

Archaeological Site Report	SiteNo	9/2/448/0018
	Site Name	Old New Republic Raadsaal and Fort, and the Area
	Date	between this site and Carnegie Library, Vryheid
	Project	
	CaseNID	
	Coords	-27.768010, 30.796033

Page No: 1 **SiteAutoID:** 26034

Site Category: Building

SiteComments:

Archive Import History: At the conclusion of the Zulu War of 1879 the Zulu King, Cetshwayo, was deposed, but he was reinstated by Queen Victoria in 1883. However, one of his headmen, Sibebu, drove him out, and he died in February, 1884. His son, Dinizulu, continued the struggle against Sibebu. With the help of a volunteer Boer commando from the Transvaal under the command of Lukas Meyer, Dinizulu defeated Sibebu and succeeded to the kingship. On 23rd May, 1884, he entered into an agreement with the Boer volunteers whereby he granted them land to establish their own State. The Boers drafted and adopted a constitution at Sandlaer near the Umkuzi River on 31st July, 1884. A Volksraad was elected and an Executive Council, with Lukas Meyer as Acting President, was appointed. On 16th August the 'Nieuwe Republiek' was proclaimed. The Government moved from Sandlaer to Boomlaer at the foot of the Hiobane mountain. A committee was appointed to select a site for a town. The site elected was surveyed into stands and given the name of Vryheid. At the outset the Volksraad met in tents, but on 24th September, 1884, it was resolved to erect a government building. It was to be a building 6,7 m by 12,8 m, with burnt brick walls 3 metres high resting on stone foundations. The roof was to be of corrugated iron. In addition to the Council Chamber the building was to provide for a committee room for the Executive Committee, a room for a post office and two rooms, with a block in one of them, to serve as a gaol. The building work seems to have started at the end of 1884 and in June, 1885, the Volksraad, which had been using tents for all these months, could take occupation of the Raadsaal even though it was not quite completed. The decisions of the Volksraad were usually announced on Saturdays. They were written out by hand or duplicated and then nailed to the door of the Raadsaal. The Staatscourant or Government Gazette was also hand written and printed lithographically. On 13th November, 1884, the republic adopted its own flag and coat of arms. The citizens of the 'Nieuwe Republiek' nearly all came from the Transvaal and the incorporation of the republic into the Transvaal was practically a foregone conclusion. This in fact took place on 20th July, 1888, when it became part of the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek. This territory was eventually transferred to Natal after the Anglo-Boer War. Visual Description: In President Street there is a simple rectangular little building with a corrugated iron roof, and behind it a sturdy stone building. These are respectively the old Raadsaal or Council Building and the fort of the Nieuwe Republiek'. Colours: Site Features: Condition: Construction Date: Materials: Catalogue: , No: , Significance Category:

Damage Types: