



Archaetnos Culture & Cultural
Resource Consultants
BK 98 09854/23

FINAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL REPORT

**A REPORT ON THE ASSESSMENT OF POSSIBLE GRAVES
AT ZITHULELE HOSPITAL, EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE**

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WSP

E-mail: Pieta.Pretorius@wsp.com

By:

Prof. AC van Vollenhoven (L.AKAD. S.A.) (Principal Investigator)
Accredited member of ASAPA (no 166) and SASCH (no CH01),

REPORT NO: **AE02242V**

23 November 2022

SAHRA Permit officer: Thingahangwi Tshivhase

Archaetnos

P.O.Box 55
GROENKLOOF
0027

Tel: **083 291 6104**

Fax: **086 520 4173**

Email: antonv@archaetnos.co.za

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SUMMARY

Archaetnos cc was requested by WSP Group Africa (Pty) Ltd to assess possible graves which are inside of the premises of the Zithulele Hospital. The site is situated on The Farm Zithulele Hospital No 196 situated in the Mbhashe Municipality, Administrative District of Xhosa, Province of the Eastern Cape. This is located south-east of Mthatha.

The hospital was identified by the National Department of Health as one of the rural hospitals that must be upgraded to a Level 1 District Hospital to supply much needed medical care to the communities around the hospital as well as the whole Eastern Cape Province. WSP Group Africa (Pty) Ltd was appointed by Coega Development Corporation (Implementing agents) as professional service provider for Zithulele Hospital.

During a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) on site some buildings older than 60 years were noted. No other sites of historical or archaeological interest were identified during the site visit. Also no graves were identified. However, during the site handover to the contractor, GVK-Siya Zama Construction, the Chief, Mr. A.G. Dudumayo, indicated that there used to be graves on site, of which no above-ground indications are visible. The chief with one of the community elders identified positions of possible graves on site. WSP was thus instructed to start the formal process of confirming the burial sites before any construction work can be carried out in the identified positions. For this purpose, Archaetnos obtained a permit from the South African Heritage Resources Agency. The main aim was to do a watching brief while excavating possible positions of the graves.

The family for graves 1 & 2 did not wish those to be investigated, but all the others were excavated. No human remains were identified in any of these. No indications of graves or graves pits, burials, human or other remains were identified. The soil seemed undisturbed.

It is therefore recommended that:

- It was agreed with the families that the development on site may continue. This should therefore be allowed.
- However, should any human remains be identified during work on site, work should immediately cease, and the area demarcated. An archaeologist should then be called in to investigate the find.
- In such a case the families will also be informed.
- It was also agreed with the Cebani family (the site that was not excavated) that one of the new hospital wings will be named after them, in this way commemorating the family. This should be implemented.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Archaetnos cc was requested by WSP Group Africa (Pty) Ltd (hereafter WSP) to assess possible graves which are inside of the premises of the Zithulele Hospital. The site is situated on The Farm Zithulele Hospital No 196 situated in the Mbhashe Municipality, Administrative District of Xhosa, Province of the Eastern Cape. This is located south-east of Mthatha (Figure 1-2).

The hospital was identified by the National Department of Health as one of the rural hospitals that must be upgraded to a Level 1 District Hospital to supply much needed medical care to the communities around the hospital as well as the whole Eastern Cape Province. WSP Group Africa (Pty) Ltd was appointed by Coega Development Corporation (Implementing agents) as professional service provider for Zithulele Hospital.

For this purpose, a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) was done by Archaic. It is clear from the report (Whelan 2017) and the inspections carried out during the site visit, that the material value of the buildings on the site that constitute the Zithulele Regional Hospital are limited: they are all of more recent construction and are thus not protected by the general protection clause of the South African Heritage Resources Act, which allows for immediate protection of buildings over the age of 60 years. No other sites of historical or archaeological interest were identified during the site visit. Also no graves were identified.

