

**KOKSTAD CRU HOUSING PROJECT, GREATER
KOKSTAD MUNICIPALITY, KWAZULU-NATAL**

Phase 1 Heritage Impact Assessment

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Greater Kokstad Municipality plans to build houses on subdivision of a portion of the Remainder of Erf 1 adjacent to the Usher Memorial Hospital in Wylde Street, Kokstad. The area is currently undeveloped with widespread dumping of household rubbish and building rubble.

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

The 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.

Some sections of the project area were overgrown with vegetation and thick stands of wattle and other trees but, in general, visibility was good during the site inspection which took place on 01 November 2016.

The project area has historically been used by residents of Kokstad as an informal and illegal dumping site for both household rubbish as well as building rubble. It is also used for the grazing of cattle as seen during the site inspection. Some areas within the project site appear to have been excavated for soil and there is a watercourse that runs close to the eastern boundary of the project area.

A large rocky outcrop is found in the southern half of the project area. This area is currently overgrown with wattle trees.

The South African Heritage Resources Agency's Fossil Sensitivity Map indicates that the project area is situated in an area of very high palaeontological / fossil sensitivity interspersed with a band of insignificant or zero fossil sensitivity running through it. An area of very high sensitivity requires a field assessment. Due to the project area crossing both very high and insignificant areas of fossil sensitivity it is recommended that a desktop palaeontological study is undertaken to ensure that no significant fossils will be destroyed by the proposed development.

It is also recommended that the rocky outcrop found on site remains undeveloped if possible and is kept as an open space around which the planned housing should be constructed.

No heritage resources, such as graves and structures, were found during the site inspection nor any visible archaeological sites or material. However, due to the very high fossil sensitivity of parts of the project area, the recommended desktop study will indicate when the housing project may proceed, or if a permitted rescue of fossils needs to take place prior to construction and whether a palaeontologist should be on site during the construction phase to rescue unearthed fossils..

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AUTHOR DETAILS

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Greater Kokstad Municipality proposes to construct 300 housing units of which 100 will be 1 bedroom apartments and 200 of the units being 2 bedroom apartments. The proposed site is located on subdivision of a portion of the Remainder of Erf 1, Kokstad, which is located adjacent to the Usher Hospital in Wylde Street, Kokstad. The total footprint of the development is 3 Ha.

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

2. LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

The planned housing development is 3 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 Kokstad housing project.

3. LOCATION

The location of the proposed housing development is on subdivision of a portion of the Remainder of Erf 1, Kokstad. It is situated on the western end of Wylde Street adjacent to the Usher Memorial Hospital. Its north-eastern boundary is Spurwing Park, a gated residential estate; its southern boundary is a formal cemetery, a gravel road leading to the cemetery as well as open commonage. Several residences are found along its western boundary (see Figures 1 and 2 below). The project is located at 39°92'2.94"S and 33°91'00"E.



