

PROPOSED MBHELE PEDESTRICAN BRIDGE, KWAZULU-NATAL

PHASE 1 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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Compiled for: 1World Consultants

Compiled by: Jean Beater

JLB Consulting

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Hisbiscus Coast Municipality proposes the construction of a pedestrian bridge, to be known as the Mbhele pedestrian bridge in the community of Enkanyisweni which is situated roughly 6km inland and north-west of the coastal town of Ramsgate.

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

The proposed construction of the bridge 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 surrounding area has large-scale intensive sugar cane farming. 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 disturbed nature of the surrounding area. Traditional burial places are typically located in homestead precincts; the proposed pedestrian bridge is situated well away from surrounding homesteads and no graves were identified during the site inspection. During the site inspection two local residents indicated to the specialist that there were no heritage sites in the area where the bridge is proposed.

The fossil sensitivity map indicated that the project area falls within an area of insignificant fossil sensitivity which means that no palaeontological studies need to be undertaken for this proposed development.

Based on the findings of the assessment, the development can proceed as it 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

Verification	Name	Qualification	Professional Registration
Author	Jean Beater	MA (Heritage Studies)	Affiliate Member of Association of South African Professional Archaeologists (No. 349) Member of IAIAAsa (No. 1538)

1 INTRODUCTION

The Hibiscus Coast Municipality proposes the construction of a pedestrian bridge, to be known as the Mbhele pedestrian bridge in the community of Enkanyisweni which is situated roughly 6km inland and north-west of the coastal town of Ramsgate.

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

2 LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

The proposed pedestrian bridge is approximately 30 m in length therefore the project does not trigger subsection (b) of section 38 of the National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act No 25 of 1999), that states the following:

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

(b) the construction of a bridge or similar structure exceeding 50 m in length must notify the responsible heritage resources authority and furnish it with details regarding the location, nature and extent of the proposed development.

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 6km inland and north-west of the coastal town of Ramsgate. It will be situated in the community of Enkanyisweni – see Figures 1 and 2 below. The total development area of the Mbhele Bridge will be 244m². The layout of the bridge can be seen in Figure 3.

4 METHODOLOGY

A site inspection of the area where the pedestrian bridge is 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.

