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Battlefields Tourism: The status of heritage tourism in Dundee, South Africa

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Abstract. Heritage tourism is a significant contemporary facet of tourism in many developing countries. This paper analyses the economic opportunities for battlefield-heritage tourism in South Africa by examining the battlefields route within KwaZulu-Natal. Through structured interviews with stakeholders and structured questionnaires with visitors and local residents, this research explores the understanding of heritage tourism as well as perceptions of its influence on the physical landscape and gauges the importance of this form of tourism as a driver for local economic development in South Africa. Dundee, a small coal-mining town in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa – where several battlefields are found, is used as a case study. The study demonstrates that several issues need to be addressed if this niche of cultural and heritage tourism is to be a sustainable and responsible form of tourism in South Africa.

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1. Introduction

Heritage tourism is an increasingly popular and interesting niche of cultural tourism in many countries around the world, having become a significant component of the global tourism industry (Park, 2014). The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) asserts that heritage and cultural tourism is growing faster than most other tourism segments, and certainly more rapidly than the global tourism rate (UNWTO, 2002). Tlabela and Munthree (2012: 1) concur that cultural and heritage tourism has been "*identified as one of the major growth markets in global tourism*". Accordingly, heritage tourism offers great potential for local economic development within many countries (Madden, Shipley, 2012). Heritage is a contested and politically charged concept (Graham, Howard, 2008) and can be classified as any resource, immovable (buildings, rivers and natural areas) and moveable (objects and artefacts), as well as values, customs, ceremonies, or lifestyles (Timothy, Boyd, 2003). Indeed, heritage tourism espouses both the tangible and intangible elements of the past and is defined as "*a subgroup of tourism, in which the main motivation for visiting a site is based on the place's heritage characteristics according to the tourist's perceptions of their own heritage*" (Poria et al., 2001: 1048). Timothy and Nyaupane (2009: 3) define heritage tourism within the developing world, as "*existing cultures and folkways of today… music, dance, language, religion… monuments, historic buildings and homes, farms, castles and cathedrals, museums, and archaeological ruins and relics*". Within this definition, conflicts and the battlefields on which they occurred also form part of cultural or heritage tourism.

In South Africa, heritage tourism was identified in early planning for the post-apartheid tourism economy as one potential avenue to expand tourism development (RSA, 1996). Several South African cities are capitalising on aspects of heritage tourism as components of local strategies for urban tourism development and of broader local economic development planning (see Rogerson, 2002, 2008, 2010; Rogerson, Rogerson, 2010; Rogerson, 2011a; Rogerson, Visser, 2011a; van der Merwe, 2013; Weiss, 2014). Outside the country's major cities, one aspect of heritage tourism is the phenomenon of battlefields tourism which has so far attracted little attention (see Moeller, 2005; Rogerson, Rogerson, 2011; Rogerson, Visser, 2011b; Venter, 2011). Given the national importance attached to heritage tourism more research is required on the effects of rural tourist attractions and touristic areas in remote regions of South Africa where most battlefield sites are situated. In particular, research is needed on those battlefields that are of special cultural or heritage significance. The critical significance of heritage tourism for South Africa is highlighted in the National Department of Tourism's (NDT) *National Heritage and Cultural Tourism Strategy* (NDT, 2012). The central objective of this strategy is "*to guide and provide strategic direction for the development and promotion of heritage and cultural tourism in South Africa. The strategy provides a framework for the coordination and integration of heritage and culture into the mainstream of tourism... although the value and impact of this segment of tourism has not been fully realised, particularly the economic potential of heritage and cultural tourism products*" (NDT, 2012:10). This paper examines battlefields tourism as part of the South African cultural and heritage tourism economy and the potential for battlefields tourism, as a significant economic driver for Local Economic Development (LED) within South Africa (Binns, Nel, 2002; Marschall, 2012; Moeller, 2005; Rogerson, 2002, 2008, 2010).

LED is an appropriate framework in which to examine heritage tourism, and battlefields tourism more specifically, as sites of conflict and historical interest are usually in remote (and rural) locations. Rogerson (2014: 204) has shed some valuable light on the policy shifts impacting LED in South Africa lately and argues that "*focal activities are based upon maximising the comparative advantages of localities and include improving the local business environment, building local skills, cluster development (often involving small medium and micro-enterprises (SMMEs)) and encouraging trust and partnerships between the private sector, public institutions and civil society*". This paper will investigate what is required for the Battlefields in KwaZulu-Natal province of South Africa to become a sustainable and responsible form of heritage tourism. The study is situated within the international context of research on heritage and battlefields tourism.

2. Heritage and Battlefields Tourism

Battlefields or warfare tourism includes "*visiting war memorials and war museums, 'war experiences', battle re-enactments and the battlefield*" (Dunkley et al, 2011: 860). Much research on the battlefields of World War I has been done (Clarke, Eastgate, 2011; Winter, 2012) with 2014 marking the centenary of World War I (1914-1918), many people across the world are visiting battlefield sites. Battlefields tourism forms part of thanatourism or what is more commonly called 'dark tourism' (Miles, 2014). Several reasons as to why people would want to visit places of death and destruction (such as these once were), exist. These motivations include, inter alia, special interest (a personal interest someone may have in a particular site or war, as a result of personal links or family associations to the event); thrill/risk seeking (being part of an re-enactment of the battle); validation (legitimising and forming approval and acceptance for or of the event); authenticity (not so much the realness of the event but rather the representation of it from all perspectives); self-discovery (knowing what your ancestors experienced and sacrificed for you by being involved or killed in that conflict); iconic sites (some sites are considered seminal in history and a 'must-see' for tourists); convenience (a battlefield site is close by and coincidentally forms part of the tourists' itinerary); morbid curiosity (people interested in the macabre); pilgrimage (people who lost loved ones in that event want to see where, what, and learn about how, it took place); remembrance and empathy (young and old died together); contemplation (thinking history through for personal reflection and meaning-making); legitimisation (creating national pride); economic resurgence (creation of employment and income flows through visitation); discovery of heritage (where local communities discover a sense of identities through past histories); acts of remembrance (honouring those who sacrificed their lives for your freedom); and personal aspirations (of seeking social or political prestige) (Ryan, 2007a, 2007b; Kim, Butler, 2014).

Much of existing research done on battlefields tourism focuses on how they are represented (or imaged) as well as how they are managed or maintained (Ryan, 2007; Zhang, 2010). The representation of history (and from whose perspective it is represented) is a contested concept within the literature (Winter, 2009) and remains one aspect of understanding battlefields and struggle/liberation heritage tourism, which still needs further investigation. For example, the Pacific War Battlefields have many Japanese people feeling uneasy and ashamed of their ancestors' involvement in the War (Cooper, 2006). Heritage and battlefields tourism has been attributed to the development and understanding of social memory, and remembrance (Lloyd, 1998; Marschall, 2006; Marschall, 2014; Winter, 2009). Battlefields have been studied as a memory or commemoration of the past (Iles, 2008; Leopold, 2007). It is argued that "*battlefield sites possess their own life cycle of meaning and nature of attraction – and with age they 'cool' to become not simply places of memorial to a recent past generation, but a place of heritage to inform future generations*" (Ryan, 2007b: 207); this means that they have a wider appeal to a larger audience (Tourism KwaZulu-Natal, 2004). It is maintained that care needs to be taken in the representation and imaging of the battlefield so as to create awareness among visitors to the sobering nature of the conflict and consequences for all involved.

