

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF THE
PROPOSED PHUMLANI HOUSING
DEVELOPMENT, HLUHLUWE**

FOR EXIGENT ENVIRONMENTAL CC

DATE: 6 NOVEMBER 2008

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INTRODUCTION

Umlando cc was contracted by Exigent Environmental cc, to undertake a heritage survey of a proposed development Phumlani Housing Development near Hluhluwe, KwaZulu-Natal.

The area is located south of the main town of Hluhluwe (fig. 1). The land is on a gentle slope that appears to have had little agricultural activity in the past. There has been systematic, if not illegal, dumping in the area since the 1970s (seen in the types of bottles). Some areas have been excavated, but the area is generally undisturbed. The grass had been recently burnt prior to the survey allowing for good archaeological visibility.

Several sites have been recorded in the general area of Hluhluwe and there was thus good reason to believe that sites would occur in the affected area. Two heritage sites were observed during the course of the survey, and three sensitive areas were noted.

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. Historical buildings

8.2. Battlefields and general Anglo-Zulu and Anglo-Boer sites

8.3. Graves and/or community cemeteries

8.4. Living Heritage Sites

8.5. 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.

A Phase 2 may yield enough material so that further excavations are not required. However, if significant material occurs in the archaeological deposit then it is likely that a Phase 3 will be required.

RESULTS

Two heritage sites were recorded and three sensitive areas were noted during the course of the survey. These sites are as follows.

FIGURE 1: LOCATION OF THE PROPOSED PHUMLANI HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AND HERITAGE SITES



HLU001

HLU001 is located across the entire proposed development area. The site is a multicomponent site consisting of three different archaeological periods: Middle Stone Age (MSA), Late Stone Age (LSA), and Indeterminate Iron Age (IIA).

The MSA component consists of an extensive scatter of MSA stone tools across the entire property. These tools included flakes and cores. The LSA component consists of a few flakes and one formal tool (a scraper) that are located along the southern part of the property. The IIA component consists of several pottery sherds that appear to occur along the western part of the property. An upper grinding stone was also observed. The pottery is undecorated and probably dates to the late Iron Age or Historical Period.

Significance: The site is of low significance as the Stone Age material appears to be in a secondary context, and the IIA material is ephemeral.

Mitigation: No further mitigation is required.

SHEMBE CIRCLE

A Shembe Circle was observed along the eastern part of the development. It appears to be an established area of worship and the members probably live in the adjacent community. There is a partially constructed brick building nearby. This is a heritage site as it is a place of religious activity.

Significance: The Shembe Circle is of high significance due to its religious implications.

Mitigation: The development will need to discuss the future of this area with members of the community.

SENSITIVE AREAS

Three areas were noted as being sensitive in the development. These individual areas are marked by the older *Euphorbia spp.* tree that is growing.

These trees are historically associated with human burials. I could not determine if human remains occurred beneath these trees, and there were no direct indications that they are graves. However, the occurrence of pottery sherds in the nearby vicinity makes these areas sensitive.

Significance: The area is only of high significance if there are human remains beneath the trees.

Mitigation: Care should be taken if these trees are removed. If any human remains do occur then Amafa KZN, or a registered heritage practitioner, should be contacted immediately. Alternatively, the environmental control officer should be on site during the site clearance phase.

CONCLUSION

The heritage survey of the proposed Phumlani Housing Development recorded one archaeological site, one religious site, and three sensitive areas. The sensitive areas may, or may not, be associated with human burials. All *Euphorbia spp.* trees should be considered as sensitive during the development.

The development will require a permit from Amafa KZN for the destruction and/or damage to the archaeological sites. The development will also need to consult with the relevant community regarding the Shembe Circle.

UMLANDO ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE RECORD FORM

SITE CATEGORY: (X where applicable)

Stone Age: MSA, LSA

Early Iron Age:

Late Iron Age x?

Historical Period:x?

Recorder's Site No.: HLU001

Map Reference: S28 01' 29.4", E32 15' 56.4" (alt = 89m) – approx. centre of site.



DIRECTIONS TO SITE: SKETCH OR DESCRIPTION.

From N2 drive towards Hluhluwe. At 2nd traffic circle turn right into Duiker St. Development occurs below current housing and between Idube and Duiker St. and continues south towards the river.

SITE DESCRIPTION:

Type of Site: Open

Merits conservation: No

Threats: yes

What threats: Possible development

RECORDING:

Graphic record: None

Digital pictures:

Tracings :

Re-drawings:

Recorder/Informant: Name: Gavin Anderson

Address: PO Box 102532, Meerensee, 3901

Date: 5 November 2008

Owner: Hluhluwe Municipality?

References:

Description of site and artefactual content.

Site consists of an ephemeral scatter of IIA sherds, MSA flakes and cores, and LSA flakes and scraper.

Shembe circle occurs to east of development. Some Euphorbia spp. trees in area that may be related to human graves (cannot verify without excavations)