

**PROPOSED IBISI INFILL HOUSING PROJECT,
UMZIMKHULU LOCAL MUNICIPALITY
KWAZULU-NATAL**

Phase 1 Heritage Assessment

December 2019

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Umzimkhulu Local Municipality has proposed two infill areas for residential development in the town of Ibisi. These areas are an extension of the existing Ibisi town to the north and south. The northern Ibisi infill area is a triangular portion of land which abuts the northern edge of the existing Ibisi town, with the Ibisi Junior Primary School on the southern edge and the Ibisi Police station to the east. The Ibisi River is located on the north east and north west edges of the northern infill site. The southern infill area is “Y” – shaped, and located along the southern and eastern edge of the existing Ibisi town. Some Ibisi residential houses and a church are located immediately north of the southern infill area. The R56 road is located along the eastern edge, open veld to the south and the Ibisi River valley to the west.

The proposed northern infill covers an area of 176 509m² and the southern infill covers an area of 307 736m² hence the proposed development triggers section 41 (1) (c)(i) of the KwaZulu-Natal Amafa and Research Institute Act, 2018 which lists developments or activities that may require an HIA. The relevant section of the Act refers to developments or other activities which will change the character of the site exceeding 5000m² in extent.

The town of Ibisi is situated 23km south west of Umzimkhulu town centre along the R56 regional road in southern KwaZulu-Natal. The developments are located on Farm portions Remainder of Ibisi Kululwa (0 of 18259) and Portion 5 of Ibisi Kululwa (5 of 18259).

A site inspection was undertaken on 5 December 2019. Visibility was good.

Northern infill site: The area to the east and north-east of the police station was previously cultivated and is presently lying fallow. No heritage sites were found in this disturbed section of the site.

Immediately behind and west of the police station, one intact structure and the remains of several other structures were found. The intact dwelling is currently occupied. The remains of walls and floors of two structures are still visible and outlines in the ground and associated rubble of at least three other structures can be seen. The 1: 50 000 map (3029BD) shows one homestead in this area. The remains of square structure dug into the ground were found that could have been the outside toilet / long-drop. The surrounding area was inspected for graves but none were found. The areas below or north of the school and close to the river have also previously been cultivated and are now lying fallow. No heritage sites were found in these areas.

Southern infill site: The northern area close to the houses has existing reservoirs and associated water infrastructure on it as well as an existing borrow pit. The topography is steep and erosion is taking place close to the water infrastructure and below the borrow pit.

On top of the hill, several circular indentations outlined with stone were found indicating that a number of homesteads were located here in the past. The 1:50000 map shows these homesteads situated in a row as well as those situated at the base of Mfundweni Mountain. This area was inspected for graves but no visible graves were found. The structures are situated just outside the proposed infill area with the closest site situated 35m west of the infill area. A small family grave site is located within the proposed infill site. The graves have headstones and are fenced. No further heritage sites were found during the site inspection.

The fossil sensitivity map of indicates that both infill sites fall into an area of moderate sensitivity which requires a desktop palaeontological study. Although the northern infill area is disturbed by previous cultivation, the southern infill site is largely undisturbed hence it is recommended that a desktop palaeontological assessment is undertaken for this infill housing project.

The topographical map indicates that at least one of the structures found in the northern infill site is older than 60 years of age. If all the remains are to be destroyed to make way for the proposed housing development, then application must be made to the KwaZulu-Natal Amafa and Research Institute for permission to do so as structures older than 60 years are protected in terms of the section 37 (1)(a) of the KwaZulu-Natal Amafa and Research Institute Act, 2018.

The remains of circular structures on the southern infill site are older than 60 years. These are protected by the above section as well as section 40 (1) of the above Act that states that no person may destroy, damage, excavate, alter, write or draw upon or otherwise disturb archaeological sites without the prior written approval of the Institute. Hence, the recommendation that remains of all of the circular structures are fenced with a buffer of 10 m around them to protect them not only from construction activities but also from damage once the houses are occupied. The grave site found in the southern infill area is protected by section 39 (1) of the above Act. It is recommended that the graves are left *in situ* and clearly marked so that they are not damaged during the construction of houses.

