

FIRST PHASE HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSED MBHEKAMUZI PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE NEAR ULUNDI, NORTHERN KWAZULU- NATAL



ACTIVE HERITAGE cc.

For: Green Door.

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10 July 2017

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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 1820 in this part of the country
IRON AGE	Early Iron Age AD 200 - AD 1000 Late Iron Age AD 1000 - AD 1830
IIA	Intermediate Iron Age
ISA	Intermediate Stone Age
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)
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

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A heritage impact assessment and survey of the proposed Mbhekamuzi Pedestrian Bridge, Ulundi Local Municipality, Northern KwaZulu-Natal identified no heritage sites on the footprint. There is no known archaeological reason why the development may not proceed as planned. However, it should be noted that the general area is rich in archaeological and historical sites. Construction work may expose material and attention is drawn to the South African Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act No. 25 of 1999) 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.

1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE PROJECT

Table 1. Background information

Consultant:	Frans Prins (Active Heritage) for Green Door
Type of development:	The Applicant, The Department of Transport, propose to a pedestrian bridge over the Mbhekamuzi River, located on Sub 4 of Reserve No. 20, No. 15840, between Ulundi and Nongoma, KwaZulu- Natal.
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, 1997 (Act No. 4 of 2008).

1.1. Details of the area surveyed:

The project area is situated between Ulundi and Nongoma near the R66 (Figs 1 & 2). The proposed bridge will be located at the following GPS coordinates: 28° 07' 18.54" S 31° 28' 58.65" E.

The terrain is gently undulating with rolling hills, broad valleys and scattered free standing koppies. The landscape is dissected by broad river valleys. The Mbhekamuzi River that borders onto the proposed pedestrian bridge drains eastwards to the Indian Ocean. The study area is largely underlain by the sandstone, shale and grit with coal and oil-shale beds of the Vryheid Formation of the Ecca Group. Interspersed are large outcrops of dolerite. Basalt boulder beds and yellow-brown sandy clay are found in finger-like intrusions. Erosion is very common in the latter areas. The natural vegetation of the general area comprises four vegetation types. The bulk of the study area is Zululand Lowveld (SVI 23) with small areas of Scarp forest (FOz5) on some of the mountain slopes. Northern Zululand Sourveld (SVI 22) is present at the western edge of the study area whilst Subtropical Alluvial Vegetation (AZa 7) is found along the broad watercourses and drainage lines. Much of the natural vegetation had been

transformed through human settlement or cultivation. A rural settlement is located approximately 500m to the south of the proposed pedestrian bridge.

2 BACKGROUND TO ARCHAEOLOGICAL HISTORY OF AREA

2.1 Archaeology

The greater Ulundi area has been sporadically surveyed for archaeological heritage sites by archaeologists previously employed by the Natal Museum, the Ondini Cultural Museum and Amafa. The most systematic surveys occurred recently in the Emakhosini Opate Park (Pelser 2013) and further south at the Umfolozi-Hluluwe Nature Reserve. It is especially the extensive surveys conducted by Penner (1970), and Hall (1980) but also subsequent research by Feely (1980) and Anderson (1988) that has thrown light on the heritage resources of this nature reserve.

The available evidence, as captured in the KwaZulu-Natal Museum heritage site inventories, indicates that this area contains a wide spectrum of archaeological sites covering different time-periods and cultural traditions. Six Early Stone Age sites have been recorded. These sites date back to between 300 000 and 1.5 million years ago. Most of these are situated in dongas close to water with little in-situ material. An astonishing 59 Middle Stone Age sites have been recorded in the nature reserve. Middle Stone Age sites are associated with anatomically modern people and dates back to approximately 40 000 to 200 000 years ago. The vast majority of Middle Stone Age sites in the nature reserve are open-air sites. They therefore do not occur in archaeological context and have limited excavation value. Later Stone Age sites occur in various localities in the nature reserve. Thirty five Later Stone Age sites have been recorded. Although the majority of these sites are situated in open air context some are also associated with small shelters and caves. These shelters have archaeological excavation potential. The Later Stone Age is usually associated with San hunter-gatherers or their immediate predecessors and dates back to between 200 years and 30 000 years ago. Interestingly, the nature reserve also contains 11 rare examples of Zululand rock art sites. Although not as well-known as the rock art of the Drakensberg the art of this region is nevertheless unique as it is probably older and executed in a different style from the Drakensberg art.