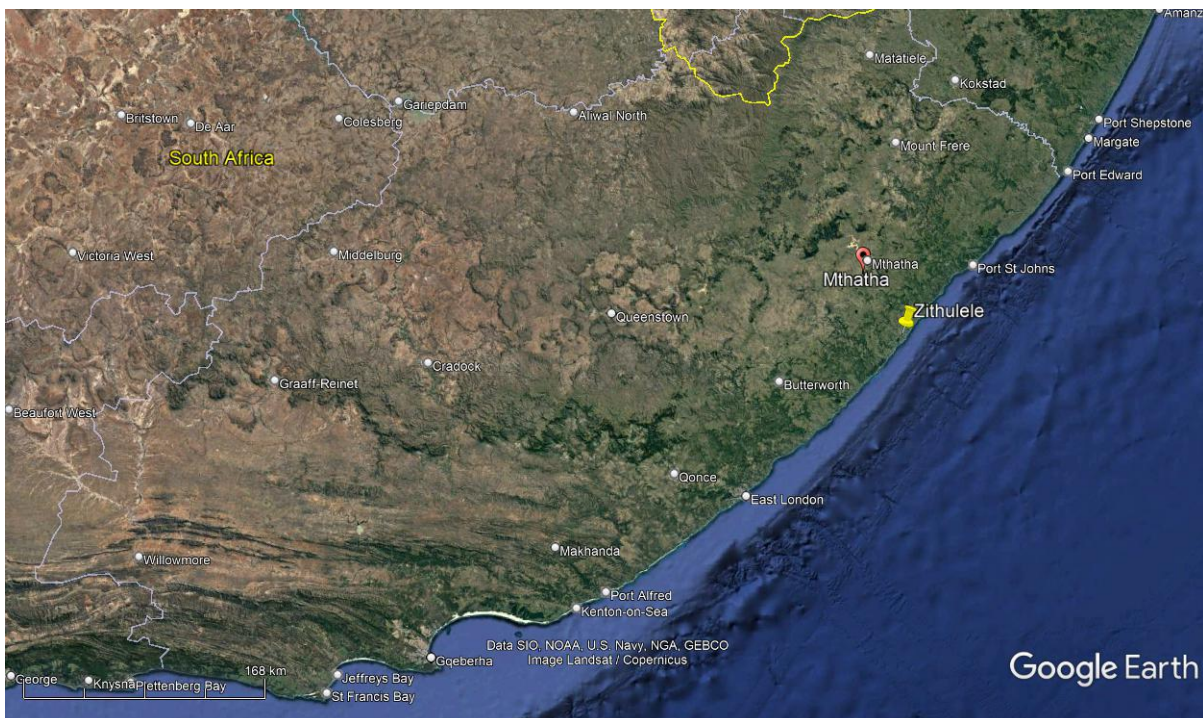


Figure 1: Mthatha and Zithulele in the Eastern Cape Province. North reference is to the top.



Figure 2: Location of the site within Zithulele.

The Contractor, GVK-Siya Zama Construction was appointed for the construction of the new hospital. The site was handed over to the Contractor on 10 March 2022. During the site handover meeting, the Chief, Mr. A.G. Dudumayo, indicated that there used to be graves on site, of which no above-ground indications are visible. The chief with one of the community elders identified positions of possible graves on site (Figure 3-4).

Coega Development Corporation therefore instructed WSP to start the formal process of confirming the burial sites before any construction work can be carried out in the identified positions. Archaeos was appointed to do the investigation.



NOTES:

1. THE GRAVE POSITIONS ARE TO BE PLACED IN THE AREAS SHOWN ON THIS PLAN.
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NO.	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	REV.	DATE

PROJECT TITLE: **GRAVE POSITIONS**

WSP
WSP GROUP AFRICA (PTY) LTD
 CONSULTING ENGINEERS
 201 RIVER ROAD, SANDHURST, JHB 6016, SOUTH AFRICA
 TEL: +27 (0)11 805 2800 FAX: +27 (0)11 805 2801

DOEGA DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

HOSPITAL DESIGN GROUP

ZITHULELE HOSPITAL

GRAVE POSITIONS

SCALE: 1:250	DRAWN BY: G. DAVEL	CHECKED BY: E. DOODEN
PROJECT NO.: 43101065	DATE: 10/09/2010	DATE: 02/23/2010
PROJECT NAME: GRAVE POSITIONS	PROJECT NO.: SK001	REV: A

DATE OF ISSUE: 10/09/2010

PROJECT NO.: 43101065

PROJECT NAME: GRAVE POSITIONS

PROJECT NO.: SK001

REV: A

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Figure 3: Site map indicating the possible sites of the graves.