Figure 1: Google image of project area

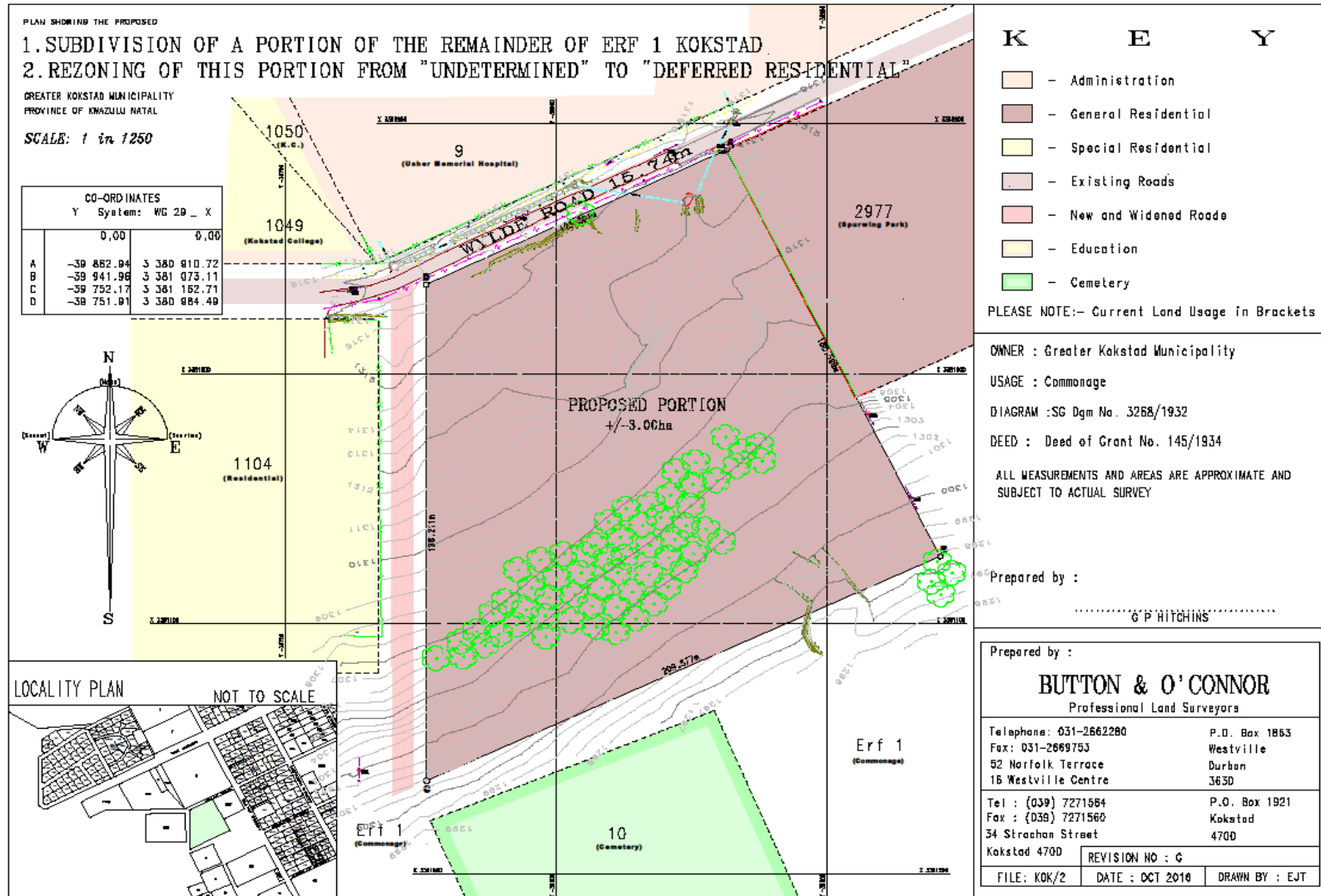


Figure 2: Layout of housing project

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 Kokstad area, were found on the SAHRIS database that provided some additional historical and archaeological data regarding the area.

A site inspection of the project area was undertaken on 01 November 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

Early, Middle and Later Stone Age material occur in KwaZulu-Natal. Early Stone Age material occurs primarily along the coast and in savanna areas, most especially in the river valleys, and in secondary contexts. Middle Stone Age artefacts have a wider distribution that extends into and across the Drakensberg including rock shelters with deep Middle Stone Age deposits, found both east and west of the escarpment. The Later Stone Age is better known, with evidence of shelter occupation in the southern Drakensberg between 12000 and 8000 years ago (Roodt and Roodt, 2013:8).

Although here has been no systematic archaeological survey of the area (Anderson 2012:13), the Natal Museum database indicated that several archaeological sites have been recorded in the general area of Kokstad. These sites are Middle and Late Stone age sites, with some shelters

containing rock art. The project area for the proposed housing development is located on relatively flat land that does not have any shelters.

According to the most recent archaeological cultural distribution sequences by Huffman, KwaZulu-Natal falls within the distribution area of various Iron Age groupings originating out of both the Urewe Tradition (eastern stream of migration) and the Kalundu Tradition (western stream of migration). As Iron Age farmers favoured areas with arable soil, sweetveld grazing, and wood for industrial and domestic use, Iron Age sites are unlikely to occur in the project area. African farmers, however, did settle in sourveld grasslands during the 1800s as a result of various colonial and other forces (Roodt and Roodt: 8).

