

# **CULTURAL HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSED MATHAMO BRIDGE, LOCATED NEAR ESTCOURT-INJASUTI, IMBABAZANE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, KWAZULU-NATAL.**

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

EIA	Early Iron Age
ESA	Early Stone Age
HISTORIC PERIOD	Since the arrival of the white settlers - c. AD 1836 in this part of the country
IRON AGE	Early Iron Age AD 200 - AD 1000 Late Iron Age AD 1000 - AD 1830
LIA	Late Iron Age
LSA	Late Stone Age
MSA	Middle Stone Age
NEMA	National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998 and associated regulations (2006).
NHRA	National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act No. 25 of 1999) and associated regulations (2000)
NPA	Natal Provincial Authority
SAHRA	South African Heritage Resources Agency
STONE AGE	Early Stone Age 2 000 000 - 250 000 BP Middle Stone Age 250 000 - 25 000 BP Late Stone Age 30 000 - until c. AD 200

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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A cultural heritage survey of the proposed Mathamo Bridge, in the Imbabazane Local Municipality, near Estcourt-Injasuti, KwaZulu Natal. It is for the uThukela District Municipality. A Water Use Licence Applications (WULA in terms of the National Water Act, 1998 (Act No. 36 of 1998) may be required (KSEMS Environmental BID Document. 2th May 2015.

Although a number of houses and other structures lie within the close vicinities of the proposed construction, it is unlikely that any heritage material from the surrounding communities will be disturbed by the construction of this bridge since the area of construction is likely to be contained for such a small-scale project. It is however advised that during construction care should be taken not to allow disturbance of the landscape to intrude into the residential and operational zone of the associated community since heritage material is often associated with habitation areas, including graves and other cultural material.

The exception to this statement excludes, however, the original Drift which lies about 10m on the eastern side of the existing Mathamo Bridge. The old drift was used by the original farmer of this land and it appears to be more than 60 years old. This feature is therefore protected by Provincial Heritage Legislation.

There is also a notable San Rock Art site located just approximately 40 metres above the Mathamo Bridge along a sandstone ridge which rears above the river. Mitigation is required in order to protect this site during the construction phase of the bridge. There may also be San

stone tools in the river course, and along the banks, and care should be taken during construction of the bridge not to disturb these and to summon a Heritage Officer should any be found.

The old quarry which lies close to the Mathamo Bridge is younger than 60 years old and is not protected by heritage legislation.

We would also like to draw stakeholders attention to the South African National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act No. 25 of 1999) (NHRA), and the KwaZulu-Natal Heritage Act (Act No. 4 of 2008), which requires that operations that expose archaeological, or historical remains should cease immediately, pending evaluation by the provincial heritage agency.

## **2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION RELATING TO THE PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF MATHAMO BRIDGE**

The KwaZulu-Natal (KZNDoT) propose to construct a bridge along District Road D69, within the Imbabazane Local, and the Uthukela District Municipalities, close to Estcourt and Injasuti. The proposed Mathamo Bridge structure will be constructed across the Little Bushman's River (Mathamo River), and will be approximately 23 metres in length, and 11.8 metres wide (KSEMS Environmental BID Document. 2th May 2015). The existing bridge is approximately 2 m long and 3 m wide. The side pillars are in a bad state of repair, most likely to have been caused by flooding and contact with moving vehicles. It is highly likely that this bridge is younger than 6 years of age and requires no mitigation as a heritage feature.



Plate 1. The Mathamo Bridge.

It is proposed that the new bridge will replace an existing structure which will be demolished once the new bridge is constructed. The construction of Mathamo Bridge is part of the KZNDOT's initiative to improve public amenities which pose a safety hazard to the surrounding communities (ibid).

The co-ordinates for the proposed bridge are: 29° 4'20.10"S; 29°44'40.40"E. The proposed activity triggers Activities 12 and 19 of Listing Notice 1 (GNR 983) of 2014 published under NEMA. The aforementioned proposed project in terms of Section 21 (c) and (i) of the National Water Act, 1998 (Act No. 36 of 1998) also requires a Water Use License application (WULA) (ibid).

