

HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSED MQANGQALA ACCESS ROAD, UMZUMBE MUNICIPALITY



ACTIVE HERITAGE cc.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | | |
|----------|---|-----------|
| 1 | BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE PROJECT | 1 |
| 2 | BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF THE SURVEY | 5 |
| 2.1 | Methodology | 5 |
| 2.2 | Restrictions encountered during the survey | 6 |
| 2.2.1 | <i>Visibility</i> | 6 |
| 2.2.2 | <i>Disturbance</i> | 6 |
| 2.3 | Details of equipment used in the survey..... | 6 |
| 3 | DESCRIPTION OF SITES AND MATERIAL OBSERVED | 6 |
| 3.1 | Locational data | 6 |
| 3.2 | Description of the general area surveyed..... | 6 |
| 3.3 | Heritage sites identified..... | 6 |
| 4 | STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (HERITAGE VALUE) | 7 |
| 4.1 | Field Rating..... | 7 |
| 5 | RECOMMENDATIONS | 8 |
| 6 | MAPS AND FIGURES | 9 |
| 7 | REFERENCES | 13 |

LIST OF TABLES

| | | |
|----------|--|---|
| Table 1. | Background information..... | 1 |
| Table 2. | Archaeological sites located during the ground survey..... | 5 |
| Table 3. | Field rating and recommended grading of sites (SAHRA 2005) | 7 |

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 |
| 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 heritage survey of the proposed Mqangqala Access Road, Umzumbe Local Municipality identified one modern grave site adjacent to the road. Due to its close proximity to the road it is proposed that the developer maintain a buffer of at least 8 m around the site. Should this not be possible then a second phase heritage impact assessment, by a grave relocation expert, must be conducted to arrange for mitigation. The relatives of the buried people live in the immediate environs of the graves, in associated residential dwellings, and their memories of the deceased are still very much part and parcel of the “living heritage” associated with these graves. They will have to be consulted on all aspects relating to the possible alteration and/or exhumation process of the relevant graves. Apart from this one grave site there is no archaeological reason why the proposed upgrade may not proceed on the remainder of the road as planned. 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) for Thlaho Environmental Consultants |
| Type of development: | The construction of a 1.5 km long access road x 5m width. The proposed Mqangqala access road will serve a rural community who has been disadvantaged in the past. |
| Rezoning or subdivision: | Not applicable |
| Terms of reference | To carry out a Heritage Impact Assessment |
| 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 Umzumbe Local Municipality has proposed the construction of an access road at Mqangqala. The road points can be found at:

Start: 30°33'21.13"S, 30°12'47.22"E End: 30°32'46.99"S, 30°12'35.58"E (Fig 1). The study area is situated in a rural area on a ridge overlooking a steep valley. The surrounding vegetation has been disturbed and a mixture of traditional Zulu homesteads and more modern style homes dotted the area (Fig 6).

1.2. Cultural Heritage legislation

According to Section 3 (2) of the NHRA, the heritage resources of South Africa include:

- a. places, buildings, structures and equipment of cultural significance;
- b. places to which oral traditions are attached or which are associated with living heritage;
- c. historical settlements and townscapes;
- d. landscapes and natural features of cultural significance;
- e. geological sites of scientific or cultural importance;
- f. archaeological and palaeontological sites;
- g. graves and burial grounds, including
 - i. ancestral graves;
 - ii. royal graves and graves of traditional leaders;
 - iii. graves of victims of conflict;
 - iv. graves of individuals designated by the Minister by notice in the Gazette;
 - v. historical graves and cemeteries; and
 - vi. other human remains which are not covered in terms of the Human Tissue Act, 1983 (Act No. 65 of 1983);
- h. sites of significance relating to the history of slavery in South Africa;
- i. movable objects, including objects recovered from the soil or waters of South Africa, including
 - i. archaeological and palaeontological objects and material, meteorites and rare geological specimens;
 - ii. objects to which oral traditions are attached or which are associated with living heritage;
 - iii. ethnographic art and objects;
 - iv. military objects;
 - v. objects of decorative or fine art;
 - vi. objects of scientific or technological interest; and

vii. books, records, documents, photographic positives and negatives, graphic, film or video material or sound recordings, excluding those that are public records as defined in section 1(xiv) of the National Archives of South Africa Act, 1996 (Act No. 43 of 1996).”

In terms of section 3 (3) of the NHRA, a place or object is to be considered part of the national estate if it has cultural significance or other special value because of:

- “a. its importance in the community, or pattern of South Africa's history;
- b. its possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage;
- c. its potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage;
- d. its importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class of South Africa's natural or cultural places or objects;
- e. its importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by a community or cultural group;
- f. its importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period;
- g. its strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons;
- h. its strong or special association with the life or work of a person, group or organisation of importance in the history of South Africa; and
- i. sites of significance relating to the history of slavery in South Africa.”

BACKGROUND TO ARCHAEOLOGICAL HISTORY OF AREA

The project area has never been systematically surveyed for archaeological sites in the past. However, the coastal areas of the greater Hibberdene and Port Shepstone areas to the east of the project area has been surveyed by archaeologists of the then Natal Museum in the 1970's and 1980's. Further inland the greater Oribi Gorge, situated to the south of the project area, has also been intensively surveyed in the past. These surveys were originally conducted by staff associated with the then Natal Parks Board in the 1970's. However, more professional surveys were conducted by archaeologists such as J. H. Cable in the early 1980's (Cable 1984) and later by various archaeologists attached to the Natal Museum (Mazel 1989; Mitchell 2005).

The available evidence, as captured in the KwaZulu-Natal Museum heritage site inventories, indicates that the greater Umzumbe area contains a wide spectrum of archaeological sites covering different time-periods and cultural traditions. These include Early, Middle and later Stone Age sites, Early Iron Age sites, Later Iron Age sites, and some historical sites. Various buildings and farmsteads belonging to the Victorian and Edwardian periods occur in the area. These would also be protected by heritage legislation.

Stone Age sites of all the main periods and cultural traditions occur along the coastal cordon in the immediate vicinity of Hibberdene and Port Shepstone. Most of these occur in open air contexts as exposed by donga and sheet erosion. The occurrence of Early Stone Age tools in the near vicinity of permanent water resources is typical of this tradition. These tools were most probably made by early hominins such as *Homo erectus* or *Homo ergaster*. Based on typological criteria they most probably date back to between 300 000 and 1.7 million years ago. The presence of the first anatomically modern people (i.e. *Homo sapiens sapiens*) in the area is indicated by the presence of a few Middle Stone Age blades and flakes. These most probably dates back to between 40 000 and 200 000 years ago. The later Stone Age flakes and various rock painting sites identified in the area are associated with the San (Bushmen) and their direct ancestors. These most probably dates back to between 200 and 20 000 years ago.

The San were the owners of the land for almost 30 000 years but the local demography started to change soon after 2000 years ago when the first Bantu-speaking farmers crossed the Limpopo River and arrived in South Africa. By 1500 years ago these early Bantu-speaking farmers also arrived in the project area. Due to the fact that these first farmers introduced metal technology to southern Africa they are designated as the Early Iron Age in archaeological literature. Their distinct ceramic pottery is classified to styles known as “Msuluzi” (AD 500-700), Ndongondwane (AD 700-800) and Ntshokane (AD 800-900). Most of the Early Iron Age sites in the greater Umzumbe Municipality area belong to these traditions (Maggs 1989:31; Huffman 2007:325-462). These sites characteristically occur on alluvial or colluvial soil adjacent to large rivers below the 1000m contour. The Early Iron Age farmers originally came from western Africa and brought with them an elaborate initiation complex and a value system centred on the central significance of cattle.

Later Iron Age sites also occur in the greater Hibberdene and Port Shepstone areas. These were Bantu-speaking agropastoralists who arrived in southern Africa after 1000 year ago via East Africa. Later Iron Age communities in KwaZulu-Natal were the direct ancestors of the Zulu-speaking people (Huffman 2007). Many African groups moved through the study area due to the period of tribal turmoil as caused by the expansionistic policies of king Shaka Zulu in the 1820's and subsequent civil wars in Zululand to the north. It is known from oral history that the greater project area was inhabited by Zulu refugees in the 19th century (Bryant 1965) especially by members of the abakwaCele clan. The abakwaCele arrived in the project area around 1828 soon after the murder of King Shaka when they were being pursued by supporters of King Dingane (ibid). However, it appears that the lower densely wooded valley areas were only occupied later. According to oral history most of the historical settlement of the area took place on the higher altitude grassland areas.

