

PROPOSED DRESSING PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE, KWAZULU-NATAL

PHASE 1 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Hisbiscus Coast Municipality proposes the construction of a pedestrian bridge, to be known as the Dressing pedestrian bridge and associated footpaths, which will be situated approximately 1km south of the road from Margate to Izotsha and Paddock. The bridge will be situated roughly 12km inland and north-west of the town of Margate.

This report serves as the Phase 1 Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for the proposed construction of the pedestrian bridge and associated footpaths. A site inspection of the area where the bridge will be constructed was undertaken on 29 December 2015.

The proposed construction of the bridge and associated could impact on graves and structures, as well as 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.

The immediate project area is characterised by low to medium density rural settlement, with subsistence farming and livestock herding. Traditional building techniques and styles still occur supplemented by homes and other structures built in a western architectural style.

The potential for finding *in situ* significant archaeological sites and other heritage resources is regarded as low due to the highly disturbed nature of the surrounding area. Traditional burial places are typically located in homestead precincts; the proposed pedestrian bridge is situated quite close to two dwellings but discussions held with local residents indicated that there are no graves or other heritage sites in the area where the bridge is proposed.

The fossil sensitivity map indicates that the project area falls within an area that is largely unknown in terms of fossil sensitivity. Although a desktop study is required, this is not recommended or supported as the area of development is highly disturbed by residential development, roads, pathways and subsistence farming. There is therefore a very low chance of intact, significant fossils being found in the area.

Based on the findings of the assessment, the development can proceed as the development will not impact on any heritage resources, with the proviso that the mitigation measures provided in the main body of this report are implemented.

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AUTHOR DETAILS

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1 INTRODUCTION

The Hibiscus Coast Municipality proposes the construction of a pedestrian bridge, to be known as the Dressing pedestrian bridge that will be situated roughly 12km inland and north-west of the coastal town of Margate.

This report serves as the Phase 1 Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for the proposed construction of the Dressing pedestrian bridge.

2 LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

The proposed pedestrian bridge is approximately 29 m in length and the associated footpaths are 17m on one side and 7m on the other side of the bridge. Therefore, the project does not trigger subsections (a) and (b) of section 38 of the National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act No 25 of 1999) that state the following:

“(1) Subject to the provisions of subsections (7), (8) and (9), any person who intends to undertake a development categorised as—

(a) the construction of a road, wall, power line, pipeline, canal or other similar form of linear development or barrier exceeding 300m in length;

(b) the construction of a bridge or similar structure exceeding 50 m in length

However, the proposed construction of the bridge may impact on graves and structures, as well as 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), therefore a HIA was undertaken for the project.

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).

The Phase I HIA was undertaken to assess whether any heritage resources will be impacted by the proposed pedestrian bridge.

3 LOCATION

The project is situated approximately 1km south of the tar road from Margate to Paddock that eventually joins the N2 that leads to Kokstad and the Eastern Cape. The bridge and associated footpaths will be situated roughly 12km inland and north-west of the town of Margate. – see Figure 1 below. The total development area of the Dressing Bridge will be 85.6m².

