MSIMANGO WAY PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE, ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY, KWAZULU-NATAL

Desktop Heritage Assessment

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FOR: **ENVIROPRO**
Dr. Tara Fitzgerald
REF.: **EVP1457**

AUTHOR: JLB Consulting
Jean Beater

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I, Jean Beater, act as an independent specialist for this project and I do not have any vested interest either business, financial, personal or other, in the proposed activity other than remuneration for work performed in terms of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014.

SPECIALIST DETAILS

Name	Qualification	Professional Registration
Jean Beater	MA (Heritage Studies) MSc (Environmental Management)	Member of Association of South African Professional Archaeologists (No. 349) Member of IAIAsa (No. 1538)

1. INTRODUCTION

The areas of Ward 74 and Ward 69 near Msimango Way in Lamontville, eThekwini Municipality are divided by a river. Residents in the both areas currently utilise an informal crossing which comprises a pipeline between the two areas to gain access to facilities such as schools, clinics, retail outlets and public transportation. The proposed construction of a pedestrian bridge forms part of the vision and mission of the eThekwini Municipality (Enviropro 2022:1).

A desktop heritage assessment was undertaken for the project as the proposed pedestrian bridge is located in a highly urbanised and disturbed area with formal and informal housing on either side of the river and close to the river.

2. LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

The length of the proposed pedestrian bridge and approaches is over 50m hence it triggers section 41 (1)(b) of the KwaZulu-Natal Amafa and Research Institute Act, 2018 (Act No 5 of 2018) which lists developments or activities that may require an HIA. Section 41 (1)(b) refers to: the construction of a bridge or similar structure exceeding 50m in length.

The construction of the pedestrian bridge may also impact graves, structures, archaeological and palaeontological resources that are protected in terms of sections 37, 38, 39, and 40 of the KwaZulu-Natal Amafa and Research Institute Act, 2018.

In terms of section 3 of the NHRA, heritage resources are:

(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) 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).

3. LOCATION

The proposed pedestrian bridge is located between Wards 74 and 69 near Msimango Way in Lamontville. The site is located 310m west of the N2 highway which separate the site and Lamontville from the Mobeni, Merebank and Clairwood industrial areas (**Figure 1**). **Figure 2** is a closer image of the area where the pedestrian bridge is proposed. **Figure 3** shows the design of the proposed bridge.

4. TERMS OF REFERENCE

Undertake a desktop heritage assessment in order to determine whether heritage resources could be impacted by the proposed pedestrian bridge. Provide mitigation measures to limit or avoid the impact of the proposed project on heritage resources (if any).

Submit the desktop heritage report to the provincial heritage resources authority, the KwaZulu-Natal Amafa and Research Institute (hereafter referred to as the Institute), for their assessment and comment.

