

**DEVELOPMENT OF MONA VEHICULAR BRIDGE,  
NDWEDWE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY  
KWAZULU-NATAL**

**Phase 1 Heritage Impact Assessment**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Ndwedwe Local Municipality plans to construct a concrete vehicular bridge within the Municipality. The proposed bridge aims to improve rural mobility and provide safer and more efficient pedestrian movement in the Ndwedwe Municipality. The project entails the construction of a new eight span concrete slab bridge (vehicular), measuring 26 800mm x 5 000mm and contains 7 piers & 2 abutments.

Although the proposed bridge does not trigger Section 38 (1) of the National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act No 25 of 1999) that lists the developments and associated criteria that may trigger a heritage impact assessment, the construction of the proposed bridge could 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 National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA).

The proposed bridge falls within the Ndwedwe Local Municipality and its location is at: 29° 31' 50.13"S and 31° 03' 01.06"E.

A site inspection of the proposed bridge was undertaken on 07 March 2017. Site conditions were generally good apart from the surrounding vegetation which was densely overgrown and wet conditions due to recent rains in the area.

The proposed bridge is located at a site where access is easy due to the valley sides not being too steep. Quite close to the site of the bridge is a sheer rock face to the north of the proposed site of the bridge. Access is via the existing gravel road which is approximately 90 metres from the river crossing. Although the area where the proposed bridge is to be located is undeveloped, it is not in pristine condition. There has been soil removal from the areas along the western bank of the river as well as soil erosion. The surrounding area is also used for cattle grazing. There is an existing power line crossing the area as well.

The South African Heritage Resources Agency's (SAHRA) Fossil Sensitivity Map indicated that the project area is situated in an area of low fossil sensitivity which means that no further palaeontological studies are required. However, a protocol for chance finds of fossils which is provided in Section 9 of the main body of the report below.

During the site inspection no heritage resources were found at the project site nor in the surrounding area. Discussion with a local resident determined that to the resident's knowledge no areas of community significance (including graves) were in the located wider project area.

It is therefore recommended that from a heritage perspective, the construction of the proposed Mona vehicular bridge can proceed with the proviso that the mitigation measures listed in chapter 9 of this report are implemented and adhered to.

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**AUTHOR DETAILS**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Ndwedwe Local Municipality, which is situated in the iLembe District Municipality, proposes to construct a concrete vehicular bridge over the Mona River which is situated within the Municipality. The proposed bridge aims to improve rural mobility and provide safer and more efficient pedestrian movement in the Ndwedwe Municipality. The project entails the construction of a new eight span concrete slab bridge (vehicular), measuring 26 800mm x 5 000mm and contains 7 piers & 2 abutments.

This report serves as the Phase 1 Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for the proposed Mona vehicular bridge.

## 2. LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

Although the proposed bridge does not trigger Section 38 (1) of the National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act No 25 of 1999) that lists the developments and associated criteria that may trigger a heritage impact assessment, the construction of the proposed bridge could 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 National Heritage Resources Act (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).

This Phase I HIA is undertaken to assess whether any heritage resources will be impacted by the proposed construction of the Mona river vehicular bridge.