Archaeological sites in the near vicinity of the project area include 2 Middle Stone Age sites and 11 Later Stone Age rock art sites situated within the greater Oribi Gorge and adjacent areas. The rock art sites form part of the eastern seaboard coastal rock art zone. Most of these occur in sandstone shelters and depict red monochrome paintings. None, however, have been recorded in the project area. The absence of rock art sites in the project area most probably related to the near absence of sandstone shelters and associated geology in this specific area. No Iron Age sites were identified in the project area although there is a high probability that Early Iron Age sites would occur adjacent to the UMzumbe River.

2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF THE SURVEY

2.1 Methodology

A desktop study was conducted of the archaeological databases housed in the KwaZulu-Natal Museum. The SAHRIS website was consulted for data relating to the distribution and significance of heritage sites in the greater Umzumbe area. In addition, the available heritage literature covering the study area was also consulted.

A ground survey, following standard and accepted archaeological procedures, was conducted.

2.2 Restrictions encountered during the survey

2.2.1 Visibility

Visibility was good.

2.2.2 Disturbance

No disturbance of any potential heritage features was noted.

2.3 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.

3 DESCRIPTION OF SITES AND MATERIAL OBSERVED

3.1 Locational data

Province: KwaZulu-Natal

Municipality: Umzumbe Local Municipality

Towns: Port Shepstone and Harding

3.2 Description of the general area surveyed

An existing dirt road runs along the trajectory of the envisioned access road (Fig 6). In some places this road is hardly more than a track. Traditional Zulu homesteads as well as more modern homes occur along this road. These are all relatively modern and none appears to be more than 60 years old. No archaeological sites occur in the study area. However, one modern grave site occurs along this eastern bank of the existing road. A description of this site is given below.

3.3 Grave sites identified

One modern grave site was located during the ground survey. Its context and significance is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Heritage sites located during the ground survey.

| | Heritage site category | Brief description | Significance (Table 3) and “living heritage” values | Mitigation | GPS Latitude and Longitude |
|---|---|---|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1 | Informal grave site – younger than 60 years old (Figs 2 - 5). | Three informal graves situated adjacent to each other on the eastern bank of the access road.. The graves are indicated by packed stones on each grave. Each grave covers an area of approximately 1.6m X 1.5m. The total area covered by the grave site is approximately 5m X 4m. The grave site is situated approximately 9m from the existing road (Figs 3 & 4). | The relatives of the deceased still inhabit the residential homes in the near vicinity to the grave site. According to informants the graves are younger than 60 years. They are therefore not strictly protected by heritage legislation. However, the relatives of the deceased would like to protect these graves and do not want to be compromised by the proposed road development. The grave site is therefore rated as: High Significance Locally (Local Grade 111B) (Table 3) | Maintain a 8m buffer zone around the grave site. Alternatively motivate for a second phase heritage impact assessment, by a grave relocation expert. A comprehensive community consultation process will have to be initiated to arrange for potential grave exhumation and reburial (Appendix 1). | S 30° 33' 07.05 E 30° 12' 42.54" |

4 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (HERITAGE VALUE)

4.1 Field Rating

The grave site has been rated as Local Grade 111B i.e. it is considered to be of high significance locally (Table 3). The implication is that it may not be disturbed or altered under any circumstance. It is important to maintain a buffer zone of at least 8m around this. site However, should there be a need to relocate these graves then a second phase heritage impact assessment by a grave relocation expert needs to be implemented. Amafa, the provincial heritage agency, could provide a list of registered

grave relocation consultants. The processes outlining the conditions for a grave relocation exercise is provided in Appendix 1.

Table 3. 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 |

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

One modern grave site has been located during this survey. This site is situated approximately 9m on the eastern bank from the existing road. Although this site is not highly rated in terms of heritage values it has local significance and therefore need protection. Given the close proximity of the grave site to the existing road it is proposed that the developer maintain a buffer zone of at least 8 m around this site where no development may occur. No removal of artefacts or alterations of any heritage structure will be allowed within this zone. Alternatively, should the developer wish to develop in the immediate vicinity of each gave site (within the 8m buffer zone) then a phase two heritage assessment should take place in order to assist with the mitigation process. Depending on the recommendations of this second phase assessment a grave exhumation and relocation process may be called for. Such an excavation can only take place once the local heritage agency Amafa issued a permit to such effect.

