

PHASE ONE CULTURAL HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSED NIGEL ACCESS ROAD, UMZIMKHULU LOCAL MUNICIPALITY.



FOR: Green Belt Projects

ACTIVE HERITAGE

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23 February 2021

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Frans received his MA (Archaeology) from the University of Stellenbosch and is presently a PhD candidate on social anthropology at UKZN. His PhD research topic deals with indigenous San perceptions and interactions with the rock art heritage of the Drakensberg.

Frans was employed as a junior research associate at the then University of Transkei, Botany Department in 1988-1990. Although attached to a Botany Department he conducted a palaeoecological study on the Iron Age of northern Transkei - this study formed the basis for his MA thesis in Archaeology. Frans left the University of Transkei to accept a junior lecturing position at the University of Stellenbosch in 1990. He taught mostly undergraduate courses on World Archaeology and research methodology during this period.

From 1991 – 2001 Frans was appointed as the head of the department of Historical Anthropology at the Natal Museum, Pietermaritzburg. His tasks included academic research and publication, display conceptualization, and curating the African ethnology collections of the Museum. He developed various displays at the Natal Museum on topics ranging from Zulu material culture, traditional healing, and indigenous classificatory systems. During this period Frans also developed a close association with the Departments of Fine Art, Psychology, and Cultural and Media Studies at the then University of Natal. He assisted many post-graduate students with projects relating to the cultural heritage of South Africa. He also taught post-graduate courses on qualitative research methodology to honours students at the Psychology Department,

University of Natal. During this period he served on the editorial boards of the *South African Journal of Field Archaeology* and *Natalia*.

Frans left the Natal Museum in 2001 when approached by a Swiss funding agency to assist an international NGO (Working Group for Indigenous Minorities) with the conceptualization of a San or Bushman museum near Cape Town. During this period he consulted extensively with various San groupings in South Africa, Namibia and Botswana. During this period he also made major research and conceptual contributions to the Kamberg and Didima Rock Art Centres in the Ukhahlamba Drakensberg World Heritage Site.

Between 2003 and 2007 Frans was employed as the Cultural Resource Specialist for the Maloti Drakensberg Transfrontier Project – a bilateral conservation project funded through the World Bank. This project involved the facilitation with various stakeholders in order to produce a cultural heritage conservation and development strategy for the adjacent parts of Lesotho and South Africa. Frans was the facilitator for numerous heritage surveys and assessments during this project. This vast area included more than 2000 heritage sites. Many of these sites had to be assessed and heritage management plans designed for them. He had a major input in the drafting of the new Cultural Resource Management Plan for the Ukhahlamba Drakensberg World Heritage site in 2007/2008. A highpoint of his career was the inclusion of Drakensberg San indigenous knowledge systems, with San collaboration, into the management plans of various rock art sites in this world heritage site. He also liaised with the tourism specialist with the drafting of a tourism business plan for the area.

During April 2008 Frans accepted employment at the environmental agency called Strategic Environmental Focus (SEF). His main task was to set-up and run the cultural heritage unit of this national company. During this period he also became an accredited heritage impact assessor and he is rated by both Amafa and the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA). He completed almost 50 heritage impact assessment reports nation-wide during an 18th month period.

Frans left SEF and started his own heritage consultancy called “Active Heritage cc” in July 2009. Although mostly active along the eastern seaboard his clients also include international companies such as Royal Dutch Shell through Golder Associates, and UNESCO. He has now completed almost 1000 heritage conservation and management reports for various clients since the inception of “Active Heritage cc”. Amongst these was a heritage study of the controversial fracking gas exploration of the Karoo Basin and various proposed mining developments in South Africa and proposed developments adjacent to various World Heritage sites. Apart from heritage impact assessments (HIA's) Frans also assist the National Heritage Council (NHC) through Haley Sharpe Southern Africa, with heritage site data capturing and analysis for the proposed National Liberation Route World Heritage Site and the national intangible heritage audit. In addition, he has done background research and conceptualization of the proposed Dinosaur Interpretative Centre at Golden Gate National Park and the proposed Khoi and

San Interpretive Centre at Camdeboo, Eastern Cape Province. During 2009 he also produced the first draft dossier for the nomination of the Sehlabathebe National Park, Lesotho as a UNESCO inscribed World Heritage Site.