Once the recommendations made in this report have been undertaken, the construction of the proposed infill housing project can proceed from a heritage perspective. The mitigation measures provided in this report must also be implemented and adhered to where applicable.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
AUTHOR DETAILS	v
1. INTRODUCTION	6
2. LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND	6
3. LOCATION	7
4. TERMS OF REFERENCE	10
5. METHODOLOGY	10
6. HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF STUDY AREA	10
7. RESULTS OF SITE INSPECTION	11
8. DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION	22
9. MITIGATION MEASURES	23
10. REFERENCES	25

FIGURES

Figure 1: Locality map showing project within wider area	8
Figure 2: Infill sites outlined in red.....	9
Figure 3: Northern infill housing site.....	12
Figure 4: Fallow land with structures on eastern boundary	12
Figure 5: Previously cultivated land with police station in background.....	13
Figure 6: Dwelling and remains of dwelling	13
Figure 7: Section of topographical map showing homesteads	14
Figure 8: Remains of two roomed structure	15
Figure 9: Remains of structure	15
Figure 10: Southern infill site	16
Figure 11: Existing reservoirs	17
Figure 12: Fenced reservoirs	17
Figure 13: View across project area looking south	18
Figure 14: Circular remains of structure	18
Figure 15: Remains of structure	19
Figure 16: Fenced graves.....	19
Figure 17: Fossil sensitivity of project area outlined in blue.....	20

TABLESTable 1: Heritage sites found during site inspection..... 21

I, Jean Lois Beater, act as an independent specialist for this project and I do not have any vested interest either business, financial, personal or other, in the proposed activity other than remuneration for work performed in terms of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014.

AUTHOR DETAILS

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Umzimkhulu Local Municipality has proposed two infill areas for residential development in the town of Ibisi. These areas are an extension of the existing Ibisi town to the north and south. The northern Ibisi infill area is a triangular portion of land which abuts the northern edge of the existing Ibisi town, with the Ibisi Junior Primary School on the southern edge and the Ibisi Police station to the east. The Ibisi River is located on the north east and north west edges of the northern infill site (Enviroedge 2019:3).

The southern infill area is “Y” – shaped, and located along the southern and eastern edge of the existing Ibisi town. Some Ibisi residential houses and a church are located immediately north of the southern infill. The R56 road is located along the eastern edge, open veld to the south and the Ibisi River valley to the west. These infill areas are considered greenfield development. The study area entrance is located at 30°24'46.95"S 29°53'37.59"E (Enviroedge 2019:3).

This report serves as the Phase 1 Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for both the northern and southern infill areas.

2. LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

The proposed northern infill covers an area of 176 509m² and the southern infill covers an area of 307 736m² hence the proposed development triggers section 41 (1) (c)(i) of the KwaZulu-Natal Amafa and Research Institute Act, 2018 (Act No 5 of 2018) which lists developments or activities that may require an HIA. The relevant section of the Act refers to: “*developments or other activities which will change the character of the site – exceeding 5000m² in extent*”.

The project may also impact on graves, structures, archaeological and palaeontological resources that are protected in terms of sections 37, 38, 39, and 40 of the above Act.

In terms of Section 3 of the National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (No. 25 of 1999), heritage resources are described as follows:

- (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 paleontological 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:
 - (i) objects recovered from the soil or waters of South Africa, including 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).

This Phase1 HIA was undertaken to assess whether any heritage resources will be impacted by the proposed Ibisi infill housing development.

3. LOCATION

Located within in Ward 11 of the Umzimkhulu Local Municipality, the Ibisi Township is situated 23km south west of Umzimkhulu town centre along the R56 regional road in southern KwaZulu-Natal (see **Figure 1** below). The developments are located on Farm portions Remainder of Ibisi Kululwa (0 of 18259) and Portion 5 of Ibisi Kululwa (5 of 18259). A topographical plan depicting the two sites is provided in **Figure 2**.