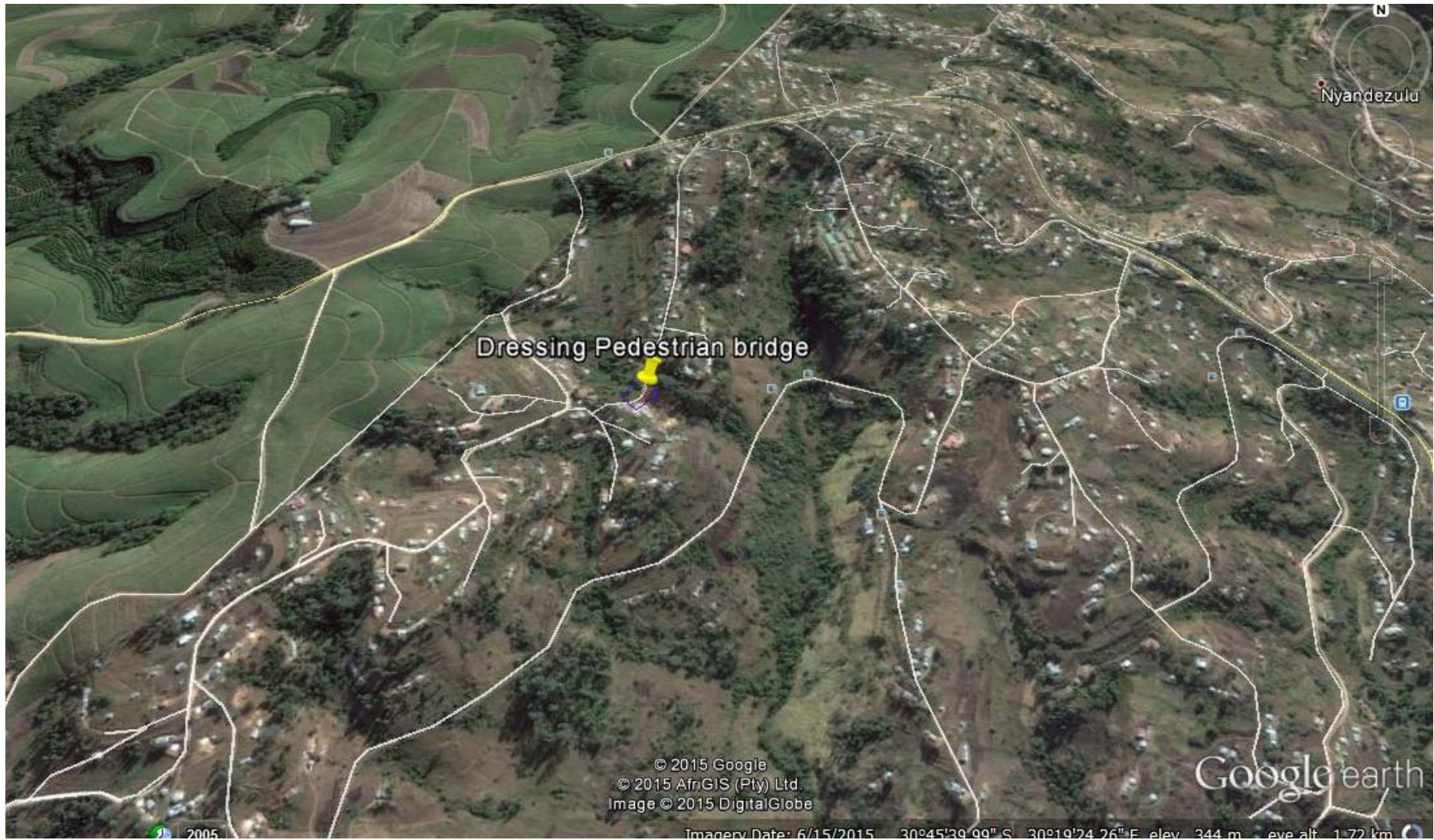


Figure 1: Location of proposed bridge



Figure 2: Location of proposed bridge

4 METHODOLOGY

A site inspection of the area where the pedestrian bridge and footpaths are to be constructed was undertaken on 29 December 2015.

A survey of literature, including other heritage impact assessments completed in the surrounding area, was undertaken in order to understand the potential heritage resources that could be found in the area where the proposed bridge is to be constructed.

5 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF PROJECT AREA

Archaeology of area

Stone Age sites of all the main periods and cultural traditions occur along the coastal cordon in the immediate vicinity of Port Shepstone which is situated north of the project area. Most of the sites 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 various rock painting sites 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 (Prins 2012:4).

Around 1 700 years ago, an initial wave of Early Iron Age people settled along the inland foot of the sand dunes in KwaZulu-Natal on sandy but humus rich soils which would have ensured good crops for the first year or two after they had been cleared. They produced a characteristic pottery style known as Matola. The Matola people exploited the wild plant and animal resources of the forest and adjacent sea-shore. The communities seemed to have been small groups of perhaps a few dozen people, moving into a landscape sparsely inhabited by Later Stone Age San hunter- gatherers. By 1500 years ago, another wave of Iron Age migrants entered the area. Their distinct ceramic pottery has been classified as styles known as

“Msuluzi” (AD 500-700), Ndongondwane (AD 700-800) and Ntshekane (AD 800-900) (Prins 2012: 4).

