

**IXOPO CRU HOUSING PROJECT, UBUHLEBEZWE
LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, KWAZULU-NATAL**

Phase 1 Heritage Impact Assessment

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Ubuhlebezwe Municipality plans to construct 150 housing units of various sizes in an area situated along the R56 road and south of centre of the town of Ixopo. The development will also include parking bays, children's' nursery and a playground. The location is on portion B of Erf 174, Stuartstown, Ixopo. There is an existing informal settlement which will be incorporated into the project.

This report serves as the Phase 1 Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for the proposed housing development.

The planned housing development is over 2 ha in size hence it triggers section 38 (1) (c) (i) of the National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA), 1999 (Act No 25 of 1999) that refers to developments exceeding 5000 m² in extent. The development may also impact on graves, structures, archaeological and palaeontological resources that are protected in terms of sections 33, 34, 35, and 36 of the KwaZulu-Natal Heritage Act (No. 4 of 2008) as well as sections 34, 35, and 36 of the NHRA.

The area where the informal settlement is located is highly disturbed. Throughout the project area there are several areas that have been cleared and are used for vegetable and maize cultivation. The project area, apart from the informal settlement, appears to be largely undeveloped but the area is disturbed by its close proximity to the informal settlement with the existence of informal roads, paths and rubbish dumps. Several geotechnical test pits had been dug for investigation for the housing development. There is also an existing power line that crosses the project area.

Some areas were overgrown with vegetation and thickets of wattle trees but, in general, visibility was good during the site inspection which took place on 27 September 2016.

The South African Heritage Resources Agency's Fossil Sensitivity Map indicates that the project area is situated in an area of moderate palaeontological / fossil sensitivity. An area of moderate sensitivity requires a desktop palaeontological assessment, however, due to the disturbed nature of the project area, it is anticipated that there is a low probability of finding intact and significant fossils therefore it is recommended that no further studies are undertaken in this regard. However, it is recommended that the protocol for fossil finds that is included in the mitigation measures in this report must be adhered to by the developer.

No heritage resources, such as graves and structures, were found during the site inspection nor any visible archaeological sites or material. It is therefore recommended that the proposed housing development should proceed but with the proviso that the mitigation measures provided in the main body of this report are adhered to.

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AUTHOR DETAILS

Verification	Name	Qualification	Professional Registration
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1. INTRODUCTION

The Ubuhlebezwe Local Municipality proposes to construct 150 housing units of which 45 will be 1 bedroom apartments with an area of 35 m² each and 105 of the 150 units being 2 bedroom apartments with an area of 45 m² each. The units will have equivalent laundry spaces and parking bays. The development will also include a multi-purpose court, nursery school, a children's playground as well as a guard house at the entrance. The total footprint of the development is 2.2 Ha.

There is an existing informal settlement very close to the project area and it is understood that the inhabitants of the informal settlement will benefit from the project in terms of the provision of housing.

This report serves as the Phase 1 Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for the proposed Ixopo CRU housing development.

2. LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

The planned housing development is 2.2 ha in size hence it triggers section 38 (1) (c) (i) of the National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA), 1999 (Act No 25 of 1999). The relevant section of the NHRA states that:

“(1) Subject to the provisions of subsections (7), (8) and (9), any person who intends to undertake a development categorised as—

(c) any development or other activity which will change the character of a site —

(i) exceeding 5 000 m² in extent;

must notify the responsible heritage authority and furnish it with details regarding the location, nature and extent of the proposed development.

The development may also impact on graves, structures, archaeological and palaeontological resources that are protected in terms of sections 33, 34, 35, and 36 of the KwaZulu-Natal Heritage Act (No. 4 of 2008) as well as sections 34, 35, and 36 of the NHRA.

In terms of Section 3 of the NHRA, 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).

The Phase I HIA was undertaken to assess whether any heritage resources will be impacted by the proposed Ixopo housing project.

3. LOCATION

The project is located at 30°09'32.12"S and 30°03'52.98" in E Ward 4 and on Portion B of Erf 0 Stuartstown, Ixopo. It is situated south of the centre of Ixopo with the R56 road situated on its north-western border (see Figures 1 and 2 below).



Figure 1: Project area



Figure 2: Google Earth image of project area

4. TERMS OF REFERENCE

Undertake a Phase 1 Heritage Impact Assessment in order to determine the possible existence of archaeological, palaeontological and cultural-historical sites or features in the project area that could be impacted by the proposed housing development.

Provide mitigation measures to limit or avoid the impact of the construction of the project on heritage resources (if any).

5. METHODOLOGY

A survey of literature was undertaken of the larger area in order to place the project in a historical context. A few HIAs, undertaken in the wider geographical area, were found on the SAHRIS database that provided some additional historical data regarding the area.

A site inspection of the project area was undertaken on 27 September 2016. The area was overgrown in parts but, in general, visibility was good.