Historical

Under Adam Kok III, the Griqua trekked from the vicinity of Philippolis in the Free State after losing their lands to the Voortrekkers. In 1862, after crossing the Drakensberg they settled on the slopes of a mountain which they named after Sir Walter Currie who had supported them in settling in the area. The area where they settled was referred to as 'No-Man's' land located between the then Cape and Natal colonies (Bulpin 1986: 480; Reader's Digest 1992:190).

In September 1869, Adam Kok founded Kokstad as the capital of Griqualand East on the banks of the Mzintlava River. The Griqua's independence was short-lived as East Griqualand area was annexed in 1874 by the Cape Colony. On the 5th of April 1892, Kokstad became a municipality.

The Usher Memorial Hospital was named after Commandant Henry Usher who fell in the Pondomiso-Basutho Rebellion in 1881. It opened in 1897. It was gutted by fire in 1908 and rebuilt in 1922 (www.kznhealth.gov.za/egusher/history).

At the outbreak of the Anglo Boer War in 1899, black volunteer units were developed in the area and consisted predominantly of Bhaca, Thembu and Mfengu who were taken up in the Thembuland Field Force and the East Griqualand Field Force. Most of these volunteer forces were disbanded in March 1900. Another unit raised during the same war was the Griqua Light Horse. Raised in the Mount Currie, Kokstad and Matatiele districts, the unit comprised 300 men. All the non-commissioned officers were Grikwas including Thomas Kok, a relative of Adam Kok. (www.angloboerwar.com).

7. RESULTS OF SITE INSPECTION

A walk through of the project area revealed a site that has been used for the dumping of waste and rubble for an extended period. Vegetation has grown over the older dumping areas and there is litter strewn over the project area with recent dumping activities. There are a number of informal roads and paths that cross it and small sections of the area have been excavated for soil.



Figure 3: Looking south over project area



Figure 4: Rubble and waste along eastern boundary

Sections of the study area are overgrown by thick stands of wattle and other trees - see Figure 5 below.



Figure 5: Thick stand of trees growing over rocky outcrop

A small stream or watercourse runs through the project area close to its eastern boundary and several recent geotechnical test pits were observed during the site inspection.



Figure 6: Stream running through project area



Figure 7: Recent geotechnical test pit near western boundary and residences



Figure 8: Southern boundary of project area

No heritage sites, such as graves, remains of old structures, archaeological material, etc, were found during the site inspection. However, a large rocky outcrop is located in the southern half of the project area. The rock type is unknown but this area could indicate the presence of fossils (see palaeontological section below) and it is recommended that the rocky outcrop remains undeveloped and becomes an open area within the housing development.



Figure 9: Rocky outcrop overgrown by wattles

Palaeontological

The South African Heritage Resources Agency's Fossil Sensitivity Map indicates that the project area is situated in an area of very high palaeontological / fossil sensitivity (indicated in red in the map below) interspersed with a band of insignificant or zero fossil sensitivity (indicated in grey) (see Figure 10 below). An area of very high sensitivity requires a field assessment. Due to the project area crossing both very high and insignificant areas of fossil sensitivity, it is recommended that a desktop palaeontological study is undertaken to ensure that no significant fossils will be damaged by the proposed housing development.

It should be noted that it is possible that the desktop assessment may recommend that a field assessment is undertaken to confirm the assessment's findings.

