



eThembeni Cultural Heritage

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

10 December 2017

Attention Bernadet Pawandiwa

Heritage Scoping Report

Proposed Birdhaven Boutique Residential Estate Development

50B Colwyn Drive, Sheffield Beach

KwaDukuza LM, Ilembe DM, KwaZulu-Natal.

Project Area and Project description¹

In 1997 the Graham family acquired the real estate now known as Birdhaven, described as Portions 744-763 of the farm Lot 61 No.1521. At the time of transfer the land was under sugar cane cultivation and had been so for the prior 40 years. Farm Lot 61 was one of the parent farms from which the Sheffield Beach Township was established in 1957.

The old cane lands were initially planted to buffalo grass and subsequently, over the next two decades, the Graham's set out systematically to transform a bare sugar cane field back to coastal forest and its attendant biota, with special detail to wetland and swamp forest rehabilitation along natural drainage lines. In the course of this rehabilitation programme an indigenous plant nursery was established to provide feed stock to the estate. Over a period of fifty years the estate lands have been fundamentally transformed from coastal forest and grassland to cane lands; and now again, in the last two decades, to a mosaic of regenerating coastal ecosystems.

In anticipation of a proposed low density boutique residential estate development within the context of the township, and in alignment with Sheffield Beach Township Erf descriptions, Birdhaven has subsequently been subdivided and resurveyed. Portions 744-763 have been redesignated as Erven 1097 – 1115 and 1306, Sheffield Beach. (See Title Deeds and SG. Diagrams loaded to SAHRIS Case File 12056).

Seventeen erven at 50B Colwyn Drive now comprise the proposed Birdhaven Estate (Figures 1 -3).

¹ Information provided by Client, Graham Family.
<https://www.birdhavenestate.co.za>



Figure 1 Proposed Birdhaven Estate Development – nursery, wetland rehabilitation and reforestation



