

A LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION (WITH CONDITIONS) FOR THE EXEMPTION OF A FULL PHASE 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF A PORTION OF THE BLOEMENDAL ARTERIAL AND STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE BETWEEN THE R368 AND R75 IN THE BETHELSDORP AREA, NELSON MANDELA BAY MUNICIPALITY, EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE

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PROJECT INFORMATION

Type of development

The project includes the development of a section of the Bloemendal Arterial and stormwater infrastructure in the Bethelsdorp area in the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality. The road will connect the R368 and the R75 through the Joe Slovo area. The proposed road will be a 5 km link dual carriageway road within a 40 m reserve, and 5 km of underground stormwater system with related infrastructure.

Applicant

Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality

Consultant

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Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to conduct a Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) of the proposed development of the Bloemendal Arterial and stormwater infrastructure in the Bethelsdorp area in the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality of the Eastern Cape Province, to establish;

- the range and importance of possible exposed and *in situ* archaeological sites, features and materials,
- the potential impact of the development on these resources and,
- to make recommendations to minimize possible damage to these resources.

Site and location

The area for the proposed development of the Bloemendal Arterial and stormwater infrastructure in the Bethelsdorp area is located within the 1:50 000 topographic reference map 3325DC & 3425AD Uitenhage and 3325DD & 3425BA Port Elizabeth (Map 1). The proposed road and stormwater infrastructure will connect the R368 and the R75 over a distance of 5 kilometres crossing three drainage lines. These will be constructed to service several new housing developments which are currently underway (Maps 1-2) (General GPS reading: 33.50.241S; 25.28.791E).

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION

Methodology and findings

The investigation was conducted on foot by two archaeologists. GPS readings were taken and all important features were digitally recorded. Previous relevant survey information for adjacent areas was consulted before the investigation started. A Google Earth aerial image study was also conducted of the area prior to the investigation (Map 2). The investigation followed the route layout as provided by the consultant. To cover as much of the terrain as possible the tracks which run through the property were followed on foot by two archaeologists and spot checks were also conducted from a vehicle.

Limitations and assumptions

It was not possible to do a complete survey of the entire route. The section of the route from the R75 through the township and outskirts was not investigated due to the social instability in the area. Security companies in Uitenhage advised us against entering the townships and surrounding areas. Notwithstanding, the development in that section will take place within a build environment which has been severely disturbed in the past and therefore it is unlikely that any significant heritage remains will be exposed during the construction of the road and stormwater infrastructure. Furthermore, although most of the route has already been cleared from vegetation the section from the R368 was still covered by dense vegetation which also made it difficult to locate archaeological sites/materials (Figures 1-2). The development in the section from the R368 to the second drainage line will take place parallel to an existing pipe line route and a long section thereafter has already been trenched, filled-in and leveled. Notwithstanding, the experiences and knowledge gained from other investigations in the immediate area and wider surrounding region, provided background information to make assumptions and predictions on the incidences and the significance of possible pre-colonial archaeological sites/material which may be located in the area, or which may be covered by the soil and vegetation.

Finds and predictions

Due to the dense vegetation in places and the disturbed nature of the proposed alignment of the road and stormwater infrastructure the archaeological visibility was poor and made it difficult to locate archaeological sites/materials. Only a few 'crude' weathered Middle Stone Age stone tools (older than 30 000 years) were observed along the cleared section east of the second drainage line (Map 2, figure 2 bottom right image) (General GPS reading: 33.50.241S; 25.28.791E). These stone tools were manufactured on quartzite and display typical faceted striking platforms and were found randomly without any recognised distribution patterns. The tools were in secondary context and not associated with any other archaeological material. Three relevant archaeological investigations were conducted north-west of the proposed development. Similar stone tools were observed during two of the investigations (Binneman 2008; Binneman *et al.* 2011) but none were found during the third investigation (Murimbika

2010). It is predicted that occasional stone tools mainly of Middle Stone Age origin and in secondary context may be exposed during development.

