

# **The Preliminary Archaeological Survey Of The Zulti South Mining Lease**

**For Richards Bay Minerals**

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## INTRODUCTION

Richards Bay Minerals contracted Umlando to undertake periodical monitoring of the new Zulti South mining lease. The initial desktop assessment was to survey the area every four months to keep up to date with the mining explorations and drilling. The environment is similar to the Zulti North mining lease in that the vegetation is very dense, and sites are unlikely to be observed unless some form of clearance has been undertaken. This procedure is condoned by Amafa KZN.

A survey is undertaken at approximately four month intervals. This report covers the period from July to November. We intend to undertake another survey in December so as to be up to date with the drilling lines.

## RESULTS

All of the recorded sites during the initial surveys will be revisited during later stages of the mining project. This is regardless of their significance.

### ZS10

This site is located on the top of a dune. It has been disturbed by the drilling activity. Several artefacts were observed in the road cuttings.

The artefacts consist of:

- undecorated pottery sherds – one sherd had an *isumpa* for a rope handle
  - Pottery included light brown and red sherds.
- lower grinding stone fragments made from beach sandstone
- faunal remains – mostly domestic cattle
- one piece of slag

The site probably pre-dates 1850 AD because of the occurrence of slag.

The site is of low-medium archaeological significance and further no mitigation is required. The site will be monitored.

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## **ZS11**

This site was located west of ZS10 along the same drill path. The site has been extensively damaged by the drill path and several artefacts were located along the road cuttings.

The artefacts include:

- Different types of pottery. One near complete pot was sampled
- Faunal remains
- Possible human remains
  - cranium fragment
  - tooth fragment
  - cervical vertebrae

The site is of low-medium archaeological significance and further no mitigation is required. The site will be monitored. We will monitor the site for more artefacts and human remains, however we do not believe that any remains will be *in situ*.

Individual pottery sherds or grindingstones were observed at other places.

So far we have recorded sites that date to the Late Iron Age and Historical Period, albeit tentatively. The area has the potential to yield more of these types of sites.

## **ZS10**

This site is located on the top of a dune. It has been disturbed by the drilling activity. Several artefacts were observed in the road cuttings.

The artefacts consist of:

- undecorated pottery sherds – one sherd had an *isumpa* for a rope handle
  - Pottery included light brown and red sherds.
- lower grinding stone fragments made from beach sandstone
- faunal remains – mostly domestic cattle
- one piece of slag

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The site probably pre-dates 1850 AD because of the occurrence slag.

The site is of low-medium archaeological significance and further no mitigation is required. The site will be monitored.

### **ZS11**

This site was located west of ZS10 along the same drill path. The site has been extensively damaged by the drill path and several artefacts were located along the road cuttings.

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- Different types of pottery. One near complete pot was sampled
- Faunal remains
- Possible human remains
  - cranium fragment
  - tooth fragment
  - cervical vertebrae

The site is of low-medium archaeological significance and further no mitigation is required. The site will be monitored. We will monitor the site for more artefacts and human remains; however, we do not believe that any remains will be *in situ*.

Individual pottery sherds or grinding stones were observed at other places.

## **CONCLUSION**

The initial surveys of the Zulti South area have yielded eleven new archaeological sites, and a few areas that may become sites. The mining lease area is of interest in that it may, or may not, yield pottery decorations previously associated with Thembu-Tsonga speakers. This pottery has been recorded only as far as the Town Board mining area, i.e. just north of Meerensee. Whether or not this type of pottery is located in the Zulti South area is significant either way. This may yield information to

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settlement patterns south of Richards Bay, and furthermore, how the people from the two areas interacted in pre-colonial times. In terms of archaeology, there is much evidence to indicate that Early Iron Age people existed in this area. The more significant information may relate to the Late Iron Age inhabitants and their socio-linguistic and political groups.