Figure 4: Google Earth image indicating the possible sites (1, 2, 3A&B, 4, 5 and 6).

2. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Terms of Reference for the study were as follows:

1. Assessing the Zithulele site to determine the possible locations of graves on site.
2. Doing a watching brief while excavating areas indicated by families as possible grave sites.
3. Documenting the process and any grave that may be identified.
4. Covering any possible human remains encountered in order to exhume this at a later stage.

3. CONDITIONS & ASSUMPTIONS

The following conditions and assumptions have a direct bearing on the study:

1. Cultural Resources are all non-physical and physical man-made occurrences, as well as natural occurrences associated with human activity. These include all sites, structure and artifacts of importance, either individually or in groups, in the history, architecture and archaeology of human (cultural) development. **Graves and cemeteries are included in this.**

2. The significance of the sites, structures and artifacts is determined by means of their historical, social, aesthetic, technological and scientific value in relation to their uniqueness, condition of preservation and research potential. The various aspects are not mutually exclusive, and the evaluation of any site is done with reference to any number of these aspects. **Graves are always given a high cultural significance as it is an extremely emotional issue.**
3. The latitude and longitude of any archaeological or historical site or feature, is to be treated as sensitive information by the developer and should not be disclosed to members of the public. **This includes graves.**
4. Cultural significance is site-specific and relates to the content and context of the site. Sites regarded as having low cultural significance have already been recorded in full and require no further mitigation. Sites with medium cultural significance may or may not require mitigation depending on other factors such as the significance of impact on the site. Sites with a high cultural significance require further mitigation.
5. All recommendations are made with full cognizance of the relevant legislation.

4. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Aspects concerning the conservation of cultural resources are dealt with mainly in two acts. These are the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999) and the National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998).

4.1 The National Heritage Resources Act

According to the above-mentioned Act the following is protected as cultural heritage resources:

- a. Archaeological artifacts, structures and sites older than 100 years
- b. Ethnographic art objects (e.g. prehistoric rock art) and ethnography
- c. Objects of decorative and visual arts
- d. Military objects, structures and sites older than 75 years
- e. Historical objects, structures and sites older than 60 years
- f. Proclaimed heritage sites
- g. Grave yards and graves older than 60 years**
- h. Meteorites and fossils
- i. Objects, structures and sites of scientific or technological value.

The national estate includes the following:

- 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 features of cultural significance
- e. Geological sites of scientific or cultural importance
- f. Archaeological and paleontological importance
- g. Graves and burial grounds**
- h. Sites of significance relating to the history of slavery
- i. Movable objects (e.g. archaeological, paleontological, meteorites, geological specimens, military, ethnographic, books etc.)

A Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) is the process to be followed in order to determine whether any heritage resources are located within the area to be developed as well as the possible impact of the proposed development thereon. An Archaeological Impact Assessment only looks at archaeological resources. An HIA must be done under the following circumstances:

- a. The construction of a linear development (road, wall, power line canal etc.) exceeding 300m in length
- b. The construction of a bridge or similar structure exceeding 50m in length
- c. Any development or other activity that will change the character of a site and exceed 5 000m² or involve three or more existing erven or subdivisions thereof
- d. Re-zoning of a site exceeding 10 000 m²
- e. Any other category provided for in the regulations of SAHRA or a provincial heritage authority

Structures

Section 34 (1) of the mentioned act states that no person may demolish any structure or part thereof which is older than 60 years without a permit issued by the relevant provincial heritage resources authority.