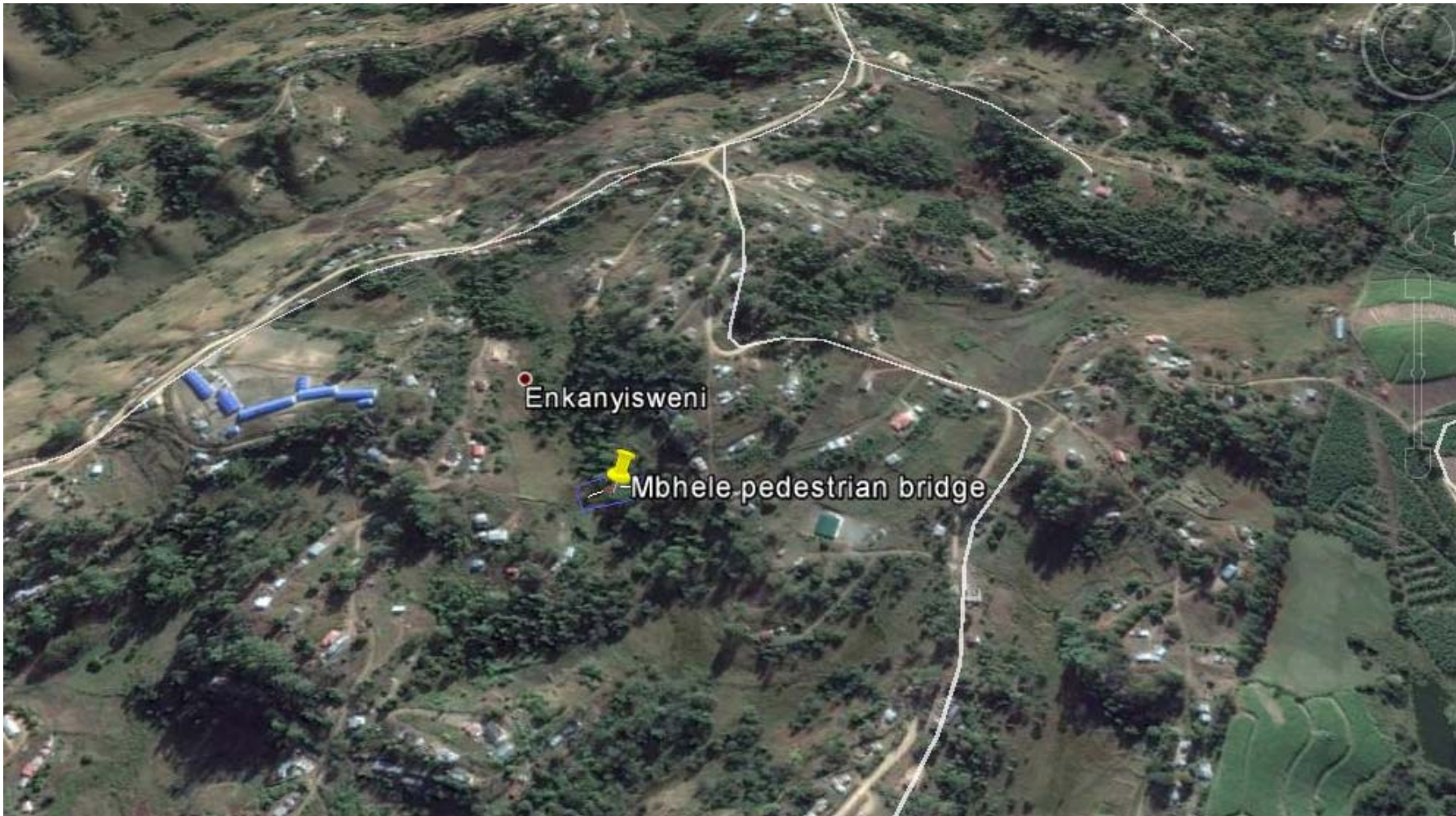


Figure 1: Location of proposed bridge



Figure 2: Location of proposed bridge

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 and of Ramsgate. One of the earliest recorded arrivals in Ramsgate is recorded in 1895. Captain Crompton arrived on the shore and established a settlement called Fascadale slightly inland from the coast. He started a trading store and post office on Fascadale Road (which remains today). The settlement was called Fascadale after a ship that wrecked just off the coast at Southbroom in that same year. The ship was carrying sugar from Lisbon to Mauritius. Much of the cargo was rescued by an early settler, Mr Mitchell who is said to have used some of the wood salvaged from the ship in the construction of his home on the Bushy Vales farm. One of the most famous early settler was a man called Paul Buck who settled on the southern bank of the iBilanhlo River. The iBilanhlo River (the marvellous Boiler) got its name from the powerful currents that churn up the water creating bubbles (Online 2012:1).

The Town Boards of Ramsgate and Baven-on-Sea were amalgamated in the late 1950s and it was decided to call the consolidated town Ramsgate (Online 2012:1).

6 RESULTS OF SITE INVESTIGATION

The surrounding area has large-scale intensive sugar cane farming. The immediate project area is characterised by low to medium density rural settlement, with subsistence farming and livestock herding, limited electricity and telecommunications infrastructure, 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 is situated well away from surrounding homesteads and no graves were identified during the site inspection. The project area is overgrown with vegetation and is situated in a gum tree plantation.

During the site inspection two local residents, Ms Sindi Thutshini and Mrs Nkosi, both indicated to the specialist that they were aware of the project and that there were no heritage sites in the area where the bridge is proposed to be developed.



Figure 3: Area to be developed



Figure 4: Location of bridge and stream with farming in background

7 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

No obvious heritage sites were identified during the site investigation of the project. Two local residents confirmed the findings by indicating that to their knowledge there were no heritage sites in the area where the bridge is to be built.

The fossil sensitivity map of the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) indicates that the project area falls within an area of insignificant fossil sensitivity (see Figure 6 below) that means that no palaeontological studies need to be undertaken for this proposed development.