This HIA report will be submitted to the heritage authority of KwaZulu-Natal, namely Amafa aKwaZulu-Natali (Amafa) for their assessment and comment.

6. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY AREA

Archaeological

The available evidence, according to Prins (2013:2), indicates that the greater Ixopo area contains a wide spectrum of archaeological sites covering different time-periods and cultural traditions. These include Early Stone Age sites, Middle Stone Age sites, Later Stone Age sites, and Early and Later Iron Age sites. The Later Iron Age sites were occupied by Bantu-speaking agropastoralists who arrived in southern Africa after 1000 year ago via East Africa. Later Iron Age communities in KwaZulu-Natal were the direct ancestors of the Zulu people.

Many African groups moved through the greater Ixopo area because of the turmoil caused by the expansionistic policies of King Shaka Zulu in the 1820's. Fodo, Chief of the Nhlanguwini, established his Dumezulu kraal near the right bank of the Mkhomazi River upstream of the

Josephine Bridge between Richmond and Ixopo after Dingane, who had participated in the killing of Shaka, had been enthroned in 1828.

Historical

The village of Ixopo was established in 1978 and was originally named Stuartstown after the district magistrate, Martinus Stuart. Thereafter it assumed the name Ixopo which is a Zulu word for marsh or bog and refers to the squelching sound made when a foot is withdrawn from a marsh (Standard Encyclopedia Southern Africa 1972). T.V. Bulpin (1986:480) states that Ixopo was named after the stream that runs through the valley (spelt eXobo) where the village is situated.

According to Whelan (2013:3), archival evidence points at the arrival of a railway line at Stuartstown (Ixopo) at the beginning of the 20th century. Construction of the line commenced in August 1912. The terminus, located near the Union Bridge consisted of a wood and iron station building with a passenger shelter, lamp room and a goods shed and was named Madonela, the local name for Donald Strachan, one of the oldest living residents in the district. The junction just outside Ixopo where the lines divided to go up to Donnybrook and down to Madonela became known as Union Bridge Junction. The narrow gauge railway line used to carry produce from the area to the coast (Bulpin: 480) but use of the railway line stopped about 25 years ago according to Whelan (2013:3).

7. RESULTS OF SITE INSPECTION

The site of the proposed development includes an informal settlement on the south eastern section of the project area. The area where the informal settlement is situated is highly disturbed by human activity with lots of litter lying around. There are several areas throughout the project area that have been cleared and used for vegetable and maize cultivation (see Figures 3 and 4).

A walk through of the project area was undertaken. The area, apart from the informal settlement, is largely undeveloped but it is disturbed by its close proximity to the informal settlement with the existence of informal roads, paths and rubbish dumps. In addition, several geotechnical test pits had been dug for investigation for the proposed housing development (see Figures 5 and 6). There is also an existing power line that crosses the project area.

There are thickets of wattle trees and thick undergrowth that are used as informal toilets and access in these areas was limited. (Figure 7). However, visibility was generally good apart from the few areas mentioned.



Figure 3: Informal settlement with cultivated area adjacent to shacks



Figure 4: Looking northwards with cleared area in foreground



Figure 5: Existing road/path and power line looking southwards



Figure 6: Test pit with R56 road in background



Figure 7: Overgrown sections of project area



Figure 8: South western section of project area

An area enclosed with wire is situated close to the R56 where either animals are kept or where produce is grown.

No heritage resources such as graves and old structures were found during the site inspection. Several passersby's were consulted regarding the existence of heritage resources in the project area and they all indicated that to their knowledge there were no such sites in the area. No visible archaeological sites or material were found during the inspection.

Palaeontological

The South African Heritage Resources Agency's Fossil Sensitivity Map indicates that the project area is situated in an area coloured in green that indicates an area of moderate palaeontological / fossil sensitivity (see Figure 8 below). As indicated in Figure 9, an area of moderate sensitivity requires a desktop palaeontological assessment. However, due to the disturbed nature of the project area, it is anticipated that there is a low probability of finding intact and significant fossils therefore it is recommended that no further studies are undertaken in this regard. However, a protocol for fossil finds included in the mitigation measures in section 9 of this report, must be adhered to by the developer.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

No visible heritage sites or resources were found in the project area during the site inspection. Discussions with local residents indicated that there were no graves in the area nor areas of significance for the surrounding community. It is therefore recommended that the proposed housing development should proceed but with the proviso that the mitigation measures provided in the chapter below are adhered to.