A structure means any building, works, device or other facility made by people and which is fixed to land, and includes any fixtures, fittings and equipment associated therewith.

Alter means any action affecting the structure, appearance or physical properties of a place or object, whether by way of structural or other works, by painting, plastering or the decoration or any other means.

Archaeology, palaeontology and meteorites

Section 35(4) of this Act deals with archaeology, palaeontology and meteorites. The Act states that no person may, without a permit issued by the responsible heritage resources authority (national or provincial):

- a. destroy, damage, excavate, alter, deface or otherwise disturb any archaeological or paleontological site or any meteorite;

- b. destroy, damage, excavate, remove from its original position, collect or own any archaeological or paleontological material or object or any meteorite;
- c. trade in, sell for private gain, export or attempt to export from the Republic any category of archaeological or paleontological material or object, or any meteorite; or
- d. bring onto or use at an archaeological or paleontological site any excavation equipment or any equipment that assists in the detection or recovery of metals or archaeological and paleontological material or objects or use such equipment for the recovery of meteorites.
- e. alter or demolish any structure or part of a structure which is older than 60 years as protected.

The above mentioned may only be disturbed or moved by an archaeologist, after receiving a permit from the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA). In order to demolish such a site or structure, a destruction permit from SAHRA will also be needed.

Human remains

Graves and burial grounds are divided into the following:

- a. ancestral graves
- b. royal graves and graves of traditional leaders
- c. graves of victims of conflict
- d. graves designated by the Minister
- e. historical graves and cemeteries
- f. human remains

In terms of Section 36(3) of the National Heritage Resources Act, no person may, without a permit issued by the relevant heritage resources authority:

- a. destroy, damage, alter, exhume or remove from its original position or otherwise disturb the grave of a victim of conflict, or any burial ground or part thereof which contains such graves;
- b. destroy, damage, alter, exhume or remove from its original position or otherwise disturb any grave or burial ground older than 60 years which is situated outside a formal cemetery administered by a local authority; or
- c. bring onto or use at a burial ground or grave referred to in paragraph (a) or (b) any excavation, or any equipment which assists in the detection or recovery of metals.

Unidentified/unknown graves are also handled as older than 60 until proven otherwise. Human remains that are less than 60 years old are subject to provisions of the **National Health Act (Act 61 of 2003)** and to local regulations. Exhumation of graves must conform to the standards set out in the **Ordinance on Excavations (Ordinance no. 12 of 1980)** (replacing the old Transvaal Ordinance no. 7 of 1925).

Permission must also be gained from the descendants (where known), the National Department of Health, Provincial Department of Health, Premier of the Province and local police. Furthermore, permission must also be gained from the various landowners (i.e. where the graves are located and where they are to be relocated) before exhumation can take place. Human remains can only be handled by a registered undertaker or an institution declared under the **National Health Act (Act 61 of 2003)**.

4.2 The National Environmental Management Act

This Act (Act 107 of 1998) states that a survey and evaluation of cultural resources must be done in areas where development projects that will change the face of the environment will be undertaken. The impact of the development on these resources should be determined and proposals for the mitigation thereof are made.

Environmental management should also take the cultural and social needs of people into account. Any disturbance of landscapes and sites that constitute the nation's cultural heritage should be avoided as far as possible and where this is not possible the disturbance should be minimized and remedied.

5. METHODOLOGY

No social consultation was done since the families came to the fore by themselves and discussed the matter with the developer. After consultation with them, the method indicated below was decided upon.

It has to be stated that there is no above ground indication of any graves. Also, the family are unsure exactly where the graves are located since the area is entirely landscaped.

GPRS scanning was considered but after consultation with the families decided not to use this as result may not be conclusive meaning that one will have to excavate in any case to obtain proof of graves. It was therefore decided to dig trenches/holes and monitor the trenches and soil (a watching brief) for any indications of graves or skeletal material (Figure 5). This is in accordance with previous projects done to find skeletal remains.

It needs to be indicated that some of the families decided not to continue with the digging process. These areas were then merely documented.