Figure 1: Location of bridge in terms of surrounding areas

Figure 2: Location of pedestrian bridge between two Wards

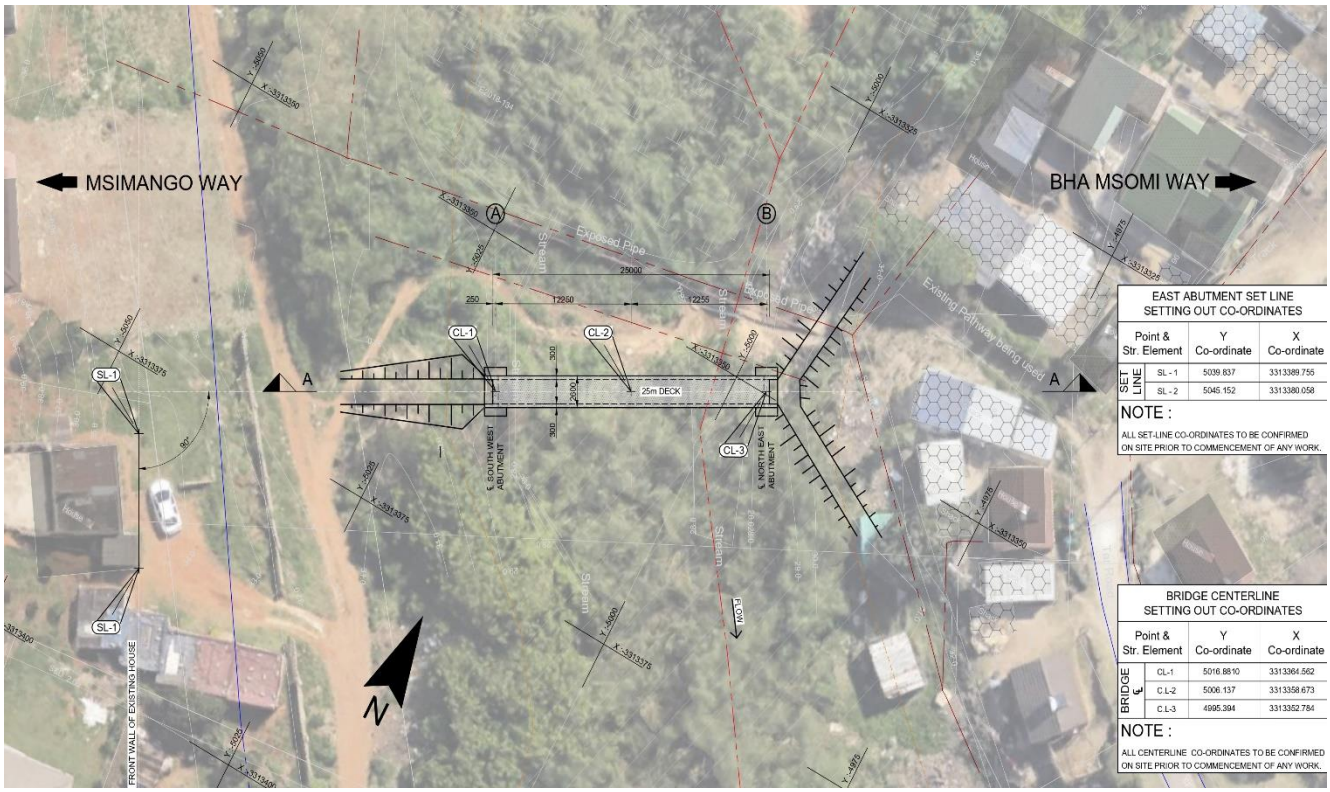

Figure 3: Proposed design of pedestrian bridge

5. METHODOLOGY AND CONSTRAINTS

A survey of literature, including other heritage impact assessment reports completed for the surrounding area, was undertaken in order to ascertain the history of the area and what type of heritage resources have or may be found in the area of development.

Older maps and aerial photographs were consulted in order to understand what the project site was like previously. These maps and photographs were obtained from the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform's CDNGI Geospatial Portal (www.cdngiportal.co.za).

Photographs of the project area and immediate surroundings were provided by Enviropro, the Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP).

6. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF PROJECT & SURROUNDING AREA

Site records from the archaeological database of the Natal Museum indicate that pre-colonial settlement of the Durban South Basin (SDB) area includes ephemeral Early and/or Middle Stone Age occupation of higher-lying areas around the former Durban International Airport site. Later Stone Age and Early and Late Iron Age middens (concentrations of shellfish, stone and bone, often incorporating human remains) have also been recorded in the primary dune cordon. This settlement pattern probably reflects sporadic or seasonal pre-colonial exploitation of the rocky coastline and surroundings. Seasonal inundation of the area between the uMlazi and Isipingo River mouths until well into the twentieth century created swamp-like conditions that discouraged permanent human occupation (eThembeni Cultural Heritage 2014: 23-24).

Prins (2016:5) states that some of the shell middens recorded along the coastline of KwaZulu-Natal belong to the very first Nguni-speaking agropastoralists who settled in the province. These sites have been dated to approximately 1200 years ago. Shell middens with both later Stone Age and Iron Age cultural material occur near the mouth of the Mlazi River which is situated approximately 5km south-east of the proposed pedestrian bridge.