Increasingly, battlefield tours have strong religious overtones around remembrance and sacrifice which are constituted and fulfilled in a pilgrimage (Clarke and Eastgate, 2011). Heritage custodians and tourism authorities have a suite of moral and ethical dilemmas to reconcile in portraying the history at a particular heritage site (Tourism KwaZulu-Natal, 2004). Another important theme within battlefields tourism is the authenticity of the experience to the tourist (Ryan, 2007a; Miles, 2014; Winter, 2009). People visit battlefields for a number of reasons and "*the visitor experience is thus multifaceted with an appreciation of the site as a heritage, not a specifically dark, tourism site*" (Miles, 2014: 145). Increasingly, the literature is exploring the meanings and motivations of people visiting battlefields with a "*desire for learning and commemoration play(ing) an important part in motivating battlefield tourists*" (Dunkley et al, 2011: 860). Stakeholders of battlefield tourism are thus coming to the realisation that these tourists are "*an emotionally sensitive, nuanced and reflexive constituency*" (Dunkley et al, 2011: 866). In this research it will be shown that battle-

field tourists are a specific niche of the cultural/ heritage tourism market.

Although Battlefields Tourism has been researched throughout the world as yet few studies have been done on the local developmental and economic impacts from cultural and heritage tourism on the local economy. Several reasons exist in South Africa as to heritage and cultural tourism being used as an economic development tool. First, South Africa's cultural and heritage assets are different from those in developing countries (which may appeal to the battlefield tourist). Second, many of these battlefield sites are located in rural remote areas where other economic and revenue creating activities would be limited; Third, traditional economic activities can be supported by heritage and cultural tourism, such as Bed & Breakfasts in local rural settlements. Four, establishing entry level SMMEs that support heritage or cultural tourism is relatively easy as little capital is required (Tourism KwaZulu-Natal, 2008).

3. Battlefields Tourism in South Africa – context and methods

Battlefields play an important role in the collective identify and history of South Africa (Tourism KwaZulu-Natal, no date; Venter, 2011). In 1994, under the leadership of Nelson Mandela, when South Africa became a democracy – the government initiated a "*host of memorials, monuments, and heritage sites to redress the existing (apartheid) heritage landscape*" (Marschall, 2008: 88). Many of the battlefield sites throughout South Africa are declared as national heritage sites and cover some of the most important events that have shaped South African history, from "*colonial clashes of the 18th and 19th Centuries to the 2nd Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902*" (von der Heyde, 2013: 12). Moeller (2005) claims battlefield tourism in South Africa has grown during the past few decades particularly in KwaZulu-Natal and in the Northern Cape provinces. In total there are over 140 sites to visit in KwaZulu-Natal, which detail the Boer, the British, and the amaZulu conflicts in history (Battlefields Route, no date). These battles form part of South Africa's history that "*arose from colonisation by the Dutch and the British, and clashes between different African societies over resources and territory*" (von der Heyde, 2013:14).

The four battlefields that make up the case studies of this research are shown in Figure 1 and are listed in Table 1. Each has significance to South African history and impacts on South Africans' heritage. The Battle of Blood River – see Photo 1 (from the Afrikaans perspective) or Ncome (the amaZulu perspective) was a conflict that arose when Voortrekker leader Andries Pretorius led 460 Dutch trekkers to invade Zululand. The intention was to avenge the killing of Piet Retief and 70 of his companions that had occurred on the 5th February 1838 at the hands of Dingane and the Zulu people (von der Heyde, 2013). The Battles of Isandlwana and then Rorke's Drift occurred after the British Ultimatum to the Zulu King Cetshwayo had expired and the British soldiers invaded Zululand. It was a momentous victory for the amaZulu – where every remaining British soldier was killed. The battle of Rorke's Drift occurred later that same day as Zulu warriors followed retreating and injured British soldiers to the mission station and hospital based over the hill, a victory for Britain "*only 17 British soldiers were killed but over 800 Zulu lay dead around the post*" (von der Heyde, 2013, 147). The battle of Talana Hill was the result of the Boer Ultimatum to the British being breached on the 12th October 1899. President Kruger ordered the invasion of the British colonies of the Cape and Natal, where it was hoped the Boers could be victorious by taking small British garrisons while they were still unprepared. The war dragged on for three years with both sides claiming this battle as a victory; the "*Boers succeeded in occupying the town, but could not prevent the 4000-strong British garrison from reaching and supporting Ladysmith*" (von der Hyde, 2013, 157). Both domestic and foreign tourists visit such sites to pay homage to fallen ancestors and to 'see history' with their own eyes, experiencing the battle through the guidance of a trained and qualified tourist guide (Hamman, 2013). Venter (2011:4) explores several reasons for people visiting the battlefields in South Africa, although these sites predominantly have "*served as places of awe and inspiration, mourning and commemoration, leisure and tourist destinations*".