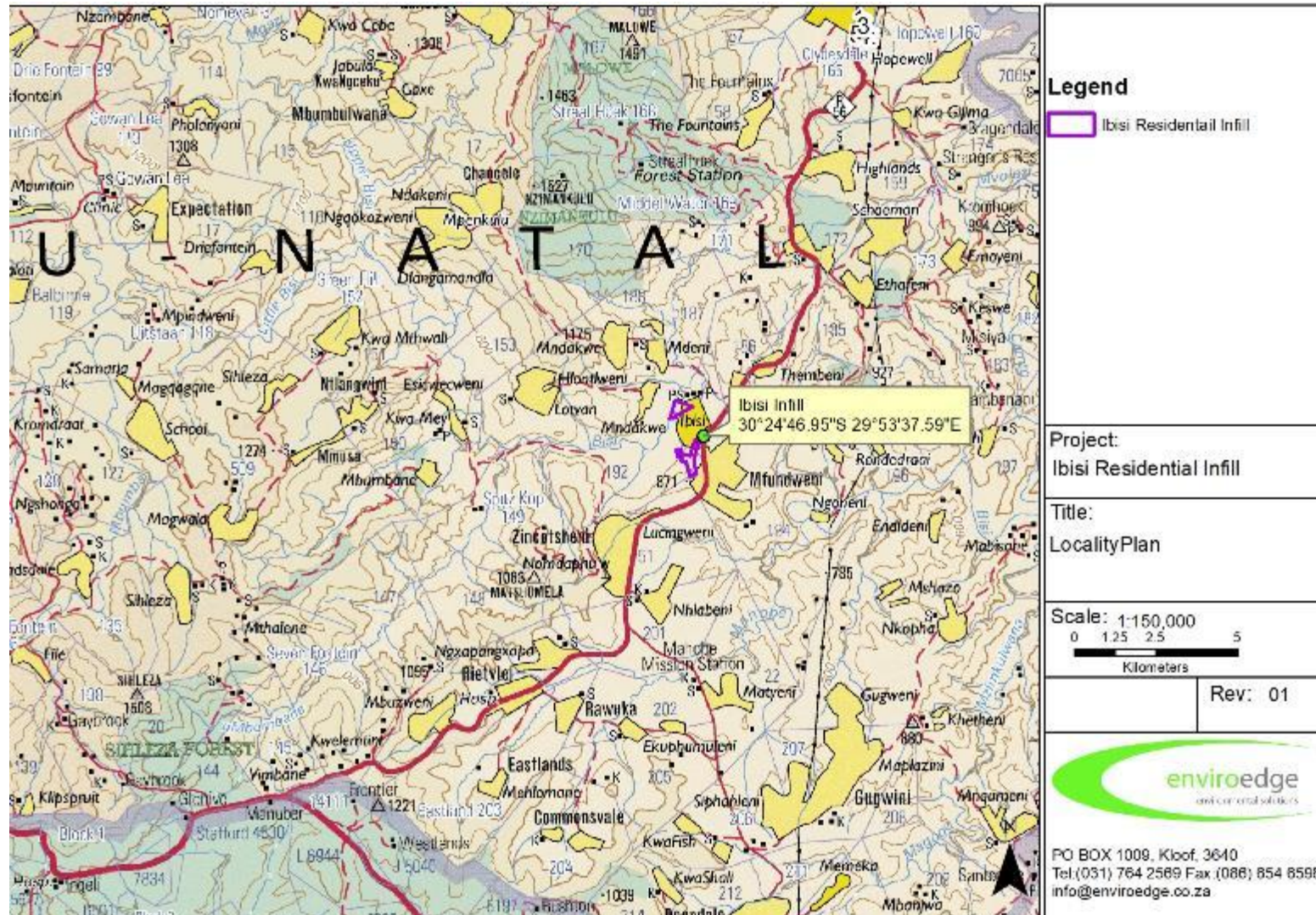


Figure 1: Locality map showing project within wider area

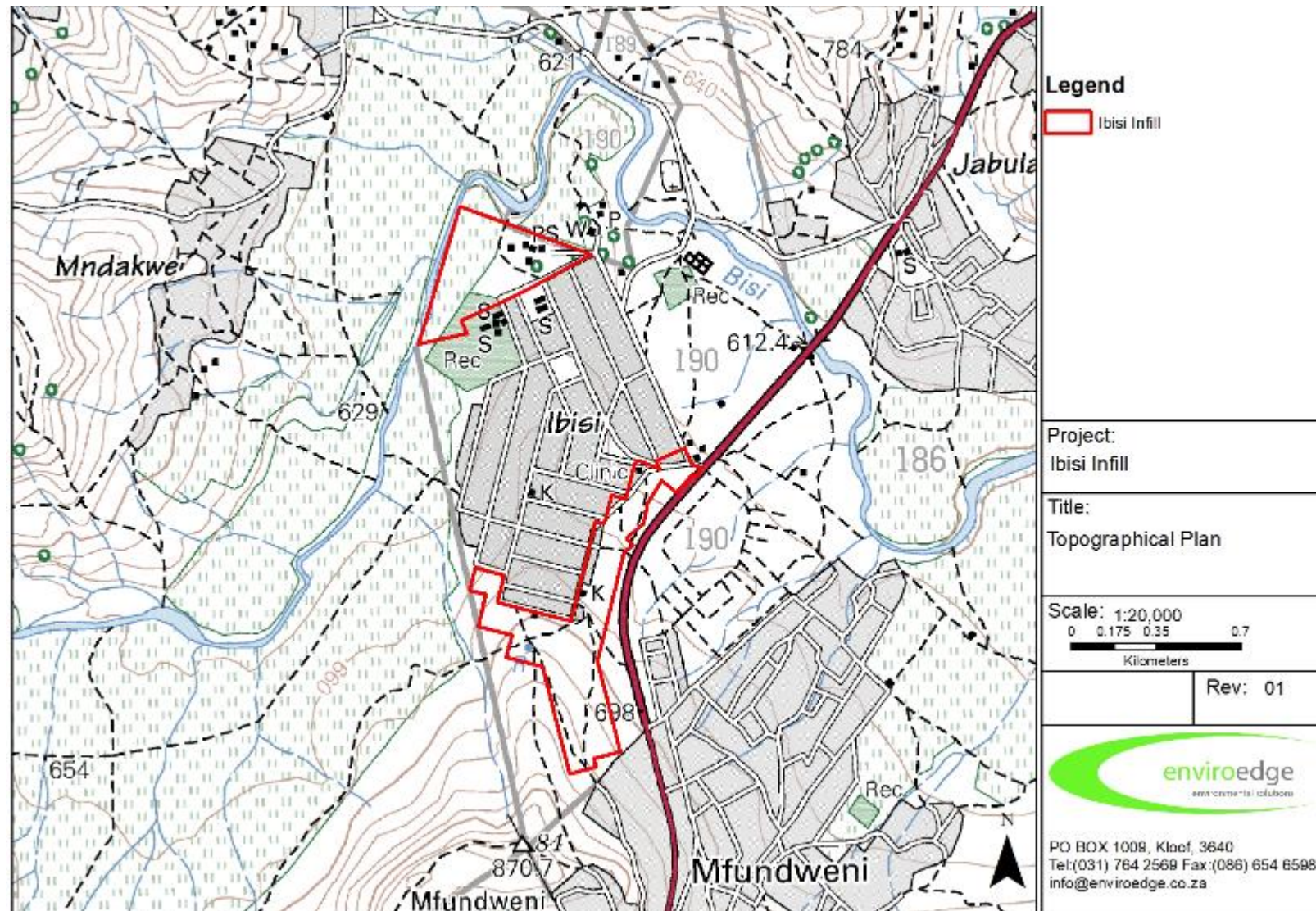


Figure 2: Infill sites outlined in red

4. TERMS OF REFERENCE

Undertake a Phase 1 Heritage Impact Assessment in order to determine the possible existence of heritage resources, as listed above, in or close to the infill housing areas. Provide mitigation measures to limit or avoid the impact of the construction of the housing on heritage resources.

Submit the HIA report to the provincial heritage resources authority, KwaZulu-Natal Amafa and Research Institute (hereafter, referred to as the Institute) for their assessment and comment.

5. METHODOLOGY

A survey of literature, including other HIA reports completed in the wider area and captured on the SAHRIS database was undertaken in order to be aware of any heritage resources identified in such reports that could be found in the project area.

A site inspection was undertaken on 05 December 2019. Visibility and access to both sites were good.

6. HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF STUDY AREA

The greater Umzimkhulu area, including the village of Ibisi, has never been intensively surveyed for heritage sites. The available evidence, as captured in the KwaZulu-Natal Museum heritage site inventories, indicates that the greater Umzimkhulu area contains a wide spectrum of archaeological sites covering different time-periods and cultural traditions. These include five Early Stone Age sites, two Middle Stone Age sites, four Later Stone Age sites, two rock painting sites, four Early Iron Age sites and three Later Iron Age sites (Active Heritage 2019:4).