In general the area for the proposed development is of low cultural sensitivity and it is highly unlikely that any archaeological remains of any significance will be found *in situ* or exposed during the development. There are no known graves or buildings older than 60 years in the area surveyed.

References

- Binneman, J. 2008. A Phase 1 Archaeological Heritage Impact Assessment of the proposed establishment of an integrated residential estate on erven 5614, 5616 and 3981 in Kwanobuhle, Uitenhage, Eastern Cape. Prepared for CEN Integrated Environmental Management Unit. Port Elizabeth. Albany Museum. Grahamstown.
- Murimbika, M. 2010. Phase 1 Archaeological and Heritage Impact Assessment specialist study report for proposed construction of low cost housing and associated infrastructure in Kwanobuhle Area 11, Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Municipality, Port Elizabeth in the Eastern Cape Province prepared by Nzumbululo Heritage Solutions.
- Binneman, J., Booth, C. (author) and Higgitt, N. 2011. A phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) for the proposed mixed-use housing development, Kwanobuhle, Extension 11, Uitenhage, Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality, Eastern Cape Province. Prepared for: SRK Consulting. Port Elizabeth. Albany Museum. Grahamstown.



Figure 1. General views of the proposed road and pipeline route from the R368 (main image) towards the R75. The Middle Stone Age stone tools were observed in the area of the bottom right image.



Figure 2. General views of the proposed road and pipeline route from the R368 towards the R75 (bottom left image) and a sample of the Middle Stone Age stone tools observed along the route (bottom right image).

DISCUSSION AND CONDITIONS

The proposed development of a section of the Bloemendal Arterial and stormwater infrastructure in the Bethelsdorp area in the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality has been disturbed in the past and is of low cultural significance. Although it is unlikely that any significant archaeological heritage remains will be exposed during the development, there is always a possibility that human remains and/or other archaeological and historical material may be uncovered during the development. Should such material be exposed then work must cease in the immediate area of the finds and it must be reported to the Albany Museum (Tel.: 046 6222312) or to the Eastern Cape Provincial Heritage Resources Authority (Tel.: 043 6422811), so that a systematic and professional investigation can be undertaken. Sufficient time should be allowed to remove/collect such material (See Appendix B for a list of possible archaeological sites that may be found in the area).

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the proposed development of the Bloemendal Arterial and stormwater infrastructure in the Bethelsdorp area in the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality of the Eastern Cape Province is exempted from a full Phase 1 Archaeological Heritage Impact Assessment. The proposed area/route for development is disturbed and of low cultural sensitivity. It is unlikely that any significant archaeological remains will be found on the property. The proposed development may proceed as planned.

Note that this letter of recommendation only exempts the proposed development from a full Phase 1 Archaeological Heritage Impact Assessment, but not for other heritage impact assessments. It must also be clear that this letter of recommendation for exemption of a full Phase 1 archaeological heritage impact assessment will be assessed by the relevant heritage resources authority. The final decision rests with the heritage resources authority, which should issue a permit or a formal letter of permission for the destruction of any cultural sites.

The National Heritage Resources Act (Act No. 25 of 1999, section 35) (see Appendix A) requires a full Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) in order that all heritage resources, that is, all places or objects of aesthetics, architectural, historic, scientific, social, spiritual linguistic or technological value or significance are protected. Thus any assessment should make provision for the protection of all these heritage components, including archaeology, shipwrecks, battlefields, graves, and structures older than 60 years, living heritage, historical settlements, landscapes, geological sites, palaeontological sites and objects.

GENERAL REMARKS AND CONDITIONS

It must be emphasized that this letter of recommendation for exemption of a full Phase 1 archaeological heritage impact assessment is based on the visibility of archaeological sites/material and may not therefore, reflect the true state of affairs. Sites and material may be covered by soil and vegetation and will only be located once this has been removed. In the unlikely event of such finds being uncovered, (during any phase of construction work), it must be reported to the archaeologist at the Albany Museum (046 6222312) or to the Eastern Cape Provincial Heritage Resources Authority (043 6422811) immediately. The developer must finance the costs should additional studies be required as outlined above. The *onus* is also on the developer to ensure that this agreement is honoured in accordance with the National Heritage Act No. 25 of 1999. The consultant is responsible to forward this report to the relevant Heritage Authority for assessment, unless alternative arrangements have been made with the specialist to submit the report.