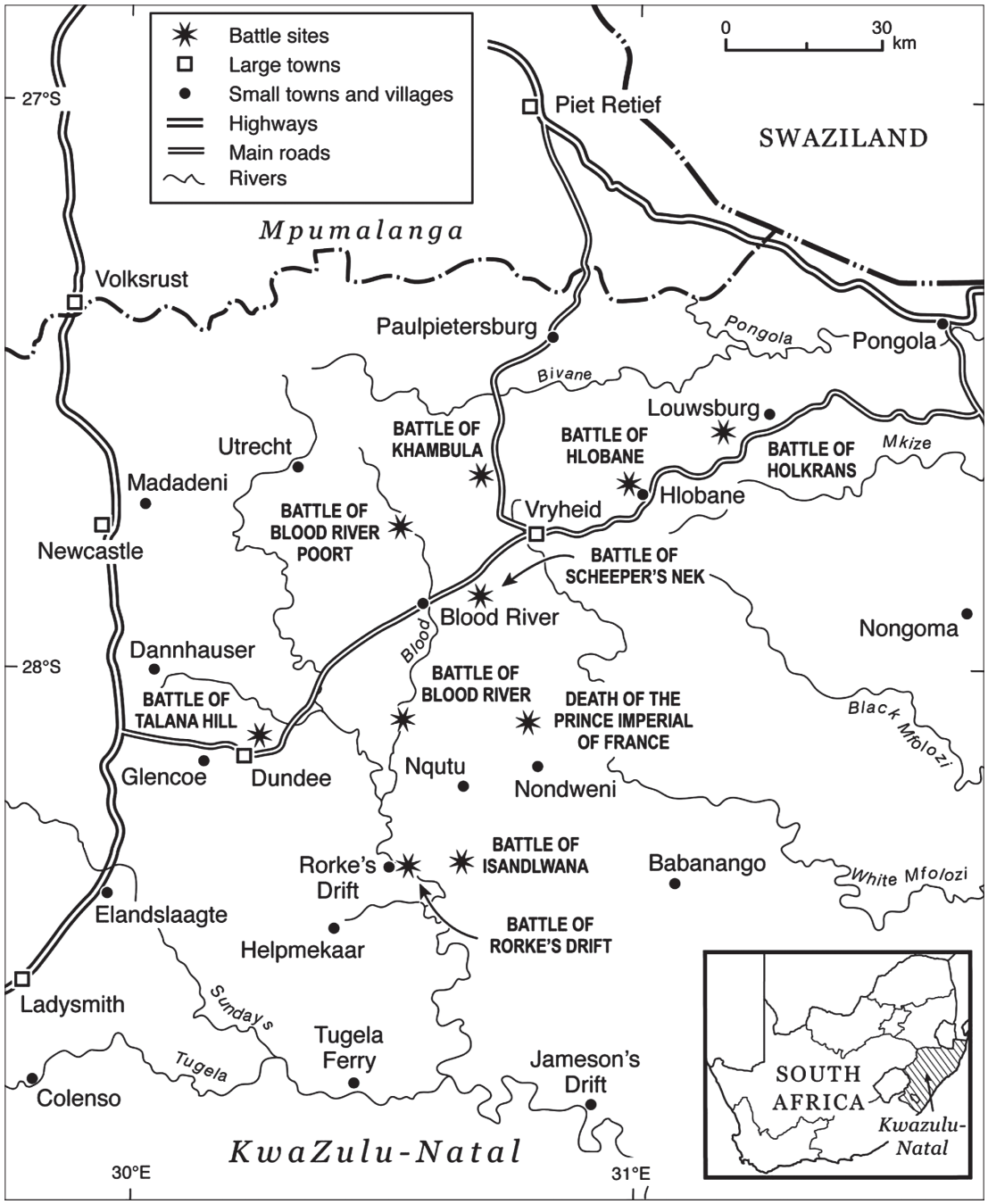


Fig. 1. Location of battlefields in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

Source: Author's Map

Table 1. Battles and battlefield sites in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa: 1838 to 1900.

Battle	Date	Warring Parties
Blood River	16th December 1838	Boers & amaZulu
Isandlwana	22nd January 1879	British & amaZulu
Rorke's Drift	22nd January 1879	British & amaZulu
Talana Hill	20th October 1899	Boers & British

Source: Author's Table



Photo 1. The Battle of Blood River (28° 06' 18.94" S; 30° 32' 28.24" E)

Source: Author's Photo



Photo 2. The Battle of Talana Hill, re-enactment 17th October 2013.

Source: Author's Photo

This study sought to further investigate the motivations of heritage tourists in visiting battlefield sites as part of heritage tourism in South Africa. If South Africa is to more effectively market and sustain heritage tourism, extended research on Battlefields Tourism is necessary. Local residents' perceptions of heritage tourism are also under researched, although Marschall (2013:32) reveals that "*lack of knowledge and interest impedes local people's ability to connect with the tourism phenomenon and take advantage of the opportunities it creates*". This has serious implications for the success and sustainability of heritage tourism from a local economic development point of view. Many local people see few benefits of the battlefields and therefore never visit the sites themselves and do not care much for heritage conservation or development. Political and social transformation of the tourism industry and heritage sector is also problematic and cited as one of the reasons for the lack of development in heritage tourism within South Africa (Marschall, 2013). Tourism led-development of local economies and job creation, feature as major themes in much of the research on heritage tourism in South Africa (Marschall, 2013; Taru et al, 2014).

In terms of research approach the following is undertaken. First, the policy environment for local tourism development is explored and unpacked. Second, the current trends within the local tourism economy as a whole are outlined in order to situate the potential contribution of heritage tourism. Third, an understanding of who heritage tourists are, is needed, in order to better interpret this market of cultural or heritage tourism (Khumalo et al, 2014; van der Merwe, Rogerson, 2013) or battlefield tourism. Four, local impacts are evaluated. In addressing these issues a mixed methods research approach was adopted. Documentary sources were collated and analysed to ascertain the local promotion initiatives around tourism in Dundee (and the surrounding locales). Use was made of the IHS Global Insight national tourism databases which provides local level data on trends in tourism trips, estimates of tourism spending, and of tourism contribution spend to local Gross Domestic Product (GDP) within local municipalities in South Africa. Data was extracted for trends in tourism in the local municipalities of Abaqulusi, Endumeni, Msinga, and Nquthu for the period 2001 to 2012. Field research was undertaken to profile and characterise visitors to the four battlefields, in KwaZulu-Natal over a 12-month period in 2013, to understand the heritage tourism market in South Africa and to explore tourist perceptions of heritage and heritage tourism. The latter, it is suggested, is essential so as to enable local decision-makers within the tourism industry to more effectively segment-market and grow the 'battlefields tourism economy'. A comparative data analysis was undertaken of the results from the battlefields' research, which involved a face-to-face survey questionnaire to visitors at the various battlefield sites with the findings of a national audit on customer satisfaction with heritage tourist sites, undertaken by the National Department of Tourism (NDT) in 2010 (Tlabela, Munthree, 2012).

Finally, local stakeholders in the tourism industry were consulted concerning the role of local government in relation to the state of tourism in the battlefields region. In total 12 accommodation owners, two tour operators; three tourist guides and five other key stakeholders in tourism were consulted on their views in promoting local tourism and effectively managing and leading this sector into more sustainable practices. In addition, as part of the fieldwork for this study, the author and two research assistants visited each of the battlefield sites with an accomplished tourist guide. The sites of the Battlefields are spread out from one another and in some instances can be reached within a day's travel. Figure 1 illustrates the location of Battlefields within this region of KwaZulu-Natal. The guided tour involves the guide driving visitors to the site and relaying the battle as a narrative explanation often with the use of some visual stimulus – like a battle map, where strategy and battle plans are expounded. Some of the sites have visitor centres where audio-visual aids are used to relay the context and history of the battle with many artefacts exhibited at the museum(s) on site. The Battle of Talana is ceremonially re-enacted every October on the site, where today the Talana Museum in Dundee is found. Photo 2 shows the battlefield and the Talana Hill Battle re-enactment.