Early, Middle and Later Stone Age material occurs in KwaZulu-Natal. Early Stone Age material occurs primarily along the coast and in savanna areas, most especially in river valleys, and generally in secondary contexts. Middle Stone Age artefacts have a wider distribution that extends into and across the Drakensberg. Many of the recorded 'sites' comprise artefacts in a secondary context, but more important factory and knapping sites exposed in donga erosion also occur. The Later Stone Age is better known, with evidence of shelter occupation in the southern Drakensberg between 12000 and 8000 years ago. Based on research, it seems Later Stone Age people

preferred grassland environments; good evidence of occupation in savanna areas occur only from about 2000 years ago when Iron Age farmers first settled in the region (Whitelaw 2013:9).

Many African groups moved through the project area due to the turmoil caused in part by the expansionistic policies of King Shaka in the 1820's and subsequent civil wars in Zululand. The consolidation of Zulu power was viewed with concern by various groups including the Thembu and Chunu who had already moved to avoid subjugation by the Zulu state hence these groups and others had no option but to move further south with the Thembu eventually crossing the Mzimkulu River to settle on the margins of the Mpondo chiefdom's sphere of influence and the Chunu settling between the Mkhomazi and Mzimkhulu Rivers (Whitelaw 2013:9).

During the colonial era (1840s onwards) many African groups were settled in this area by the administrator of the Colony of Natal, Lord Shepstone. It is known from oral history that the Umzimkhulu area was occupied by the Nhangwini, amaWushe, amaHlubi, amaBhaca, amaZizi, amaNqolo, amaCunu and various other Zulu-speaking and Xhosa-speaking refugees in the 19th century. There are also some Mpondo and Sotho groupings in the area (Active Heritage 2019:5).

