



Heritage Scoping Report

Proposed upgrade of two one-kilometre sections of existing dirt roads within Ward 6 and Ward 11 of the Mandeni Local Municipality, Ilembe DM KwaZulu-Natal.

Project Area and Project description ¹

The proposed Access Road projects involves the construction and upgrade of two one-kilometre sections of road at Abashumi in Ward 6, and at Zithulele in Ward 11 (Langeni / Sikhonyane Traditional Authority Area [Inkosi MW Mhlongo]); within the Mandeni Local Municipality and Ilembe District Municipality, Kwa-Zulu Natal.

(See Figures 1 & 2, and kml images loaded to SAHRIS Case File).

The gravel road will be constructed as Standard Type District Road in accordance with the Department of Transport specifications. The final road carriageway width will be six (6m) meters.

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 08 June 2021. The proposed road upgrades are aligned along existing roads and, in places, well used tracks. The area falls within the Inkanyezi Regional Traditional Authority and the designated land has been settled at least since 1913, and even earlier in the 19th C. The area was incorporated into the previous KwaZulu Homeland in 1979, and subsequently settled as traditional *imizi* with their attendant agricultural allotments.

¹ Information provided by EAP: EnviroPro Environmental Consulting



Figure 1 Abashumi access road in Ward 6 (kml loaded to SAHRIS Case File)



Figure 2 Zithulele access road in Ward 11 (kml loaded to SAHRIS Case File)

Subsistence agriculture and livestock husbandry is practiced, and some small-scale sugar cane production is prevalent.

Consequently family graves and cemeteries were observed to occur within the fenced *imizi* precincts and outside of the proposed 6 m road reserve. Local informants were aware of the

proposed road upgrades and are supportive of the initiative. No observed graves or burial sites are anticipated to be potentially impacted by the new road alignments, and none were mentioned by informants in the adjacent communities during the field survey.

No archaeological residues were observed within the road alignments during the field inspection.

The SAHRIS Palaeontology sensitivity map indicates the area to be of insignificant sensitivity (grey). The predominant lithology of the region is Natal Group Sandstones unconformably overlying and abutting plutons of Oribi Gorge Granites². Neither of these lithologies are fossil bearing³. No further palaeontological assessment or monitoring is recommended.

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



Figure 3 Abashumi access road in Ward 6 to be upgraded along existing roads and tracks

² Litho-chronostratigraphic shape files. South African Council for Geoscience. Pretoria. <http://geoscience.org.za/cgs/>

³ Palaeontological Technical Report for KZN. Groenewald, G. 2012.



Figure 4 Existing access road at Zithulele in Ward 11

Recommendations

Accordingly, as a consequence of the scoping exercise undertaken, we request that Amafa grant an exemption from an HIA for the proposed roads 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 the KwaZulu-Natal Amafa and Research Institute.

Yours sincerely

Len van Schalkwyk

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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.