The interviews revealed that Battlefields tourism in South Africa has a long history. Indeed, according to one respondent, "*since the battles were fought, General Evelyn Wood brought the Princess Eugenie to see where her son the Prince Imperial was killed,*

a year after the Anglo Zulu War ended, but it was in the late 1980s that the ladies got the (Battlefields) Route going" (Sutcliffe, 2014). This said, it was argued that the modern phase of Battlefields Tourism probably started with the centenary of the Anglo Zulu War in 1979. One respondent stated: "*By the early 1980s I was the only registered guide in the area and was promoting tours and trips. I did a fair amount of work for international companies starting to take notice of the Anglo Zulu war sites. During the mid to late 1980s tourism started to grow which is why the Battlefields route was mooted and launched in March 1990. In addition, much promotion and the anniversaries and events helped really grow the route and tourists in the 1990s. The Anglo Boer centenary also raised considerable awareness of the area*" (McFadden, 2014). As a whole, a Battlefields Tour in South Africa can be tailor-made to the needs of a tourist or group, but usually lasts between one and five days. The typical tour involves the tourist driving to the battlefield site and using a guidebook or tourist guide to interpret and understand the battle.

The results and discussion are divided into three further sections. First, an analysis is presented of tourism promotion, planning and trends in the four local municipalities (which make up the four battlefield sites) in this region of KwaZulu-Natal. The second section reviews the results of the visitor survey and of the market characteristics of heritage tourists visiting the battlefields. The last section turns to discuss the limits of Battlefields Tourism as a vehicle for promoting local development.

4. Local tourism policy, planning and trends in the Battlefields Region

The tourism promotion of battlefields is well articulated in local and provincial tourism policy documents which are produced by local and provincial tourism bodies. The KwaZulu-Natal provincial tourism vision for 2030 is to "*be globally renowned as Africa's top beach destination with a unique blend of wildlife, scenic and heritage experiences for all visitors*" (Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs, 2014). All four of the battlefields investigated as part of this case study are situated in the province of KwaZulu-Natal (Figure 1). The region in which the four battlefield sites are found forms part of two District Municipalities (DM), namely Umzinyathi DM (which is responsible for Isandlwana; Rorke's Drift; Blood River and Talana Battlefields) and Zululand DM (which is responsible for Ncome Battlefield). It is argued that "*Dundee is a centre from which tourism based on the cultural heritage of the Zulu Kingdom and 'battlefields' is emphasised and managed to some extent*" (Umzinyathi, 2014: 3). The Umzinyathi DM Integrated Development Plan (IDP) recognises that this DM is 'the custodian of the Battlefield region in the Zulu Kingdom and concedes that branding is of international and regional significance'. This DM admits that the range of battlefield attractions is not adequately harnessed for their job creating opportunities. Tourism is seen as a driver for economic development within this region, and a long-term strategy has been developed towards district industrial hubs (Umzinyathi, 2014).

In terms of strategic direction and immediate requirements, within the Umzinyathi DM – the following are identified as significant issues within the local Integrated Development Plan (IDP):

- Resuscitate stakeholder partnerships in tourism
- Review of Tourism Strategy
- Identify clear cut opportunities within the sector
- Branding of local products
- Establish community based Tourism Organisations
- Develop distinct tourism concepts and implement Spatial Development Nodes
- Marketing of the District (Umzinyathi IDP, 2014: 155).

The IDP recognises that problems such as a general poor infrastructure (roads and basic services) exist; land claims and land tenure issues prohibit investment in the region; the area is very far from main airports (such as Durban and Johannesburg); and that a negative reputation of the area in terms of crime and safety drives many tourists from visiting the area. These factors negatively impact on Battlefields Tourism for the region. Nevertheless it is acknowledged, "tourism is currently built around the 'battlefields' concept. However, this is largely incidental tourism and one should explore the expansion of this concept to the extent that the area becomes a tourism destination in its own right". (Umzinyathi, 2014: 243). The Umzinyathi DM con-

sists of three local municipalities (LM): Nquthu LM (responsible for Isandlwana and Blood River Battlefields); Msinga LM (which houses Rorke's Drift); and Endumeni LM (in which Talana Battlefield and the Talana Museum are found). The Nquthu LM integrated development plan states that Isandlwana and Blood River – both world acclaimed landmarks and destinations have widespread economic appeal for tourism purposes, but that community based tourism in the area remains untapped. To correct this, the IDP (2012 – 2017) earmarked funds towards resuscitating the Local Tourism Office. The Msinga Local Municipality (LM) IDP (2012-2017), which is responsible for Rorke's Drift Battlefield – reiterates the importance and competitive advantage of Battlefield Tourism for the area, and identifies its potential. It is estimated "*that 443 000 domestic tourists (7% of KZN domestic market) visited the Battlefields in 2005*" (Msinga, 2014). The Msinga IDP concedes the key weaknesses to effectively harnessing and sustaining Battlefields tourism as follows:

- Great distances between the province's key attractions (many not accessible within a day trip);
- Poor public tourism-related infrastructure (poor roads and a lack of signage);
- Lack of significant investment into tourism by both the private and public sector;
- Lack of structured tourism marketing and training in the area; and
- The absence of a tourism growth coalition between local government, the tourism business sector and civil society (Msinga, 2014: 31).

It is evident that these weaknesses are related to the needs as expressed in the DM's IDPs but no strategic direction on how to correct these problems is given. Endumeni LM claims to have "*a relatively well diversified local economy, where tourism in particular, contributes significantly to its economy. This is dominated by cultural tourism; bearing in mind that Dundee is centrally situated to a number of Anglo-Zulu and Anglo-Boer war battlefields*" (Endumeni, 2014: 2-3). Tourism in Endumeni enjoyed positive growth from 2007 to 2009 but has had a downturn since that time. The IDP identifies the need for more attention from stakeholders to lifting tourism out of stagnation (Endumeni, 2014).

The Zululand DM IDP Review 2014/2015 acknowledges that the region lacks large economic investments in order to boost the local economy. During the 1990s, the District's economy was reliant on heavy coal mining, which experienced an economic decline over the last decade, resulting in the closure of many mines and reduced job opportunities in the region (Binns, Nel, 2003). Tourism development and LED are widely mentioned throughout the IDP – but again, how the promotion of and likely impacts of Battlefields Tourism to LED could occur is not provided. The lack of strategic direction within local governments concerning tourism planning across South Africa has been identified and expounded upon by Rogerson (2010, 2013, 2014). Abaqulusi Local Municipality (where the Ncome Museum is found – the Zulu representation of Blood River, 16th December 1838) is the last LM in this region. The area's latest IDP defines cultural tourism as "*exposing tourists to local customs, traditions, heritage, history and way of life. The development of the battlefields in the late 1980s and 1990s placed the area on the tourist map*" (Abaqulusi, 2014: 12). This said, the planning document cautions that visitors tend to stay only a few nights and "*that there is a need to develop the concept of a destination that will encourage longer stays*" (Abaqulusi, 2014: 12).

