



eThembeni Cultural Heritage

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

12 September 2017

Attention Bernadet Pawandiwa

Dear Ms Pawandiwa

Heritage Scoping Assessment

Proposed Mixed Use Development of Ballito Hills Estate by Balwin Properties Ballito Bay, KwaDukuza LM, Ilembe DM, KwaZulu-Natal.

Project Area and Project description¹

Balwin Properties have acquired land in Ballito and intend to establish the Ballito Hills Development Estate on these consolidated landholdings. The proposed developments comprise medium to high income residential units with attendant commercial and institutional components (Figure 1).

The land holding is described as Portion of Sub 365 and Remainder 12 of No.56 of 931 and Portion 365 of the Farm Lot 56 of No.931 Bogmore Sundrum. These land portions are located east of the Wakenshaw Residential Complex, south of Simbithi Eco-Estate, and north of the Ballito Junction and Lifestyle Centre that parallel the MR445 access road from the N2 (N) into Ballito Bay (see Figures 1 - 3).



Figure 1 Proposed Balwin Properties Ballito Hills Development

¹ Information provided by Royal HaskoningDHV acting for Balwin Properties.

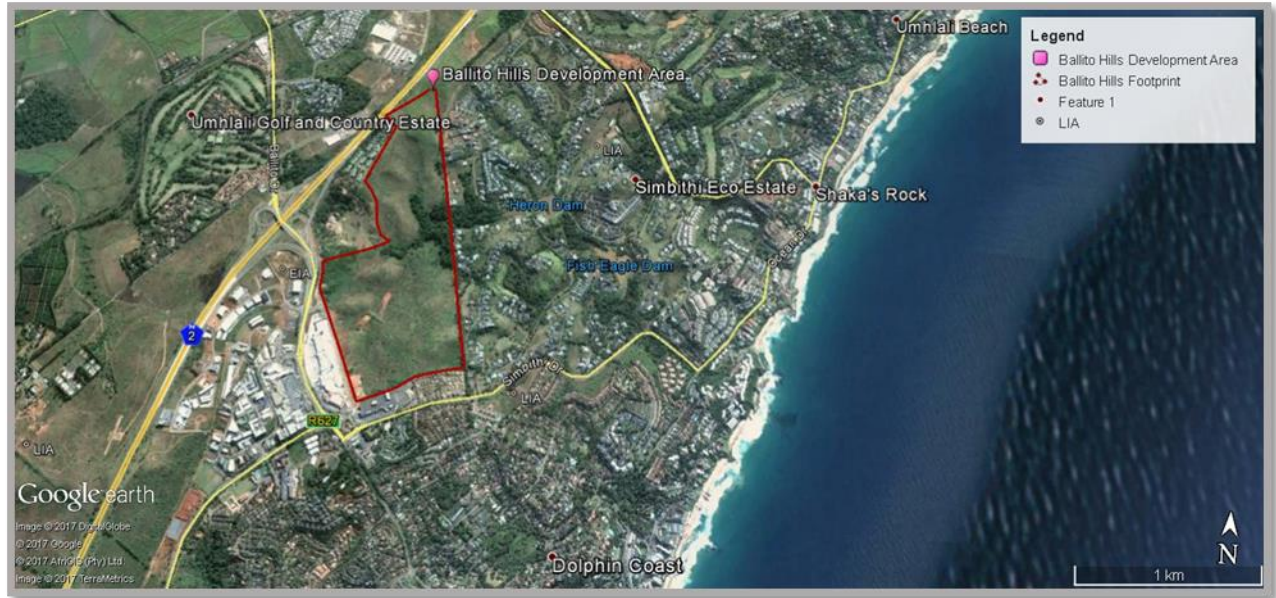


Figure 2 Ballito Hills Development Area



Figure 3 Ballito Hills Development Footprint

An EIA was previously conducted on the site and the Environmental Authorisation (EA) is currently valid. Balwin Properties are now the holder of this EA. (see EA and amendments on SAHRIS case file).

However, it appears that a Heritage Assessment was not conducted during the EIA process and Amafa KZN have not granted approval of the development. eThembeni CHM have been appointed to pursue such authorisation.