According to the eThekwini Municipality (2011:1), Lamontville, built in 1934, is Durban's oldest African township. Intended for members of the aspiring African middle class, it was also home to thousands of workers in the nearby south Durban industrial areas. Houses were initially built for couples, with single people housed at the nearby SJ Smith Hostel. It was only in the late 1980s that people could lease or own the houses.

The 1940 topographic map (2930DD_2931CC) of the study area shows that the proposed site and surrounding area was used for the cultivation of sugar cane presumably under the auspices of Illovo as indicated in the image below.

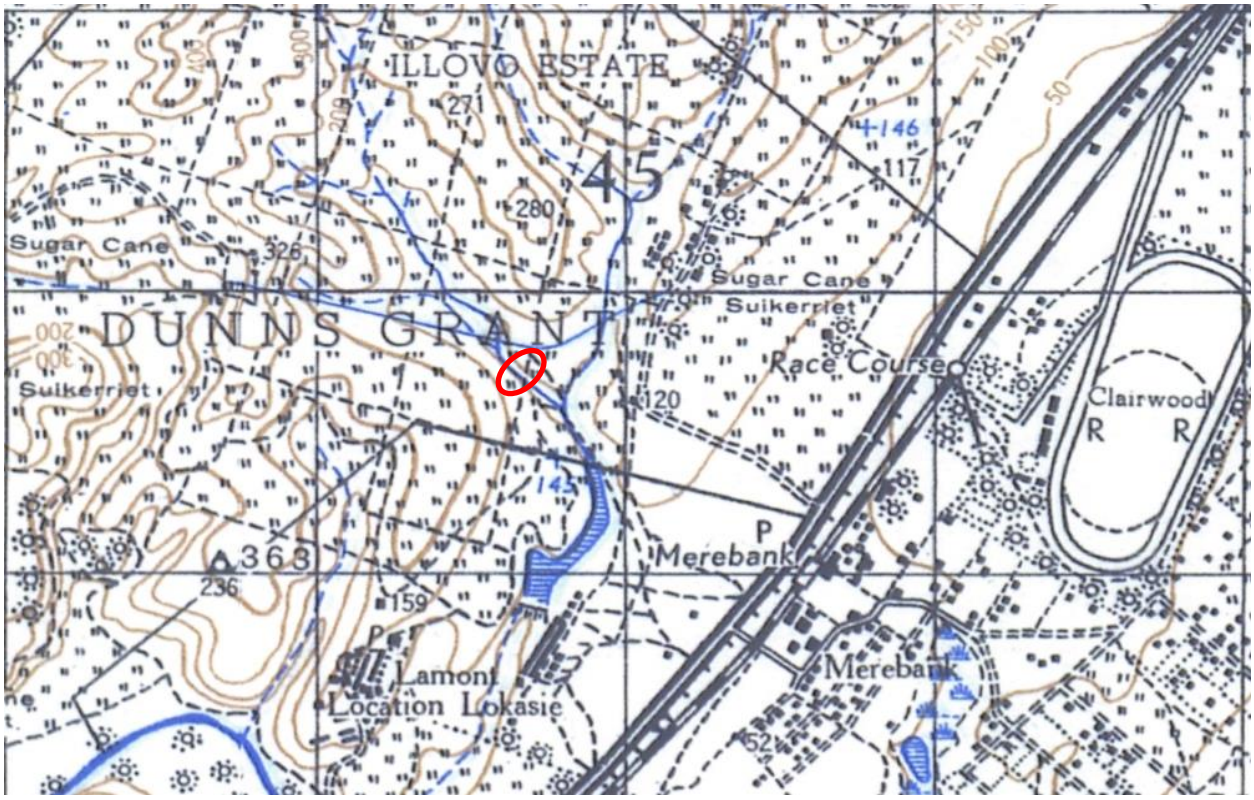

Figure 4: 1940 map of the project area and surrounds with project site indicated in red

The 1956 topographic map still shows sugar cane farming in the project area and surroundings; however, there are more roads and the number of structures making up Lamontville has increased. In addition, the name of the farm / property has changed from Dunns Grant to Mobeni 13538.