5. Who Visits Battlefields and for what reasons?

By looking at the different variables of: visitor numbers to each Battlefield Site; purpose of tourist trips; average tourist spend; and percentage of tourism contribution to the Gross Domestic Product – within each Local Municipality – a profile of the local Battlefields tourism economy is provided. Figure 2 illustrates the trends in visitor numbers from 2007 to 2013. The general trend for the battlefields in the region signals a stagnation or decline over time. The only exception is the increase in visitors to Ncome, which has been open only since 1999. In this case, growth can be accounted for in the large numbers and higher incidence of school groups that visit the museum as well as the public holiday programmes, and women's day events. As observed by a stakeholder, "*on certain days of the year they have huge numbers of visitors – but all from the local commu-*

nity – not tourists per say" (McFadden, 2014). Nevertheless others question whether the 2010 increase (as a result of the FIFA Soccer World Cup – hosted in June 2010 by South Africa) gives a false sense of hope – making it appear that many more tourists may have visited the Battlefields – but this was in fact not the case (Sutcliffe, 2014).

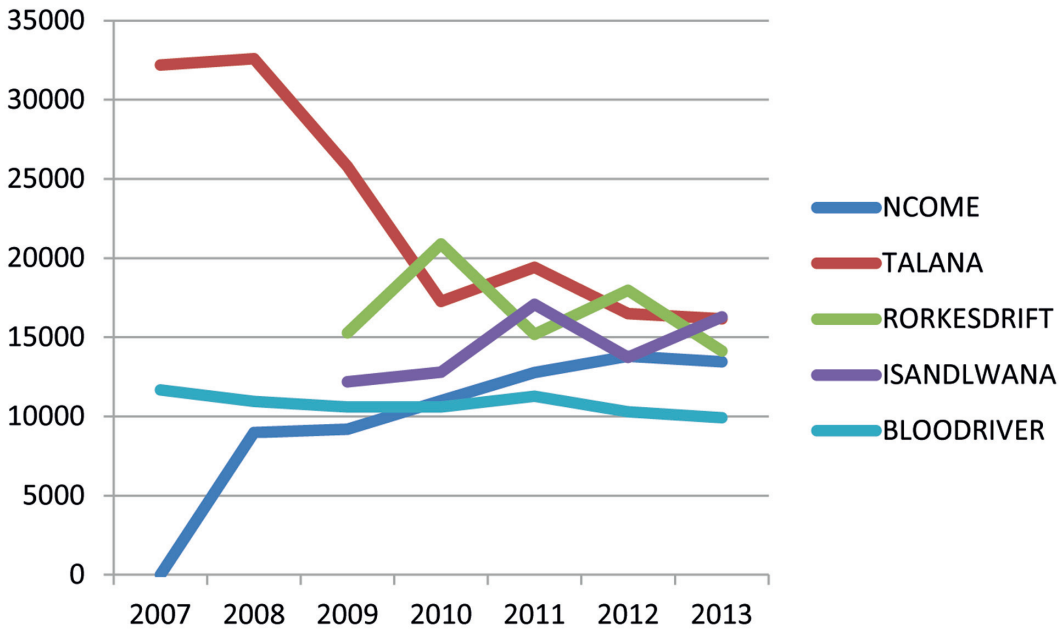


Fig. 2. Number of visitors to each Battlefield Site, from 2007 to 2013

Source: Marketing Department and Curator of each Battlefield Site

It must be understood that visitor statistics for the Battlefields include students that are part of school tours or fieldtrips. Over the period that South Africa was hosting the Soccer World Cup, schools had an extended holiday period – and this larger number of visitors to Battlefields could be a result of that, although "this is debatable" (Sutcliffe, 2014). Talana's visitor numbers have always been good, but a steady decline in people visiting the museum and battlefield is evident. This is attributed to the fact that the tour companies were refocused on getting soccer fans to stadia – rather than to museums and battlefields. One interviewee suggested "*we lost up to 10 buses a week from April 2010 and had none until the end of September 2010. Even now (2014) we are battling to get back the tour buses – from 10 a week, we are lucky to see three. Overseas visitors that would normally have come to SA did not and soccer fans do not visit museums. Having stayed away and gone elsewhere in 2010, they realised how expensive a destination South Africa is, also South African visitors stayed home to keep away from all the hoo-ha*" (McFadden, 2014).

The Battlefields of Isandlwana and Rorke's Drift are more 'specialised sites' in terms of requiring a guided tour. Here it was observed that "*more people visit Rorke's Drift than Isandlwana, but the general practice amongst guides is to recommend that people visit both as the one battle is really just the overflow from the other*" (Sutcliffe, 2014). Overall, it was argued "*visitor numbers seemed to be on the increase until 2009… but this was as a result of the English and Welsh Lions Rugby tour, this was our best tour to date… at least 500 people visiting the battlefields at one time*" (Hamman, 2013). Another respondent commented that "*in 2010 we had the World Soccer Cup and hardly any visitors, it was very bad, and visitor numbers are definitely declining. We are not getting the publicity out there that we need, but as this has to come from the municipalities, we are never likely to get it unless the stakeholders in the private sector are prepared to band together and do*

it themselves" (Sutcliffe, 2014). Another respondent stated that "*Rorke's Drift peaked in 2010 because of all the day trips offered by hotels in Durban, to the site… but this caused more hassles than good as it turned out to be a very long day and didn't use specialist guides – so in all, not a good experience for us, and we have all felt the backlash*" (McFadden, 2014). The false hope of the FIFA Soccer World Cup has negatively affected the Battlefield Tourism industry. One tourist guide lamented that the World Cup "*did not create the flood of business that we had been led to believe, in fact, it siphoned business away from us. Quite simply, it has been my worst year in business yet. We still have not recovered, and I doubt if we ever will, visitor numbers have dropped dramatically after 2010 – and I am on the brink of closing this B&B… the Battlefield visitors keep us alive, but only just. In December of 2009, I had over 20 tours… that is the number for the whole year now!*" (Anon, 2014a).

Blood River is a privately-run battlefield site with administrative ties to the Voortrekker Museum in Pretoria. The visitor numbers here appear constant and stagnant. Management at the site attribute the low numbers of visitors to "*most tour buses which exit Swaziland south, head directly for the coast. Those who return to Gauteng OR Tambo, go via Dundee. Current accommodation is situated directly on the Vryheid-Dundee route. Therefore groups sleep over, visit two Battlefield sites south of Dundee the next day and exit directly back for Gauteng*" (Rabie, 2014). Another respondent interviewed confirmed this: "*we need the development of the R66 down to Ulundi*" (Sutcliffe, 2014). Many tour operators bringing busloads of tourists "usually arrive JHB – Kruger Park and Lowveld, down through Swaziland, into northern KZN, Zululand game Parks and Zulu heritage, Battlefields, Drakensberg and go out through Golden gate and off to Cape town" (Sutcliffe, 2014). Figure 3 confirms the reduction in visitor numbers over time, and represents the number of tourist trips undertaken for leisure to the various municipalities of the Battlefields.