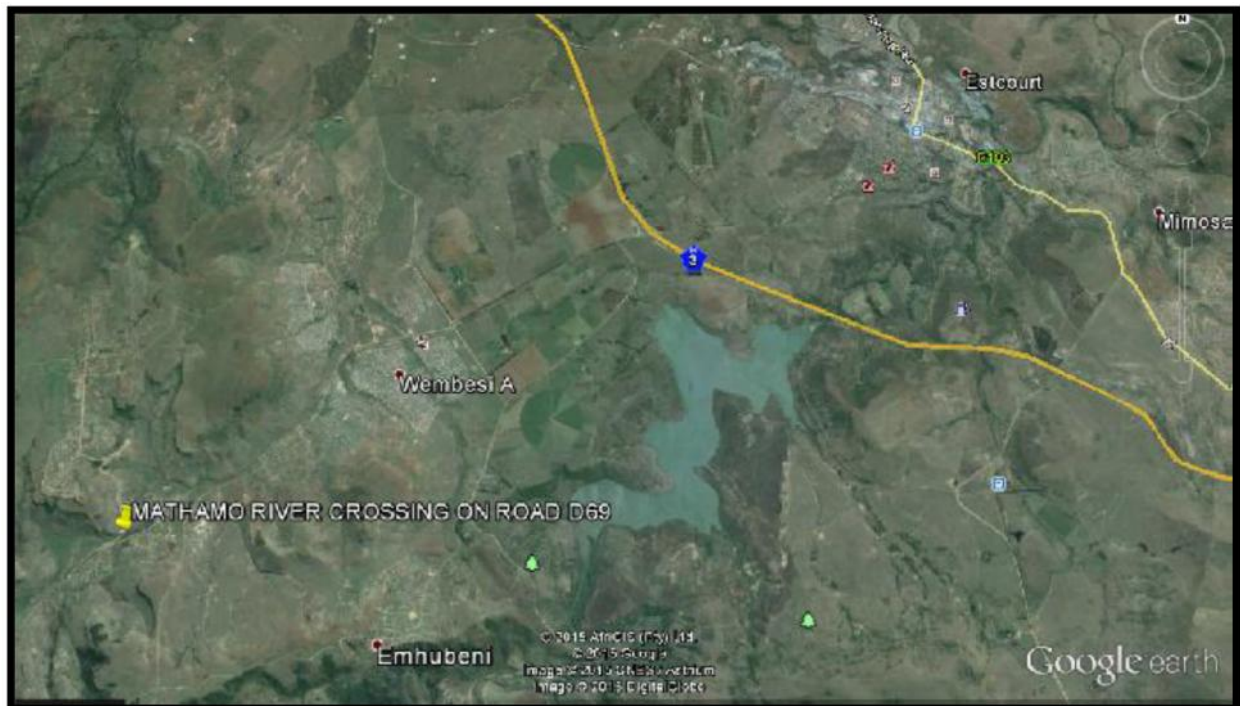


Figure 1. Location of the proposed Mathamo Bridge.

### 3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE PROJECT PARAMATERS

The consultant was approached by KSEMS Environmental Consultants to conduct a heritage impact assessment (HIA) of the proposed establishment of the proposed Mathamo Bridge for the authorised uThukela District Municipality. The Applicant, has appointed KSEMS Environmental Consultants to conduct the Basis Assessment Process for the proposed development.

According to the National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (NHRA) (Act No. 25 of 1999), the heritage resources of South Africa include:

- 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 palaeontological 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 newly promulgated KwaZulu-Natal Heritage Act (Act No. 4 of 2008) also makes specific mention to rock art and archaeological sites.

It is furthermore stated that:

—(1) No person may destroy, damage, excavate, alter, write or draw upon, or otherwise disturb any battlefield site, archaeological site, rock art site, palaeontological site, historic fortification, meteorite or meteorite impact site without the prior written approval of the Council having been obtained on written application to the KwaZulu-Natal Heritage Council.

(2) Upon discovery of archaeological or palaeontological material or a meteorite by any person, all activity or operations in the general vicinity of such material or meteorite must cease forthwith and a person who made the discovery must submit a written report to the Council without delay.

(3) The Council may, after consultation with an owner or controlling authority, by way of written notice served on the owner or controlling authority, prohibit any activity considered by the Council to be inappropriate within 50 metres of a rock art site.

(4) No person may exhume, remove from its original position or otherwise disturb, damage, destroy, own or collect any object or material associated with any battlefield site, archaeological site, rock art site, palaeontological site, historic fortification, meteorite or meteorite impact site without the prior written approval of the Council having been obtained on written application to the Council.

(5) No person may bring any equipment which assists in the detection of metals and archaeological and palaeontological objects and material, or excavation equipment onto any battlefield site, archaeological site, rock art site, palaeontological site, historic fortification, or meteorite impact site, or use similar detection or excavation equipment for the recovery of meteorites, without the prior written approval of the Council having been obtained on written application to the Council.

(6) (a) The ownership of any object or material associated with any battlefield site, archaeological site, rock art site, palaeontological site, historic fortification, meteorite or meteorite impact site, on discovery, vest in the Provincial Government and the Council is regarded as the custodian on behalf of the Provincial Government.

(b) The Council may establish and maintain a provincial repository or repositories for the safekeeping or display of—

(i) archaeological objects;

(ii) palaeontological material;

(iii) ecofacts;

(iv) objects related to battlefield sites;

(v) material cultural artefacts; or

(vi) meteorites.

(7) The Council may, subject to such conditions as the Council may determine, loan any object or material referred to in subsection (6) to a national or provincial museum or institution.

(8) No person may, without the prior written approval of the Council having been obtained on written application to the Council, trade in, export or attempt to export from the Province—

(a) any category of archaeological object;

(b) any palaeontological material;

(c) any ecofact;

(d) any object which may reasonably be regarded as having been recovered from a battlefield site;

(e) any material cultural artefact; or

(f) any meteorite.

(9) (a) A person or institution in possession of an object or material referred to in paragraphs (a) – (f) of subsection (8), must submit full particulars of such object or material, including such information as may be prescribed, to the Council. (b) An object or material referred to in paragraph (a) must, subject to paragraph (c) and the directives of the Council, remain under the control of the person or institution submitting the particulars thereof.

(c) The ownership of any object or material referred to in paragraph (a) vest in the Provincial Government and the Council is regarded as the custodian on behalf of the Provincial Government.

This study aims to identify and assess the significance of any heritage and archaeological resources occurring on the site. Based on the significance, the impact of the development on the heritage resources would be determined. Then appropriate actions to reduce the impact on the heritage resources would be put forward. In terms of the NHRA, a place or object is to be

considered part of the national estate if it has cultural significance or other special value because of:

- a. its importance in the community, or pattern of South Africa's history;
- b. its possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage;
- c. its potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage;
- d. its importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class of South Africa's natural or cultural places or objects;
- e. its importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by a community or cultural group;
- f. its importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period;
- g. its strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons;
- h. its strong or special association with the life or work of a person, group or organisation of importance in the history of South Africa; and
- i. sites of significance relating to the history of slavery in South Africa.