Umzimkhulu and surrounds are also related to the early British settlers of the Colony. The Strachan family came to Natal from Campbeltown in Scotland, as part of the Byrne Scheme which was aimed at settling the new British territorial claim of Natal. By 1858, Donald and Thomas Strachen had raised enough capital to open a trading store near their farm Clydesdale at the Drift (later Umzimkhulu) just across the Umzimkhulu River in Nomansland. The town was originally called "Madonela" meaning "the place of Donald" after Donald Strachan. It was later called Clydesdale, until being named Umzimkhulu after the river in the late 1800s (Anderson 2008:14).

7. RESULTS OF SITE INSPECTION

Northern infill site (Figure 3):

This area was inspected on foot. The area to the east and north-east of the police station was previously cultivated and which is presently lying fallow. Several structures were observed on the eastern boundary of the infill site (see **Figures 4 and 5** below). No heritage sites were found which was unsurprising due to the disturbed nature of this area.



Figure 3: Northern infill housing site



Figure 4: Fallow land with structures on eastern boundary




Figure 5: Previously cultivated land with police station in background

Immediately behind and west of the police station (which is situated in the infill site), one intact structure and the remains of several other structures were found. The intact dwelling is currently occupied. The remains of walls and floors of two structures are still visible and outlines in the ground and associated rubble of at least three additional structures can be seen.



Figure 6: Dwelling and remains of dwelling

The 1: 50 000 topographical map (3029BD) that was surveyed in 1965 with aerial photography taken in 1958 of Ibisi shows one homestead () in this area. The homestead is indicated by a red arrow as well as the cultivated field mentioned above.