Frans was appointed as temporary lecturer in the department of Heritage and Tourism, UKZN in 2011. He is also a research affiliate at the School of Cultural and Media Studies in the same institution. Frans's research interests include African Iron Age, paleoecology, rock art research, San ethnography, traditional healers in South Africa, and heritage conservation. Frans has produced more than forty publications on these topics in both popular and academic publications. He is frequently approached by local and international video and film productions in order to assist with research and conceptualization for programmes on African heritage and culture. He has also acted as presenter and specialist for local and international film productions on the rock art of southern Africa. Frans has a wide experience in the fields of museum and interpretive centre display and made a significant contribution to the conceptual planning of displays at the Natal Museum, Golden Horse Casino, Didima Rock Art Centre and !Kwa tu San Heritage Centre. Frans is also the co-founder and active member of "African Antiqua" a small tour company who conducts archaeological and cultural tours world-wide. He is a Thetha accredited cultural tour guide and he has conducted more than 50 tours to heritage sites since 1992.

Declaration of Consultants independence

Frans Prins is an independent consultant to Green Belt Projects and has no business, financial, personal or other interest in the activity, application or appeal in respect of which he was appointed other than fair remuneration for work performed in connection with the activity, application or appeal. There are no circumstances whatsoever that compromise the objectivity of this specialist performing such work.



Frans Prins

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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
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 phase one cultural heritage survey of the proposed Nigel Access Road, Umzimkhulu Local Municipality, identified no heritage sites on the footprint. Some heritage sites are located in the nearby town of Umzimkhulu but these are not threatened by the proposed development and no mitigation is necessary. The area is also not part of any known cultural landscape. There is no general heritage or archaeological reason why development may not proceed as planned. The phase one paleo desktop study indicates that the footprint is situated in an area with a high fossil sensitivity. A desktop survey by an accredited palaeontologist, followed by a potential ground survey, will be required before development may proceed. Attention is drawn to the South African Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act No. 25 of 1999) and the KwaZulu-Natal & Amafa Research Institute Act (Act no 5 of 2018) which, requires that operations that expose archaeological or historical remains and fossils should cease immediately, pending evaluation by the provincial heritage agency.

1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE PROJECT

Frans Prins (Active Heritage cc) was appointed by Green Belt Projects to conduct heritage impact assessment (HIA) for the proposed Nigel Access Road near Umzimkhulu, KZN.

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).

2 SCOPE OF WORK

This study aims to identify and assess the significance of any heritage and archaeological resources occurring on or adjacent to the proposed access roads. Based on the significance, the impact of the development on the heritage resources will be determined and appropriate actions to reduce the impact on the heritage resources 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 organization of importance in the history of South Africa; and
- i. sites of significance relating to the history of slavery in South Africa.

Table 1. Background information

Consultant:	Frans Prins (Active Heritage)
Type of development:	Upgrading of proposed gravel access road
Rezoning or subdivision:	Rezoning
Terms of reference	To carry out a Phase One 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 Amafa & Research Institute Act, 2018 (Act No 5 of 2018).

2.1. Details of the area surveyed:

The Umzimkhulu Municipality have proposed the construction of a new 3.4km gravel road within the village of Nigel (Figs 1 – 3). The new proposed road includes a watercourse crossing which traverses the uMvubukazi River which is a perennial stream, draining to the east towards the Umzimkhulu collector River. The watercourse crossing will provide formal access and an efficient link between the villages of eMvubukazi and Mountain Home. The project also aims to allow local residents to have improved, formalised vehicular access to their homes, schools, shops and the extended road network, particularly during high rainfall periods when access is limited. The proposed new road section traverses the perennial uMvubukazi river at 30°16'11.13"S 29°50'16.93"E, where a new watercourse crossing portal culvert causeway is proposed. The culvert causeway will comprise 3 rows of 1500mm x 2100mm culverts to cater for peak flow periods. Ingress and egress points at the wingwalls will be shaped to conform with the new gravel road elevation. The watercourse crossing will be founded on a concrete base to support portal culverts and road pavement structure. The culvert causeway structure is proposed at 5180mm wide by 7803mm long. Wing walls and base foundation will be 3000mm and the ingress and egress points and extend the total length to 13 803mm. The proposed road construction will be constructed and complete with

formal stormwater infrastructure, cut-off drains and a watercourse crossing structure. The proposed road width is expected to be a 4m wide cambered gravel access road, with 1m servitudes on either side, having a total width of 6m.

The project is situated in Ward 19 of the Umzimkhulu Local Municipality, Harry Gwala District Municipality. The site is located approximately, 13km south west of Umzimkhulu town (Fig 1). The site is located at co-ordinates 30°15'12.70"S 29°49'52.54"E. The proposed project is located on the Remaining extent of Farm 533 Imvubukazi SG 21 Digit Code: N0ES00000000053300000.

The proposed road upgrade and construction provides a formal gravel access road with complete watercourse drainage infrastructure. The proposed road will be new road construction adjoining the D2426 at start point 30°15'13.15"S 29°49'53.70"E. The end point is at 30°16'27.22"S 29°50'14.41"E and will link to the L2302 Road at Umvubukazi Primary school (Fig 2). The site is accessed off the P601-2 road. The proposed development is unlikely to impact any provincial or national road, although slow turning construction traffic and the generation of dust may have an impact during construction phase.

3 BACKGROUND TO ARCHAEOLOGICAL HISTORY OF AREA

The greater Umzimkhulu area has never been intensively surveyed for heritage sites. However, some sites have been recorded by cultural resource consultants who have worked in the area during the last two decades whilst archaeologists from the KwaZulu-Natal Museum have made sporadic visits to the area. The area was surveyed in 2008 by Anderson (2008) and a few year later by Beater & Prins (2014) and the nearby Ibisi Water Reticulation Project in 2019 (Prins 2019) but no archaeological sites were recorded. The available evidence, as captured in the KwaZulu-Natal Museum heritage site inventories, indicates that the greater Umzimkhulu area contains a wide spectrum of archaeological sites covering different time-periods and cultural traditions. These include five Early Stone Age sites, two Middle Stone Age sites, four Later Stone Age sites, two rock painting sites, four Early Iron Age sites, three Later Iron Age sites, and one historical site. Various buildings and farmsteads belonging to the Victorian and Edwardian periods occur in the area. These would also be protected by heritage legislation (Derwent 2006).

Stone Age sites of all the main periods and cultural traditions occur within the greater study area. Most of these occur in open air contexts as exposed by donga and sheet erosion. The occurrence of Early Stone Age tools in the near vicinity of permanent water resources is typical of this tradition. These tools were most probably made by early hominins such as *Homo erectus* or *Homo ergaster*. Based on typological criteria they most probably date back to between 300 000 and 1.7 million years ago. The presence of the first anatomically modern people (i.e. *Homo sapiens sapiens*) in the area is indicated by the presence of a few Middle Stone Age blades and flakes. These most probably dates back to between 40 000 and 200 000 years ago. The later Stone Age flakes and one rock painting site identified in the area are associated with the San (Bushmen) and their direct ancestors. These most probably dates back to between 200 and 20 000 years ago.

The San were the owners of the land for almost 30 000 years but the local demography started to change soon after 2000 years ago when the first Bantu-speaking farmers crossed the Limpopo River and arrived in South Africa (Mitchell 2002). By 1500 years ago these early Bantu-speaking farmers also arrived in the greater Umzimkhulu area. Due to the fact that these first farmers introduced metal technology to southern Africa they are designated as the Early Iron Age in archaeological literature. Their distinct ceramic pottery is classified to styles known as “Msuluzi” (AD 500-700), Ndondondwane (AD 700-800) and Ntshekane (AD 800-900). Most of the Early Iron Age sites in the greater Ixopo area belong to these traditions (Maggs 1989:31; Huffman 2007:325-462). These sites characteristically occur on alluvial or colluvial soil adjacent to large rivers, such as the Mzimkhulu River, below the 1000m contour. The Early Iron Age farmers originally came from western Africa and brought with them an elaborate initiation complex and a value system centred on the central significance of cattle.

Later Iron Age sites also occur in this area. These were Bantu-speaking agropastoralists who arrived in southern Africa after 1000 year ago via East Africa. Later Iron Age communities in KwaZulu-Natal and adjacent parts of the Eastern Cape Province were the direct ancestors of the Zulu and Xhosa-speaking people (Huffman 2007). Many African groups moved through the study area due to the period of tribal turmoil as caused by the expansionistic policies of King Shaka Zulu in the 1820's. During the colonial era (1840s onwards) many African groups were settled in this area by the native administrator of the Colony of Natal, Lord Shepstone. It is known from oral history that the Umzimkhulu area was occupied by the Nhlanguwini, amaWushe, amaHlubi,

amaBhaca, amaZizi, amaNqolo, amaCunu and various other Zulu-speaking and Xhosa-speaking refugees in the 19th century (Bryant 1965; Jackson 1975). There are also some Mpondo and Sotho groupings in the area. Interestingly, descendants of the San still live in the area and have adopted the Zulu clan name of Ndobe. The descendants of all these ethnic groupings still live in the area. Interestingly, after the Anglo-Zulu war of 1879 and the Bambatha Rebellion of 1911 some of the African people in the study area adopted a Zulu ethnic identity.

