

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF THE PROPOSED  
MFEKAYI VODACOM TOWER, AT MAZALA HILL,  
KWAZULU-NATAL**

**FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING SERVICES**

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## INTRODUCTION

Vodacom are proposing to construct a 45 metre mast and a control container to be known as Mfekayi on an old coastal dune overlooking the Hluhluwe River, near the N 2, in the Hlabisa Municipality in land falling within the jurisdiction of the Mpukonyoni Traditional Council. Umlando cc was contracted by Environmental Planning Services to undertake the heritage survey of the affected area.

The area is located near the N2 and the Zamimphilo Market (fig. 1) on a hill referred to as Mazala Hill (fig. 2). The area is Coastal Forest and Thornveld, and is currently used for communal grazing. The soil is sandy with an outcrop of Pleistocene beach occurring near the surface. This beach is more commonly referred to as 'white beach sandstone'.

## METHOD

The method for Heritage assessment consists of several steps.

The first step forms part of the desktop assessment. Here we would consult the databases from both Umlando and the Natal Museum. These databases contain most of the known heritage sites in KwaZulu-Natal. This database does; however, tend to be restricted to archaeological and palaeontological sites. Consulting with the relevant authorities will also cover known battlefields and historical sites. We also consult with an historical architect and an historian where necessary.

The initial archaeological survey (i.e. fieldwork) consists of a foot survey where the selected area was covered. The survey results will define the significance of each recorded site, as well as a management plan.

All sites are grouped according to low, medium and high significance for the purpose of this report. Sites of low significance have no diagnostic artefacts, especially pottery. Sites of medium significance have diagnostic artefacts and these are sampled. Sampling includes the collection of artefacts for future analysis. All diagnostic pottery, such as rims, lips and decorated sherds are sampled, while bone, stone and shell are mostly noted. Sampling usually occurs on most sites. Sites of high significance are excavated and/or extensively sampled. Those sites that are extensively sampled have high research potential, yet poor preservation of features. We attempt to recover as many artefacts from these sites by means of systematic sampling, as opposed to sampling diagnostic artefacts only.

### **Defining significance**

Archaeological sites vary according to significance and several different criteria relate to each type of site. However, there are several criteria that allow for a general significance rating of archaeological sites.

These criteria are:

#### **1. State of preservation of:**

##### 1.1. Organic remains:

###### 1.1.1. Faunal

###### 1.1.2. Botanical

##### 1.2. Rock art

##### 1.3. Walling

##### 1.4. Presence of a cultural deposit

##### 1.5. Features:

###### 1.5.1. Ash Features

###### 1.5.2. Graves

###### 1.5.3. Middens

###### 1.5.4. Cattle byres

1.5.5. Bedding and ash complexes

**2. Spatial arrangements:**

2.1. Internal housing arrangements

2.2. Intra-site settlement patterns

2.3. Inter-site settlement patterns

**3. Features of the site:**

3.1. Are there any unusual, unique or rare artefacts or images at the site?

3.2. Is it a type site?

3.3. Does the site have a very good example of a specific time period, feature, or artefact?

**4. Research:**

4.1. Providing information on current research projects

4.2. Salvaging information for potential future research projects

**5. Inter- and intra-site variability**

5.1. Can this particular site yield information regarding intra-site variability, i.e. spatial relationships between various features and artefacts?

5.2. Can this particular site yield information about a community's social relationships within itself, or between other communities?

**6. Archaeological Experience:**

6.1. The personal experience and expertise of the CRM practitioner should not be ignored. Experience can indicate sites that have potentially significant aspects, but need to be tested prior to any conclusions.

**7. Educational:**

7.1. Does the site have the potential to be used as an educational instrument?

7.2. Does the site have the potential to become a tourist attraction?

7.3. The educational value of a site can only be fully determined after initial test-pit excavations and/or full excavations.

**8. Other Heritage Significance:**

8.1. Palaeontological sites

8.2. Historical buildings

- 8.3. Battlefields and general Anglo-Zulu and Anglo-Boer sites
- 8.4. Graves and/or community cemeteries
- 8.5. Living Heritage Sites
- 8.6. Cultural Landscapes, that includes old trees, hills, mountains, rivers, etc related to cultural or historical experiences.

The more a site can fulfill the above criteria, the more significant it becomes. Test-pit excavations are used to test the full potential of an archaeological deposit. This occurs in Phase 2. These test-pit excavations may require further excavations if the site is of significance (Phase 3). Sites may also be mapped and/or have artefacts sampled as a form of mitigation. Sampling normally occurs when the artefacts may be good examples of their type, but are not in a primary archaeological context. Mapping records the spatial relationship between features and artefacts.

