

The Archaeological Survey Of The Richards Bay Minerals

Mining Lease: May 2004

For Richards Bay Minerals

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May 2004 Archaeological Survey at RBM

Mining Ponds

MPE

No new sites were recorded at MPE.

MPD

MPD70 is located along the second dune cordon from Lake Nhlabane. The site consists of a scatter of artefacts that have been exposed by bulldozer activity. One shell midden was visible on the surface. The shell species consisted of brown mussels, oysters and limpets. Several grinding stones were recorded and these occurred on white beach sandstone and quartzite river pebbles. The pottery sherds are undecorated and vary in thickness.

The site dates to the Iron Age, however it is not possible to allocate a precise date. The

site is of low significance and no further mitigation is required.

MPC

MPC 79 is located along the first dune cordon from Lake Nhlabane. MPC 79 is ± 20 m x 50 m in area. The site consists of a single shell midden in a dark brown-black deposit. The shell consists of brown mussels. The pottery is thin-walled and undecorated. This suggests that it dates to the Late Iron Age. One white beach sandstone grinding stone was recorded as well.

The site is of low significance and no further mitigation is required.

MPC80 is located south along the same dune cordon as MPC79. The site is a scatter of artefacts in a 30 m x 50 m area. The artefacts consist of limpets, brown mussels and pottery. The pottery sherds appear to date to both the Early and Late Iron Ages.

It is possible that this site is a result of dune slumping as a result of the dune mining.

The site is of low significance and no further mitigation is required.

MPA

MPA31 is located south of MPC80 along the track that runs parallel with the electricity lines. The site consists of a variety of sherds. The site appears to have been partially disturbed by the construction of the electricity line. The rest of the site probably occurs upslope in the undisturbed vegetation. The pottery appears to date to the Early Iron Age.

The site will be monitored in the future.

MPA32 is located in front of MPA's mining face. The site consists of one shell midden and a scatter of pottery. The shell midden consists mainly of oysters, and a few mussels. This is unusual, as brown mussels tend to be more abundant in the shell middens. The pottery is thin-walled with a red burnish. While the pottery is undecorated it probably belongs to Group 7 pottery: early Late Iron Age.

The site is of low-medium significance and no further mitigation is required.

MPA33 is located along a ridge of a high dune cordon eastward of MPA. Most of the site is still under vegetation. Several otoliths (fish ear bones) and one cockle shell. Otoliths are important in fish species identification and are rare occurrences in the dunes (often because of their small size)

The site will be monitored in the future.