The town of Umzimkhulu owes its origins to the Strachan Family who set up a trading store on the banks of the Umzimkhulu River, near the original ferry crossing in the 1880s. This store (and specifically the trading company) formed an integral part of the regional economy. Strachan & Co. even had its own coins minted that were accepted by the banks in Kokstad. Anderson (2008) recorded some historical buildings in the actual town of Umzimkhulu. However, none of these occur closer than 1km to the actual footprint.

4 BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF THE SURVEY

4.1 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 Umzimkhulu area was also consulted. The SAHRIS website was consulted to ascertain the location of heritage sites in or near the footprint.

A ground survey, following standard and accepted archaeological procedures, was conducted on 10 January 2021. The footprint was visited on foot. The consultant was also guided by community perspectives and interviewed local residents of the area whilst conducting the ground survey. None of them had knowledge of any heritage sites or features on the actual footprint.

4.2 Restrictions encountered during the survey

4.2.1 Visibility

Visibility was good (Figs 5 - 8)

4.2.2 Disturbance.

The proposed development site has been disturbed by overgrazing and small-scale subsistence farming activities in the past. The rural homesteads in the area may also mask heritage sites or features. However, no disturbance of any potential heritage features was noted.

4.3 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.

4.4 Locational data

Province: KwaZulu-Natal

Town: Umzimkhulu

Municipality: Umzimkhulu Local Municipality

4.5 Description of the general area surveyed

The desktop and ground survey did not identify any heritage sites on the footprint. Archaeological sites do occur in the greater Umzimkhulu area but none of these are situated closer than 5km to the footprint (Fig 3). Graves do occur in the local village (Fig 8) but none of them are older than 60 years old or belong to victims of conflict. They are therefore not protected by heritage legislation. There is no need for any mitigation. It is also important to note that the footprint does not form part of any known cultural landscape.

5 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (HERITAGE VALUE EXCLUDING PALEONTOLOGY)

As there are no heritage sites on the proposed development site the area is not significant in terms of heritage values. No archaeological sites were observed during the course of the survey. Several historical buildings do occur in the town (Anderson 2008) but these are situated more than 20km from the footprint.

5.1 Field Rating

The field rating criteria as formulated by SAHRA (Table2) does not apply to the footprint as no heritage sites or features have been identified (Table 3).

Table 2. 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

Table 3. Evaluation and statement of significance (excluding paleontology).

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.

6 PHASE 1 DESKTOP PALAEOLOGY ASSESSMENT

The SAHRIS fossil sensitivity map indicates that the proposed Nigel Access Road falls in an area with a high fossil sensitivity (Fig 4). It is possible that the shale formations in the project area carry some fossils. A desktop study by an Amafa accredited palaeontologist, followed by a potential ground survey, will be required before any development may proceed.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS

The development of the proposed Nigel Access Road may proceed in terms of general heritage values as no heritage and archaeological sites are in any danger of being destroyed or altered. There is no need for mitigation. There are no limitations and assumptions.

However, a desktop paleontological study by an accredited palaeontologist will be required before any development may proceed.

It should also be pointed out that the KwaZulu-Natal Heritage Act requires that operations exposing archaeological and historical residues as well as fossils should cease immediately pending an evaluation by the heritage authorities.

8 RISK PREVENTATIVE MEASURES ASSOCIATED WITH CONSTRUCTION

Not applicable.