Figure 2 Aerial View Birdhaven Development Area²

² Figures 1- 3 courtesy of <https://www.birdhavenestate.co.za>

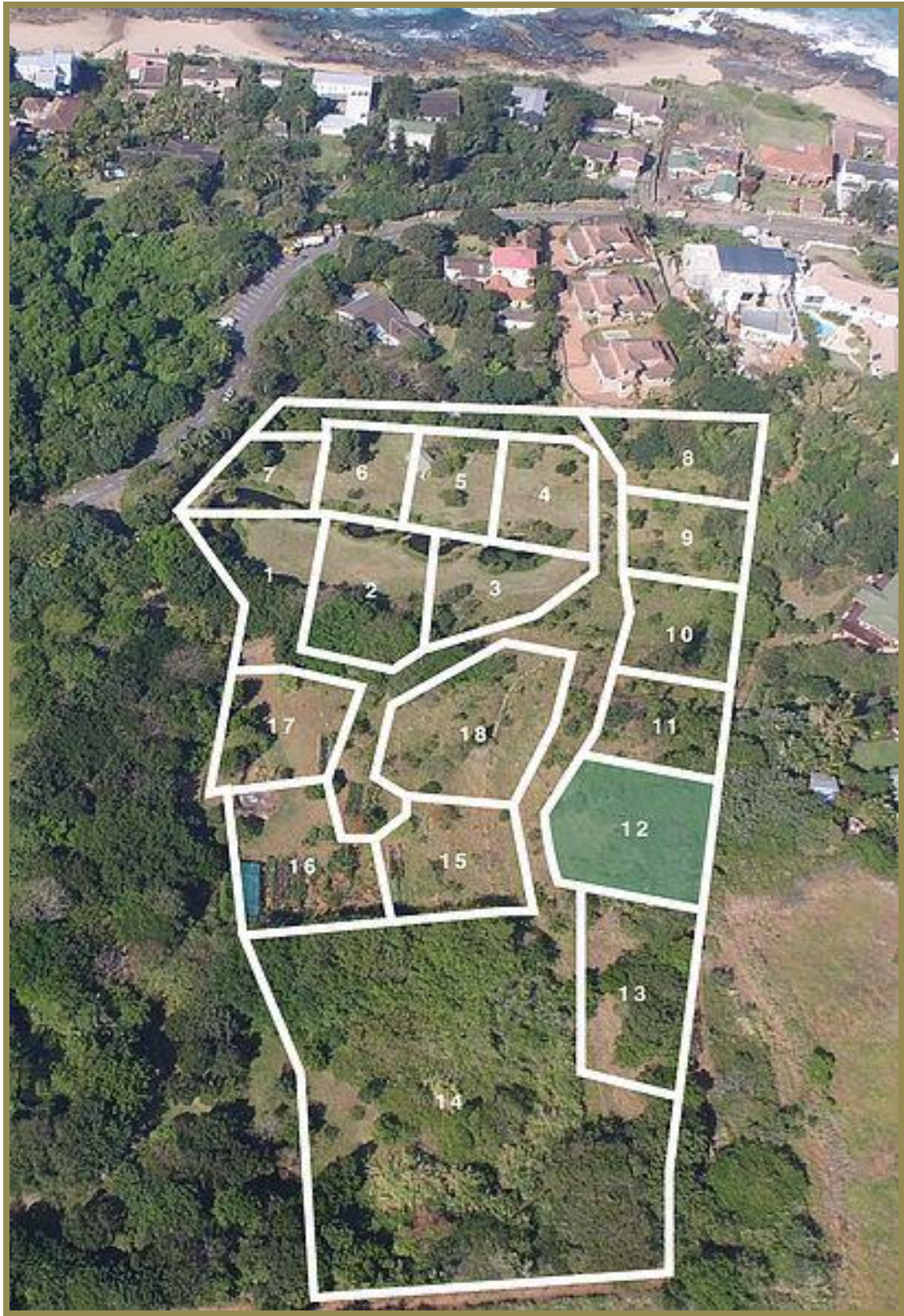


Figure 3 Birdhaven – proposed plot layout

In 2013, the KZN Dept. of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs (EDTEA) indicated in writing that an Environmental Authorisation was not required for the proposed Birdhaven development.³ However, subsequent to 2013 SPLUMA⁴ principals require that Heritage Agencies (viz. Amafa) are required to comment on developments in terms of Section 38 of the NHRA.⁵ In compliance with these requirements, eThembeni CHM have been appointed to obtain such **Final Comment** from Amafa.

Observations

eThembeni staff conducted a site visit and walk over of the property on 07 December 2017. The property is located on the steeply sloped first primary frontal dune, landward of the coastline; with the principle drainage lines orientated from W to SW, draining eastwards. The lower reaches of these drainages comprise rehabilitated swamp forest with mixed riparian and coastal forest patches on the higher slopes⁶.

Given the excess of fifty years of transformation on the land holdings of the estate no primary context archaeology was expected. Archaeologically, the observed pattern of Late Iron Age settlement along this coastal littoral is one of hilltop settlements ^{7,8}; in this case the dune front that is Birdhaven being eschewed, due to both steepness and the dense and closed canopy forest coverage.

Whilst the Birdhaven study area no doubt formed an integral part of the Iron Age exploited cultural landscape, the unobserved archaeological footprint is a consequence of the prevailing topography and forested nature of the first primary dune. 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 footprint is located. Pile driving during construction may extend into the underlying solid bedrock but would not necessarily yield any fossil bearing deposits.

³ SAHRIS Case ID 11890 – Birdhaven Enquiry. TripIO4.

⁴ The Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act No. 16 of 2013

www.schindlers.co.za/2017/spatialplanninglandusemanagementact/

⁵ National Heritage Resources Act. Act 25 of 1999.

⁶ Simon Bundy (SDP- Ecologist). pers.comm.

⁷ (Tinley Manor North and South Banks, Brettenwood Coastal Estate, Simbithi Coastal Estate, Zulu Lami 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).

⁸ KZN Museum Archaeological Data Base

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.