefact assemblages range in length from 100 to 200 mm or more. Collectively they are called bifaces because they are normally shaped by flaking on both faces. In plan view, they tend to be pear-shape and are broad relative to their thickness. Most bifaces are pointed and are classified as handaxes, but others have a wide cutting end and are termed cleavers. The Acheulian design persisted for more than a million years and only disappeared about 250 000 years ago.

The change from Acheulian with their characteristic bifaces, handaxes and cleavers to Middle Stone Age (MSA), which are characterized by flake industries, occurred about 250 000 years ago and ended about 30 000 – 22 000 years ago. For the most part the MSA is associated with modern humans; *Homo sapiens*. MSA remains are found in open spaces where they are regularly exposed by erosion as well as in caves. Characteristics of the MSA are flake blanks in the 40 – 100 mm size range struck from prepared cores, the striking platforms of the flakes reveal one or more facets, indicating the preparation of the platform before flake removal (the prepared core technique), flakes show dorsal preparation – one or more ridges or arise down the length of the flake – as a result of previous removals from the core, flakes with convergent sides (laterals) and a pointed shape, and flakes with parallel laterals and a rectangular or quadrilateral shape: these can be termed pointed and flake blades respectively. Other flakes in MSA assemblages are irregular in form.

The change from Middle Stone Age to Later Stone Age (LSA) took place in most parts of southern Africa little more than about 20 000 years ago. It is marked by a series of technological innovations or new tools that, initially at least, were used to do much the same jobs as had been done before, but in a different way. Their introduction was associated with changes in the nature of hunter-gatherer material culture. The innovations associated with the Later Stone Age “package” of tools include rock art – both paintings and engravings, smaller stone tools, so small that the formal tools less than 25mm long are called microliths (sometimes found in the final MSA) and Bows and arrows. Rock art is an important feature of the LSA and is abundant in certain area of Kruger National Park.

During a survey conducted by the National Cultural History Museum in Pretoria in 1996, it is reported that a Late Stone Age site exists on the neighbouring farm Mamitwas Kop 462 LT.

The greening project does not impact on overhangs or large boulders where rock art paintings or engravings may occur.

5.2 The Iron Age (Early Farming Communities)

According to the archaeological cultural distribution sequences by Huffman (2007), this area falls within the distribution area of various cultural groupings originating out of both the Urewe Tradition (eastern stream of migration) and the Kalundu Tradition (western stream of migration). The ceramic (pottery) facies that may be present are:

Urewe Tradition:	Kwale Branch	Silver Leaves facies AD 280 – 450 (Early Iron Age)
	Moloko branch	Mzonjani facies AD 450 – 750 (Early Iron Age)
		Icon facies AD 1300 - 1500 (Late Iron Age)
Kalundu Tradition:	Happy Rest sub-branch	Doornkop facies AD 750 – 1000 (Early Iron Age)
		Eiland facies AD 1000 – 1300 (Middle Iron Age)
		Letaba facies AD 1600 - 1840 (Late Iron Age)

Outside of the project area it is known that the Lowveld is rich in archaeological sites, dating from the Stone Age, through the Early Iron Age to the colonial or contact period. Due to the population density and township development and agricultural activities in this area, many and archaeological sites have been destroyed or obscured.

5.3 History of the N'wamitwa

Research indicates that the Valoyi clan originated from the Changamire ruling lineage in Zimbabwe (Mathebula 2018). It appears that the Changamire ruling lineage had relocated away from the Great Zimbabwe area to a place called Mazoe, within the Butua state. The lineage reigned from this new capital until the 17th century, around 1660.

In the beginning of the 17th century, the ruling Changamire was known as Gulukhulu. He had a son called Gwambe who, after transgressing by practicing witchcraft, was banished together with his entire family and many of his supporters. They became known as the *va ka Valoyi*, meaning those who practice witchcraft. Therefore, the Valoyi, as part of the ruling lineage, probably stayed there until they broke away from the Changamire family, in the early 17th century, around 1640. They marched southeast towards the Limpopo River, but did not cross it. Instead, they followed it through its northern bank until its confluence with the Olifants River. There, they established their new capital, which became known as Gulukhulu and Gutse, and it later adopted a third name of N'wamahunyani.