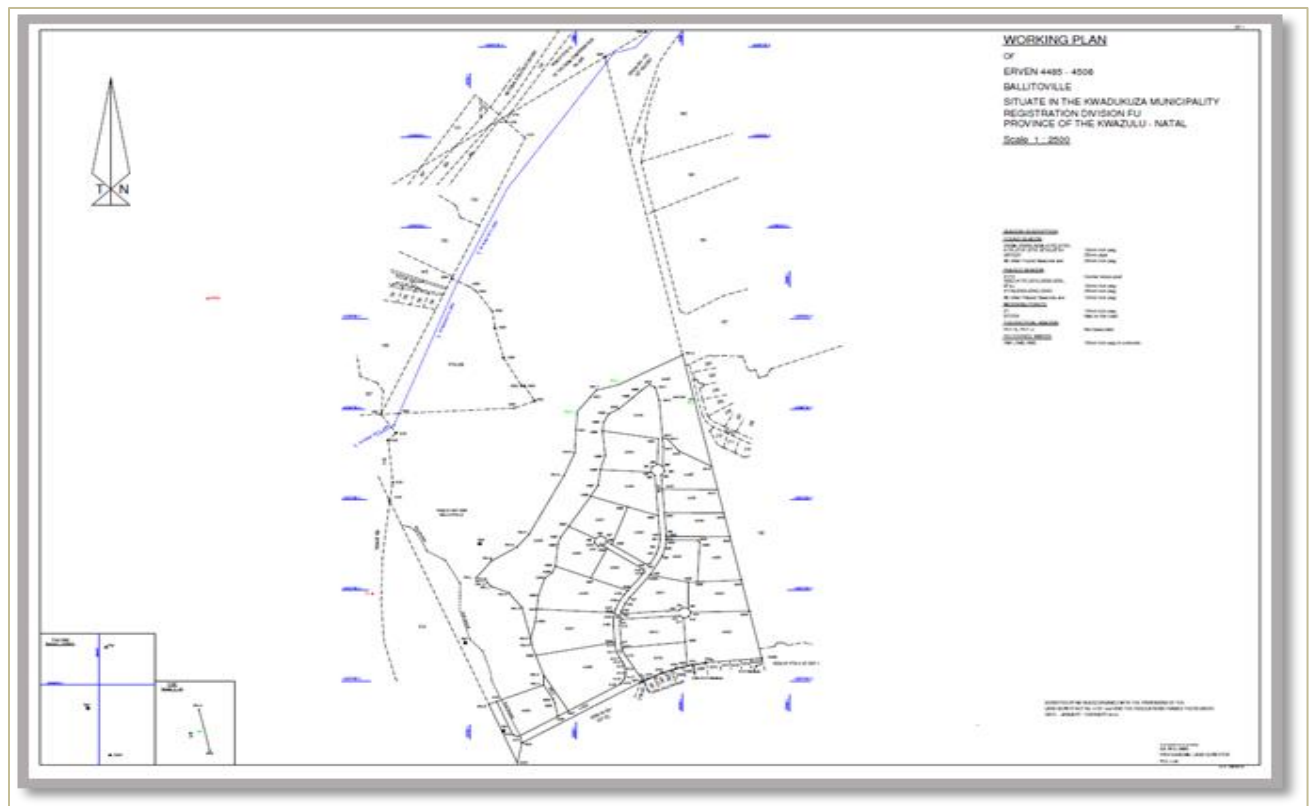


Figure 4 Site Layout Plan

Observations

eThembeni staff conducted a site visit and walk over of the property on 25 August 2017. The property is located in a steeply sloped dune slack, between the first and second primary dunes landward of the coastline, with major drainage lines running from the north, west and south. These drain eastwards into the Simbithi Eco Estate. Prior to the properties being cleared for sugar cane production² the lower reaches of the drainage would have comprised swamp forest with mixed riparian and coastal forest / open palm-veld patches on the higher slopes³. The original farm name, “Bogmore”, attests to the swampy and marsh-like nature of the lowest lying areas of the dune slack (see kml. File loaded to SAHRIS). The property has not been planted to cane in over a decade (LvS. personal observation) and consequently basal cover comprises largely feral sugar cane, and pioneer stands of bush tick berry (*Chrysanthemoides montilifera*), flatcrown (*Albizia andianthifolia*) and sweet thorn (*Vachelia kosiensis*, previously *A.karoo*–*A.natalitia*). Secondary drainage lines revealed some tenacious pioneer forest species but are largely infested with alien species (*Chromolaena odorata*, *Solanum mauritianum*, *Lantana camara*, *Schinus terebinthifolius* and feral eucalyptus). Surface areal visibility was consequently constrained.