Consultants:	Frans Prins (Active Heritage cc) and Sian Hall (Cultural Solutions) for Green Door Environmental
Type of development:	<p>The Applicant, uThukela District Municipality, propose to establish bridge over the Little Tugela River near Estcourt and Injasuthi, uThukela District Municipality, KwaZulu-Natal. In terms of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations under Section 24(5), 24M and 44 of the National Environmental Management Act (Act No 107 of 1998) published in Government Notice No. R. 543 of 2010, the proposed development triggers Listed Activities published in Government Notice No R. 544:</p> <p>The proposed activity triggers Activities 12 and 19 of Listing Notice 1 (GNR 983) of 2014 published under NEMA. The aforementioned proposed project in terms of Section 21 (c) and</p>

	(i) of the National Water Act, 1998 (Act No. 36 of 1998) also requires a Water Use License application (WULA).
Rezoning or subdivision:	Not applicable
Terms of reference	To carry out a Heritage Impact Assessment
Legislative requirements:	The Heritage Impact Assessment was carried out in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998) (NEMA) and following the requirements of the National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act No. 25 of 1999) (NHRA) and the KwaZulu Natal Heritage Act (Act No. 4 of 2008)

Table 1. Background Information.

#### 4. BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT AREA

The project area is situated in the Central Drakensberg area near the town of Estcourt, and the areas of Injasuthi and Giant's Castle. The GPS coordinates of the footprint is as follows: 29° 4'20.10"S; 29°44'40.40"E.

The footprint is situated in the foothills of the Central Drakensberg in a rural setting. The proposed area identified for the bridge is located on the Little Bushman's or Mathamo River (Fig 2).



Figure 2. The Area immediately adjacent to Mathamo Bridge.

The study area is located within the Little Bushmen's River Valley which is surrounded by banded sandstone in which San Rock Art is often found. The river course itself may have Later Stone Age tools and stone scatters. Lochsloy a rural Location is located just to the south and east of the bridge, while another high-density location is situated on the sandstone mountain to the north-west of the bridge, and rises above it.





Plate 2. Late Stone Age Stone Flake Located about 20 m Below the Mathamo Bridge Rock Shelter.

## 5. BACKGROUND TO THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL HISTORY OF THE AREA

The greater Drakensberg area is well endowed with cultural heritage, including various wilderness areas within and outside the formal protected area network. Although most literature refers to this heritage mainly in terms of San rock art, the region also contains other categories of cultural heritage features representative of various cultures and time-periods. The cultural heritage of the Drakensberg is diverse and highly fragile. Cultural heritage, unlike natural heritage, is non-renewable and irreplaceable. Once damaged, it is gone forever. San rock paintings and associated Later Stone Age sites, as well as the palaeontology of the area, are unique and have global significance. The remaining categories, however, certainly have national, provincial, and regional significance. The area has had several different cultural groups associated with it, from the San to the southern Sotho, the Zulu-speaking and Xhosa-speaking groups, and, more recently, the Griqua and Anglo-Boer descendants. Each of these groups has its own unique cultural expressions and has related in various ways to the others. These differences are found in the building styles of homes, their way of life as they interact with their environment,

traditional dress, and so on. In addition, there are a number of living heritage values associated with all of these groups, many of which are unknown or poorly recorded. The following section is a more detailed description of the various cultural heritage features.

### 5.1. The Early Stone Age

The occurrence of Early Stone Age tools such as hand axes in areas below the 1 800 m contour suggests that the first inhabitants of the area predated modern humans by at least 800 000 years. Sites belonging to this period in the Drakensberg are mostly characterised by a few surface scatters and individual stone tools – usually in the close vicinity of water. They were most probably manufactured by *Homo erectus*, a predecessor of modern humans.

### 5.2. The Middle Stone Age

Anatomically modern people (*Homo sapiens sapiens*) with a very different economic strategy and more sophisticated stone tool kits moved into the area about 200 000 years ago. Archaeological assemblages left behind by these people have been termed Middle Stone Age. Not only were these societies more effective hunters than their predecessors but Middle Stone Age sites elsewhere in southern Africa also provide convincing evidence for some of the earliest symbolic behaviour in the world. It was Middle Stone Age people from southern and eastern Africa who left the continent roughly between 80 000 – 60 000 years ago to populate the rest of the world. Middle Stone Age sites in the Drakensberg region occur in both Lesotho and South Africa. Sites occur as surface scatters as well as deep cave deposits. Prime archaeological deposits, however, occur in the Eastern Cape and Free State sections of the region. Archaeological excavations at Strathalan Cave in the Eastern Cape Province indicate that the Middle Stone Age persisted in the Eastern Cape Drakensberg until around 22 000 years ago (Mitchell 2002).

### 5.3. The Later Stone Age



The stone tool assemblages belonging to the immediate ancestors of the San or Bushmen have been termed Later Stone Age. Later Stone Age tools are generally much smaller but also more diversified than the earlier tool kits. It was during this period that the bow and arrow was used extensively, and societies exploited their environments distinctly more intensively and effectively.

Literally hundreds of Later Stone Age sites prevail in the Drakensberg region. In addition, most of the rock art in the region was created by the San. The earliest evidence for Later Stone Age occupation of the Maloti Drakensberg comes from Sehonghong Cave in south eastern Lesotho and from Strathalan Cave in the Eastern Cape section of the region. Here a specific Later Stone Age period called the Robberg Industry has been dated to approximately 20 000 years ago. In contrast, evidence from Good Hope shelter 1 near the bottom of Sani Pass suggests that the earliest archaeological evidence for San people in the KwaZulu-Natal portion of the Drakensberg dates back to approximately 8 000 years ago.