From the ruling nucleus of Gwambe, six lineages developed through his sons, four of them, and the descendants of Xirimbi, spearheaded the Valoyi's expansion towards the west and later contributed groups that migrated to Limpopo. These were the Lowani, Xifun'wana, Xivodze and Mpondwana. (Mathebula 2018:123–130). Oral accounts from these lineages suggest that all these lineages were located on the western part of the Valoyi country around the end of the 18th century and beginning of the 19th century and therefore bordering the Limpopo Province. The lineage of one of Gwambe's sons, Xifun'wana, gave rise to the Xitsavi clan, who were the second group of the *va ka Valoyi* to come to the Limpopo Province. The group was led by Mbhekwana, the son of Xitsavi. Its members included other sons of Xitsavi such as Muxurhu, Malatana and Ngungungu. The group arrived in Limpopo in 1838 and settled at Jajalala, in Modjadji's country, near the present-day Modjadjiskloof. The group split into three communities still found today. The N'wamitwa, (named after N'wamitwa, the son of Mbhekwana), with its own Valoyi Traditional Authority is the community living in the project area (Mathebula 2018, Mathebula & Mokgoatšana 2020).

In 2002, Hosi T.L.P N'wamitwa II was appointed to the throne. This was however contested by a struggle of succession to the throne; customarily it was a taboo for a female to rule a clan. Court cases ensued which culminated in the Constitutional court in 2008 where the ruling was in her favour. Hosi T.L.P N'wamitwa II became the first woman of the Vatsonga nation to become a ruler (https://nwamitwa.org.za/?page_id=6).

6. RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

6.1 Palaeontology

The project area falls within the grey colour code of the SAHRIS Palaeontological Sensitivity Map. No palaeontological study is required (see figure 4).

6.2 Stone Age remains

No Stone Age material was observed in the project area.

6.3 Iron Age (Early Farming Communities)

No Iron Age cultural remains were observed in the project area.

6.4 Graves and burials sites

No graves or burial sites or places of ritual significance are present in the project area.

The grave of the founding father of the Nwamitwa, Hosi Mugudeni Nwamitwa I is located approximately one kilometre south of the project area at coordinates S23°44'12.7" E30°25'10". The project will have no impact on the monument.

6.5 The built environment / historical structures

No historical structures exist in the project area.

7. DISCUSSION

The project area contains no visible heritage remains. We have had direct communications with the Traditional Authority and the Royal House who have expressed no concerns in terms of heritage resources being present in or near the project area. It must also be noted that the project is being championed by the Royal House.

8. EVALUATION AND STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

8.1 Significance criteria in terms of Section 3(3) of the National Heritage Resources Act.

Table 1: Significance criteria and rating

	Significance	Rating
1.	The importance of the cultural heritage in the community or pattern of South Africa's history	None

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

8.2 Assessment of cultural significance or other special values because of:

8.2.1 *Section 38(3) (c) An assessment of the impact of the development on such heritage resources.*

The development will have no impact on any heritage sites or remains.

8.2.2 *Section 38(3) (d) An evaluation of the impact of the development on heritage resources relative to the sustainable economic benefits to be derived from the development.*

The development will have no impact on any heritage sites or remains and will have a positive economic benefit to the community.

8.2.3 *Section 38(3) (e) The results of consultation with the communities affected by the proposed development and other interested parties regarding the impact of the development on heritage resources.*

We have had direct communications with the Traditional Authority and Hosi Nwamitwa.

8.2.4 *Section 38(3)(f) If heritage resources will be adversely affected by the proposed development the consideration of alternatives.*

No alternatives exist.

8.2.5 *Section 38(3)(g) Plans for mitigation of any adverse effects during and after the completion of the proposed development.*

The will be no adverse impact on heritage resources and no mitigation other than possible chance find are addressed.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the above no specific cultural resources management measures are recommended other than should any archaeological chance find be discovered, the heritage authority of an archaeologist must be informed.

From a heritage resources management perspective, there is no reason why the development may not proceed.