² The properties, including the adjacent Ballitoville Township (1954) and the Farm Compensation have been farmed under sugar cane since the early 20th C. The Farm Compensation (and its subsequent subdivisions) were land holdings given to returning servicemen after WWI (<https://search.windeed.co.za/>).

³ Simon Bundy (SDP- Ecologist). pers.comm.

Transects were walked along previous cane-tracks, and win row and road edges scrutinized for evidence of archaeological residues. Three minor spurs sloping west-east into the property were extensively scrutinized. No evidence of any ceramics, stone or shell were observed at these locales. Random pieces of fragmented ceramic shards (<5/100m) were observed along the downslopes of the southern boundary parallel to the Checkers Building. These are insignificant plough disturbed finds and do not comprise an archaeological site or feature.



Figure 5 Basal Cover



Figure 6 Proposed Development area. View to North. Riparian area in the dune slack.

Prior research and surveys of properties adjacent to the proposed development have however yielded sites and material of significance. In 2004 eThembeni conducted test excavations some 350m due SE of the southern boundary of the current survey area (29.525655° S; 31.213760° E) at a proposed residential development. Test pits revealed shell midden pockets and Late Iron Age [LIA] ceramics. However, plough damage had been too severe to ascertain the layout or extent of the settlement. Rescue excavations on the adjacent Simbithi Eco Estate yielded LIA ceramics, homestead remains, *daga* granary bases and shell midden pockets, domestic bovid bones, the base of an iron smithy, and attendant slag⁴. Similar occurrences have been observed in the immediate region at Greenlands Town Centre, Ballito⁵; Tinley Manor North and South Banks, Brettenwood Coastal Estate and Zimbali Coastal Estate *et al.* Early Iron Age (EIA) site residues are also recorded at the Zimbali Coastal Estate, Shrimp Lane Midden at Salt Rock and the N2/MR445 Interchange (Ballito) *et al.*⁶

Archaeologically, the observed pattern of Iron Age settlement along this coastal littoral is one of hilltop settlements, the dune slacks and valley bottoms being eschewed for residential settlement. These are factors of both seasonal waterlogging and micro-climate. Hilltops are preferred settlement *locales* to take advantage of prevailing sea-breezes in a humid sub-tropical climate and wet season drainage. Hilltop winds also lessen exposure to mosquitoes and other biting insects associated with standing water. Observed shell midden pockets are the consequence of food exploitation of the adjacent rocky shoreline and comprise largely of brown mussel (*Perna perna*), oyster (*Ostridae*) and various limpet and whelk spp (bycatch). Fish bones attest to artisanal fishing. Excavated bovid bones comprise both domestic fauna (cattle and goats) and wild species (duiker, bushbuck), and also game birds, cane rat, mole rat and monkey. Hunting and seafood gathering thus augmented meat derived from domestic animal husbandry. Iron smelting and smithing was ubiquitously practiced.

Whilst the Ballito Hills study area no doubt formed an integral part of the Iron Age exploited cultural landscape the low archaeological footprint observed is a consequence of the prevailing topography and hydrology. In contrast, the adjacent hilltop areas, already given over to extensive development, are the localities where archaeological remains have been consistently recorded.

Whilst the Palaeosensitivity Map indicates high sensitivity (orange) the proposed developments are unlikely to impact on the deep subsurface fossil-sensitive lithology. Bedrock comprises the Maputaland Group of calcarenite, clayey sands, limestone and conglomerates overlain by grey and red dune sands of the Berea Formation. The latter are the parent material from which the Pleistocene Aeolian primary dunes (Berea Red Sands) are derived. It is on these deeply weathered dune sands that the development

⁴ Anderson, G. 2004. KZN Museum ICRM. Unpublished Report. Archive File Ref: 9/2/407/0003.

⁵ eThembeni. 2015. SAHRIS Case File 4939.

⁶ KZN Museum Archaeological Data Base

footprint is located. Pile driving during construction may extend into the underlying solid bedrock but would not necessarily yield any fossil bearing deposits.

Recommendations

Accordingly, we request that Amafa authorise the proposed development to proceed with no further heritage resource mitigation, suffice their standard requirements in the event of chance finds being exposed during construction activities.

In this regard, please can you notify us timeously via the loaded SAHRIS case file as to the decision of Amafa.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Len van Schalkwyk'.

Len van Schalkwyk.
Principle Investigator.