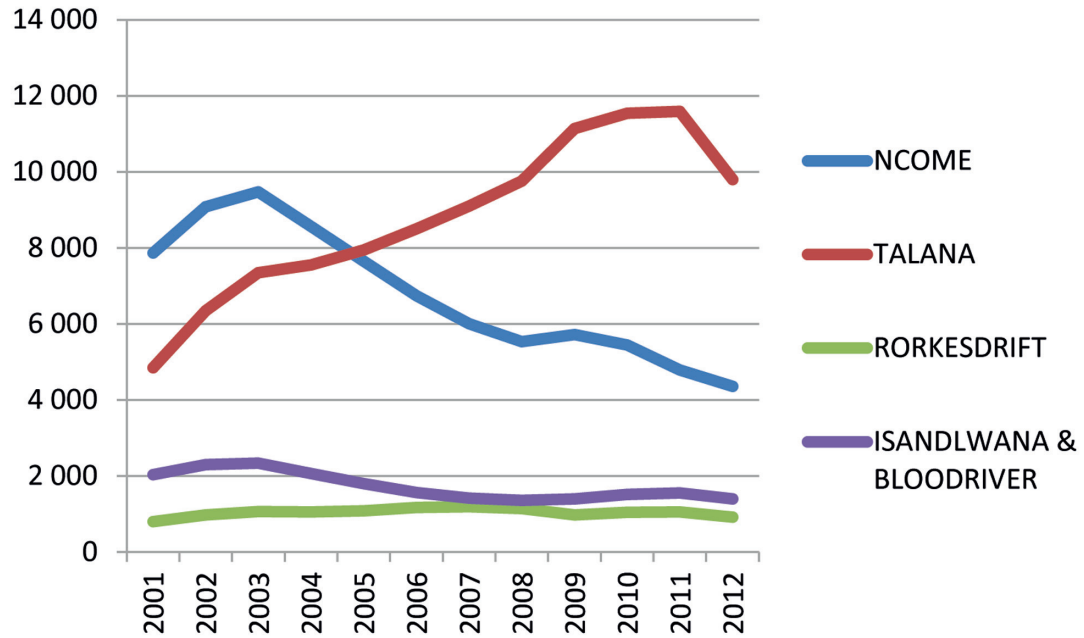


Fig. 3. Number of Tourist trips for Leisure to the various Local Municipalities making up the Battlefields around Dundee, KwaZulu-Natal from 2001 to 2012

Source: unpublished data from Global Insight

Overall, it is confirmed by most of the stakeholders in Battlefields Tourism that visitor numbers are in a state of decline. In total there are 13 accommodation establishments in the Dundee area and 17 within the Dundee-Rorke's Drift area (McFadden, 2014). Accommodation owners and managers in and around Dundee and the various sites concur that fewer people are visiting the battlefields for leisure purposes and that more of their clientele are traveling for business reasons. Indeed, when asked what the major purpose is for visit of your average guest, most respondents said 'for business tourism'. The growing impact of business tourism over leisure tourism in the battlefields is confirmed by one interviewee who stated that "*conferencing is not a huge industry in Dundee, and few people come here for workshops or a conference; but more and more companies send people on contracts to do work in the region for a few months at a time, and many accommodation establishments have their regular contractors staying with them throughout the year*" (Anon, 2013a). Figure 4 illustrates how number of tourist trips for business has at least stayed constant or increased steadily over time.

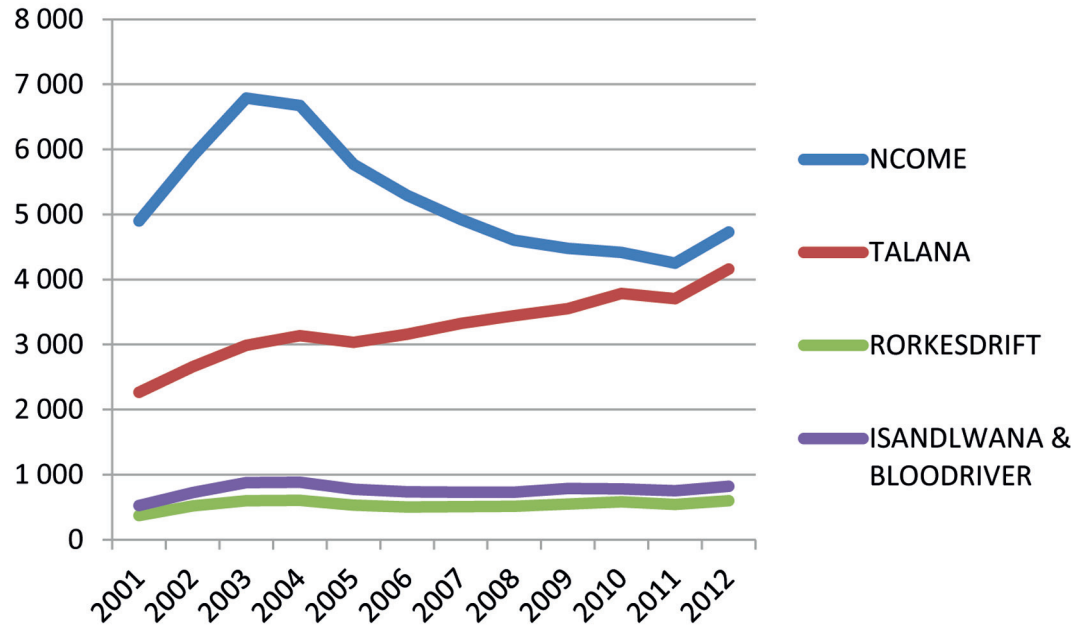


Fig. 4. Number of Tourist trips for Business to the various Local Municipalities making up the Battlefields around Dundee, KwaZulu-Natal from 2001 to 2012

Source: Unpublished data from Global Insight

Despite the upsurge in 'business tourism', the local effect of tourism (heritage and battlefield tourism included) has decreased over time. Figure 5 illustrates the trends of tourism spending as a percentage of tourism contribution to GDP. Again a spike for 2010 seems to suggest that the FIFA Soccer World Cup made a positive influence in the local economies of this region albeit few accommodation establishments reported any increased occupancy as a result of the football. One respondent observed, "*I have yet to see a Soccer player or fan, it was my worst year in business yet*" (Anon, 2013b). The profile of visitor numbers and patterns of visitor stay in the Battlefields region points to the so far limited impacts of new heritage tourism projects upon the Dundee local tourism economy and of other local municipalities.