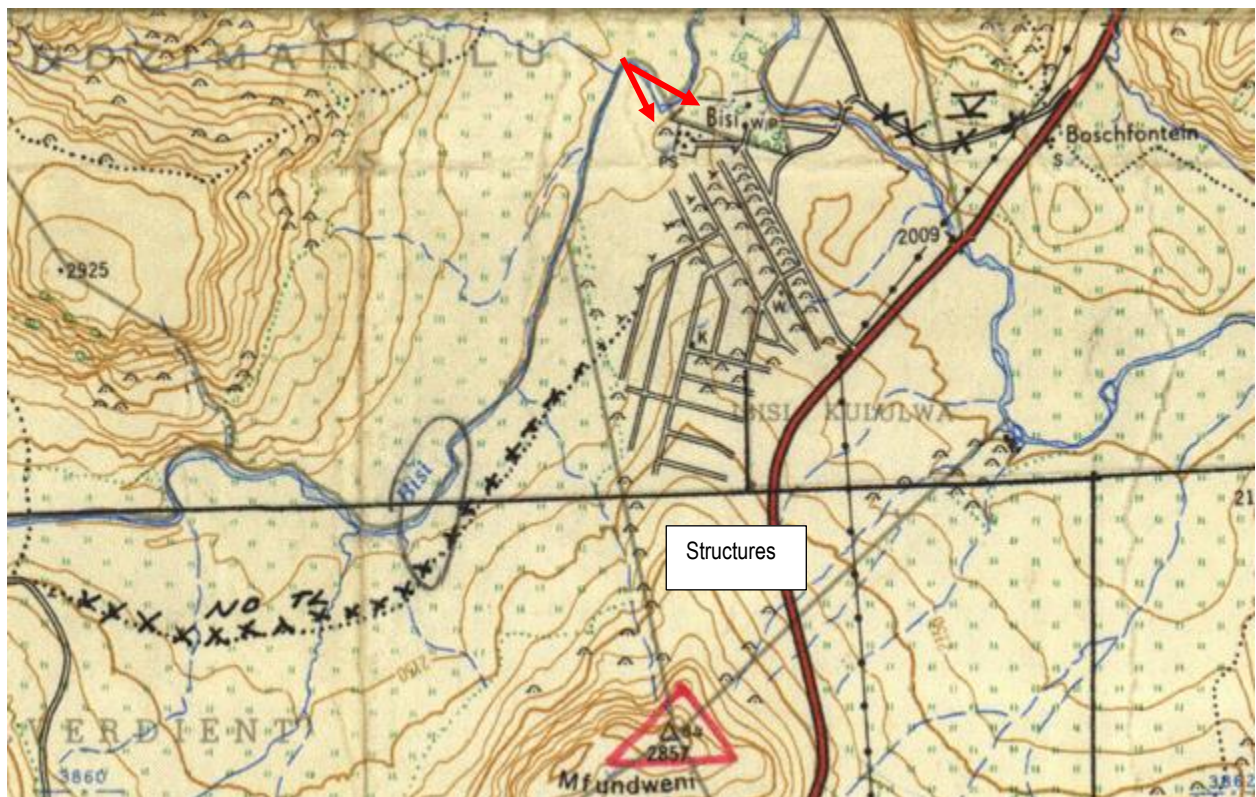


Figure 7: Section of topographical map showing homesteads

The remains of the structures indicate that they were made of mud bricks held together with 'daga' (dagha) and then plastered. The remains of square structure dug into the ground were found that could have been the outside toilet / long-drop. The surrounding area was inspected for graves but none were found.

The rest of the northern site was inspected and no heritage sites were found. Two trenches that have been dug from the tar road going towards the Ibisi River, cross the project area. These trenches are clearly visible on **Figure 3** above. Some dumping of rubbish and building rubble is taking place in this area. The areas below or north of the school and close to the river (see **Figure 3**) have also previously been cultivated and are now lying fallow. No heritage sites were found in these areas.



Figure 8: Remains of two roomed structure



Figure 9: Remains of structure

Southern infill site (Figure 10)

This area was inspected on foot. The northern area closest to houses has existing reservoirs and associated water infrastructure on it as well as an existing borrow pit below which extensive dumping of waste and rubble is taking place. The topography is steep and erosion is taking place close to the water infrastructure (reservoirs, etc.) and below the borrow pit.



Figure 10: Southern infill site

On top of the hill, several circular indentations outlined with stone were found indicating that a number of homesteads were located here in the past. **Figure 7** above clearly shows these homesteads in a row as well as several situated at the base of Mfundweni Mountain. Images of these remains can be seen in **Figures 14** and **15** below. This area was inspected for graves but no visible or apparent graves were found. The structures are situated just outside the proposed infill area. The closest site is situated 35 m west of the boundary of the infill area.



Figure 11: Existing reservoirs



Figure 12: Fenced reservoirs



Figure 13: View across project area looking south



Figure 14: Circular remains of structure



Figure 15: Remains of structure

A small family grave site is located within the proposed infill site. The graves have headstones and the site is fenced. No other heritage sites were found during the site inspection.



Figure 16: Fenced graves

The fossil sensitivity map of South Africa indicates that both infill sites fall into an area of moderate sensitivity as indicated by the green colour on the map below as well as a small area of low fossil sensitivity indicated in blue. An area of moderate sensitivity requires a desktop palaeontological study. Although the northern infill area is disturbed by previous cultivation and habitation, the southern infill site is largely undisturbed hence it is recommended that a desktop palaeontological assessment is undertaken for this infill housing project.