Figure 5: The excavator that was used.

The investigation thus entailed the following:

- A watching brief monitoring the site during a search to find possible human remains.
- Giving advice during the process and documenting the entire process.
- The site was cleared from access vegetation to improve visibility.
- The watching brief implemented consisted of the systematic investigation to determine whether graves (human remains) may be present. The following protocol was followed:
 - A permit was obtained from the SAHRA BGG unit.
 - The indicated areas were excavated by means of an excavator following agreed distances and depths.
 - It is believed that one can expect burials every 3 metres (including 2 m for the remains and 1 m space in between graves). The plan was thus to excavate at 2 metre intervals up to a depth of 2 metres to ensure nothing is missed. However, the families stopped the process after the digging of the first holes/trenches as they felt this was enough.

- If human remains would be found, it would be covered again and the archaeologist would have marked the location with a GPS instrument ensuring it would be located again later. As no remains were found, this was not needed.
- The results was communicated to the families, who in any case were present on site during excavation.
- It was foreseen that human remains would then be exhumed and reburied at a later stage. This will however only be done after further consultation with the families and the SAHRA BGG unit. As no remains have been identified this was also not done.

6. DESCRIPTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

The environment where the grave site is situated has been entirely disturbed and no natural vegetation exists. The vegetation that does occur consists of landscaped lawns. It is however clear that the area has been subjected to ground work activities in the recent past.

The topography of the area falls from west to east as the hospital is located on a ridge. No outstanding rock outcrops or rivers are found inside of the property. In summary it can be said that it is an entirely cultivated landscape.

7. DISCUSSION

The relevant questions regarding the matter of possible graves are discussed under this section. From the discussion the recommendations will follow.

On site it was determined that the initial information regarding the graves are not entirely correct. Together with the families it was determined that there are seven graves (Figure 6), with GPS coordinates, being:

- 1 & 2 - 32° 2'58.65"S; 29° 3'37.64"E – at same location
- 3 & 7 - 32° 2'57.56"S; 29° 3'41.49"E – at same location what used to be 3A
- 4 & 5 - 32° 2'53.89"S; 29° 3'42.04"E – at same location
- 6 - 32° 2'54.52"S; 29° 3'42.69"E



Figure 6: Final determined positions of possible graves.

Graves 1 & 2:

These graves are those of the Cebani family. The family representative is Mr. Cebani, cell 0835338600. It is the graves of:

- Cebani Siyoyo, a male, born approximately 1800; date of death unknown
- Nomasuwa Siyoyo, a female, born approximately 1800; date of death unknown

The family indicated that they do not wish to continue with the excavation and thus this area was not investigated (Figure 7).



Figure 7: Position of grave 1 and 2.

Graves 3 & 7:

These graves are those of the Matsutsu family. The family representative is Mr. Matsutsu, cell 0665166368. The people buried here (Figure 8) are a husband and wife, namely:

- Mr. Yamaphi, born 1800; date of death unknown
- No name or date of his wife could be traced

One trench of 12 m distance, 2 m deep was excavated but nothing was found (Figure 9). The family then indicated that they did not wish to continue with the excavation and thus no further trenches were dug.



Figure 8: Position of graves 3 and 7.



Figure 9: Trench dug for graves 3 and 7.

Graves 4 & 5:

These graves are those of the Mzinjana family. The family representative is Mr. Siyephu, cell 0737591748. It is the graves (Figure 10) of two males:

- Lhulhu Mzinjana, born 1932; died 1974;
- Mantwana Mzinjani, born 193; died 1975.

One trench of 5 m distance, 2 m deep was excavated but nothing was found (Figure 11). The family then indicated that they did not wish to continue with the excavation and thus no further trenches were dug.



Figure 10: Position of graves 4 and 5.