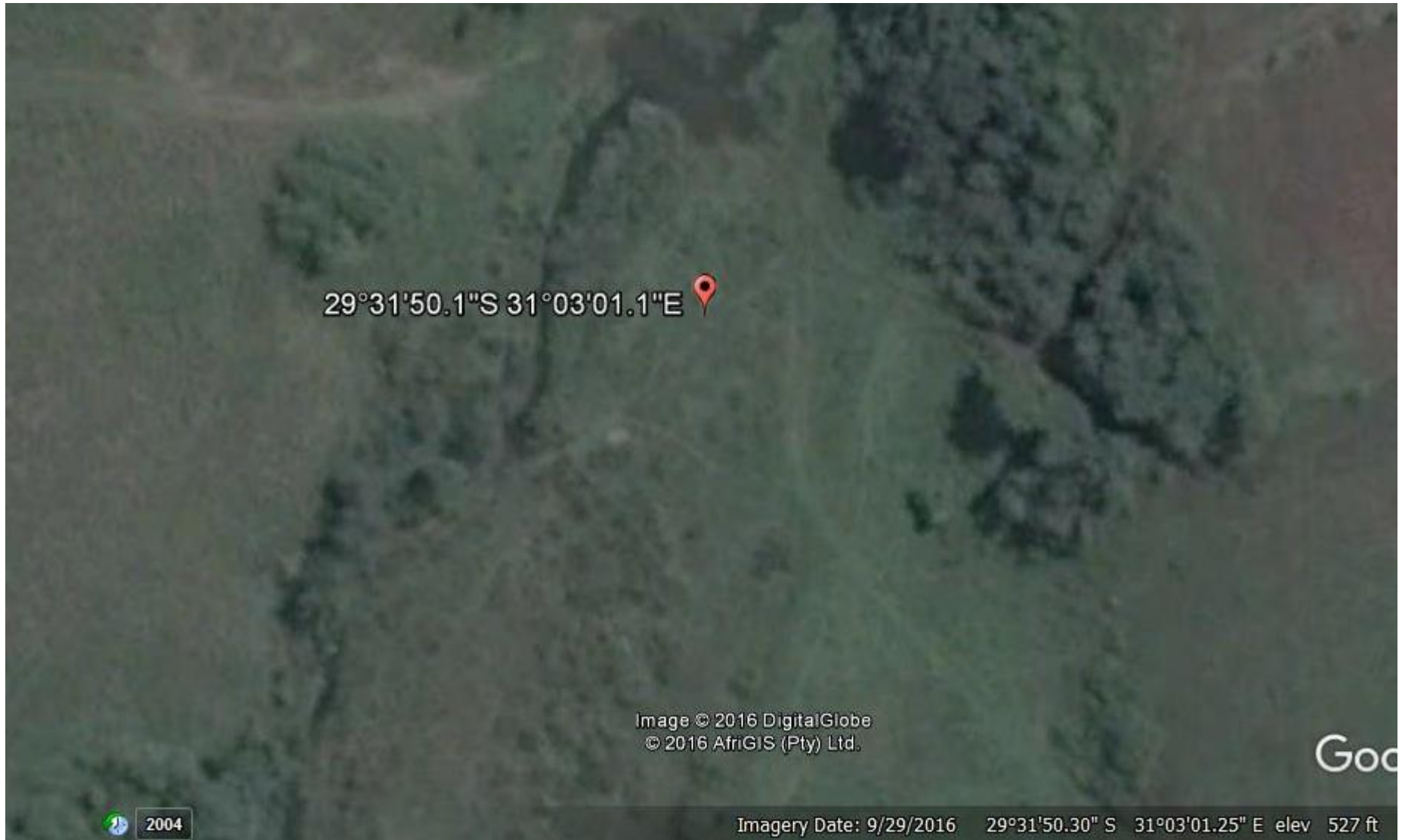
### 3. LOCATION

The proposed bridge falls within the Ndwedwe Local Municipality and its location is at: 29° 31' 50.13"S and 31° 03' 01.06"E (see **Figures 1 and 2** below). The immediate area where the bridge is to be built is undeveloped but not pristine whilst the surrounding area is occupied by many formal residences. The project site is roughly 3km from the Vincent Dickenson road that joins the towns of Ndwedwe and Verulam.

### 4. TERMS OF REFERENCE

To undertake a Phase 1 Heritage Impact Assessment in order to determine the possible existence of archaeological and other historical sites or heritage resources in and close to the proposed bridge that could be impacted by the proposed activity