9 MAPS AND FIGURES

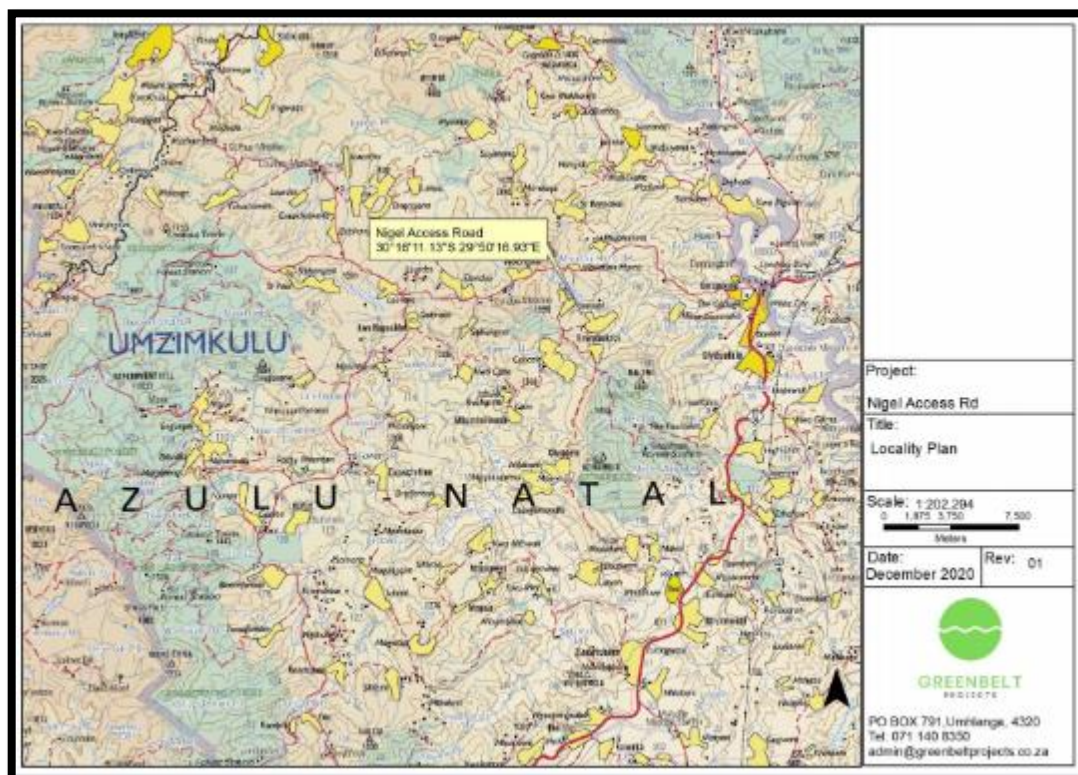


Figure 1. Map showing the locality of Nigel Access Road (Source: Greenbelt Projects).