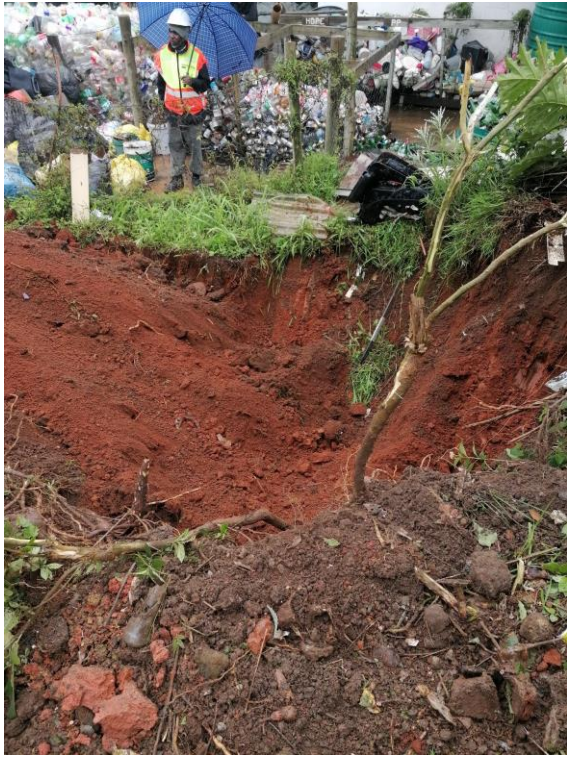


Figure 11: Trench dug for graves 4 and 5. A family representative is watching.

Grave 6:

This grave is that of the Bhalazi family. The family representative is Mr. Ngetyana, cell 0648635543. The person buried here is Bhalasi Kronqotyeni, born 1946; died 1973 (Figure 12).

One trench 3 m distance, 2 m deep was excavated but nothing was found (Figure 13). The family then indicated that they did not wish to continue with the excavation and thus no further trenches were dug.



Figure 12: Position of grave 6.



Figure 13: Trench dug for grave 6.

8. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In theory the trenches was to be dug to a depth of 2,00 m. Graves are usually about 1,8 m deep. However, the natural soil and rock formations determined the depth which therefore varied slightly. In all the trenches the soil was very soft and since the investigation was done during rainy weather, also muddy. The soil from each trench were carefully scrutinized to determine whether any human, coffin or other remains

could be found, and the trenches monitored for any indication of disturbance, mainly possible grave pits.

In none of the trenches anything of note was found. This indicates that there either never were any graves here or that the families could simply not remember the correct areas to be investigated. Information regarding the investigation is indicated in Table 1.

TABLE 1: TRENCHES INFORMATION

Grave number	Trench depth/ width	Description	Comments
1 & 2	No trench	-	Family did not want to excavate
3 & 7	2m/ 12,5m	Soft soil	No indication of grave pits, skeletal material or any other disturbance
4 & 5	2m/ 5m	Soft soil	No indication of grave pits, skeletal material or any other disturbance
6	2m/ 5m	Soft soil	No indication of grave pits, skeletal material or any other disturbance

It is concluded that the watching brief investigation as to whether there are any graves/human remains in the indicated areas, were inconclusive. No indications of graves or graves pits, burials, human or other remains were identified. The soil seemed undisturbed.

It is therefore recommended that:

- It was agreed with the families that the development on site may continue. This should therefore be allowed.
- However, should any human remains be identified during work on site, work should immediately cease, and the area demarcated. An archaeologist should then be called in to investigate the find.
- In such a case the families will also be informed.
- It was also agreed with the Thabane family (the site that was not excavated) that one of the new hospital wings will be named after them, in this way commemorating the family. This should be implemented.

9. REFERENCES

- Republic of South Africa. 1980. **Ordinance on Excavations** (Ordinance no. 12 of 1980). The Government Printer: Pretoria.
- Republic of South Africa. 1999. **National Heritage Resources Act** (No 25 of 1999). Pretoria: the Government Printer.
- Republic of South Africa. 1998. **National Environmental Management Act** (no 107 of 1998). Pretoria: The Government Printer.

Republic of South Africa. 2003. **National Health Act** (No 61 of 2003). The Government Printer: Pretoria.