APPENDIX A: brief legislative requirements

Parts of sections 35(4), 36(3) and 38(1) (8) of the National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999 apply:

Archaeology, palaeontology and meteorites

35 (4) *No person may, without a permit issued by the responsible heritage resources authority—*

- (a) destroy, damage, excavate, alter, deface or otherwise disturb any archaeological or palaeontological site or any meteorite;*
- (b) destroy, damage, excavate, remove from its original position, collect or own any archaeological or palaeontological material or object or any meteorite;*
- (d) bring onto or use at an archaeological or palaeontological site any excavation equipment or any equipment which assist in the detection or recovery of metals or archaeological and palaeontological material or objects, or use such equipment for the recovery of meteorites.*

Burial grounds and graves

36. (3) (a) *No person may, without a permit issued by SAHRA or a provincial 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, 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 equipment, or any equipment which assists in the detection or recovery of metals.*

Heritage resources management

38. (1) *Subject to the provisions of subsections (7), (8) and (9), any person who intends to undertake a development categorized as –*

- (a) the construction of a road, wall, powerline, 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 50m in length;*
- (c) any development or other activity which will change the character of the site –*
 - (i) exceeding 5000m² in extent, or*
 - (ii) involving three or more erven or subdivisions thereof; or*
 - (iii) involving three or more erven or divisions thereof which have been consolidated within the past five years; or*
 - (iv) the costs of which will exceed a sum set in terms of regulations by SAHRA, or a provincial resources authority;*
- (d) the re-zoning of a site exceeding 10 000m² in extent; or*
- (e) any other category of development provided for in regulations by SAHRA or a provincial heritage resources authority, must as the very earliest stages of initiating such a development, notify the responsible heritage resources authority and furnish it with details regarding the location, nature and extent of the proposed development.*

APPENDIX B: IDENTIFICATION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL FEATURES AND MATERIAL FROM INLAND AREAS: guidelines and procedures for developers

Human Skeletal material

Human remains, whether the complete remains of an individual buried during the past, or scattered human remains resulting from disturbance of the grave, should be reported. In general human remains are buried in a flexed position on their side, but are also found buried in a sitting position with a flat stone capping. Developers are requested to be on alert for the possibility of uncovering such remains.

Freshwater mussel middens

Freshwater mussels are found in the muddy banks of rivers and streams and were collected by people in the past as a food resource. Freshwater mussel shell middens are accumulations of mussel shell and are usually found close to rivers and streams. These shell middens frequently contain stone tools, pottery, bone, and occasionally human remains. Shell middens may be of various sizes and depths, but an accumulation which exceeds 1 m² in extent, should be reported to an archaeologist.

Large stone cairns

They come in different forms and sizes, but are easy to identify. The most common are roughly circular stone walls (mostly collapsed) and may represent stock enclosures, remains of wind breaks or cooking shelters. Others consist of large piles of stones of different sizes and heights and are known as *isisivane*. They are usually near river and mountain crossings. Their purpose and meaning is not fully understood, however, some are thought to represent burial cairns while others may have symbolic value.