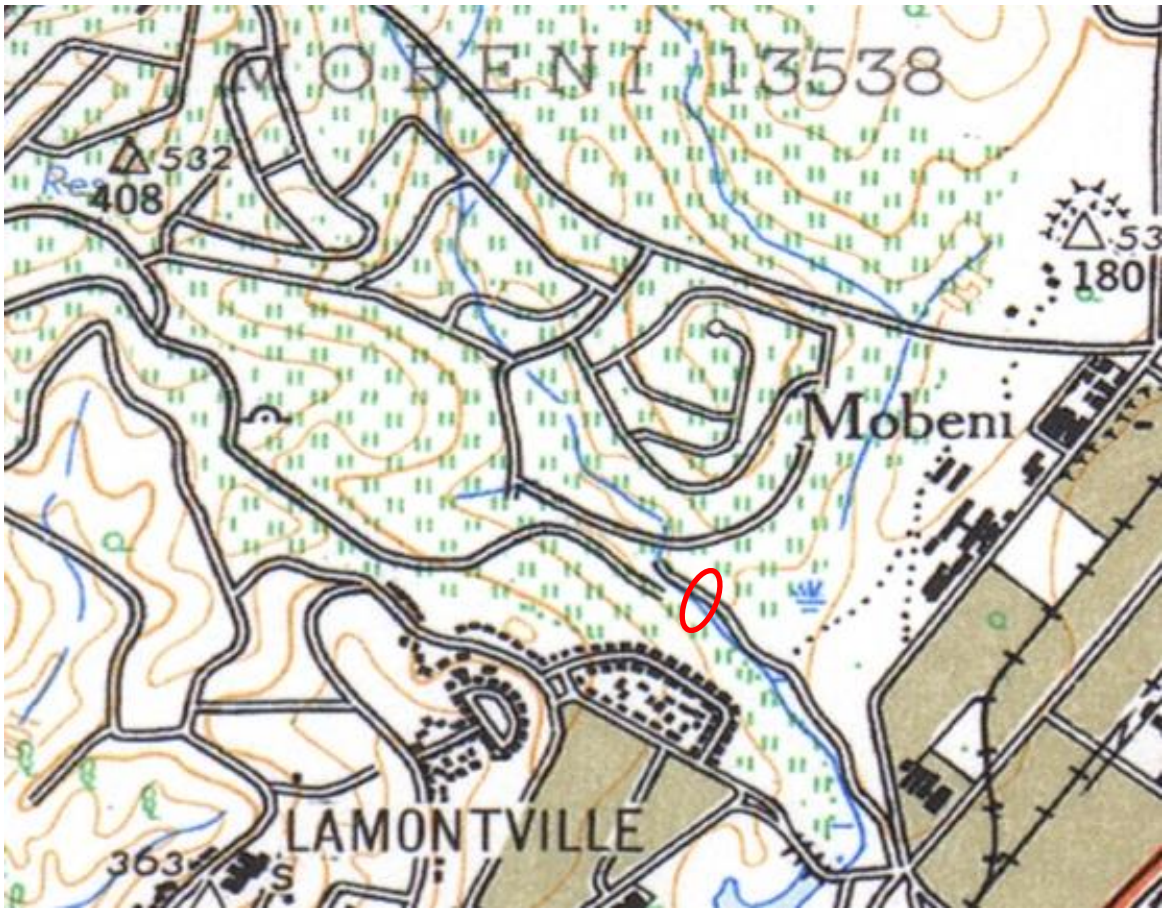

Figure 5: 1956 map of project area and surroundings

7. DESKTOP ASSESSMENT

The cultivation of the project area with sugar cane since 1940 and probably earlier than that, indicates an area that is disturbed by such activities. The current condition of the site remains highly disturbed as the area is used by residents and people to pass between two wards with a well-trodden pathway evident as well as the pipeline that is used to cross the river when it is flowing. In addition, dwellings have been constructed close to the river and to the site of the proposed pedestrian bridge thereby creating additional impacts and disturbance. The river is overgrown with vegetation.