However, there is no archaeological reason why the proposed development may not take place on the remainder of the proposed access road as planned. It should, however, be pointed out that the KwaZulu-Natal Heritage Act requires that operations exposing archaeological and historical residues should cease immediately pending an evaluation by the heritage authorities.

6 MAPS AND FIGURES

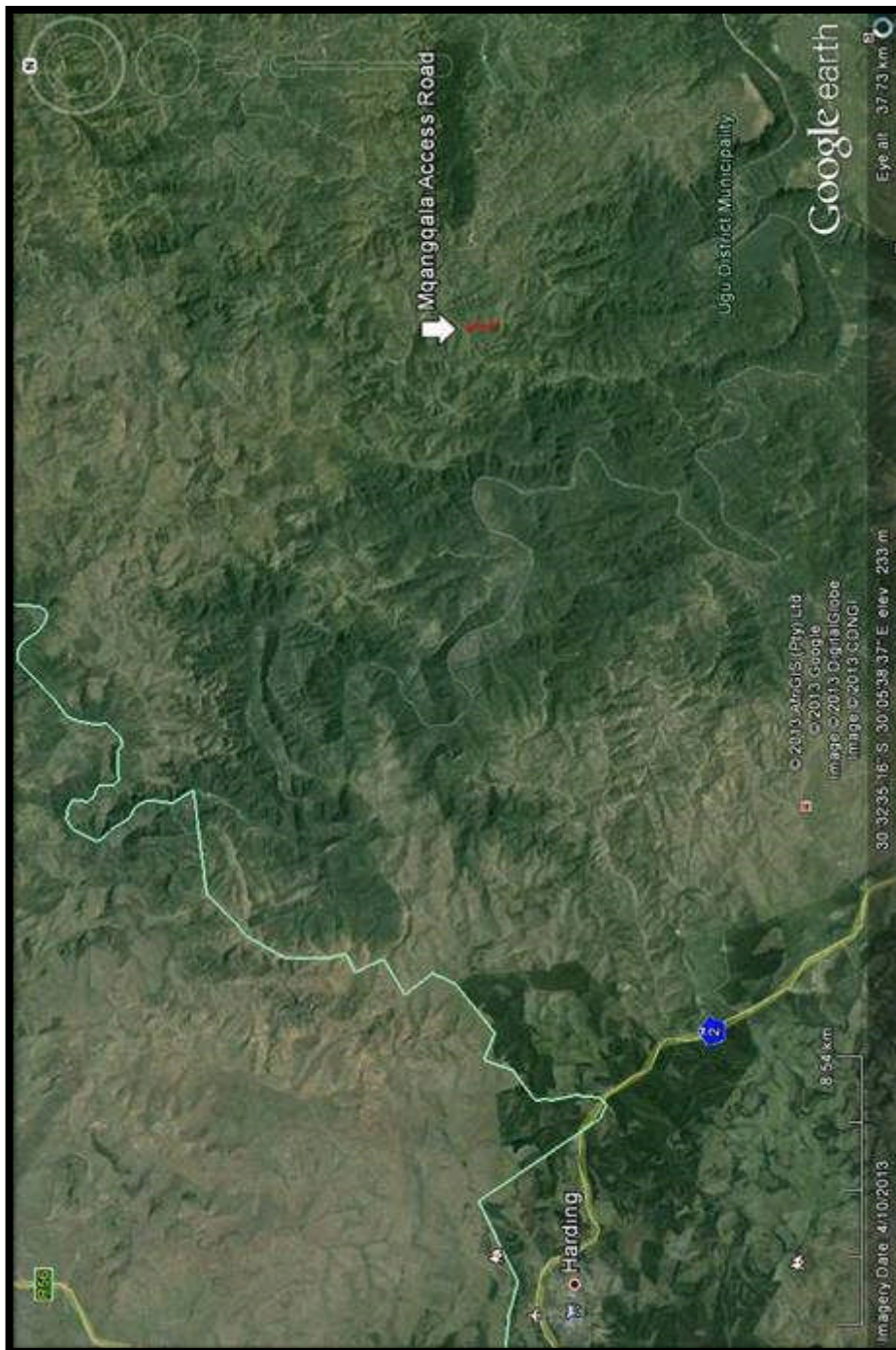


Figure 1. Google aerial photograph showing the location of the proposed Mqangqala Access Road (indicated in red).

