

**The Archaeological Survey Of Erven 449 And
450, Pietermaritzburg**

For Metallon Properties (Pty) Ltd

Date: 1 July 2006

By Gavin Anderson

**Umlando: Archaeological Tourism And
Resource Management**

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Metallon Properties (Pty) Ltd., via Ndebele Kirby Planners, contacted Umlando to undertake an archaeological assessment of Erven 449 and 450, Upper Ferncliffe, Pietermaritzburg. The area may be bought for housing development.

The Terms of Reference are:

- locate archaeological sites, and/or;
- assess the potential of sites in this area

The survey was undertaken on the 30 June 2006. The area is currently under dense indigenous and alien vegetation. This allows for poor archaeological visibility, and thus a full survey was not undertaken.

My initial assessment is that there is a low probability that archaeological sites, in a primary context, would exist in the proposed area. That is, if any material is located, it is probably brought in by natural or human activities. The area is also very steep making it an unlikely area for people to have lived here in the past.

A complete assessment can be made only after the vegetation has been cleared. I do not believe that this would be necessary, as the area does not appear to be archaeologically sensitive.

I was informed that two human graves might occur in the area. The grave was originally located by one of the development team members, however its location was known to the landowner adjacent to the development.

The grave is located at the edge of a group of Blue Gum trees, in a small glade (see Appendix A). The small glade may be a result of human activity for the graves. I noticed the gravestone lying face down in the sand when I arrived on site. I initially thought that the grave had eroded from a landslide, as there is a small gully in the current area. However, on

closer inspection I noticed that an area had been excavated besides the headstone. Furthermore, the platform of the headstone is visible in the section of this excavation. This implies that the headstone had not fallen down, but had been placed to the side. This was done to have a safe access to the grave that was then looted / excavated¹.

I believe that this activity may have occurred some time in the past, as the excavation sections appear to have vegetation growing over, and on, it, and that the .sand has settled. There is recent human activity, however this is confined to the headstone area, where it was partially cleared.

The looting, or exhumation of human remains, without a permit (from the government) is illegal, and thus a criminal activity. Both Amafa KZN and the police have to be informed regarding this site. Amafa KZN needs to be informed, as they are responsible for heritage sites older than 60 years. The police need to be informed as a criminal activity has occurred. I liaise with Amafa KZN this week regarding the site and place further information as an addendum to this report.

I suggest that the developers, and team members, do not interfere with the grave in any manner.

In summary, the area appears to be of low archaeological sensitivity and significance. If any overhangs, or caves, were located during the course of the development, then they would need to be resurveyed. It is not possible to survey the area in its current state.

If the human remains still occur in the grave(s), or if other graves are located, then they would need to be moved. The removal of human remains for development purposes is a lengthy procedure and can take between two to six months to complete. Various government departments need to be involved with the removal of each grave, as well as a qualified

¹ The headstone would have collapsed on the grave diggers if not removed

undertaker. Amafa KZN needs to be involved as the graves are of historical age.

The developer would be responsible for the costs of reburial, etc. if any human remains still exist in the grave.

APPENDIX A
ARCHAEOLOGICAL / HISTORICAL SITE RECORD FORM

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE RECORD FORM

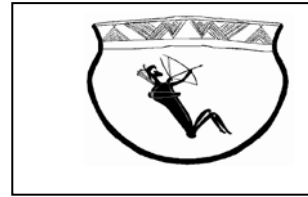
SITE CATEGORY: (X where applicable)

Stone Age

Early Iron Age:

Late Iron Age

Historical Period:



Recorder's Site No.: PMB1

Official Name:

Local Name:

Map Sheet: 2930 Pietermaritzburg

Map Reference: S29 33' 36.7" E30 19' 28.4"

GPS reading? yes

Directions to site: Sketch or description.

Travel up Town Bush Road (Pietermaritzburg). At the very top of the road is a T-junction: left hand side goes to private property, and RHS goes to Umgeni Water. From this point, backtrack down the road to a clearing on the right, for a water pipeline. There are two pipeline structures, go to the one furthest uphill, and towards the blue gums. Follow the line of blue gum trees that border on the small (summer?) stream. Site is in a small glade at the base of these trees and where an old gully occurs.

SITE DESCRIPTION:

Type of Site: grave

Merits conservation: yes

Threats: yes

What threats: vandalism and possible development.

RECORDING:

Details of graphic record: N/A

Colour slides: Black & White photographs

Tracings Re-drawings

Recorder/Informant: Name: Gavin Anderson

Address: PO Box 102532, Meerensee, 3901

Owner: Mr Barret?

References: see report to client

Date: 1 July 2006

Description of site and artefactual content.

Site consists of one visible grave. I was told that there may be two graves in the area, but I could only observe one of these. The headstone has been removed and toppled over (face downwards). The grave itself has been clearly excavated in the past. Currently it is in a depression approx 50 – 80 cm deep. The platform of the headstone is visible in the sections.

Suggestions: Area is a no-go area. Contact Amafa/police as this is illegal activity?
Need to confirm that (complete) skeleton has been removed.