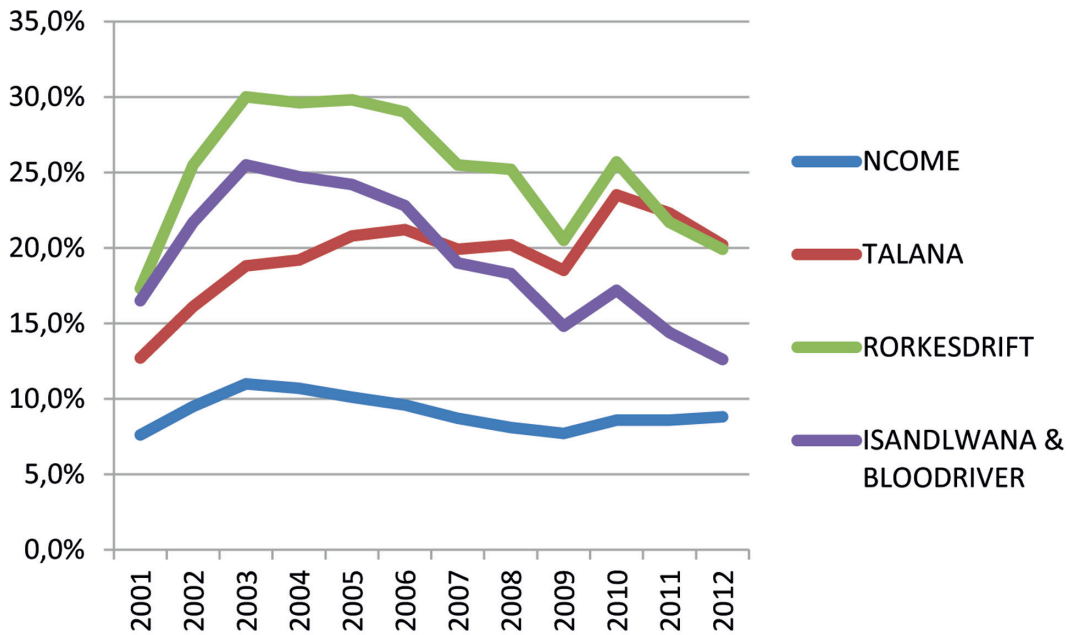


Fig. 5. Tourism spend as a Percentage of the contribution of tourism to Gross Domestic Product in the various Local Municipalities making up the Battlefields around Dundee, KwaZulu-Natal from 2001 to 2012

Source: unpublished data from Global Insight

Table 2. Socio-demographics of cultural and heritage tourism consumers

Individual Characteristics	NDT Study %	Battlefields in KZN %
Gender		
Male	51	54
Female	49	46
Race		
African	29	2
Coloured	5	0
White	57	95
Indian	9	3
Age		
Under 20 years old	7	0
21-30	29	6
31-40	25	19
41-60	31	17
Over 60	8	58
Highest Level of Education		
Primary Education	2	2
High School Education	32	12
Post High School Education	66	86

Source: Data gathered at the various Battlefield Sites, 2013 and Tlabela & Munthree, 2012

Table 2 outlines the socio-demographic characteristics of who constitutes a 'battlefield heritage tourist'. The results of the visitor survey to the various battlefields are compared with the findings of the larger customer satisfaction investigation of cultural and heritage tourists to South Africa as conducted by Tlabela and Munthree (2012). The evidence shows that most battlefields tourists are white men, retired, with a great deal of time to travel and a larger disposable income; well educated and with a particular interest in the battlefield and the history of the conflict concerned. It was disclosed that most visitors are international tourists (63%) and that local tourists constituted only 37% of the sample. These results could be related to seasonality and the nature of this study's fieldwork as one tourist guide said that 80% of his visitors are South Africans.

The findings of this research show heritage tourism is important for these battlefield tourists (Table 2). In total 63.6% of survey respondents indicated that heritage was 'very important' to them; 30.3% said heritage was 'moderately important'; 3.1% were 'neutral' and 1.5% said that heritage was either 'slightly' or of 'low importance' to them. Most respondents defined heritage according to various themes. First, many said that 'heritage' is about one's past, "*the managed history of our land both in terms of writing and looking after historical sites*"; *"our history – so that we can understand the past and plan better for the future*"; Second, many saw heritage as our inherent makeup and as being part of our place in the world, our "*inherited history, culture and our environment*"; *"something that has been there for a long time and worth preserving for future generations"; "keeping alive past events and traditions, so that we can learn and benefit from them*"; Third, many identified the tangibility of heritage with battlefields being "*any site of historical value*"; *"everything created or preserved by our forefathers for us and what we leave behind for our children. It is more than just your culture – it is what has shaped us*".

6. The limits of Battlefields Tourism for local development

The study disclosed the limits of battlefields tourism for promoting local development. A significant survey finding for local economic development impacts was that 82% of visitors to the Battlefields only stayed over in the area for one-night; the remainder were 'simply passing through' and chose to visit the battlefield site while in transit, or had stayed with family or friends. This finding has important implications for tourism spend as well as for the benefits to the local accommodation sector in terms of hotels; guesthouses; lodges and bed & breakfasts in the region. The findings correspond with the broad picture of the weak state of the local tourism economy in most municipalities.

The group of 'heritage tourists' interviewed at the various battlefield sites identified several themes that concern them which could lead to poor attendance at heritage sites in South Africa. First, safety and security were very important to visitors, many expressing "*crime and security fears*". Second, many felt that some sites were too expensive and not good value for money, observing that "*entrance fees are over-priced for locals*" and "*a lack of knowledgeable and interesting guides is also prevalent at many sites, many guides are ignorant, placed there by local authorities and who are not qualified, registered guides*". Third, logistical difficulties were also a factor as "*tourists may be deterred by poor road conditions they are unfamiliar with (potholes and stray animals*)". Indeed, it was evident that "*battlefields are often off the beaten track and in some places, require some effort to get to*"; *"great distances to travel between battlefields"; "finding the battlefield sites and lack of accommodation nearby"; "information on site and assistance to tourists is not always optimal"; "small number of quality hotels in rural areas*". Four, many respondents highlighted the lack of strategic guidance and leadership from local authorities and identified several issues relating to this as being "*political interference and influence – the truth of past events must be told without bias or manipulation*". Issues of concern were expressed in interviews variously; "*lack of funding for the upkeep and promotion of heritage*"; *"a lack of respect for the cultural importance to South Africans"; "the sites are not properly marketed and the Heritage Agencies are doing less in promoting the sites*"; and finally, the lack of support and the poor culture of tourism within the local communities, as "*many locals have no appreciation of our heritage, lacking respect for our heritage sites"; "indigenous people vandalise everything*

and only emphasise that heritage which is important to them"; and "*lack of appreciation of heritage from the youth*".

In terms of the stakeholder interviews most respondents were highly critical of the role of local government in promoting battlefields tourism. It was suggested that the local municipality "*budgets way too little for the promotion of battlefield tourism in KwaZulu-Natal*" (Anon, 2014b) and is sometimes "*at loggerheads with the tourist industry. For example, it was argued that tourist guides are made to pay every time they visit a battlefield site which causes them to put up their fees with tourists, and creates resentment amongst tourist guides and tourists, thus hindering the development of the battlefield tourism industry in KwaZulu-Natal*" (van Vuuren, 2013). Of particular concern to most stakeholders is the lack of strategic leadership and initiative from local government and bodies that should be promoting and driving the battlefields tourism industry. It was argued by some stakeholders that "*the Battlefields Route Association is supposed to be an on-going municipal tourism development project, but the changes in municipal structures and personnel has left us in a position where very few tourism officers that are supposed to run and fund the Association, are neither interested nor capable of doing so*". In one interview this point was elaborated in some detail: "*There are only five of us doing all the work, and two of us are stepping down at the AGM next month – so there is no one to replace us. Also, the municipalities are very lax about paying their subscription and providing any form of grants – so I think the situation regarding the promotion of battlefields in the region is only going to get worse*" (Sutcliffe, 2014).