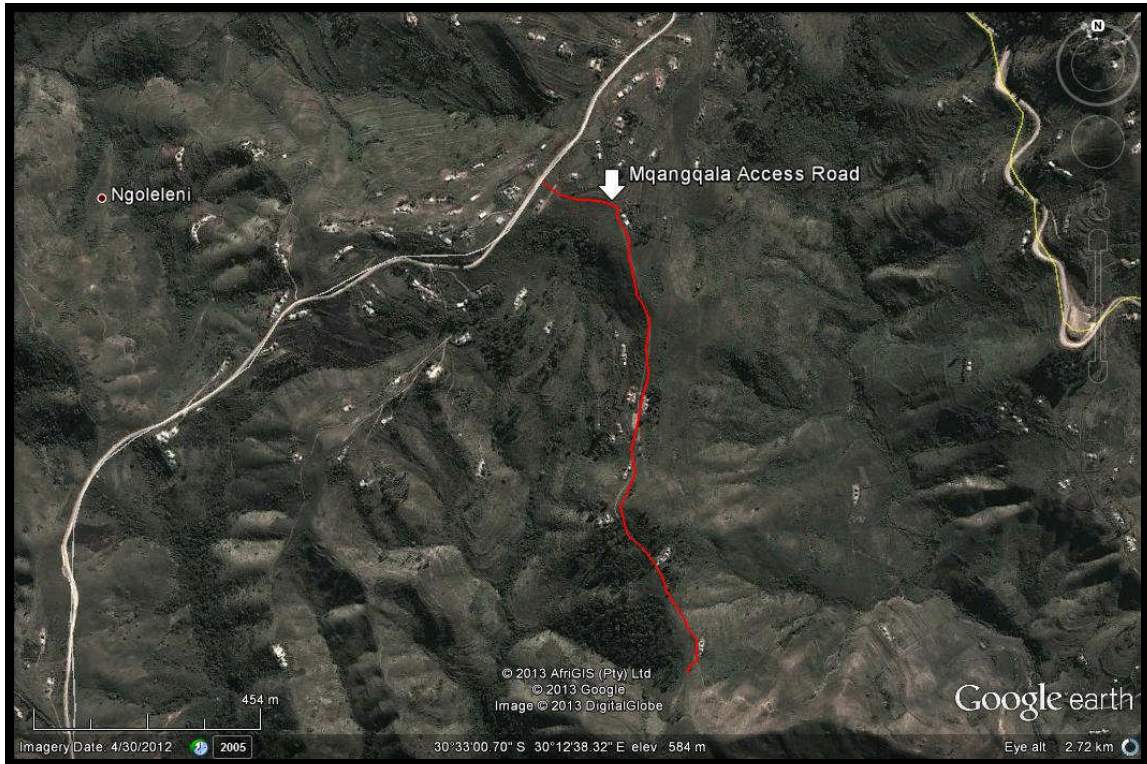


Figure 2. Google aerial photograph showing the position of the Mqangqala Access Road