Early Iron Age sites in the greater Ugu District Municipality to the north of the project 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 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. The flat alluvial and colluvial areas adjacent to the Mzimkhulu River, which is situated north of the site of the proposed bridge, have been identified as potential Early Iron Age site locations (Prins: 5).

Later Iron Age communities in KwaZulu-Natal were the direct ancestors of the Zulu-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 and subsequent civil wars in Zululand to the north. It is known from oral history that the greater project area was inhabited by Zulu refugees in the 19th century (Bryant 1965) especially by members of the abakwaCele clan. The abakwaCele arrived in the surrounding areas around 1828 soon after the murder of King Shaka when they were being pursued by supporters of King Dingane.

History of area

There is limited specific history of the project area therefore some historical background of the surrounding area will be provided. In 1908, Henry Richardson, an English surveyor laid out the town and named it Margate after another seaside resort on the northern coast of the United Kingdom. The river which flows into the sea at Margate is called "Nkhongweni" (place of entreaty) because the original inhabitants were reputed to be so mean that travellers had to beg for hospitality (Online 2015:1).

Margate hit the world headlines in 1922 (although this date is often disputed and stated as 1924) when an enormous, white, furry creature (dubbed "Trunko" due to it having an elephantine trunk) was washed up on the beach. Unfortunately the "Margate monster" was too decomposed to be identified accurately (Online 2015:1).

6 RESULTS OF SITE INVESTIGATION

The project area is characterised by low to medium density rural settlement, with subsistence farming and livestock herding with a few schools, shops and clinics. Traditional building techniques and styles still occur supplemented by homes and other structures built in a western architectural style.

The potential for *in situ* significant archaeological sites and other heritage resources is regarded as low due to the disturbed nature of the surrounding area. Traditional burial places are typically located in homestead precincts; the proposed pedestrian bridge and associated footpaths are situated very close to two residences/dwellings. However, local residents Sifiso and Mthokosizi Machi and Samuel Hadiya told the specialist that there were no graves in close proximity to the houses or to the area where it is proposed to build the bridge. The area of the proposed development is densely overgrown with vegetation which made visibility poor (see Figures 3 and 4).

It should be noted that the residents that spoke to the specialist seemed to be unaware of the project and Mrs Machi, who owns one of the residences close to the proposed bridge, expressed concern that her house and vegetable field would be affected/damaged by the bridge. It is suggested that the Municipality discuss the proposed development with the homeowner. Mrs Machi's house can be seen in the top left hand corner of Figure 4 below.



Figure 3: View of section of area to be developed looking in south-westerly direction



Figure 4: Area to be developed – north direction



Figure 5: Second residence situated close to bridge with subsistence farming in foreground

7 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

No obvious heritage sites were identified during the site investigation of the project area. Local residents confirmed these findings by indicating that to their knowledge there were no heritage sites in the area where the bridge and associated pathways are to be built.

The fossil sensitivity map of the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) indicates that the project area falls within an area that is largely unknown in terms of fossil sensitivity (see Figure 6 below). Although a desktop study is required, as indicated in the Legend for Figure 6, this is not recommended nor supported as the area of development is highly disturbed by residential development, roads, pathways and subsistence farming. There is therefore a very low chance of intact, significant fossils being found in the area.