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



**Figure 1: Google image of proposed bridge**



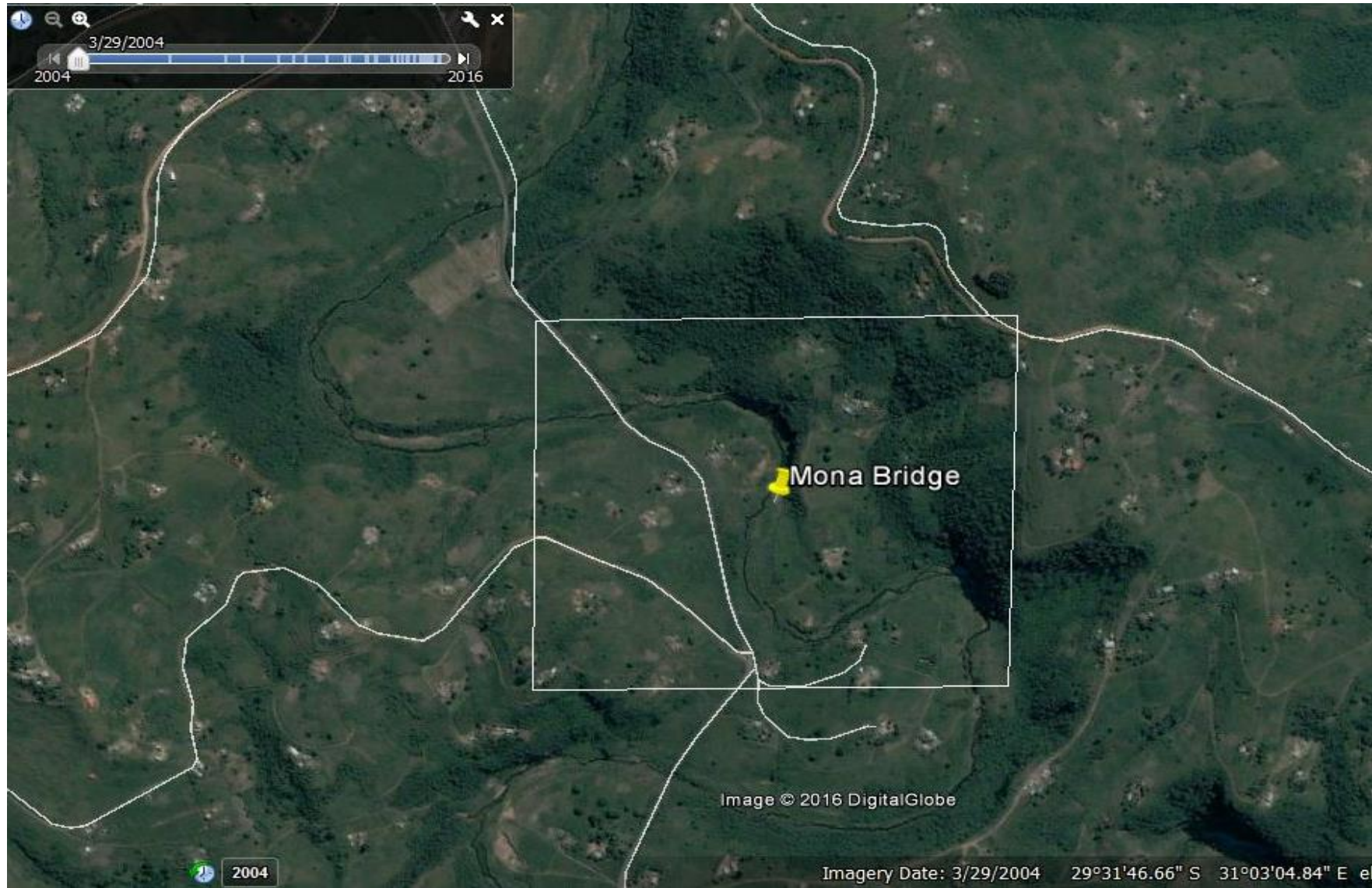


Figure 2: Google Earth image of project area

## 5. METHODOLOGY

A survey of literature, including other Heritage/Archaeological Impact Assessment Reports completed in the area, was undertaken in order to place the development area in an archaeological and historical context.

A site inspection of the proposed bridge was undertaken on 07 March 2017. Site conditions were generally good apart from the surrounding vegetation which was densely overgrown as well as wet conditions due to recent rains in the area.

## 6. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY AREA

During the pre-Shakan period in the 1700s, vast areas around Ndwedwe and surrounding areas, were under the leadership and governance of many tribal chiefs and izunduna (headmen). It was not until the Shakan period [1815-1828] that these were brought under one kingdom, the Zulu Kingdom of Shaka. Some of the leading clans and tribal chiefs in the Ndwedwe region, who have deep roots from the pre-Shakan history, include the Chili, Maphephetheni, Ngcolosi, Nyuswa, Nzama, AmaQadi, and Shangase (Ximba 2009:59).