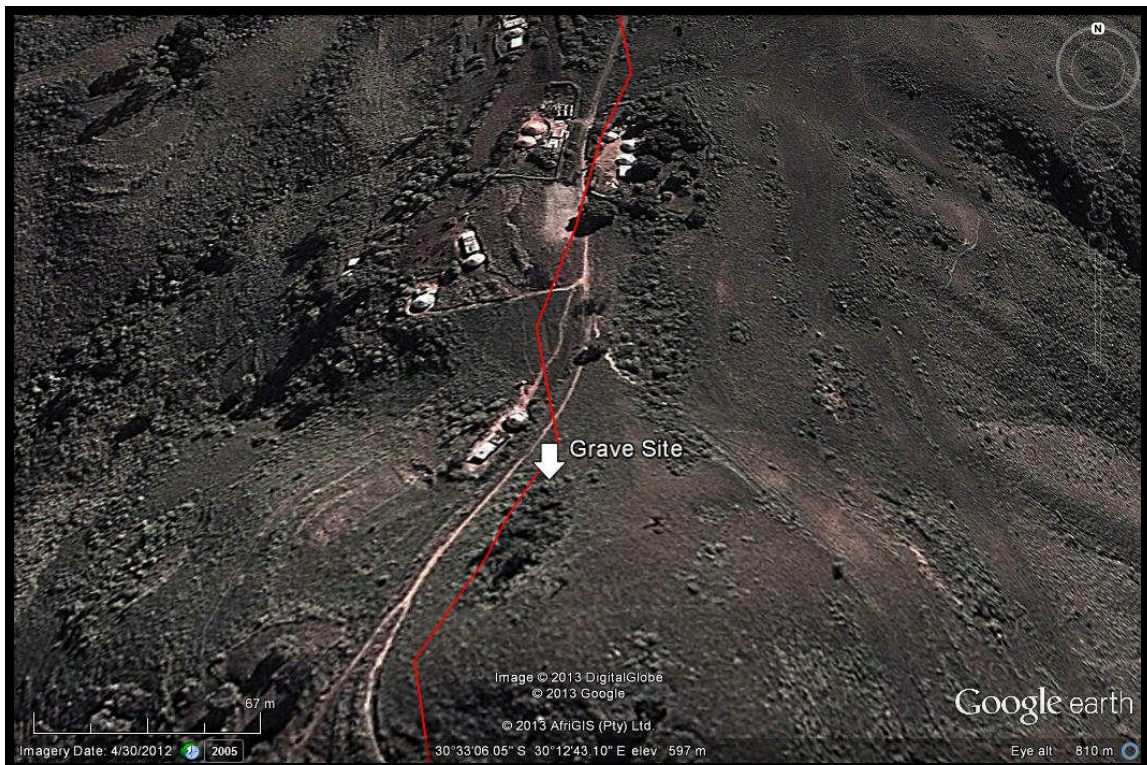


Figure 3. Google aerial photograph showing the location of the grave site relative to the proposed access road.



Figure 4. Map showing the grave site relative to the proposed development.



Figure 5. Photograph of grave site adjacent to the proposed Mqangqala Access Road.



Figure 6. Photograph of the existing track to be upgraded as the Mqangqala Access Road.

7 REFERENCES

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APPENDIX 1

RELOCATION OF GRAVES

Burial grounds and graves are dealt with in Article 36 of the NHR Act, no 25 of 1999. Below follows a broad summary of how to deal with grave in the event of proposed development.

- If the graves are younger than 60 years, an undertaker can be contracted to deal with the exhumation and reburial. This will include public participation, organising cemeteries, coffins, etc. They need permits and have their own requirements that must be adhered to.
- If the graves are older than 60 years old or of undetermined age, an archaeologist must be in attendance to assist with the exhumation and documentation of the graves. This is a requirement by law.

Once it has been decided to relocate particular graves, the following steps should be taken:

- Notices of the intention to relocate the graves need to be put up at the burial site for a period of 60 days. This should contain information where communities and family members can contact the developer/archaeologist/public-relations officer/undertaker. All information pertaining to the identification of the graves needs to be documented for the application of a SAHRA permit. The notices need to be in at least 3 languages, English, and two other languages. This is a requirement by law.
- Notices of the intention needs to be placed in at least two local newspapers and have the same information as the above point. This is a requirement by law.
- Local radio stations can also be used to try contact family members. This is not required by law, but is helpful in trying to contact family members.
- During this time (60 days) a suitable cemetery need to be identified close to the development area or otherwise one specified by the family of the deceased.
- An open day for family members should be arranged after the period of 60 days so that they can gather to discuss the way forward, and to sort out any problems. The developer needs to take the families requirements into account. This is a requirement by law.
- Once the 60 days has passed and all the information from the family members have been received, a permit can be requested from SAHRA. This is a requirement by law.

- Once the permit has been received, the graves may be exhumed and relocated.
- All headstones must be relocated with the graves as well as any items found in the grave