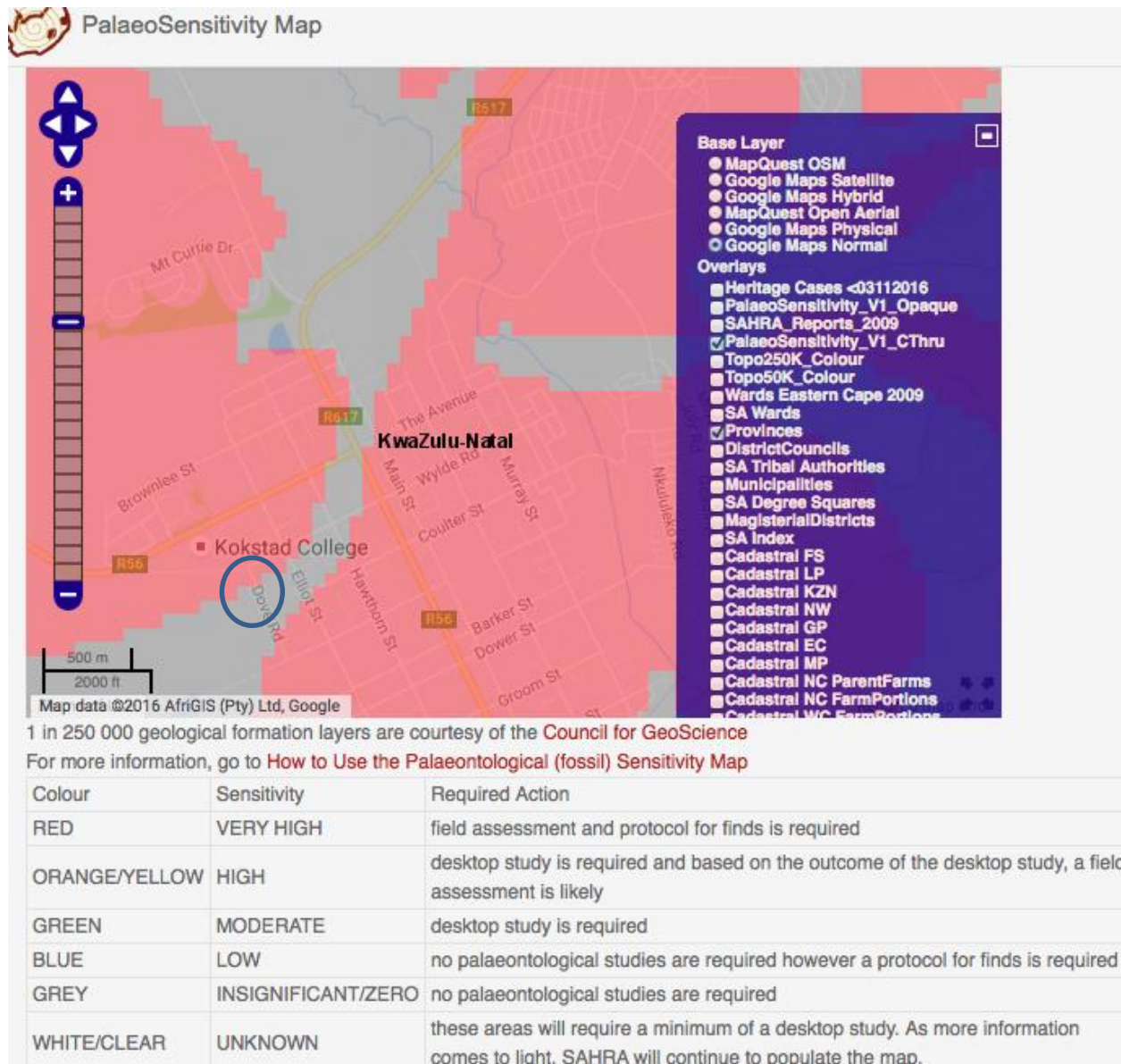


Figure 10: Fossil sensitivity map showing approximate location of project area

8. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

No visible heritage resources were found in the project area during the site inspection. However, the large rocky outcrop in the southern half of the project area and the indication that the project falls within a zone of high fossil sensitivity has led to the recommendation that a desktop palaeontological assessment is undertaken prior to construction of the houses to determine if significant fossil sites are present on the site to be developed.

It is also recommended that if possible the rocky outcrop should be left as is and that the housing development is constructed around it.

The recommended desktop study will determine when the housing project may proceed, or if a rescue of fossils may need to take place prior to construction and whether a palaeontologist should be on site during the construction phase to rescue unearthed fossils.

Once the project proceeds, the mitigation measures provided in the chapter below must also be adhered to.

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.

10. REFERENCES

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