Whereas most parts of the Maloti Drakensberg were only seasonally occupied by San hunter gatherers for the larger part of the last 20 000 years, the situation started to change during the later part of the Holocene around 5 000 years ago. This was compounded by the arrival of immigrant black farmers in the region soon after 1600 AD and European colonialism around 1834 AD (Wright & Mazel 2007). During the historical period, the Maloti Drakensberg and adjacent mountainous areas became the last stronghold for various southern San groups such as the Baroa, //Xegwi, !Ga!ne, //Kx'au, and //Ku//ke. Their Later Stone Age way of life finally came to an end during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

San descendants still live in the area but for all practical purposes have assimilated with their more powerful neighbours. Many place names within the region still retained their original San pronunciations such as the Inxu, Sehonghong, Qomoqomong and Qhoasing rivers, and the Qeme, Qhuqhu, Qhalasi, and Qholaqhoe mountains. Approximately 1 300 Later Stone Age sites are known within the South African side of the Drakensberg.

#### **5.4. Rock Paintings**

The Maloti Drakensberg region is particularly well known for the occurrence of some of the finest and most complex prehistoric rock paintings in the world. Depictions of humans dominate, although finely executed animals such as eland and rhebuck are common. Some of the art is executed in various colours and in detailed precision that almost renders it a three dimensional aspect. Most researchers support the theory developed by Professor David Lewis-Williams and his colleagues that the figures represent trance induced visions during San religious rites (Lewis-Williams 2003).

According to some researchers, the celebrated Rosetta Panel at Game Pass Shelter, situated approximately 6km from the study area, holds the key to our understanding of all San rock art in the sub-Sahara region of Africa. However, this interpretation is not supported by all rock art researchers. Notable deviations from this approach have been developed by Anne Solomon, and more recently by Thomas Dowson.

The Maloti Drakensberg is also one of the areas with the highest density of prehistoric rock art in the world and certainly contains the highest concentration of prehistoric art south of the Sahara in Africa. Although the scientific dating of these paintings is still under researched, recent research suggests that the oldest paintings may date to approximately 4000 years ago (Wright & Mazel 2007). This is much older than previously thought.

The chronological uniqueness of the art, however, is not so much in its antiquity as in the fact that the Maloti Drakensberg was the last area in Africa south of the Zambezi River where the San rock art tradition was still actively practised. Paintings at two sites in the southern portion of the region were created as recently as 1920 (Prins 2009).

The communal areas of amaNgwane and amaZizi (that is part of the greater Okhombe area) contains approximately 300 rock painting sites. These are similar in style and context to the better known art of the Ukhahlamba Drakensberg World Heritage Site.

### 5.5. Iron Age Sites

Around 2 000 years ago the southern African demographic landscape was transformed with the arrival of the first Bantu-speaking agriculturists in the sub-region. These subsistence farmers lived for the most part in the lower altitude, wooded areas of the eastern seaboard. Around 1250 AD certain agriculturists started occupying the higher altitude, grassland areas. Sites belonging to this period in KwaZulu-Natal are referred to as Moor Park settlements and they typically occupy hill tops with a low stone walling effect. The original Moor Park type-site occurs approximately 7km to the east of the project area. Although none occur within the designated Maloti-Drakensberg project area, they can be found at the fringes, at an altitude of approximately 1 200-1 400 m. By 1600 AD, groups such as the amaZizi reached the foothills of the northern Drakensberg near Winterton (Wright and Mazel 2007).

Various splinter groups of the amaZizi left KwaZulu Natal and also settled in parts of Lesotho where, over time, they adopted a Sotho identity. The baPhuti of south eastern Lesotho are perhaps the best known of these early immigrants. By the early 1700s various other Sotho and Nguni-speaking groups moved into the area and established chieftaincies in those areas below the 1 800 m contour. Impressive Iron Age sites belonging to this period and built in typical Sotho-style occur near Harrismith and Phuthaditjhaba in the Eastern Free State. Nguni-style sites of this period have also been found in KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape parts of the Drakensberg.

The expansion of the Zulu kingdom around 1818 had a major impact on Iron Age settlement in the region. Various chieftaincies were attacked, and their routed remnants typically traversed the Maloti Drakensberg region in search of better settlement elsewhere. Bandits often hid out in the mountains, and a number allegedly practised cannibalism. Perhaps the most significant

development during this period was the founding of the Southern Sotho nation under King Moshoeshoe I.

Various sites in Lesotho belong to this period – some of them, like Thaba Bosiu, are typically mountain strongholds. Almost 2 000 Iron-Age sites have been identified in the Maloti Drakensberg region, and most occur in altitudes lower than 1 800 m contour. Some sites belonging to the ancestors of the amaZizi and amaNgwane, the present ethnic groups to live in the study area, have been recorded in the nearby Didima Nature Reserve in the south and near Bergville (Maggs 1987). In fact, there is evidence for Later Iron Age occupation in the foothills of the northern Drakensberg, in the near vicinity of the study area, from about 1400 AD (Huffman 2007).

## 5.6. The Historical Period

The historical period spans the era of colonialism that started around 1830 AD when the first missionaries and Dutch immigrants arrived from the Cape Colony in the Maloti Drakensberg region. Sites associated with Voortrekker settlement of the area occur in the eastern Free State and the northern portion of KwaZulu-Natal near Winterton and Bergville. For the most part, these were the places where laagers were formed (with very low archaeological visibility) and old farmsteads with associated grave yards.

A particular site worth mentioning is Kerkenberg near Oliviershoek Pass, where Debora Retief painted the initials of her father on a rock before the trekkers descended into KwaZulu Natal. In Lesotho, the rebellion by Chief Moorosi and the resultant action by the Cape Colony government at the southern tip of the country left footprints of forts and associated graves at Moyeni Camp, Fort Hartley, Cutting Camp, and Mount Moorosi.