The AmaQadi tribe, who were involved in disputes over succession, dispersed northwards over the Tugela River and some southwards around eThekweni area. In the preShakan period the AmaNyuswa tribe lived on the northern bank of the Tugela River until they were integrated into the Zulu Nation by Shaka. The Ngcolosi tribe were once resident on the Tugela River and are now found in the Ndwedwe area. The Nzama tribe also resided north of the Mvoti River near Greytown but are now found in the Ndwedwe area. The AmaPhephetheni tribe lived next to the Ngcolosi, but moved to oPhisweni Mountain, until they were integrated into the Zulu Nation by Shaka. The Shangase tribe also called Mkeshane were related to the Ngcobo, and were integrated into the Zulu Nation like the other tribal groups (Ximba: 60).

King Shaka's main royal residences were called Bulawayo which was located in Eshowe, Umbelebele which was located in KwaMashu and KwaDukuza which was located in Stanger. Geographically, the Stanger royal residence is the nearest to Ndwedwe and it was understood that an area within a radius of 90 kilometres was regarded as been within the domain and influence of King Shaka (Ximba: 59).

The Ndwedwe area is strongly influenced by the Shembe religious beliefs, symbolised by the mythological 'Holy Mountain of Nhlangakazi' situated close to Ndwedwe.

An annual pilgrimage to the Mountain is undertaken by the faithful based on the third book of Moses, the biblical leader. It is said to date back to a revelation iNkosi Shembe of amaNazaretha experienced in 1916, where it was revealed upon him that God would only speak to him at the Holy Mountain Nhlangakazi, just as God had spoken to Moses on Mount Sinai. It is said Isaiah Shembe was alone on a hillside when he was struck down by lightning where the voice of the Lord ordered him to go south. He was carried unconscious to his hut and taken for dead. On waking up he then told his followers that he had been among spirits who had instructed him to go south. It was then that he took his Bible, a blanket, a rod as well as gifts from his followers and engaged on a pilgrimage to the south. That was the birth of the Nhlangakazi pilgrimage which is still undertaken today by the Shembe faithful (Hlatswayo 2012:2).

## 7. SITE INSPECTION RESULTS

The proposed bridge, situated in the Mona river valley, is located at a site where access is not too steep. However, quite close to the site of the bridge is a sheer rock face to the north of the proposed site of the bridge. Access to the proposed bridge is via the existing gravel road which is approximately 90 metres from the river crossing.



**Figure 3: Existing access to river crossing**

There is a homestead on the western bank of the river situated about 80 m northwest of the proposed location of the bridge and several dwellings on the eastern side of the valley.



**Figure 4: Section of river affected by the proposed bridge**



**Figure 5: Rock face to the north of the proposed bridge**



**Figure 6: Western section of proposed bridge**

The vegetation in the area was thickly overgrown which limited access / visibility to some degree. Although the area where the proposed bridge is to be located is undeveloped, it is not in pristine condition. There has been soil removal from areas along the western bank of the river as well as soil erosion and the surrounding area is used for cattle grazing. There is an existing power line crossing the area as well.

A resident, Mr. Mthokozisi Myenza, who resides on the western side of the existing gravel road indicated that, to his knowledge, there were no areas of importance to the community, including graves, in and around the area to be developed for the bridge. No heritage resources were identified during the site inspection.