Stone artefacts

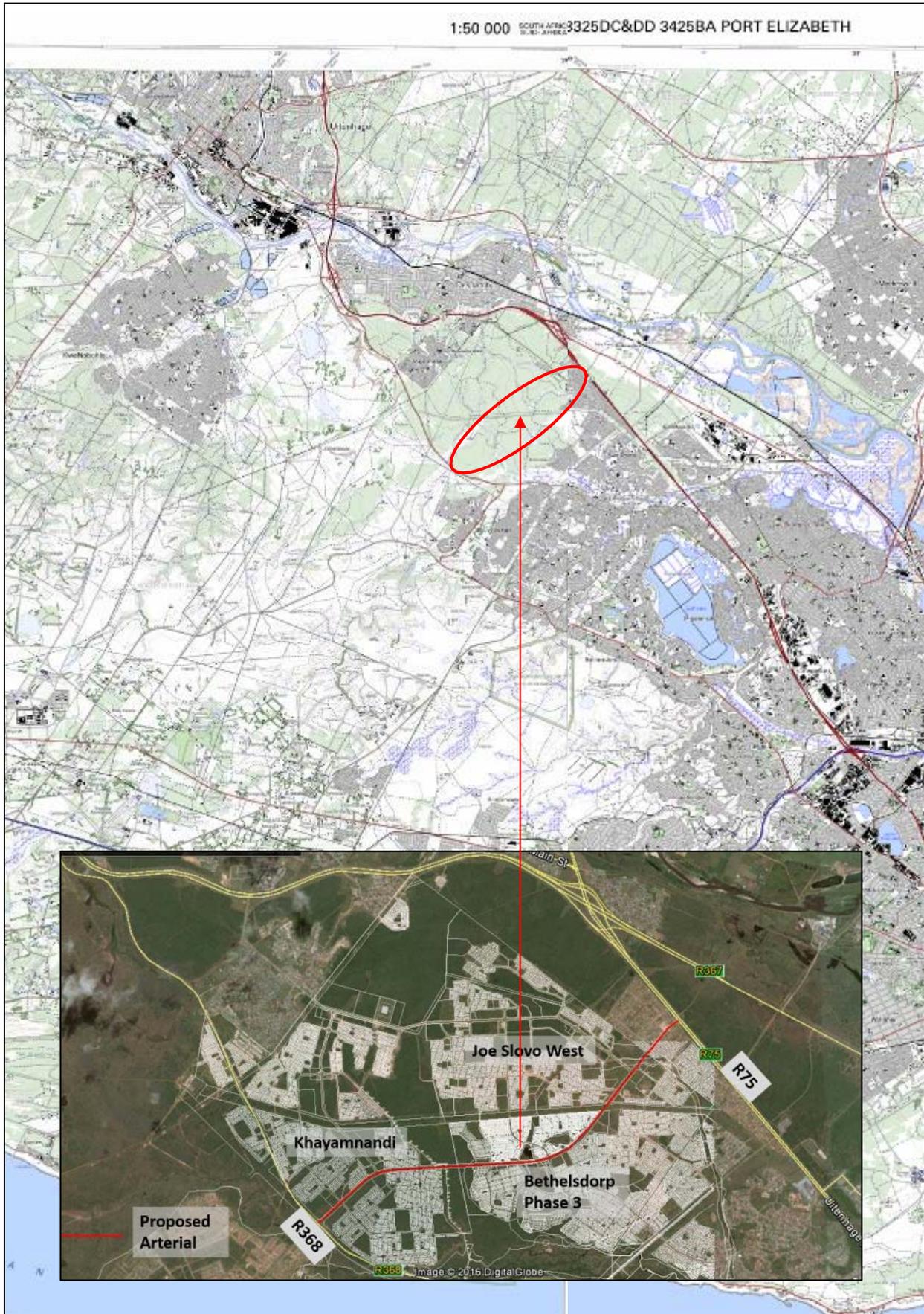
These are difficult for the layman to identify. However, large accumulations of flaked stones which do not appear to have been distributed naturally should be reported. If the stone tools are associated with bone remains, development should be halted immediately and archaeologists notified.

Fossil bone

Fossil bones may be found embedded in geological deposits. Any concentrations of bones, whether fossilized or not, should be reported.

Historical artefacts or features

These are easy to identify and include foundations of buildings or other construction features and items from domestic and military activities.



Map 1. 1:50 000 Maps indicating the location of the proposed road and pipeline route from the R368 towards the R75.



Map 2. Aerial images indicating the location of the proposed road and pipeline route from the R368 towards the R75. The yellow oval marks the area where the Middle Stone Age stone tools were observed.