## RESULTS

The desktop study indicated that eight archaeological sites exist within a 5km radius of the study area. These sites include Early, Middle and Late Stone Age material.

I surveyed the length of the hill, concentrating on the dirt road cuttings, and other areas of disturbance. There are several 'white beach sandstone' fragments on the hill and it appears to be part of a natural outcrop. These types of stones are often used as lower grinding stones along the eastern seaboard. Only one small fragment in the study area appeared to be smoothed as a result of grinding activity. I do not consider one grinding stone fragment to constitute a site. There is a recent ruin of a circular house, but this is not older than 60 years.

No artefacts were observed in the study area. No Further mitigation is required.

FIGURE 1: LOCATION OF THE PROPOSED AREA

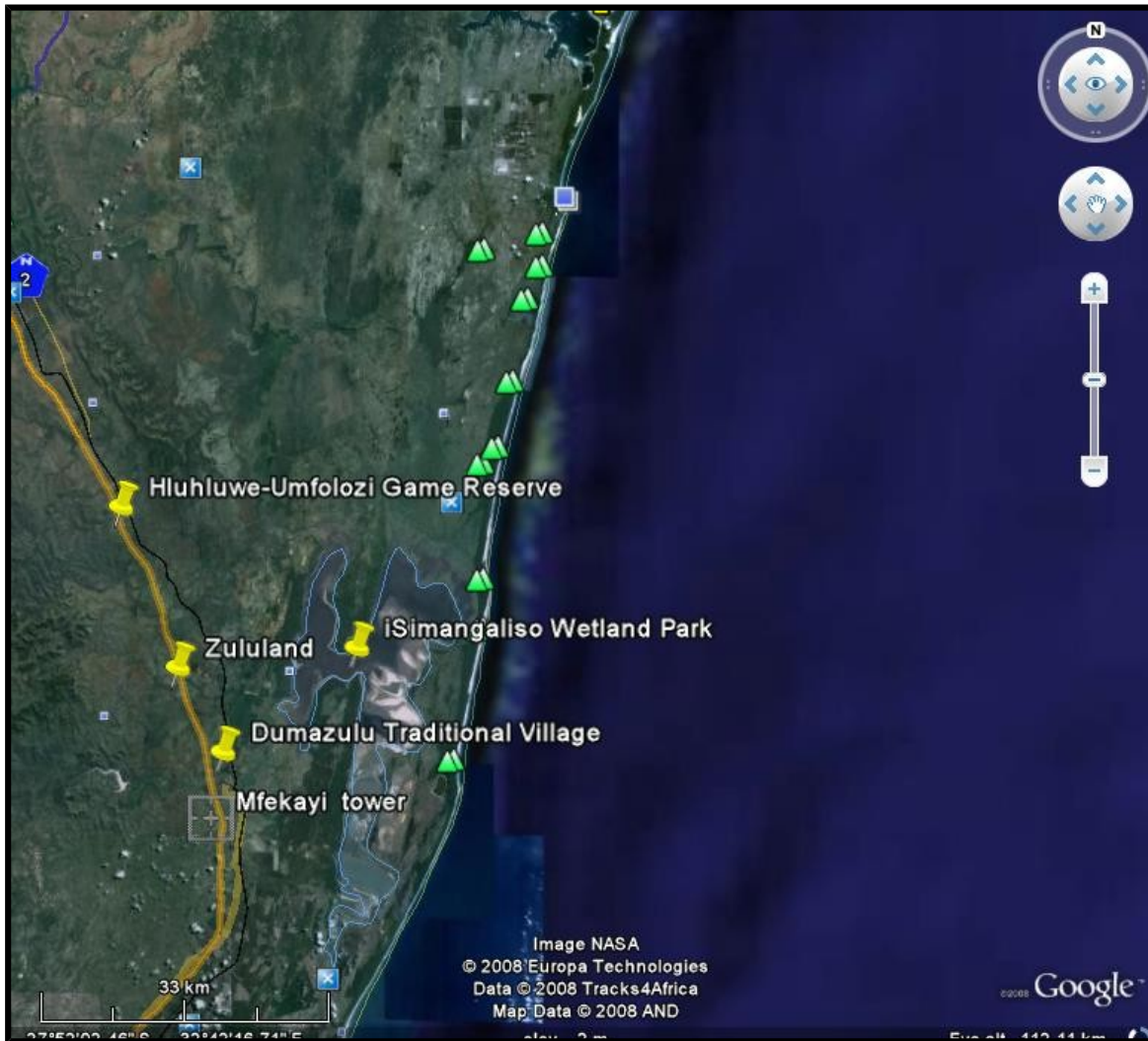
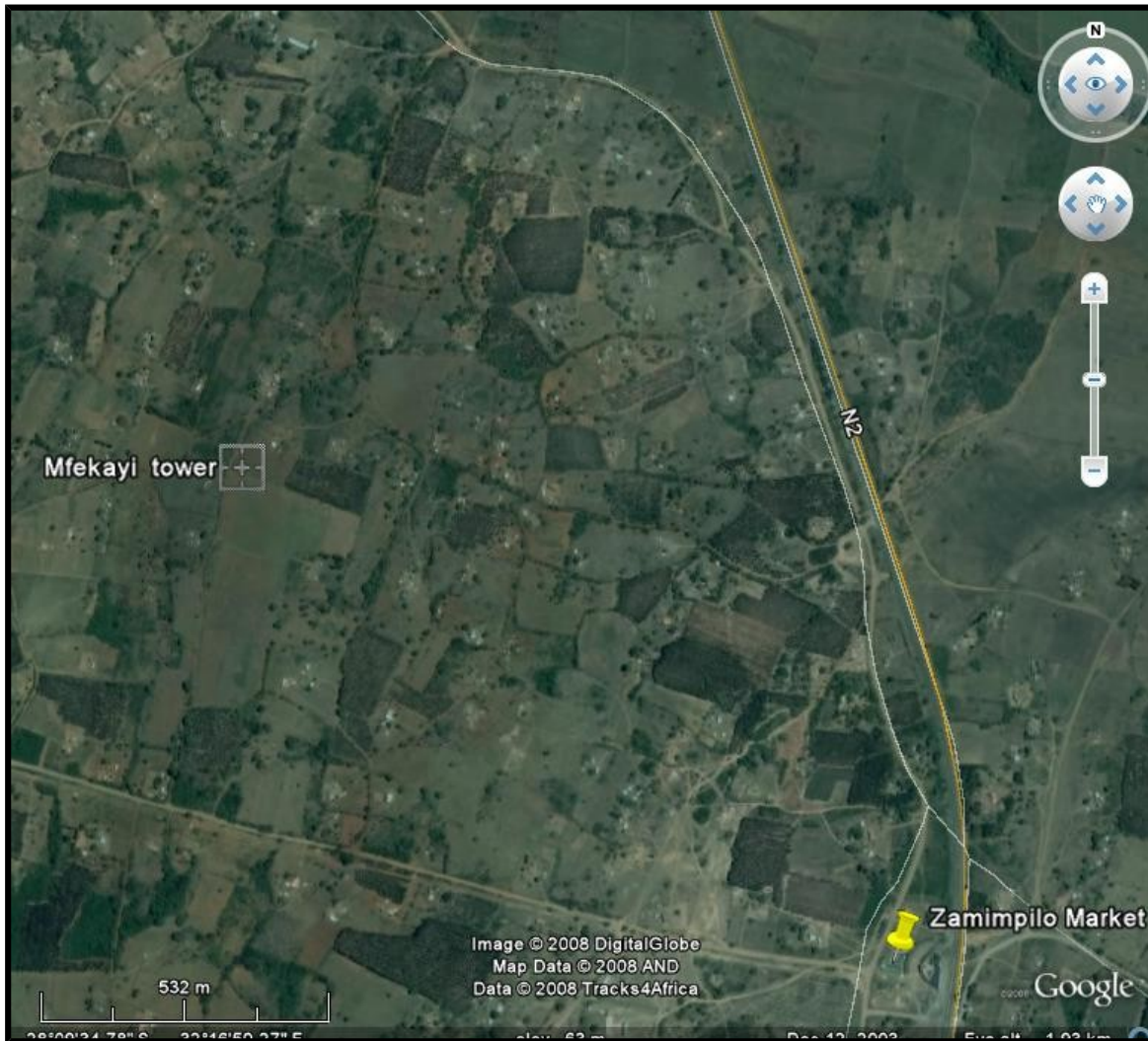


FIGURE 2: LOCATION OF THE PROPOSED AREA



**CONCLUSION & MANAGEMENT PLAN**

An heritage survey of the proposed Mfekayi Vodacom Tower, on Mazala Hill, was undertaken. No heritage remains were observed and no further mitigation is required.