



*eThembeni
Cultural
Heritage*

Amafa aKwazulu-Natali
195 Jabu Ndlovu Street Pietermaritzburg 3200 August
Telephone 033 3946 543
bernadetp@amafapmb.co.za

10 January 2018

Attention Bernadet Pawandiwa

Heritage Scoping Report
Helmsley Agricultural Estate
Located on Erf 1 Driefontein
KwaDukuza LM, Ilembe DM, KwaZulu-Natal.

In 2005 eThembeni CHM was appointed by Sustainable Development Projects (SDP) to undertake a heritage impact assessment (HIA) of the Helmsley Agricultural Estate in anticipation of a proposed residential development on the property. A then eThembeni staff member and a student intern conducted the site survey and reported on residues of a Late Iron Age hilltop settlement and evidence of an ancestral grave. They further recommended that a follow up survey be conducted once the cane-fields had been harvested (see 2005 HIA Report and Amafa response loaded to SAHRIS Case file).

Project Area and Project description¹

Helmsley Agricultural Estate lies some 4,5km due west of Ballito Bay along the Esenembi district road (see Fig.1). In 2017 a SPLUMA² application for consolidation of portions of land comprising the estate was submitted to the KwaDukuza Municipality Planning Tribunal (MPT) in anticipation of pursuing the proposed residential development as originally approved by the DFA³ Development Tribunal.

The Record of Decision from the Municipal Planning Tribunal stated in Point 3:

3. “You are required to submit a formal confirmation from KZN Amafa that the proposed Helmsley development area has no cultural heritage resources”.

(See MPT SPLUMA application response loaded to SAHRIS Case file).

¹ Information provided by IDM Consultants and Stott, Milton and Conway Land Surveyors

² Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act; Act No.16 of 2013

³ DFA – Development Facilitation Act 67 of 1995, now repealed

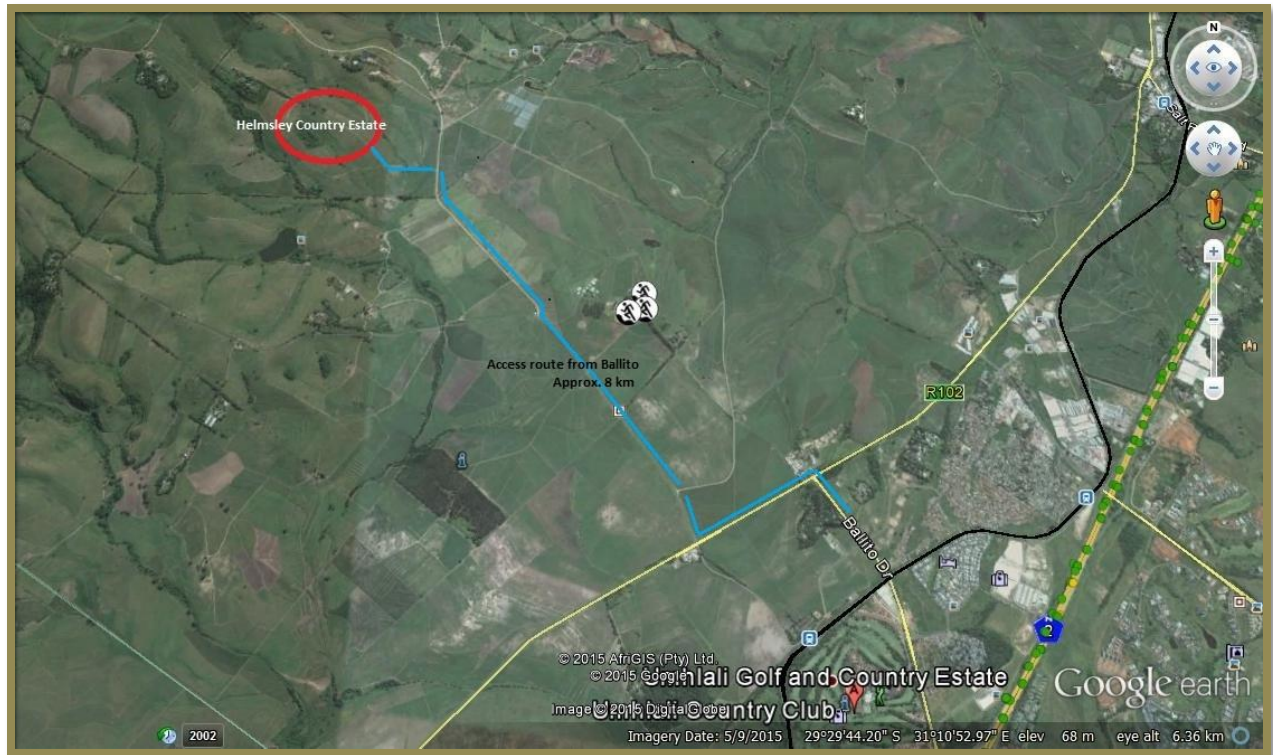


Figure 1 Location of Helmsley Agricultural Estate

SPLUMA principals require that Heritage Agencies (ie. Amafa KZN) are required to comment on developments in terms of Section 38 of the NHRA.⁴ In compliance with these requirements and that of Amafa’s response to the 2005 HIA report, eThembeni CHM have been appointed to obtain such **Final Comment** from Amafa. I consequently inspected the development foot print on 21 December 2017, conducting a controlled- exclusive surface survey *viz* King, 1989.⁵ (See Fig.2).

Observations

The property comprises steeply incised drainage lines disporting into a shallow basin to the north east (the Compensation Flats) with the interfluves broadening and levelling to the south west. The majority of cane fields were recently emerged and surface visibility amongst the setts was fair. The cane fields in which the previously reported archaeological residues had been observed was cleared of cane and had reverted to grassland. Surface visibility here too was fair to good. Transects walked along contoured cane tracks yielded random adiaagnostic pottery shards ($n=<5/50$ linear meters), but no other Iron Age residues. Some widely dispersed metal slag was observed in the road cutting below the field where the 2005 observations had been made. Valley bottoms were ignored as these would have been eschewed for homestead settlement during the Iron Age and early historical period due to seasonal waterlogging.

⁴ National Heritage Resources Act. Act 25 of 1999.

⁵ King, T.F. 1989. The archaeological survey: methods and uses. In: Canter, L.W. 1996. Environmental impact Assessment. 2nd Edition. New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc.



Figure 2 Helmsley survey and track log

Helmsley Estate lies within the core of farms that gave rise to the sugar industry of KwaZulu-Natal. In 1851 Edward Morewood crushed and milled the first cane on his farm “Compensation”, and by 1854 six mills were operational in the immediate area.⁶ Given the excess of one hundred and fifty years of agricultural transformation of these land holdings, no primary context archaeology was expected; particularly on the steeply sloped interfluvies. Archaeologically, the observed pattern of Late Iron Age settlement along this coastal littoral is one of hilltop settlements⁷. On Helmsley, the more level hilltops have all been historically settled by farmhouse precincts, thus imprinting over any precolonial Iron Age settlement of these locale`s. Consequently, the almost random scatters of pottery shards and iron slag observed are the consequence of down-slope migration from middens previously located on the hilltops and subsequently moved by plough action during field preparation for cane planting. None are in primary context.

The supposed grave site reported in the 2005 survey was in the vicinity of a Natal Mahogany tree. The only extant Natal Mahogany trees (*Trichelia emetic*) were observed along the perimeters of the cane fields in wooded hedgerows. Close scrutiny revealed only a single stone-accumulation in the vicinity of a *Trichelia* tree along the northern boundary of the cleared field. This is random cluster of water polished quartzite cobbles that were no doubt collected during field clearance and dumped away from the

⁶ <https://showme.co.za/ballito/tourism/history-of-ballito-dolphin-coast/>

⁷ KZN Museum Archaeological Data Base

ploughing zone. These cobbles derive from a deeper subsurface colluvial stratum comprising coarse river sand and water-polished pebbles and cobblestones from a geologically ancient pluvial period and erosion of the underlying lithology. It is most certainly not a grave location.

The Palaeosensitivity Map⁸ indicates low sensitivity (grey), the bedrock comprising Natal Group sandstones; these being generally reddish, feldspathic and micaceous sandstone with subordinate quartz arenite, mudrock, granulestone and conglomerate.⁹

Recommendations

Accordingly, we request that Amafa authorise the proposed development to proceed with no further heritage resource mitigation, suffice their standard protocols in the event of chance finds being exposed during construction activities.

In this regard, please can you notify us timeously via the loaded SAHRIS case file as to the decision of Amafa.

Yours sincerely



Len van Schalkwyk.
Principle Investigator.

⁸ www.sahra.org.za

⁹ <http://www.geoscience.org.za>