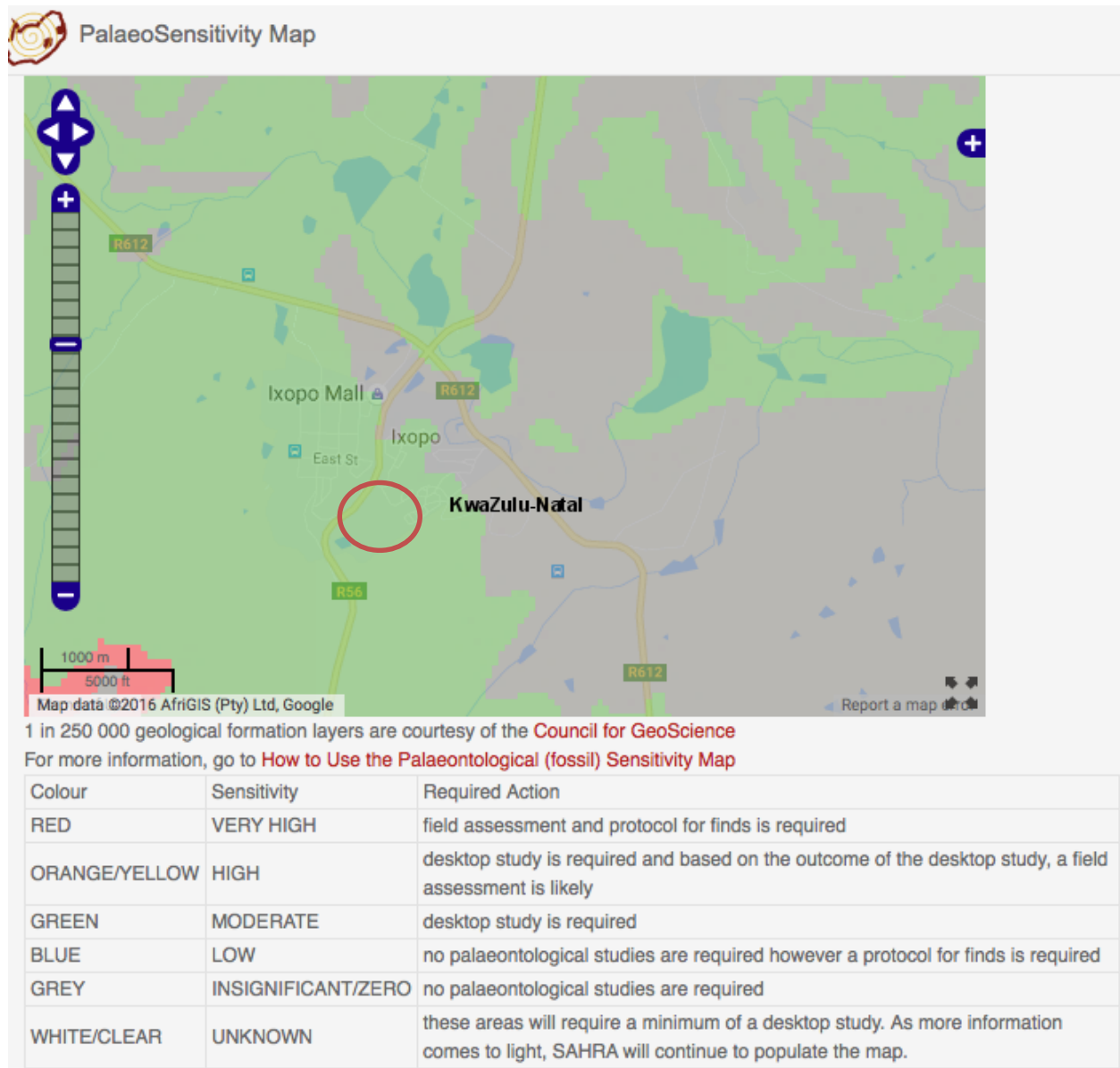


Figure 9: Fossil sensitivity map with project area indicated by red circle

9. MITIGATION MEASURES

- For any chance finds of heritage resources, such as grave, all work must cease in the area affected and the Contractor must immediately inform the Project Manager. A registered heritage specialist must be called to site for inspection. The relevant heritage resource agency (Amafa) must also be informed about the finding.
- The heritage specialist will assess the significance of the resource and provide guidance on the way forward.
- Written permission must be obtained from Amafa if heritage resources are to be removed, destroyed or altered.

- All heritage resources found in close proximity to the construction area must be protected by a 3m buffer in which no construction can take place. The buffer material (danger tape, fencing, etc.) must be highly visible to construction crews.
- Under no circumstances may any heritage material be destroyed or removed from site unless under direction of a heritage specialist.
- If there are chance finds of fossils during construction, work in the area of the find must be stopped and a palaeontologist must be called to the site in order to assess the fossils and rescue them if necessary (with an Amafa permit). The fossils must then be housed in a suitable, recognized institute.

10. REFERENCES

Bulpin, T.V. 1986. *Discovering Southern Africa*. Treasury of Travel: Muizenberg

Nasou. 1972. *Standard Encyclopedia of Southern Africa No. 6 HUN-LIT*. Nasou Limited: Elsie's River.

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Whelan, D. 2013. *Heritage Impact Assessment of the old railway shed situated on the site of the taxi rank, Ixopo, Sisonke District Municipality*. Unpublished report