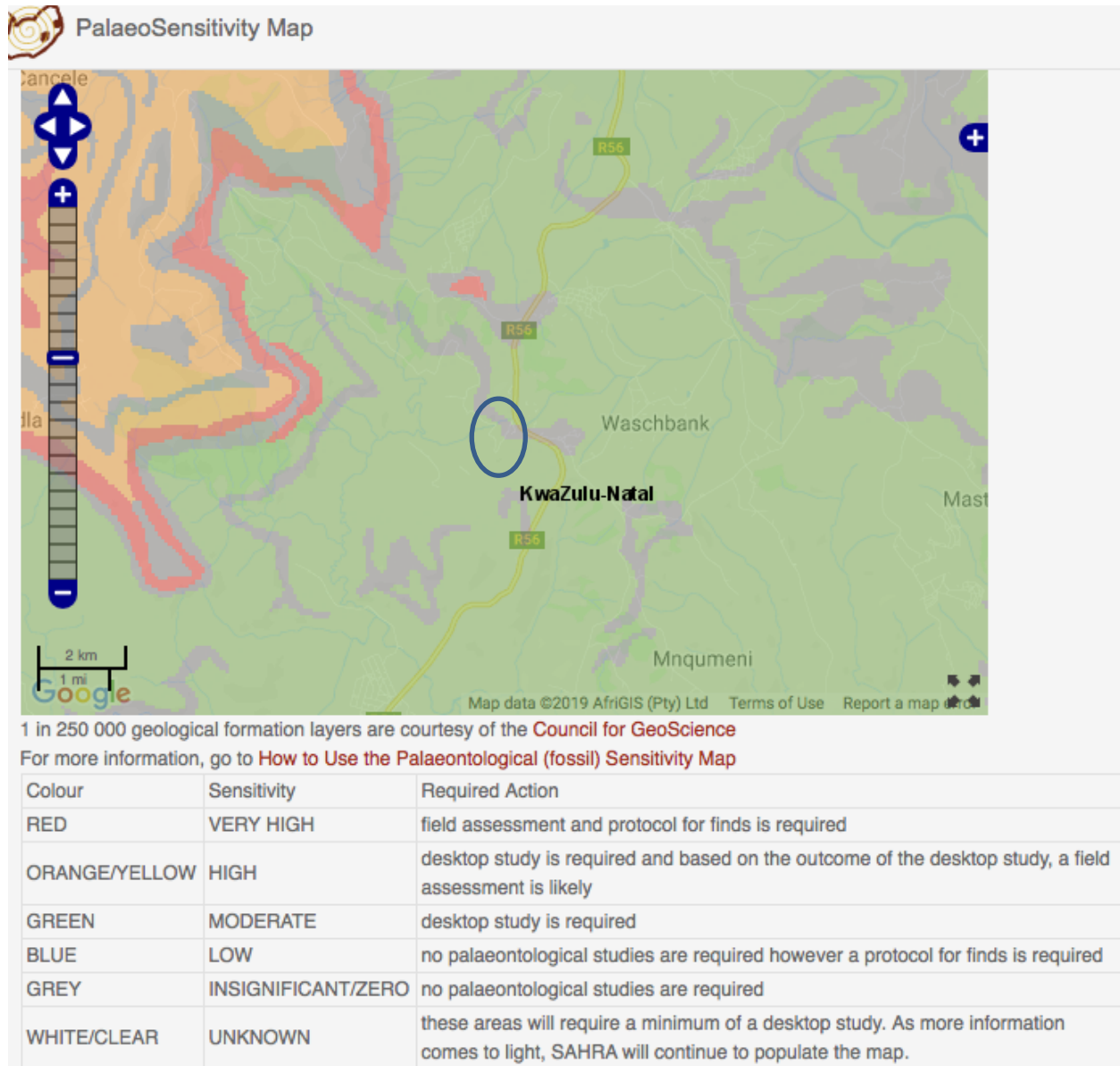


Figure 17: Fossil sensitivity of project area outlined in blue

The sites found during the site survey of the two infill areas are listed below in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Heritage sites found during site inspection

COORDINATES	DESCRIPTION	Significance	MITIGATION
NORTHERN INFILL SITE			
30°24'16.8" S 29°53'14.3" E	Remains of mud brick structure including walls and floor	Probably > 60 years; low heritage significance as such structures are fairly common in KZN; however, the remains are protected by legislation	If the remains are to be removed/destroyed, then application must be made to the Institute to obtain permission to do so
30°24'16.9" S 29°53'14.6" E	Intact structure that is currently occupied	Possibly > 60 years; low heritage significance; however, high social significance as it is someone's home	As the structure houses people, it is recommended that it remains <i>in situ</i> ; if it is to be destroyed, a built heritage specialist must be asked to determine the age of the structure; if >60 years then application must be made to the Institute to obtain permission to do so; if <60 years the structure can be demolished
30°24'17.5" S 29°53'14.0" E	Remains of walls and floor of structure	Possibly > 60 years; low heritage significance as such structures are fairly common in KZN	If the remains are to be removed/destroyed, then application must be made to the Institute to obtain permission to do so
30°24'17.5" S 29°53'13.5" E	Outline and remains of structure	Low heritage significance	Application for permission to demolish all associated structures must be made to the Institute prior to demolition.
30°24'17.5" S 29°53'13.3" E	Outline and remains of structure	Low heritage significance	As above
30°24'16.0" S 29°53'12.9" E	Remains of possible long-drop / toilet	Low heritage significance	As above
30°24'20.2" S 29°53'17.2" E	Five concrete slabs or floors	Low heritage significance as they appear to be recent structures	Can be destroyed
SOUTHERN INFILL SITE			
30°25'22.0" S 29°53'18.2" E	Stone outline of circular structure	Low heritage significance; however, remains are most probably >60 years hence protected by legislation	The complex of remains must be fenced with a buffer of 10 m between the remains and construction activity
30°25'21.8" S 29°53'17.4" E	Stone outline of circular structure	Low heritage significance; however, remains are most probably >60 years hence protected by legislation	The complex of remains must be fenced with a buffer of 10 m between the remains and construction activity
30°25'21.5" S 29°53'16.6" E	Stone outline of circular structure	Low heritage significance; however, remains are most probably >60 years hence protected by legislation	The complex of remains must be fenced with a buffer of 10 m between them and any construction activity