Archaeological sites have also been recorded outside of the Umfolozi-Hluluwe Nature Reserve although our knowledge of these is more limited. Early Stone Age tools have been recorded in the greater Ulundi district. One Middle Stone Age open air site has been recorded immediately adjacent to Nongoma in the 1970's. However, this site seems to have been destroyed by development in recent years. Later Stone Age tools, belonging to the San and their immediate ancestors, occur in various localities in Zululand some open air sites have been recorded close to Ulundi. An Iron Age engraving site also occurs in the area but not in the immediate vicinity of the footprint.

Around 1 700 years ago an initial wave of Early Iron Age People settled along the inland foot of the sand dunes on sandy but humus rich soils which would have ensured good crops for the first year or two after they had been cleared. These early agropastoralists produced a characteristic pottery style known as Matola. The Matola people also exploited the wild plant and animal resources of the forest and adjacent sea-shore. The communities seems to been small groups of perhaps a few dozen slash-and burn cultivators, moving into a landscape sparsely inhabited by Later Stone Age San hunter-gatherers.

By 1500 years ago another wave of Iron Age migrants entered the area. Their distinct ceramic pottery is classified to styles known as “Msuluzi” (AD 500-700), Ndondondwane (AD 700-800) and Ntshekane (AD 800-900). The vast majority of recorded sites belonging to this period occur in the Tugela River Basin below the 1000m contour to the south of the project area. Some of these, such as the Ndondondwane and Mamba sites have been excavated by archaeologists (Maggs 1989:31; Huffman 2007:325-462).

2.2 Historical past of the greater Ulundi area

The greater Ulundi area is particularly well known for its central situation relative to the development of the Zulu state of King Shaka Zulu in the early 1800's. The eMakhosini valley (Valley of the Kings) is situated in the immediate environs to the south-west of Ulundi. Surrounding the valley are several stone-walled structures associated with the once powerful Buthelezi and Khumalo clans. These clans later played a significant role in the formation of the Zulu kingdom. The famous king, Shaka Zulu, was born in the valley around 1785, and it is here that his forebears, King Nkosinkulu Zulu, King Phunga, King Mageba, King Ndaba, King Jama and King Senzangakhona, lie buried. The graves and royal residences of four Zulu rulers - King Shaka, King Dingane, King Mpande and King Cetshwayo, who ruled in succession from 1816 to 1884 – are located in the area around eMakhosini. The valley is regarded as the ancestral homeland of the Zulu nation as such this valley can also be classified as a cultural landscape. KwaNobamba specifically is the area where both King Jama (King Shaka's grandfather) and King Dinuzulu had homesteads and were buried. Other important sites within the greater eMakhosini Valley includes the kwaGqokli Hill, where King Shaka achieved his first military success against the powerful Ndwandwe under King Zwide and kwaMatiwane the Hill of Execution. Both the Voortrekker leader Piet Retief and the legendary leader of the amaNgwane people inkosi Matiwane were executed by King Dingane at this locality (Oberholser 1976; Derwent 2006)

The colonial history of the area starts around 1820 when early English ivory traders established themselves at Port Natal (Durban). Dutch descendants (i.e. Voortrekkers) moved into the area soon after 1834 and established a short lived Boer republic called Natalia to the south of the Tugela River. However, by 1845 Natal became a British

colony. In 1879 Zulu-land was invaded by British forces and the area annexed soon thereafter.

Historical era sites relating to the period of the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879 also occur in the greater Ulundi area to the immediate south of the project area. These include the battlefield site of Ulundi, the Royal Residence of King Cetshwayo at Ondini, and King Mpande's Grave (Fig 1). However, none of the Anglo-Zulu War period sites occur in the immediate environs of the footprint.

3 BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF THE SURVEY

3.1 Methodology

A desktop study was conducted of the archaeological databases housed in the KwaZulu-Natal Museum. In addition, the available archaeological literature covering the greater Ulundi and Nongoma areas was also consulted. The SAHRIS website was consulted to obtain background information on previous heritage surveys and assessments in the area. A ground survey, following standard and accepted archaeological procedures, was conducted on 7th July 2017. An area with a radius of 200m was surveyed around the footprint.

3.2 Restrictions encountered during the survey

3.2.1 Visibility

Visibility was good

3.2.2 Disturbance

No disturbance of any heritage sites or features was noted.

3.3 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.