10. REFERENCES

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11. MAPS AND IMAGES (Figures 1 – 9)

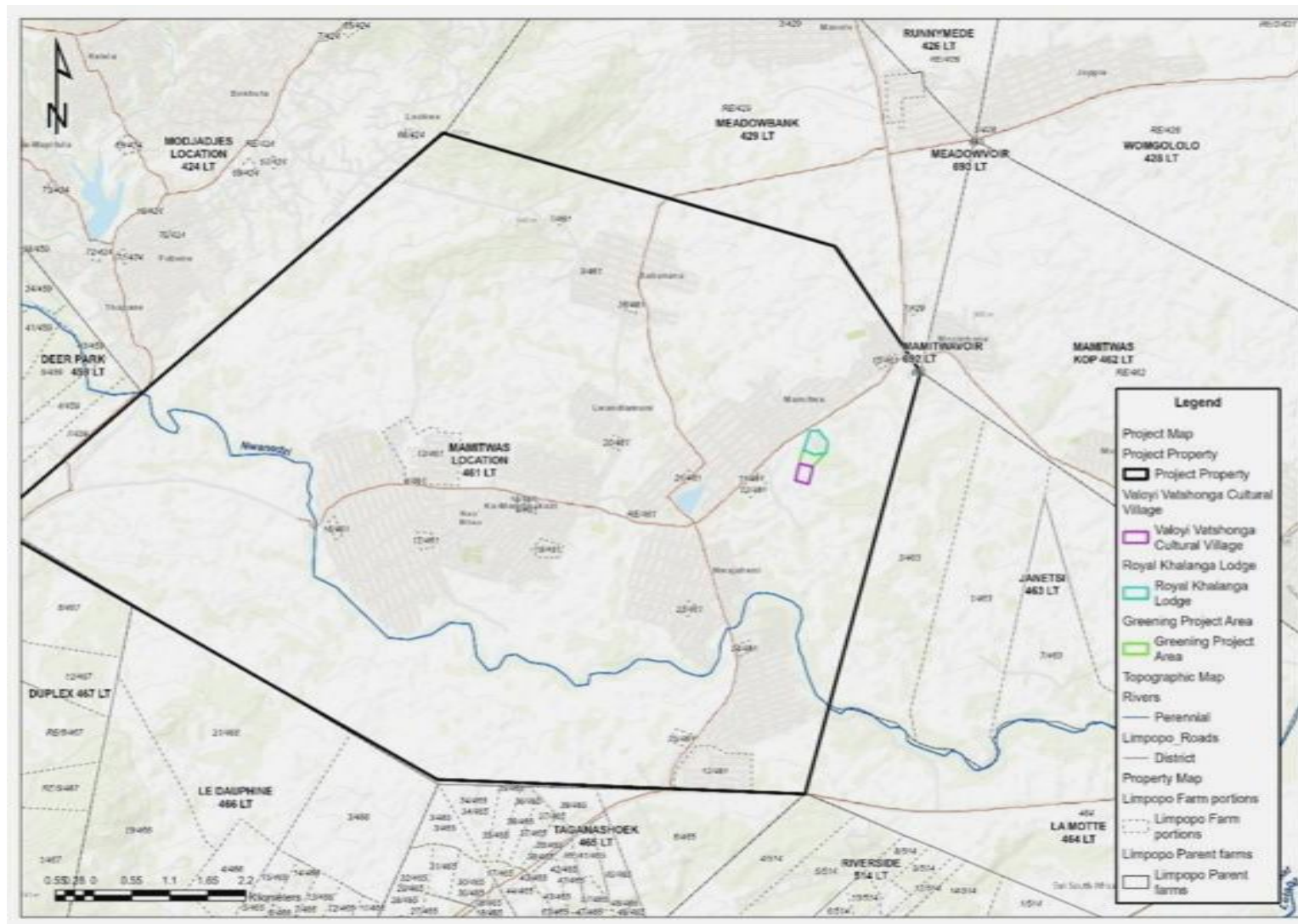


Figure 1. Project location.



Figure 2. Development Layout Plan.



Figure 3. Google earth image showing the project location between the Lodge and Cultural Village with the grave of Hosi Nwamitwa I to the south.

