

Promoting the Bluffs' whale heritage site

Nothando Mthembu

WARD 66 councillor, JP Prinsloo, and his office, together with Sodurba Tourism and WildOceans, are currently working on a project to promote the KZN whale coast by developing and beautifying three main whale viewing points on the Bluff.

The viewpoints have been identified on Airlie and Netford roads as well as Finnemore Place. "We are working with urban design and landscaping departments that will be doing landscape design for each one of these places. Each one of these places will have its own design and attraction to it.

"At Airlie Road, we have already had a local artist paint a beautiful mural of these majestic creatures. We also want to create a deck that will have technology that imitates the sonic waves that whales use to communicate. On Netford Road we are planning to creatively engrave the migration route of the whales from Antarctica through to the Mozambican Channel into a wooden deck. At Finnemore Place there will be different kinds of structures that represent the different kinds of whales that can pass the Bluff," explained

Prinsloo.

There will also be benches crafted in the shape of a whale's tail, storyboards and other educational facilities at these sites to add to the whale ambiance.

"In future, we also want to work with local artists who will create sculptures of whales for each one of the viewpoints. Through this initiative we want to expose as many people as possible through the creative work they will be doing on this project. Local artists and designers will have the opportunity to showcase their talents to anyone who visits these sites and hopefully even gain business as a result."

Sodurba Tourism chairperson, Helga du Preez, said that Sodurba identified these potential view sites to form part of the whale heritage site on the KZN Whale Coast.

"The view sites offer land based whale watching to those who are not keen on going on a boat based whale watching cruise. The sites were identified because of the beautiful



The talented artist who painted the beautiful mural on Airlie Road, Dianne Campbell, with resident Johnny Swanepoel and Cllr JP Prinsloo.

views of the Indian Ocean. As a tourism destination, the Sodurba area and community will benefit, therefore we encourage the community to get on board in making this project a success," she said.

The success of the project will see the viewpoints, which form part of the whaling route, as a prime tourist attraction that contributes to the local tourism industry as well as the rich whale history known to the Bluff. Public participation meetings with relevant stakeholders are underway on the mentioned roads to liaise with community members about getting

the ball rolling on this project and also allowing residents to voice any concerns or suggestions that they may have about the utilisation of their area for the project. "If we develop the tourism economy, we get more people coming into the area, businesses stand to benefit from the influx of visitors, artists gain exposure, people get employed, investment is likely to increase and ultimately the initiative creates a knock-on effect. It's not just about a beautiful painting on a wall, it's about looking at the bigger picture and bettering our community in a holistic approach," said Prinsloo.