30°25'23.7" S 29°53'17.1" E	Stone outline of circular structure	Low heritage significance; however, remains are most probably >60 years hence protected by legislation	The complex of remains must be fenced with a buffer of 10 m between them and any construction activity
30°25'24.4" S 29°53'18.2" E	Stone outline of circular structure	Low heritage significance; however, remains are most probably >60 years hence protected by legislation	The complex of remains must be fenced with a buffer of 10 m between them and any construction activity
30°25'24.7" S 29°53'18.5" E	Stone outline of circular structure	Low heritage significance; however, remains are most probably >60 years hence protected by legislation	The complex of remains must be fenced with a buffer of 10 m between them and any construction activity
30°25'24.5" S 29°53'18.8" E	Stone outline of circular structure	Low heritage significance; however, remains are most probably >60 years hence protected by legislation	The complex of remains must be fenced with a buffer of 10 m between them and any construction activity
30°25'24.7" S 29°53'19.1" E	Stone outline of circular structure	Low heritage significance; however, remains are most probably >60 years hence protected by legislation	The complex of remains must be fenced with a buffer of 10 m between them and any construction activity
30°25'21.5" S 29°53'27.4" E	Fenced grave site	High heritage significance, graves protected by legislation	The grave site must be left <i>in situ</i> and must not be damaged during construction of the houses; family must be allowed access to the grave site at all times.

8. DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The date of the topographical map indicates that at least one of the structures found in the northern infill site is older than 60 years of age. If the remains are to be destroyed to make way for the proposed housing development, then application must be made to the KwaZulu-Natal Amafa and Research Institute for permission to destroy all the associated structures as structures older than 60 years are protected in terms of the section 37 (1)(a) of the KwaZulu-Natal Amafa and Research Institute Act, 2018 which states that no structure which is, or which may reasonably be expected to be older than 60 years, may be demolished, altered or added to without the prior written approval of the Institute having been obtained on written application to the Institute.

The remains of circular structures on the southern infill site are older than 60 years. These are protected by the above section as well as section 40 (1) of the above Act that states that no person may destroy, damage, excavate, alter, write or draw upon or otherwise disturb archaeological sites (amongst others) without the prior written approval of the Institute having been obtained on written application to the Institute. Hence, the recommendation that remains of all of the circular structures are fenced with a buffer of 10 m around them to protect them not only

from construction activities but also from damage once the houses are occupied. The possibility of finding graves associated with these structures should not be ruled out although no apparent graves were noted during the site inspection.

The grave site that falls within the southern infill area is protected by section 39 (1) of the above Act. This section states that no grave or burial ground older than 60 years or deemed to be of heritage significance by a heritage authority – (a) not otherwise protected by this Act or (b) not located in a formal cemetery managed or administered by a local authority may be damaged, altered, exhumed, inundated, removed from its original position or otherwise disturbed without the prior written approval of the Institute having been obtained on written application to the Institute. It is recommended that the graves are left *in situ* and clearly marked so that they are not damaged during the construction of houses. The disinterment of graves is not recommended. In addition, as recommended in **Table 1** above, access to the graves by family must be allowed at all times including during the construction of the proposed housing development.

It is recommended that a desktop paleontological assessment is undertaken of both infill sites as the project area falls within an area of moderate fossil sensitivity. All recommendations and mitigation measures provided by this study must be implemented.

Once the above recommendations have been undertaken, the construction of the proposed infill housing project can proceed from a heritage perspective. The mitigation measures provided below must also be implemented and adhered to where applicable.

9. MITIGATION MEASURES

- For any chance finds of any type of heritage resource, all work must cease in the area affected and the Contractor must immediately inform the Project Manager. A heritage specialist must be called to site for inspection. The provincial heritage resource agency (the Institute) must also be informed about the finding.
- The heritage specialist will assess the significance of the resource and provide guidance on the way forward.
- Permits must be obtained from the Institute if heritage resources are to be removed, destroyed or altered.
- Under no circumstances may any heritage material be destroyed or removed from site unless under direction of a heritage specialist.

- Should any remains be found on site that is potentially human remains, the South African Police Service (SAPS) should also be contacted. No SAPS official may remove remains (recent or not) until the correct permit/s have been obtained.

10. REFERENCES

Active Heritage. 2019. *Phase One Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment of the proposed Ibisi Sewer Reticulation, Umzimkhulu Local Municipality*

Anderson, G. 2008. *Heritage Survey of Umzimkhulu Town.*

Enviroedge Environmental Solutions. 2019. *Background Information Document as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment and Water Use Licence Application for the proposed Ibisi Infill Development located with Ward 11 of Umzimkhulu Local Municipality, Harry Gwala District, KwaZulu-Natal*

Whitelaw, G. 2013. *Phase 1 Heritage Resources Scoping Report. Proposed Forestry Project, B.J. Mbanjwa, Sisonke District, Kokstad Municipal Area, KwaZulu-Natal*