



Heritage Scoping Report

Proposed construction of the Nkobongweni Community Water Supply System at Nxamalala Msinga LM, Mzinyathi District DM, KwaZulu-Natal.

Project Area and Project description¹

The proposed water supply scheme is located some 10 km south of Tugela Ferry and falls under the jurisdiction of the Msinga Local Municipality and Umzinyathi District Municipality and the Chunu Traditional Authority, under iNkosi Simakade Mchunu.

The water supply footprint straddles the UMgubadwana River at Nxamalala. The project involves the laying of some 12 km of water pipe reticulation. The supply footprint is, for the majority, aligned within existing road servitudes and along informal roads and pathways linking *imizi* clusters within this eroded and rocky valley.

Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations require a Basic Assessment to be undertaken in terms of NEMA, Act No. 107 of 1998, as amended.

Observations

eThembeni staff inspected the study area on 29 May 2021. Four obvious and observable grave clusters fall within 20 m of the proposed water reticulation servitudes. Local informants were aware of the proposed water supply scheme and were supportive of the initiative. No observed graves or burial sites are anticipated to be potentially impacted by the pipeline reticulation, and none were mentioned by informants during the field survey.

Apart from randomly scattered and colluvial washed and patinated hornfels (indurated shale) and quartzite MSA debitage and flakes washing out of water courses and along rill lines, no concentrations of archaeologically significant Stone Age material was observed. Adiaagnostic pottery fragments (< 1-2 cm) were observed in the vicinities of both extant and abandoned homesteads. These fragments too appear to have moved downslope under colluvial action and were rounded and abraded by water action. They are considered to be of historically recent origin and little heritage significance.

¹ Information provided by EAP: EnviroPro Environmental Consulting

The SAHRIS Palaeontology sensitivity map indicates the area to be of insignificant to moderate sensitivity (grey-green). The predominant lithology is Vryheid formation shales of the Ecca group. Here an extensive network of dolerite sills, sheets and dykes is ubiquitously intrusive into the former Karoo Supergroup, consequently restricting significant fossil occurrence.

No further palaeontology assessment or monitoring is recommended.

No other heritage resources of any significance were observed within the proposed road alignments surveyed.



Figure 1 Locality map of the proposed Nkobongweni Water Supply System



Figure 2 Proposed water reticulation pipes to be set along the existing road alignments



Figure 3 Stone-packed grave (outside of road servitude)



Figure 4 Stone-packed grave near existing graded road alignment



Figure 5 Miscellaneous Middle Stone Age (MSA) flakes and discards observed washing out of donga beds



Figure 4 Donga beds where washed out MSA flakes and debitage was observed

Recommendations

In the light of no other heritage resources of significance being observed during this heritage scoping exercise undertaken, we request that Amafa grant an exemption from an HIA for the water supply scheme project, allowing the enterprise to proceed with no further heritage resource mitigation. The protocols contained in Appendix 1 should be adhered to with oversight by the appointed project CLO (Community Liaison Officer) and ECO (Environmental Control Officer).

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.

Appendix 1

Protocol for the identification, protection, and recovery of heritage resources during construction and operation

It is possible that sub-surface heritage resources will be encountered during the construction phase of this project. The Project Engineer, Environmental Control Officer and all other persons responsible for site management and excavation should be aware that indicators of sub-surface sites could include:

- Ash deposits (unnaturally grey appearance of soil compared to the surrounding substrate);
- Concentrations of humanly modified stone and stone tools;
- Bone concentrations, either animal or human;
- Ceramic fragments, including potsherds;
- Stone concentrations that appear to be formally arranged (may indicate the presence of an underlying burial); and
- Fossilised remains of fauna and flora, including trees.

In the event that such indicator(s) of heritage resources are identified, the following actions should be taken immediately:

- All construction within a radius of at least 20m of the indicator should cease. This distance should be increased at the discretion of supervisory staff if heavy machinery or explosives could cause further disturbance to the suspected heritage resource.
- This area must be marked using clearly visible means, such as barrier tape, and all personnel should be informed that it is a no-go area.
- A guard should be appointed to enforce this no-go area if there is any possibility that it could be violated, whether intentionally or inadvertently, by construction staff or members of the public.
- No measures should be taken to cover up the suspected heritage resource with soil, or to collect any remains such as bone or stone.
- If a heritage practitioner has been appointed to monitor the project, s/he should be contacted, and a site inspection arranged as soon as possible.
- If no heritage practitioner has been appointed to monitor the project Amafa KwaZulu-Natal and Research Institute (Heritage KZN must be notified:
Tel. 033 3946543; archaeology@amafapmb.co.za
- The South African Police Services should be notified by a SAHRA staff member or an independent heritage practitioner if human remains are identified.
No SAPS official may disturb or exhume such remains, whether of recent origin or not.
- All parties concerned should respect the potentially sensitive and confidential nature of the heritage resources, particularly human remains, and refrain from making public statements until a mutually agreed time.
- Any extension of the project beyond its current footprint involving vegetation and/or earth clearance should be subject to prior assessment by a qualified heritage practitioner, considering all information gathered during this initial heritage scoping and assessment.