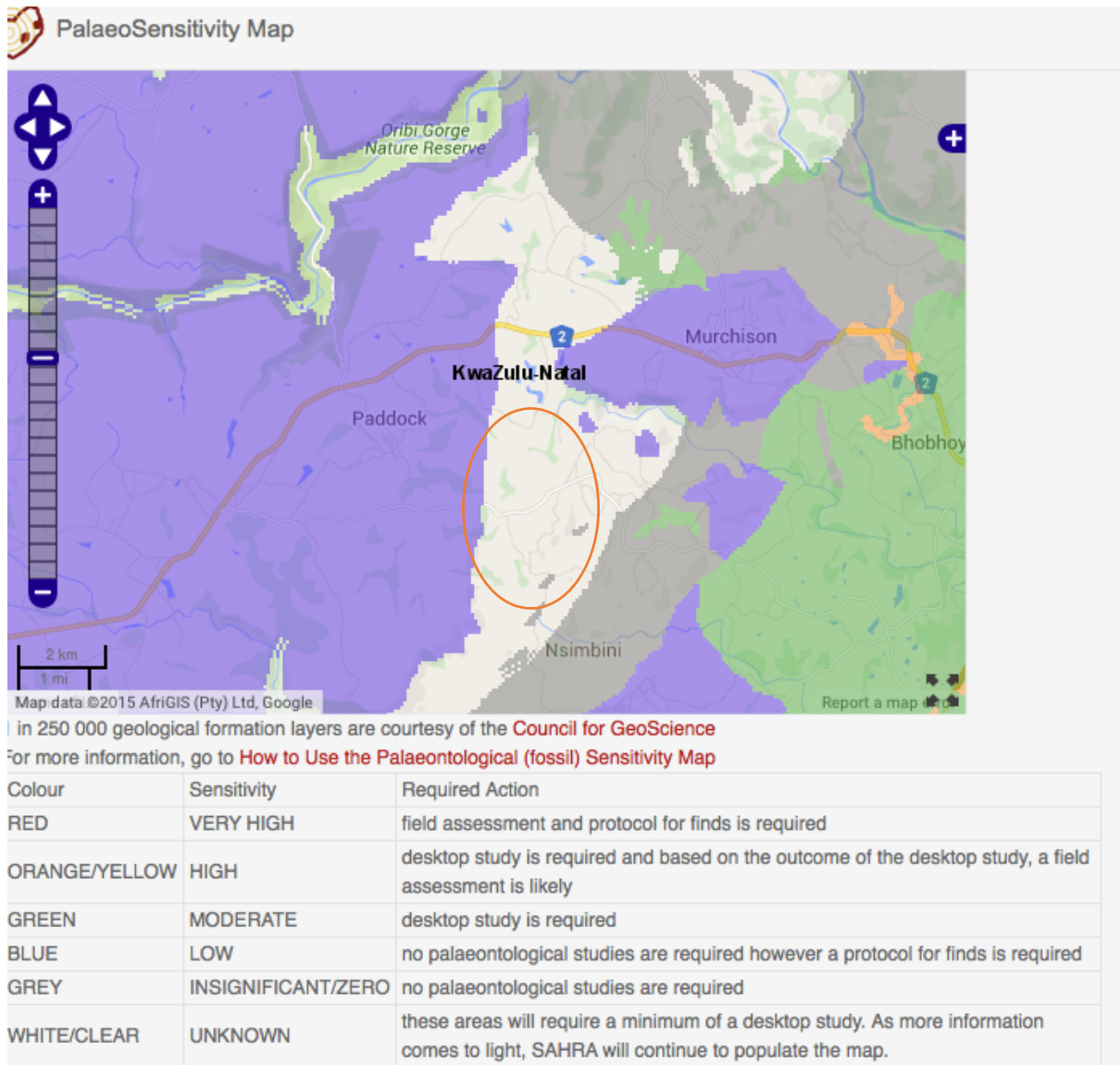


Figure 6: Fossil sensitivity of project area (circled)

8 CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the site visit, the development can proceed as no visible heritage sites were identified during the site visit which was supported by the evidence of local residents. This recommendation is based on the proviso that the implementation of the mitigation measures, as listed below, must also be taken into account.

9 MITIGATION MEASURES

- For any chance finds, all work must cease in the area affected and the Contractor must 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.
- The heritage specialist will assess the significance of the resource and provide guidance on the way forward.
- Permits to 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 to be protected by a 10m 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

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