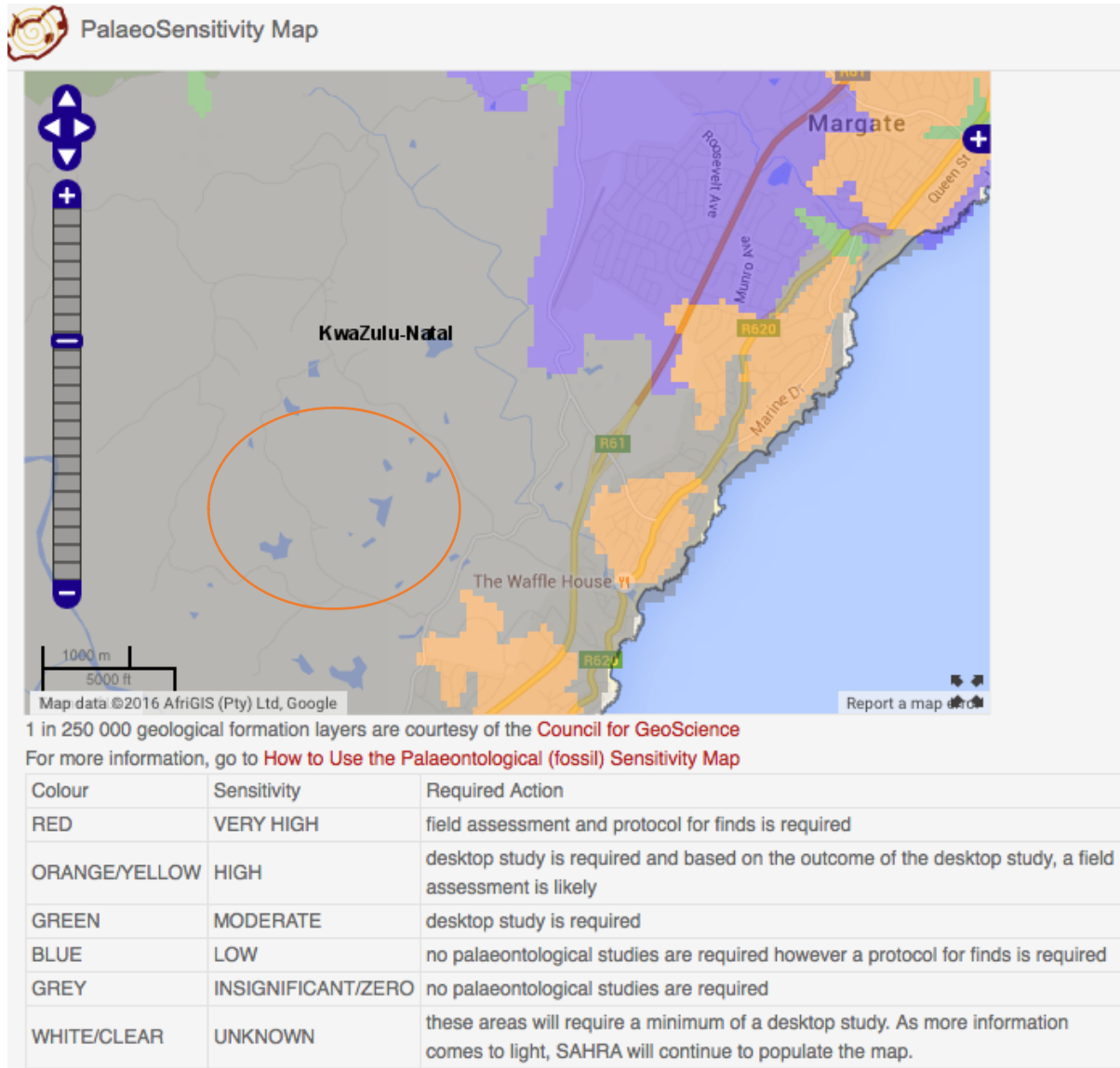


Figure 5: Fossil sensitivity of project area (circled)

8 CONCLUSION

As no significant heritage sites were found and based on the evidence of the local community, the development can proceed with the proviso that the implementation of the mitigation measures, as listed below, must 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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