The most important structure relating to the history of Bushman raids is most probably Forth Nottingham, in KwaZulu-Natal, which was built around 1852. Various historical mission stations

founded in the mid to late 1800s such as those at Morija and St James in Lesotho and Emmaus, Reichenau, and Mariazell in South Africa, are still in active use. The Ongeluksnek Pass in the Eastern Cape is intimately associated with the epic trek of the Griqua people in 1861, led by Adam Kok.

The area associated with the first native uprising against the British colonial government, by the celebrated Hlubi chief Langalibalele in 1873, is at Giants Castle Nature Reserve in the uKhahlamba Drakensberg Park World Heritage Site. Various battle sites associated with the Basotho Wars between the Boer Republic of the Orange Free State and the Sotho Kingdom of Moshoeshoe I are to be found in the eastern Free State and adjacent parts of Lesotho.

Sites belonging to the period of the Anglo-Boer War (1898-1901) abound in the eastern Free State portion of the project area. These are typically areas where skirmishes took place or where ammunition was destroyed. A few rock engravings belonging to the Anglo-Boer War period have been documented from the Golden Gate Highland Park. However, thorough research is still required to ascertain the meaning and value of these engravings.

Many historical sites can be categorised as belonging to the “built environment” as defined in heritage legislation. These are the physical remnants and traces of historical settlements that underpin the cultural value and meaning of the surrounding communities.

## 5.7. Graves

There are various grave sites belonging to different periods and cultural associations in the Drakensberg region. Perhaps the most famous sites are those belonging to the southern Sotho royalty at Botha Bothe in Lesotho; the grave of Nkosi Langalibalele at Giants Castle - approximately 18km to the west of the project area, KwaZulu Natal graves associated with the royalty of the amaZizi and amaNgwane near Bergville, KwaZulu-Natal; the grave of Adam Kok at Matatiele, Eastern Cape; and various graves in the Free State belonging to the Voortrekker and

Anglo-Boer War periods. Interestingly, graves belonging to the prehistoric San inhabitants of the area are markedly absent or, as yet, have not been identified by researchers.

## 5.8. The Living Landscape

The living heritage of the Drakensberg area is varied and as yet little understood. Yet preliminary investigations by the Maloti Drakensberg Project (Anderson 2007) indicate that certain areas, including sites in communal areas close to Underberg, are still frequented by local communities who afford them ritual or sacred significance. Such locales may include archaeological sites with a living heritage component or natural features such as mountains, forests, boulders, caves, pools, or waterfalls with cultural significance. Living heritage is not only site-specific but also relates to oral history, indigenous knowledge systems, and indigenous languages, practices, and beliefs.

Oral history specifically is a rich resource that has been passed down the generations and provides diverse narratives and interpretations concerning places of historical significance. It also provides a window on community perspectives regarding heritage resources, including indigenous names for sites and plant and animal species – all of which are imbued with cultural meaning.

Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) constitute an integral component of local knowledge, at grass roots level, often associated with traditional methods of land management and use. In this regard, IKS can enhance conservation and sustainable management of cultural heritage to which communities may relate.

Conservation should provide an enabling environment for communities to continue with the tradition of transmitting knowledge and skills and of safeguarding their cultural heritage. Traditional ceremonies still performed in the larger Drakensberg region include the *Bale* initiation schools among certain southern Sotho groups, the *amemulo* (coming of age) ceremonies among

the amaNgwane, in the near vicinity of the study area, the *Nkubelwana* (planting of the first seed) among Zulu-speakers, rainmaking, and various ceremonies associated with the veneration of the ancestors. Six indigenous languages are still spoken in the area, including siBhaca, which was believed to be almost extinct.

Two broad categories of site-specific living heritage sites have been identified:

- Sites of national significance of which nine have been identified in the SA portion of the MDTFCA. These include rock art sites, sandstone shelters without any archaeological remains but used extensively as pilgrimage sites, two sacred forests, and three sacred mountains. All of these sites are frequented by indigenous groups as part of an annual pilgrimage.
- Sites of local significance include various pools, waterfalls, hot springs, kaolin and red ochre deposits, and boulders afforded special significance by traditional healers and sectarian Christian groupings. Seventeen such sites have been identified in the larger Drakensberg area.

### Living Heritage – Wilderness

Areas least influenced by human activities are often said to be representative of a “pristine” landscape. Such areas are recognised by the IUCN. In the context of the Drakensberg, only the Ukhahlamba Drakensberg World Heritage Site has any proclaimed wilderness areas, making up about 48% of the Park. In this regard, a specific wilderness management plan has been produced for the World Heritage site, with the express aim of retaining the integrity of these wilderness areas. In terms of the South African National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act (no 57 of 2003), a wilderness area is defined as *“an area designated .....for the purpose of retaining an intrinsically wild appearance and character, or capable of being restored to such and which is undeveloped and roadless, without permanent improvements or human habitation”*.

In addition, wilderness can be considered as a value of a given area and in this regard can be defined as a “...largely undeveloped and intrinsically wild character of the area in vast wilderness areas that provide outstanding opportunities to experience solitude and for spiritual renewal” (EKZNW 2006).

There are a number of stakeholders promoting the concept of wilderness, including the Wilderness Action Group and the Wilderness Foundation. From a cultural heritage perspective, the concept is more akin to a western inspired ideal than an academic reality. In this sense the concept of wilderness, as an area where visitors may experience and enjoy pristine nature removed from anthropogenic influence and pollution, is therefore a western expression of living heritage. The wilderness notion, however, finds expression also in the indigenous concepts of cultural landscapes which are usually natural areas with profound cultural significance.

## 5.9. Palaeontology

Given its nature, palaeontology should be a component of geology and biodiversity. Nevertheless, the present heritage legislation in South Africa also covers palaeontology. In fact, the heritage management procedures relating to palaeontology are almost identical to those of archaeology. The palaeontological history of the Maloti Drakensberg area is fascinating as it tells the story of the super southern continent called Gondwanaland and its associated fauna and flora preserved today as fossils (McCarthy & Rubidge 2005).