4 DESCRIPTION OF SITES AND MATERIAL OBSERVED

4.1 Locational data

Province: KwaZulu-Natal

Towns: Ulundi

Municipality: Ulundi local Municipality, Mahlabatini District Municipality

4.2 Description of the general area surveyed

The project area is situated in a rural landscape dominated by degraded grasslands on the higher altitudes and along the existing road network and woody vegetation along the Mbhekamuzi River (Fig 3). A small rural settlement is situated approximately 500m to the immediate south of the proposed pedestrian bridge (Fig 4). Although graves are associated with some of the homesteads in this settlement none are situated closer than 400m to the Mbhekamuzi River and the proposed bridge location. No archaeological sites occur on the footprint. The area is also not part of any known cultural landscape.

5 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (HERITAGE VALUE)

As there are no heritage sites on the footprint the area is not significant in terms of heritage values. In addition, the footprint does not form part of any identified cultural landscape (Table 2). Nevertheless there is a slight possibility that excavation and construction work may expose archaeological material. Should archaeological material been exposed during construction then all development work should stop immediately and the provincial heritage agency, Amafa, must be contacted for further evaluation.

Table 2. Evaluation and statement of significance.

Significance criteria in terms of Section 3(3) of the NHRA		
	Significance	Rating
1.	Historic and political significance - The importance of the cultural heritage in the community or pattern of South Africa's history.	None.
2.	Scientific significance – Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of South Africa's cultural heritage.	None.
3.	Research/scientific significance – Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage.	None
4.	Scientific significance – Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class of South Africa's cultural places/objects.	None.
5.	Aesthetic significance – Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by a community or cultural group.	None.
6.	Scientific significance – Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.	None
7.	Social significance – Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.	None
8.	Historic significance – Strong or special association with the life and work of a person, group or organization of importance in the history of South Africa.	None.
9.	The significance of the site relating to the history of slavery in South Africa.	None.

5.1 Field Rating

The field rating criteria as formulated by SAHRA (Table 3) does not apply to the footprint as no heritage sites or features have been identified on the footprint.

Table 3. Field rating and recommended grading of sites (SAHRA 2005)

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

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

The proposed construction of the Mbhekamuzi Pedestrian Bridge may proceed in terms of heritage values as no sites are in any danger of being destroyed or altered. The area is also not part of any known cultural landscape. However, it should also be pointed out that the KwaZulu-Natal Heritage Act requires that operations exposing archaeological and historical residues as well as graves should cease immediately pending an evaluation by the heritage authorities.

7 RISK PREVENTATIVE MEASURES ASSOCIATED WITH CONSTRUCTION

Construction work and excavations may yield archaeological material or even graves. If any heritage features are exposed by construction work then all work should stop immediately and the provincial heritage agency, Amafa, should be contacted for further evaluation.