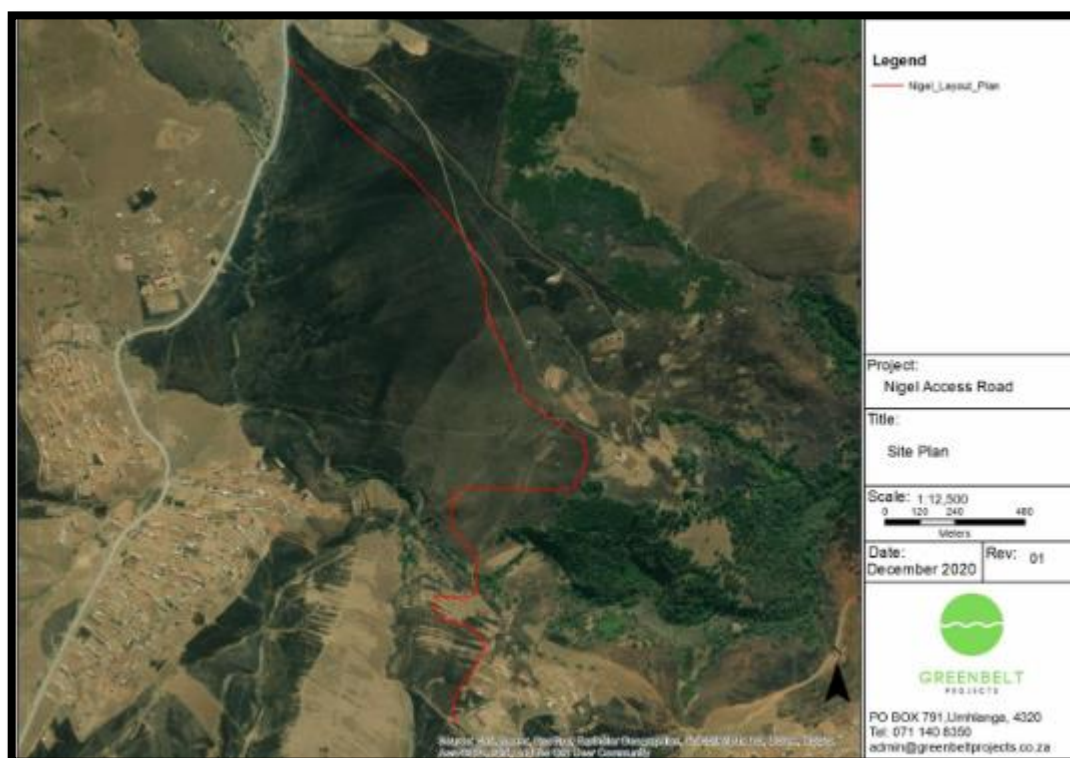


Figure 2. Map showing the location of Nigel Access Road.

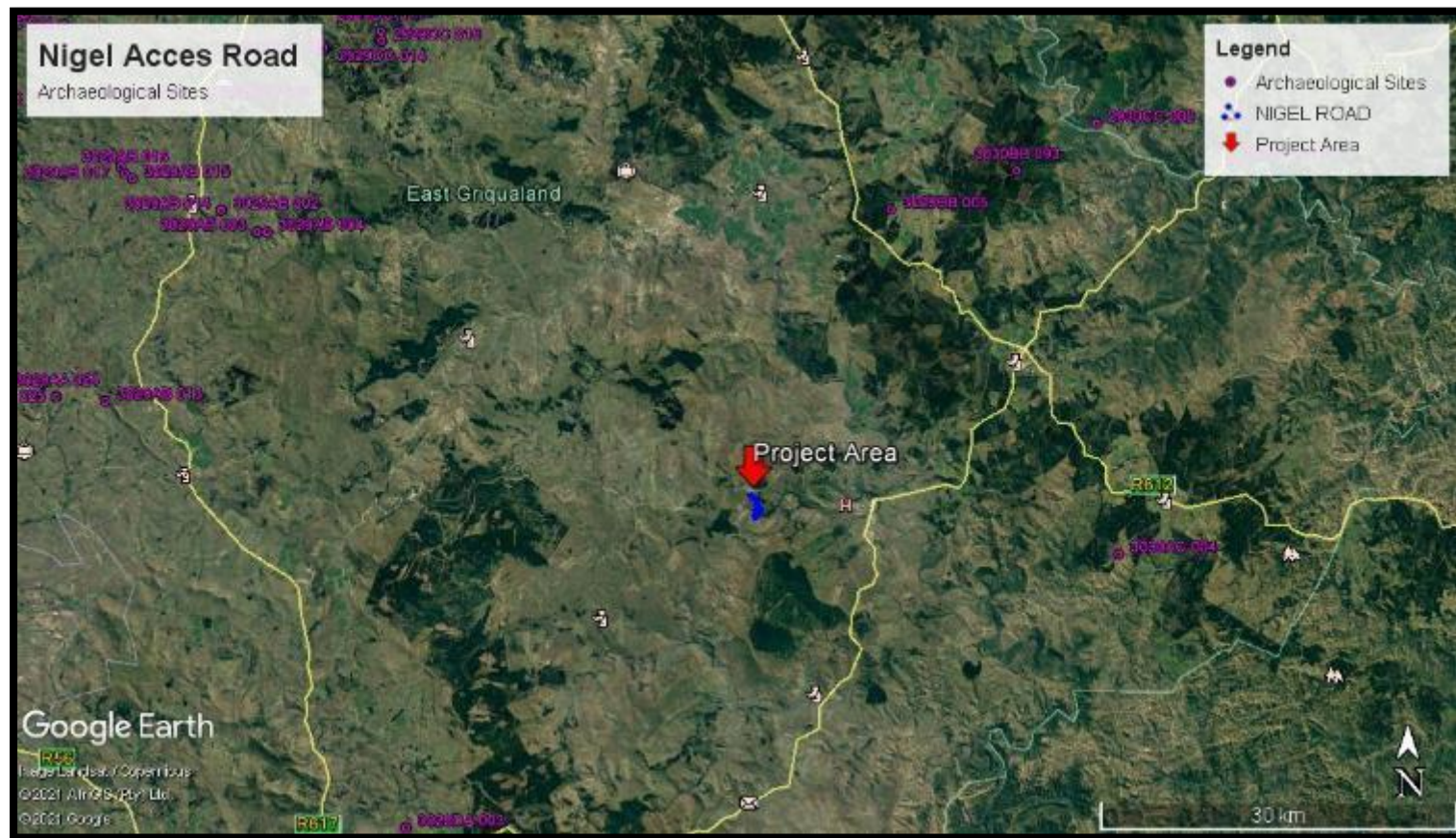
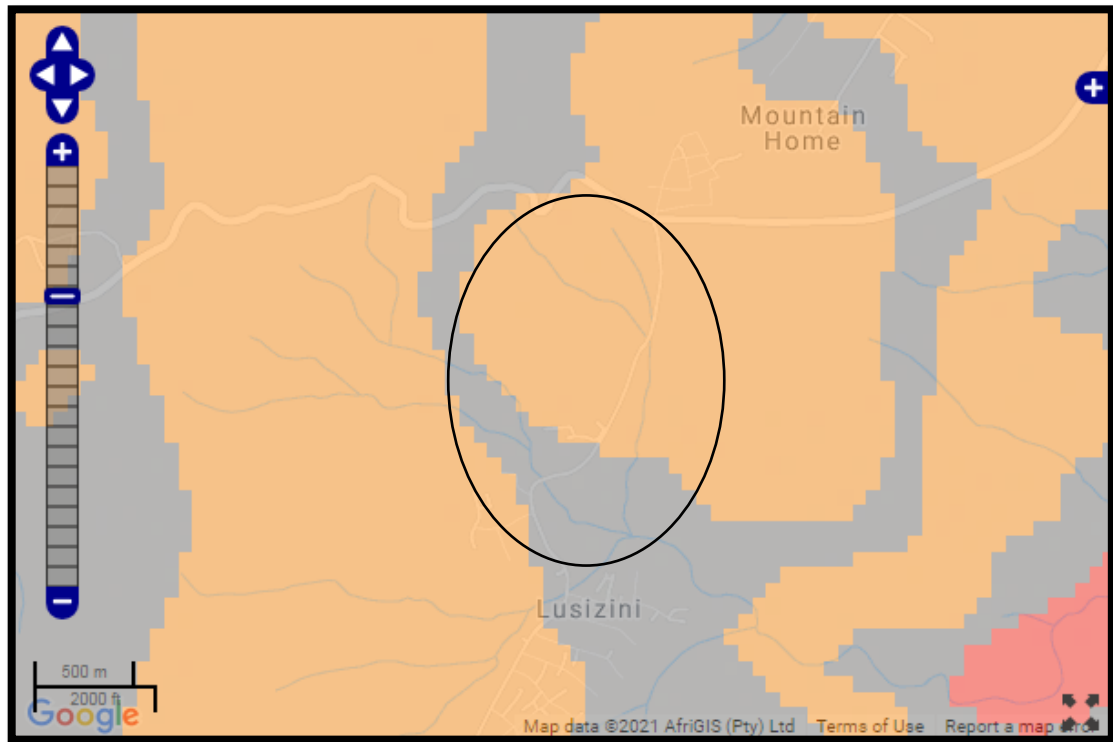


Figure 3. Google Earth Imagery showing the distribution of known archaeological sites (purple markers) in the greater project area. None occur closer than 5 km to the proposed development.



Colour	Sensitivity	Required Action
RED	VERY HIGH	field assessment and protocol for finds is required
ORANGE/YELLOW	HIGH	desktop study is required and based on the outcome of the desktop study, a field assessment is likely
GREEN	MODERATE	desktop study is required
BLUE	LOW	no palaeontological studies are required however a protocol for finds is required
GREY	INSIGNIFICANT/ZERO	no palaeontological studies are required
WHITE/CLEAR	UNKNOWN	these areas will require a minimum of a desktop study. As more information comes to light, SAHRA will continue to populate the map.

Figure 4. Fossil Sensitivity Map of the Project Area as indicated by the black circle. The yellow background indicates that the area has a high paleontological sensitivity.



Figure 5. Beginning of the Nigel access road near Evumbukazi Village



Figure 6. Local residents were interviewed, however, none had any knowledge of old graves or other heritage sites on the area.



Figure 7. No archaeological sites were encountered during the survey.



Figure 8. Although graves occur in the greater area none are situated closer than 200m to the proposed road upgrade.

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