Fossils and footprints belonging to various periods from around 270 million years ago to around 180 million years ago have been recorded and collected in the geological layers beneath the basalts. These layers, amongst other interesting facts, provide evidence of the greatest mass extinction of species in the world around 251 million years ago towards the end of the Permian period. Some species survived this extinction as attested by abundant fossils of certain species such as Lystrosaurus found deep in the Triassic period layers. Many of these occurrences can be



found within a 10km radius from the study area. Whereas the majority of fossilized remains in the area are *therapsids* (mammal-like reptiles, ancestors of most mammal species today), the Maloti Drakensberg also harbours evidence of some of the earliest dinosaurs in the world. Footprints belonging to these early dinosaurs appear in various localities in the Molteno formations of both Lesotho and South Africa.

The most celebrated palaeontological site occurs in the Golden Gate Highlands National Park. Here the earliest known dinosaur eggs in the world and a near intact embryo of an average sized dinosaur, i.e. *Massospondylus*, were located by scientists some thirty years ago. These early eggs, dated to almost 200 million years ago, are almost 100 million years older than other known dinosaur nest egg sites in the world. In adjacent Lesotho the Qomoqomong Dinosaur footprint and museum site has been developed for tourism purposes. The endemic turkey size dinosaur *Lesothosaurus* is known from various localities within Lesotho.

## 5.1. Summary

The cultural heritage of the greater Drakensberg region (including the Winterton area) is rich, diverse, and fragile. The area contains a high density of prehistoric rock art that parallels the well known Upper-Palaeolithic rock art of Western Europe in artistic execution and symbolism. In addition, it harbours a rich and diverse record of palaeontological fossils that, for the most part, pre-date the Jurassic period of popular imagination. The mountains are also the heartland of the *Difaqane* – a period of tribal turmoil that developed as a direct response to the expansion of the Zulu state of Shaka in the 1820s.

Many Iron Age sites in the area belong to this period, including significant sites associated with the founding of the Basotho Kingdom under King Moshoeshoe I. It was also the area traversed by some of the most dramatic diasporas documented in southern African history, including the Great Trek of the Voortrekkers, The Griqua trek via Ongeluksnek, the wanderings of the

amaHlubi, amaNgwane, amaZizi, and amaBhaca tribal entities, and the lesser-known but equally dramatic trek of the //Xegwi San in 1879 – the last rock artists of the region.

Sites related to these historical events abound in the Drakensberg and are windows into a significant period of the history and culture of southern Africa. That some of these cultural expressions are still alive is witnessed by the occurrence of significant living heritage sites in the region. Most of these are used as sites of pilgrimage by visitors from South Africa, Lesotho, and even further abroad.

## **6. BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF THE SURVEY**

### **6.1. Methodology**

A desktop study was conducted of the SAHRA inventory of heritage sites. Unfortunately this database is incomplete and of only limited use. In addition, the archaeological database of the KwaZulu-Natal Museum was consulted. This data base indicated more than 300 heritage sites in the northern Drakensberg in the vicinity of the study area. The far majority of these are rock art sites but some are also shelters with Later Stone Age deposits. A study of aerial photographs of the area shows numerous Later Iron Age stone walled features in the greater Winterton and Bergville areas.

A ground survey following standard and accepted archaeological procedures was conducted.

### **6.2. Restrictions Encountered During the Survey**

*Visibility:*

Visibility was good.

*Disturbance:*

The Old Drift is in a dysfunctional state.

*Details of Equipment used in the Survey:*

GPS: Garmin Etrek

Digital cameras: Canon Powershot A460

All readings were taken using the GPS. Accuracy was to a level of 5 m.

## **7. DESCRIPTION OF SITES AND MATERIAL OBSERVED**

### **7.1. The Drift and Existing Bridge**

The original Drift at Mathamo Bridge site (29° 4'19.77"S, 29°44'41.56"E) is almost certainly older than 60 years of age. It is therefore likely to be protected by Heritage Legislation, and should not be damaged in any way during the demolishing of the existing bridge and the construction of the new bridge. The Old Drift is about 15 m long and 8 m wide. It is in a state of disrepair and is used as a washer-board by the local women in the area. It is constructed of concrete and was most likely the old crossing for the original farm on which the land lies.



Plate 3. The Existing Damaged Mathamo Bridge.



Plate 4. The Old Drift at Mathamo Bridge which is older than 60 years of age.