The current institutional set up surrounding tourism development in the area was revealed as uncoordinated. The Battlefields Route of KwaZulu-Natal Association is a private sector initiative that promotes the battlefields in this part of South Africa (Battlefields Route, 2014). The route was begun in late 1980 by a group of three women and institutionalised in 1990 by group of tourist guides and history enthusiasts. Its members constitute representatives from various public and private sector institutions, including tourist guides; the accommodation sector; local tourism authorities and municipal as well as provincial role-players (Battlefields Route of KwaZulu-Natal, 2014). Amafa, the provincial heritage agency for KwaZulu-Natal is still without a CEO – this has been the situation for over a year now already, which hampers the implementation of plans and spending of budgets – and needs to be dealt with, if leadership and strategic development of the battlefields is to occur and be sustained. Furthermore, the basic maintenance of infrastructure at battlefield sites is falling into disrepair. One interviewee stated that *"Amafa is not responsible for the maintenance at battlefield sites, but is doing it by default – so as to protect tourism's interests at over 45 sites in Dundee*" (van Vuuren, 2013). For many of the stakeholders, like accommodation owners, interviewed – most expressed a lack of trust and confidence in the local and provincial authorities with respect to the management and maintenance of tourism. Among shortcomings identified by various stakeholders are a lack of strategic direction; duplication and wastage of resources; poor budgeting; poor or non-existent marketing strategies, and lack of capacity. Another stakeholder remarked: "*The (Battlefields tourism) product has to be better promoted in a professional way and moved forward into the 21st Century. It has to be de-politicised and targeted at what the visitor wants and will pay for. The sector is divided and not coordinated at this time*" (Anon, 2014c).

Fragmentation and capacity in the Battlefields region is a huge problem. Tourism industry stakeholders expressed the view that local and district municipalities have a political agenda. Many stakeholders expressed the frustration and difficulties in working with policy-makers and politicians who are constantly driving the transformation agenda and saying "*we don't want you white people involved… it kind of gets our backs up after years and years of effort to make the battlefields tourism route work. Knowledge and skills are lost from the route by this attitude*" (McFadden, 2014). Many local and district municipalities are not paying their subscription fees to the Battlefields Route Association which creates budgetary constraints for the marketing and promotions of the battlefields. Maintenance is also a major issue as many municipalities (who are mandated to run and effect tourism) are not properly doing this function, whereas "*battlefield sites need to be clean, visible and visitable – this all comes down to proper and sustained maintenance*" (Battlefields Routes Association, 2014). Accordingly, funding remains a

huge problem. For the Battlefields Route Association to effectively run battlefields tourism in KwaZulu-Natal requires an annual budget of R 450,000 (€ 32,000); with income from the website and affiliation fees payable by all stakeholders – there remains a shortfall of R 300,000 (€ 21,000) (Battlefields Routes Association, 2014). It was argued that battlefields tourism must be a 'three-way process': government-led; community-owned; and private-sector funded and supported; this partnership needs to be solidified and made more tenable if battlefields tourism is to be a sustainable tool for local development in South Africa.

In expanding the potential of battlefields as a tourism asset a number of suggestions were offered. It was argued by interviewees that the promotion of heritage tourism should be activity based with annual festivals, events that encompass heritage but also other things to attract people. Tourists should come for certain heritage elements and then get a wider package. This viewpoint was articulated by one interviewee as follows: "*Also in this type and stage of development of the business it is still very much personality driven with individuals making a mark but limited to particular sites. There is a need for innovation and new ideas and a realisation that the same old stuff will not keep selling. This is a difficult concept for the locals – this is what we make or can do so what is wrong with it*" (Mcfadden, 2014). In addition, it was maintained that municipalities need to grasp the concept that you have to build on what tourists want and not give them what you want: "*This also applies to the crafters and other service providers in the area. Crafts in general are of a poor quality, what is capable of being made not what tourists want or can export from the country. The mindset of crafters also needs to change and I have found this to be endless uphill battle and have given up. We need to start with sites that have an international/national appeal and a name that is known and market from there. N3 Gateway is a good example of what can be achieved but the Battlefields Route needs to reconsider its position*" (McFadden, 2014).

Marketing remains a further challenge. The Battlefields are not cohesively represented at the Tourism Indaba which is a national convention hosted annually at the Durban International Convention Centre. It was stated that improved marketing "needs to happen" if battlefields tourism is going to be seen as a heritage tourism product in South Africa (Battlefields Route Association, 2014). The Battlefields Route Association has printed 30,000 'Dundee – Gateway to the Battlefields' brochures in 2014, and Umzinyathi DM has offered to come onboard in assisting to fund this in future. Advertising remains an expensive exercise and if battlefields are to be effectively marketed abroad and locally, much investment is necessary. More coordination and inter-sectoral agreement, working together, are required to address and resolve these matters.

7. Conclusion

This study examined the local development potential impacts of battlefields tourism in South Africa. In common with international experience, visitors to battlefield sites, tourists, and local stakeholders within the industry agree that the battlefield sites in KwaZulu-Natal are "*worthy of attention and research for they represent not only memories of the past, but also statements of the present and aspirations for the future*" (Ryan, 2007b: 254). This said the results of this investigation suggest that whilst battlefields tourism in South Africa can be an asset and a lever for local economic development, the situation in the KwaZulu-Natal region is that this niche of heritage tourism currently is in a state of disarray and decline. Several challenges must be addressed to enhance the potential for battlefields tourism to be an important local development vehicle.

A number of problems such as lack of planning; strategic direction and management; and political will to improve the situation and solve problems that affect each of the battlefield sites must be dealt with at both local and provincial government level if heritage tourism is to be a responsible and sustainable niche of the tourism economy in South Africa. It is evident that the battlefields are attracting less of the smaller surviving generation that are immediately interested and affected by the history and heritage of these conflicts. Accordingly, attention must be given to more segmented and innovative marketing, the development of higher quality accommodation within these rural areas and improved education of guides at sites and expanding

the knowledge of local tourism officers. Expanded levels of funding and strategic grants from local and provincial government can also go a long way to helping sustain and support the work being done by the Battlefields Route Association of KwaZulu-Natal. Above all, problems exist with the capacity of local government to support tourism development including the niche of battlefields tourism.

As a whole these issues confirm more broadly the capacity shortcomings of many local governments in South Africa with respect to tourism development, planning and management (Rogerson, 2013, 2014). The local municipalities and district municipalities in this region of KwaZulu-Natal are typical of local governments across South Africa which are struggling with the multiple challenges of planning for responsible and sustainable tourism development.

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