8 MAPS AND PHOTOGRAPHS

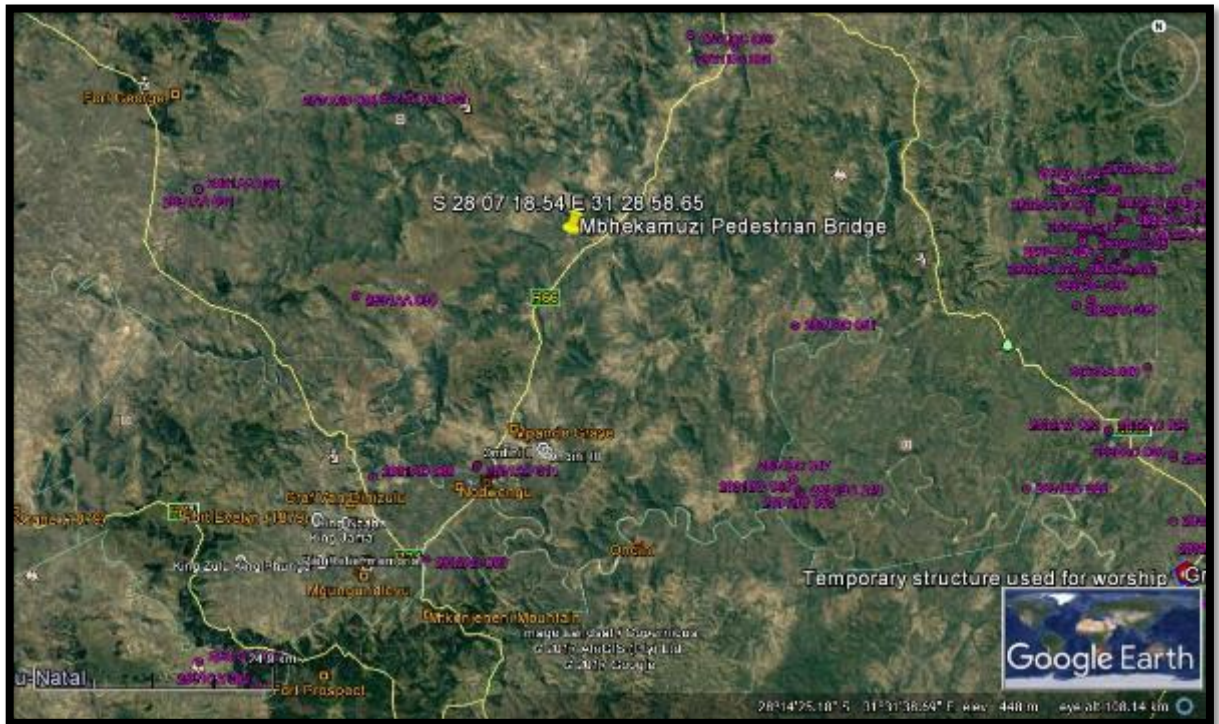


Figure 1. Google aerial photograph showing the location of the proposed Mbhekamuzi Pedestrian Bridge. The purple and orange polygons indicate the location of known archaeological and historical sites in the greater Ulundi area.

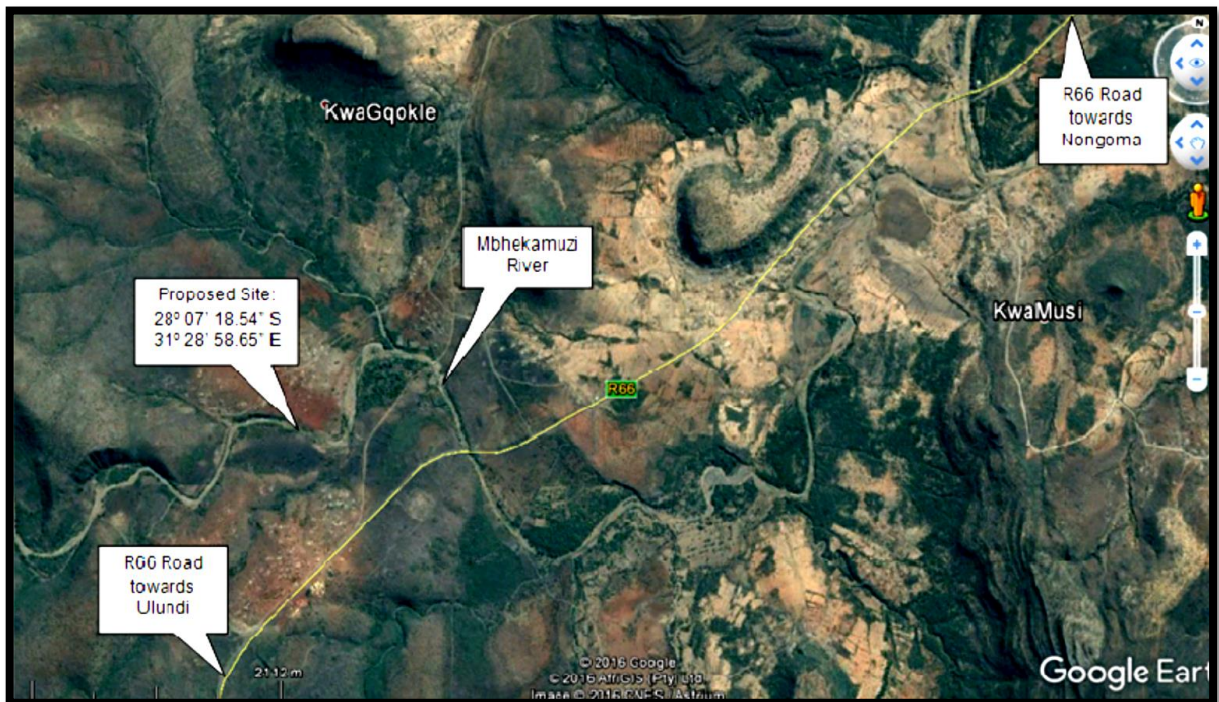


Figure 2. Location of the proposed development site adjacent to the Mbhekamuzi River (Source: Green Door).



Figure 3. The proposed location of the Mbhekamuzi Pedestrian Bridge.



Figure 4. A rural settlement near the Mbhekamuzi River.

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