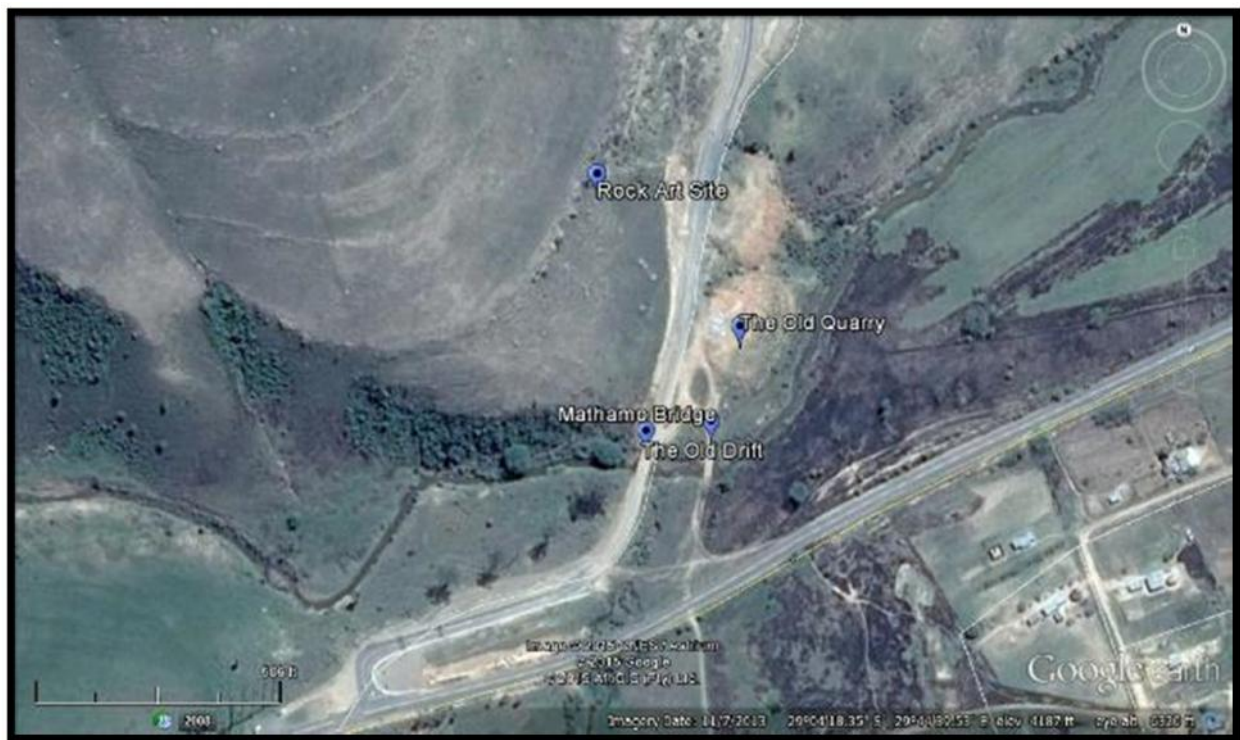


Figure 3 (a). The Location of the Old Drift and Existing Mathamo Bridge in relation to other sites.

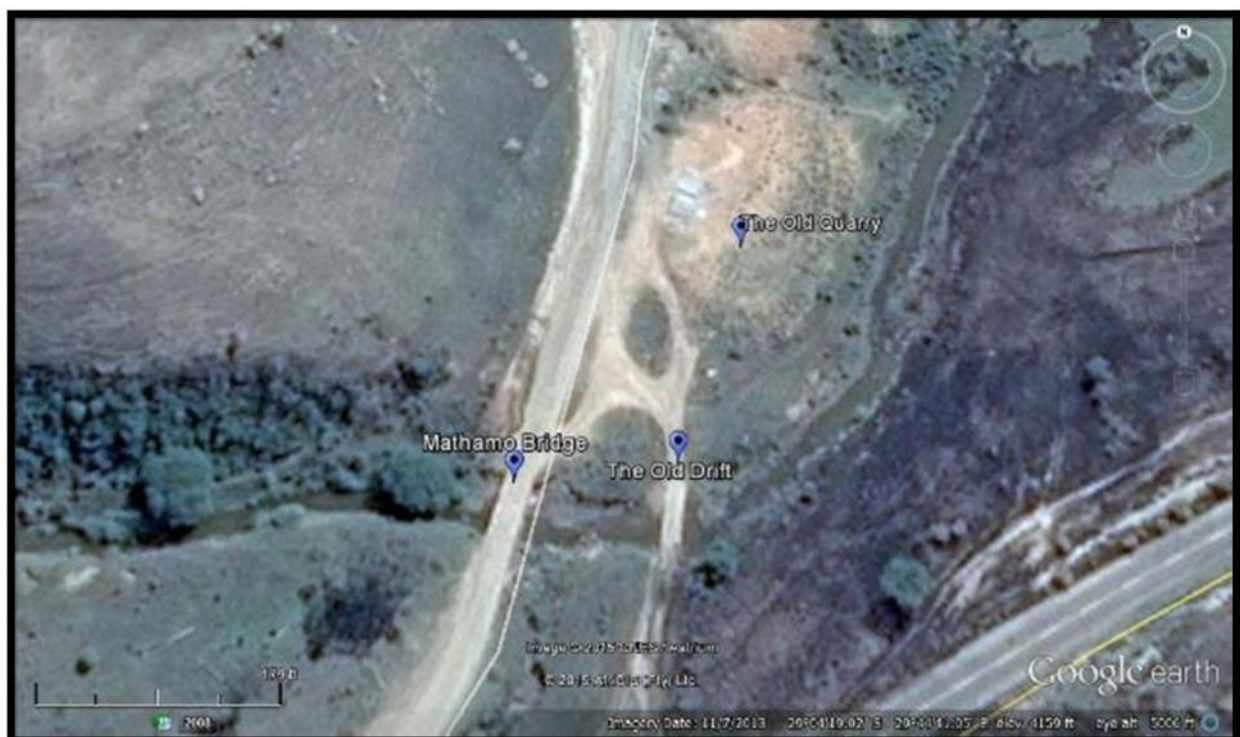


Figure 3 (b). The Mathamo Bridge and Old Drift.

#### 7.1.1. Mitigation of Old Drift

The Old Drift has been rated as locally significant in terms of SAHRA criteria (Table 2). It must not be damaged in anyway during the demolishing of the existing bridge and the construction of the new one. A supervisor should supervise that this does not happen during construction work. However, should the developers decide to move or alter the Old Drift then a Phase 2 Heritage Impact Assessment by a built heritage specialist will be called-for.