Figures 6 and **7** show the pipeline that residents of both Wards utilise to cross the river when it is full of water.

Figure 6: Pipeline utilised to cross river looking north-west

Figure 7: Pipeline in relation to river

Figures 8 – 10 depict the condition of the surrounding area and of the site of the proposed pedestrian bridge.

Figure 8: Informal pathway across river

Figure 9: Facing north-west showing surrounding dwellings

Figure 10: Nearest dwelling to project site

Figure 11: View of Msimango Way access road looking north

The fossil sensitivity map of South Africa indicates that the pedestrian bridge falls into an area of high fossil sensitivity. An area of high fossil sensitivity requires a desktop palaeontological study. The desktop palaeontological study found that the site falls in the Umkwelane Formation. Quaternary calcretes and sands may preserve fragments of transported bone, wood, rhizoliths and invertebrate shells but these would be out of context and very small. Only under special conditions such as palaeo-pans and palaeo-springs would younger and more complete fossils be likely to form or be trapped. Pans do occur in the more north-western arid region of central South Africa but are not common in KwaZulu-Natal that has a much higher rainfall (Bamford 2022:8).

The study concluded that it is unlikely that any fossils would be preserved in the vegetated sands and overlying souls of the Umkwelane Formation (Maputaland Group) of the Quaternary. There is a very small chance that fossils may occur below ground therefore it was recommended that a Fossil Chance Find Protocol be added to the Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) for the project. The study stated that the impact on the palaeontological heritage would be low, therefore, the project should be authorised (Bamford 2022:11).

8. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The proposed Msimango Way pedestrian bridge is located in an urbanised and highly disturbed area. Prior to the urbanisation of the area, the project site was used for sugar cane farming which contributed to the site's disturbance. This ongoing disturbance makes it unlikely that intact and /or significant heritage sites will be found in this area. The impact on heritage resources is deemed to be very low.

Taking cognisance of the mitigation measures provided in this report and in the desktop palaeontological study, it is recommended that the Msimango pedestrian bridge proceed from a heritage perspective.

9. MITIGATION MEASURES

- For any chance heritage finds, all work must cease in the area affected and the Applicant / Contractor must be immediately informed. A registered heritage specialist must be called to site to inspect the finding/s. The Institute must 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 the Institute if heritage resources are to be removed, destroyed or altered.
- Under no circumstances may any heritage material be altered, destroyed or removed from site unless under direction of a heritage specialist.
- Should any recent remains be found on site that could potentially be human remains, the South African Police Service as well as the Institute must be contacted. No SAPS official may remove remains (recent or not) until the correct permit/s have been obtained.
- If fossils are found by the environmental officer, or other responsible person once excavations for foundations has commenced then they should be rescued and a palaeontologist called to assess and collect a representative sample.
- All recommendations and mitigation measures provided in the desktop palaeontological study must be adhered to including the insertion of the chance fossil find protocol (as provided) in the EMPr.

10. REFERENCES

eThekwini Municipality. 2011. Lamontville. (www.durban.gov.za/Discover_Durban/History_Communities/Our_Town/Pages/Lamontville.aspx)

eThembeni Cultural Heritage. 2014. *Phase 1 Heritage Impact Assessment Report: Proposed Upgrade of the Southern Wastewater Treatment Works, Merewent, eThekwini Metropolitan Municipality, KwaZulu-Natal*

Prins, F. 2016. *Proposed establishment of a residential development on Portions 4 and 7 of Erf 2363, Isipingo, Kanku Road, eThekwini Municipality, KwaZulu-Natal*