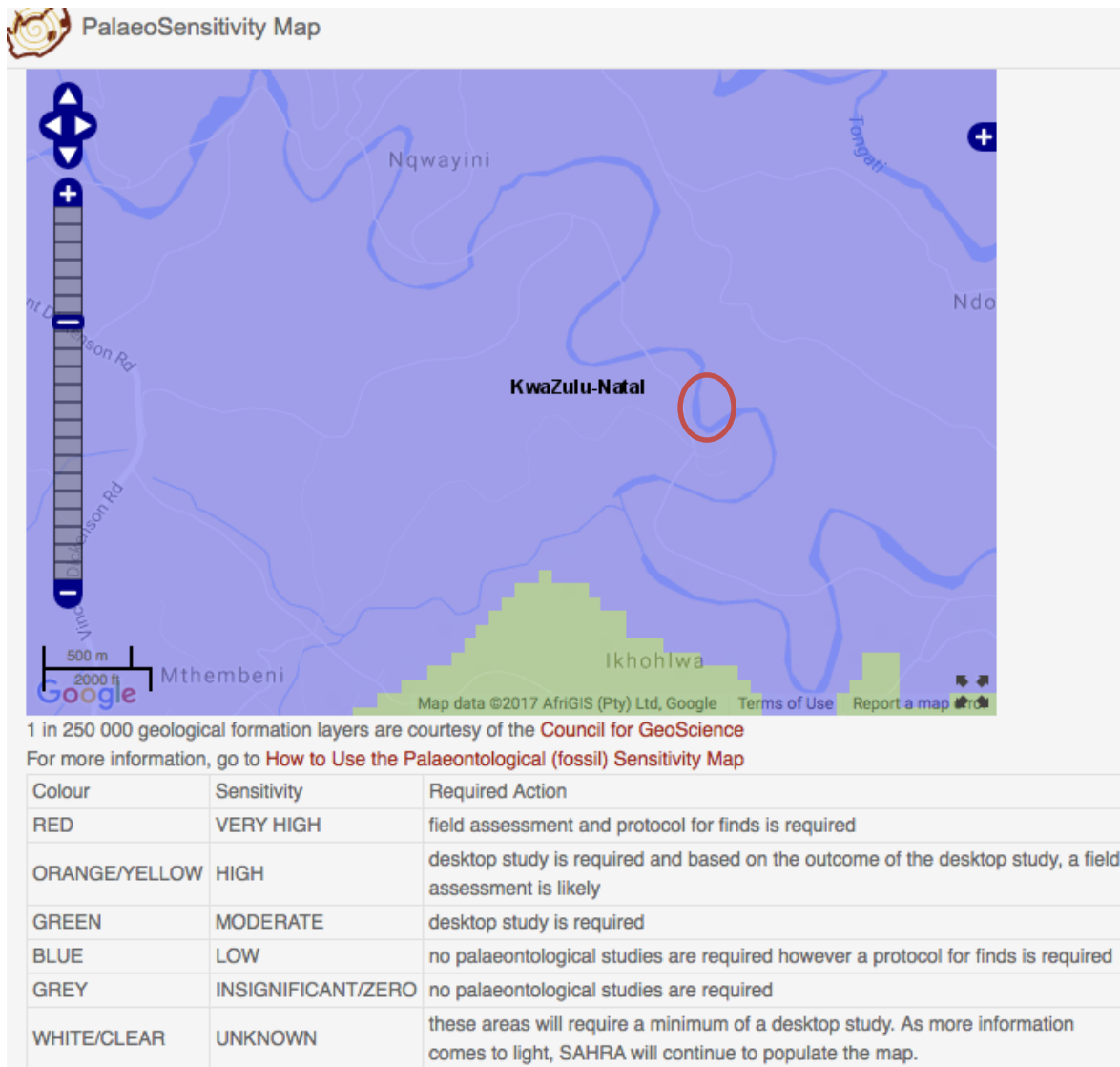
**Figure 7: Soil removal and section of pylon**



**Figure 8: Densely vegetated bank of river**

### Palaeontological

The South African Heritage Resources Agency’s (SAHRA) Fossil Sensitivity Map (see **Figure 9** below) indicates that the project area is situated in an area of low fossil sensitivity indicating that no further palaeontological studies are required; however, a protocol for chance finds of fossils is required which is provided in Section 9 of this report.



**Figure 9: Fossil sensitivity of approximate project area as indicated with red circle**

## **8. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

During the site inspection no heritage resources were found at the project site nor in the surrounding area. Discussion with a local resident determined that to the resident's knowledge no areas of community significance were located in the wider project area.

It is therefore recommended that from a heritage perspective, the construction of the proposed Mona vehicular bridge can proceed with the proviso that the mitigation measures listed in chapter 9 of this report are implemented and adhered to.

## **9. MITIGATION MEASURES**

- For any chance finds, all work will cease in the area affected and the Contractor will 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/s.
- The heritage specialist will assess the significance of the resource and provide guidance on the way forward.
- Permits 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 are to be protected by a 5m 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.
- Should any remains be found on site that is potentially human remains, the South African Police Service should also be contacted.
- If there are chance finds of fossils during construction, 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

Hlatshwayo, M. 2012. Nhlankasi- the Nazareth Baptist Church's Mecca. ([www.archivalplatform.org/blog/entry/nhlankakazi/](http://www.archivalplatform.org/blog/entry/nhlankakazi/))

Ximba, E.Z. 2009. *Cultural and Heritage Tourism Development and Promotion in the Ndwedwe Municipal Area. Perceived Policy and Practice*. Unpublished Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Arts, University of Zululand.