### 7.2. Rock Art

In 1974, at the co-ordinates 29° 4' 14.8" S, 29° 44' 38.9"E, a small rock shelter was recorded by researchers. It faces approximately east, with a floor space of some 5 m x 1 m. It is about 40 m above the Little Bushman's River, and about 300 m distant, with a good look out over the more open country to the east. No deposit, or artefacts, were discovered in the cave, but it does more than 40 San paintings executed in a maroon colour. There are several shaded polychromes with white colour included, but most paintings are faded, with only one eland being relatively well-preserved. There are also a number of paintings of humans in a variety of poses, including a seated group with at least one figure clapping their hands. There is a painting of a man with quiver and arrows, and a man with a bow. A painting to the left of the shelter consists of a series of concentric arcs associated with a small human figure and numerous with numerous small dots beside it. Its appearance is suggestive of Harold Pager's paintings of beehives from Ndedema.



Plate 5. Male Figure in Dark Red Monochrome, from the Mathamo Bridge Shelter. Well Preserved.





Plate 6. A Complex Panel of Rock Art Showing Super-impositioning of Polychrome Eland and Human Figures.

### 7.2.1. Mitigation of Rock Art

The rock art site is significant and has been rated as Grade 111 A in terms of SAHRA rating criteria (Table 2). In line with AMAFA policy, Active Heritage advises that a buffer zone of at least 35 metres be enforced about the Mathamo Bridge Rock Art Site, above the Mathamo Bridge. Under no circumstances should anybody approach the rock art site during the construction phase of the bridge. The site is extremely sensitive, and is a noteworthy site.



Figure 4. Location of the Little Bushman's River Rock Art Site above the Mathamo Bridge.

### 7.3. The Old Quarry

In the past the site was threatened by the quarrying done by the NPA, who expropriated the ground from Mr. Schiever (a farmer). The quarrying ceased some years ago and it does not seem



likely that it will renewed, the rock art site would be threatened by being undermined. In 2003 a full digital recording was made of the site by members of the then Natal Museum. It does not seem as if the site has been visited since, or interfered with in any way.



Plate 7. The Old Quarry.

#### 7.3.1. Mitigation of the Old Quarry

The quarry site is younger than 60 years old and no mitigation is required.



Figure 5. Location of Quarry Site.

## 8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (HERITAGE VALUE

### 8.1. Field Rating

The SAHRA system of Field Rating is applicable to this project. Table 2 of SAHRA Field Rating below provides levels of rating.

Level	Details	Action
National (Grade I)	The site is considered to be of National Significance	Nominated to be declared by SAHRA
Provincial (Grade II)	This site is considered to be of Provincial significance	Nominated to be declared by Provincial Heritage Authority
Local Grade IIIA	This site is considered to be of HIGH significance locally	The site should be retained as a heritage site

Local Grade IIIB	This site is considered to be of HIGH significance locally	The site should be mitigated, and part retained as a heritage site
Generally Protected A	High to medium significance	Mitigation necessary before destruction
Generally Protected B	Medium significance	The site needs to be recorded before destruction
Generally Protected C	Low significance	No further recording is required before destruction

Table 2. Field rating and recommended grading of sites (SAHRA 2005)

### 8.1. The Old Drift at Mathamo Bridge

The Old Drift at Mathamo Bridge should be classified as Local Grade IIIB, or Generally Protected A, should it be older than 60 years. This means that the Old Drift should not be damaged in any way during the demolishing of the existing bridge and the construction of the new one. It should be retained as a heritage feature.



Plate 8. View of the Old Drift (left) and the Existing Mathamo Bridge from the Mathamo Bridge Cave.

## 8.2. The Mathamo Bridge Rock Art Site

The Mathamo Bridge Rock Art Site should be classified as Local Grade IIIA. This means that it has high local significance and should be afforded protection as a heritage feature.

## 8.3. The Old Quarry

Should the Old Quarry be older than 60 years old, it should be classified as Local Grade IIIB on the Field Rating Table. This means that it should be retained as a heritage feature.

Heritage Site	Level	Detail	Action
The Old Drift	Local Grade IIIB/Generally Protected A	Considered to be of HIGH Significance Locally	The site should be mitigated, and retained as a heritage site
Mathamo Bridge Rock Art Site	Local Grade IIIA	This site is considered to be of HIGH significance locally	The site should be retained as a heritage site
The Old Quarry	Local Grade IIIB	This site is considered to be of HIGH significance locally	The site should be mitigated, and retained as a heritage site

Table 3. The Adapted Field Rating of Individual Sites possibly impacted by the proposed Construction.

## 9. CONCLUSION

This project area falls within a sensitive to highly-sensitive heritage area. It is also situated on the outskirts of the Drakensberg Maloti Transfrontier Park and World Heritage Site. Within the general area there are various well-known, and lesser-known, San Rock Art Sites. There are also San Stone Age Stone Tool scatters and deposits, Iron Age sites, graves, past residential habitation sites of the San and various Bantu-speaking and Sotho-speaking groups of people. There are also various historical sites and structures, and workings. The vast majority of these will not be impacted by the proposed construction of the Mathamo Bridge.

There are however, a number of heritage, and potential heritage, features which fall within the immediate area of the proposed construction, that will be impacted, and great care should be taken that no damage comes to these sites. Mitigation measures (suggested in the text of the

report) should be put into place to ensure no harm comes to these sites. These sites include: The Mathamo Bridge Rock Art Site, and the Old Drift situated adjacent to the Mathamo Bridge,. All of these sites are listed in Table 3 according to their Field Rating, and associated relevance and actions that should be taken in their regard.

Great care should also be taken to ensure that construction work does not impact upon the residential and operation areas of the adjacent communities since these areas will have various heritage and cultural features within their domestic areas, and upon the landscape that will be damaged by careless construction.

We would also like to suggest (as an aside) that in a rural area such as this, where outsiders are introduced for a short period of time, that AIDS and STD Education be introduced prior to construction work, in schools, and in public forums to guard against the spread of disease.

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