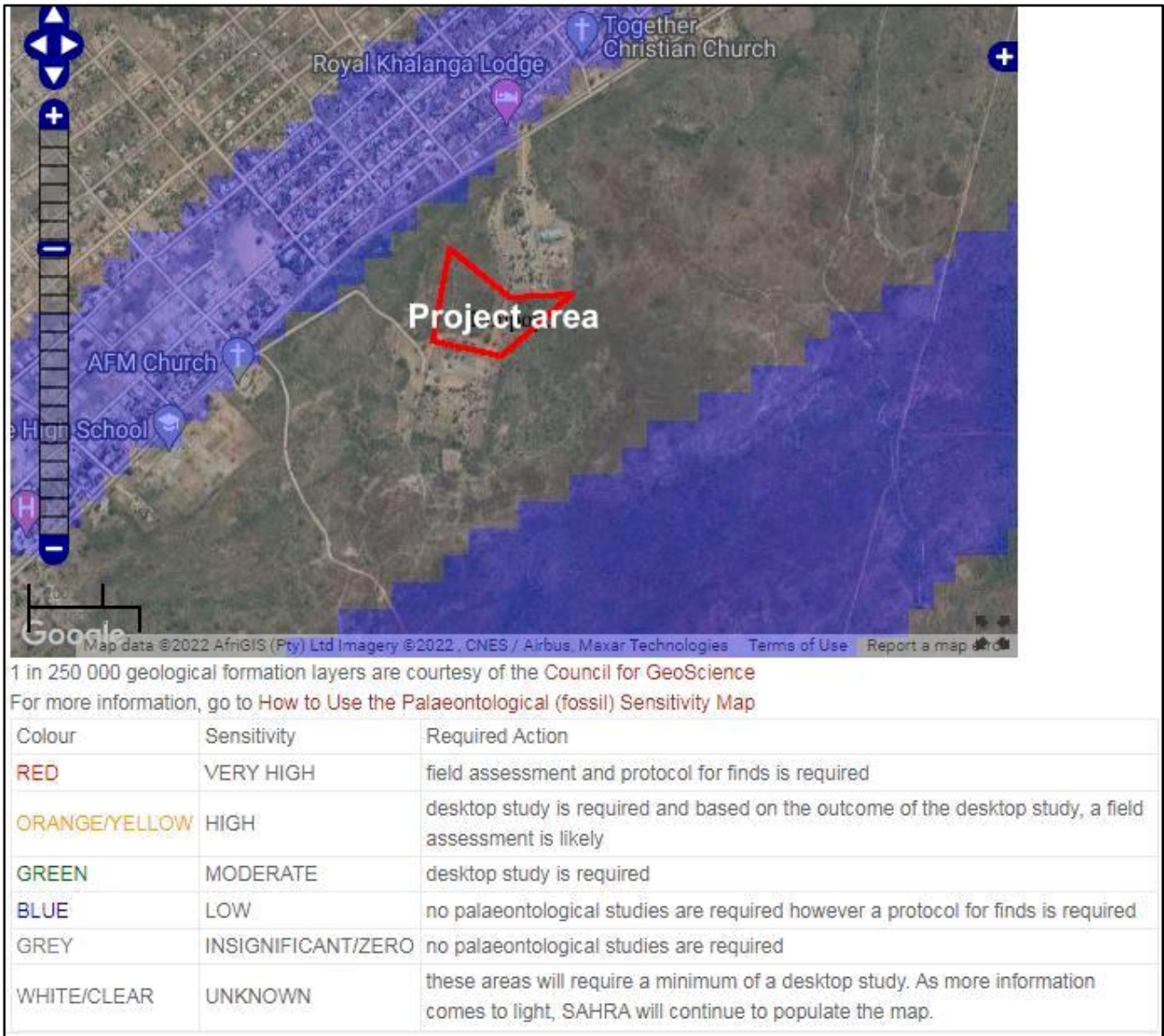


Figure 4. Palaeosensitivity map.



Figure 5. General view of vegetation on previously cleared area.



Figure 6. View of area with impenetrable sickle bush and shrub.



Figure 7. View of impenetrable Lantana ticket.



Figure 8. View of one of the geotechnical pits that were inspected.



Figure 9. Grave of Hosi Mugodeni Nwamitwa.