

**OSMOND LANGE ARCHITECTS AND  
PLANNERS**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT OF THE  
SITE OF THE PROPOSED KWAZULU-NATAL  
LEGISLATURE, PIETERMARITZBURG.**

PHASE 1 REPORT

26 JULY 2007, PIETERMARITZBURG

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## **SUMMARY**

A heritage survey of the proposed site of the new KwaZulu-Natal legislature complex revealed the remnants of a built structure on Erf 258, probably dating to the late 1800s. From an archaeological point of view, the whole site has suffered considerable disturbance in the last 120 years. Buildings, gardens and roads have been constructed. There is therefore no known archaeological reason to impede further development of the site. However, I draw attention to the KwaZulu-Natal Heritage Act which requires operations that expose archaeological remains should cease immediately, pending evaluation by the provincial heritage agency.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Osmond Lange Architects and Planners, commissioned heritage impact assessments of several properties on Town Hill, Pietermaritzburg, in accordance with Section 27 of the KwaZulu-Natal Heritage Act (Appendix 1). The site is being evaluated for the proposed KwaZulu-Natal legislature building. The affected area comprises several properties west of Townbush Valley Road, including parts of Midlands Hospital Townhill, North Park gardens, and residential accommodation currently used by hospital and police staff. In addition, the SAPS stables are located on the site. The erf numbers are 224, 247, 248 245, 258, 476 and 650 (surveyed as a road?).

Ms Deborah Whelan conducted an assessment of the buildings on the site. She will submit her findings under separate cover. I conducted an archaeological assessment of the site, focusing on pre- and early colonial archaeology. This report contains my findings.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

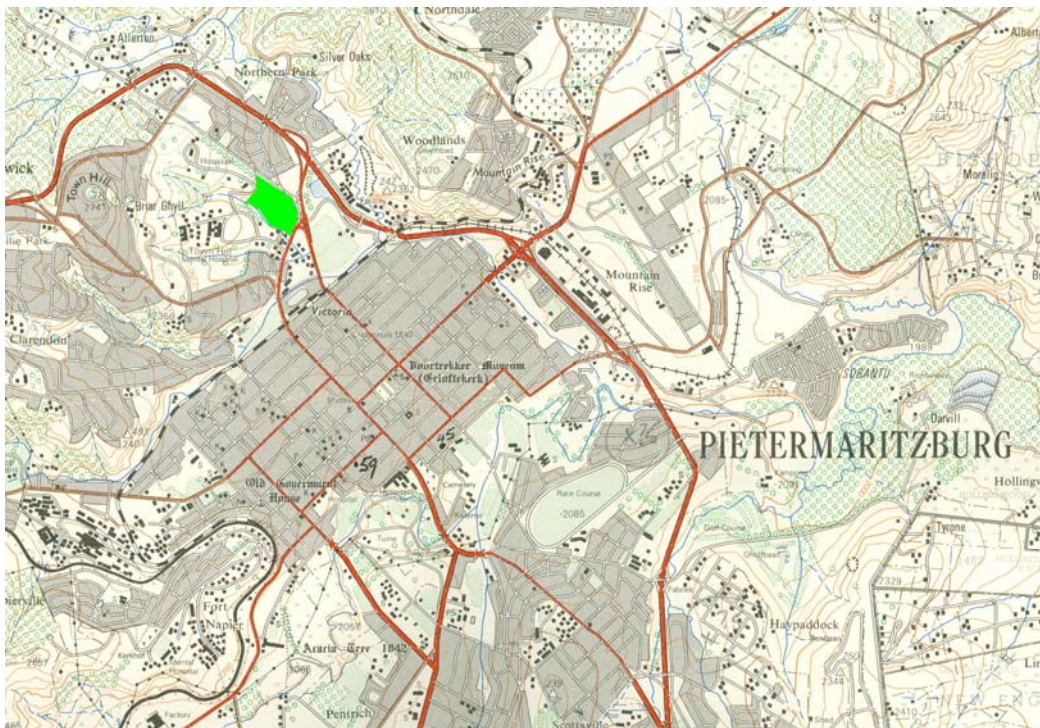
The affected area is on a narrow, sloping ridge that lies between two small streams (Fig. 1). Such areas potentially have archaeological remains of interest, but there are no records in the Natal Museum database of any archaeological material on the site. The Natal Museum is the Regional Recording Centre for archaeological site data in KwaZulu-Natal and currently has nearly 6000 sites on record.

## **METHODS**

In cultural resource management, archaeological or cultural sites are ranked into categories of significance from none to high. Sites with no significance do not require mitigation; low to medium may require mitigation; while sites with high

significance should not be disturbed at all, or will require more extensive investigation. The significance of a site is determined by the nature of the deposit, that is, its content, integrity, size and representivity; its research relevance; and its social significance.

I visited the site on 20 and 25 July 2007 and searched it on foot. It is heavily disturbed from an archaeological point of view, with earthworks related to gardens, houses and roads constructed during the last 120 years. Other than in the SA Police Service (SAPS) horse paddocks, archaeological visibility was generally poor because of lawn grass or thick veld-grass cover.



**Figure 1:** ■ The location of the affected area marked in green on the 2930CB Pietermaritzburg 1:50 000 map sheet.

## RESULTS

I identified no pre- or early colonial archaeological remains.

Buried structural remains are present on Erf 258 in the upslope horse paddock immediately north of the car park on Erf 248 (at the SAPS offices). These indicate a structure of some extent, probably dating to the late 1800s. What appears to be a collapsed or dismantled wall line is aligned roughly southeast/northwest

through the paddock. Its northwest end appears to be a corner with another wall line running perpendicularly to the southwest. Long rectangular depressions in the paddock suggest other structures. As relatively recent architectural residues, these are considered in more detail in Ms Whelan's report.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Overall, there is no known hinderance to further development of this site from an archaeological point of view. However, Ms Whelan recommends that the historical remains on Erf 258 be mapped should any future development reveal anything of interest here. The site may also contain buried rubbish dumps of the late 1800s and early 1900s, which might yield material of interest to historical architects and archaeologists.

It is also possible that other archaeological residues, or human remains, are buried beneath the surface. For example, open-air Stone Age sites sometimes comprise shallow scatters of artefacts which would be impossible to identify without shovel testing. Given the extent of modern disturbance on the site, I believe shovel testing is not worth while.

In conclusion, I draw attention to the KwaZulu-Natal Heritage Act, which requires that operations exposing archaeological and historical residues should cease immediately pending an evaluation by the heritage authorities (Amafa aKwaZulu-Natali). Future work should therefore proceed with caution and in collaboration with the heritage agency.

## APPENDIX 1

### KWAZULU-NATAL HERITAGE ACT, 1997

#### KWAZULU-NATAL HERITAGE ACT, 1997 No. 10 of 1997

##### Heritage resources management

27. (1) Any person wishing to undertake a project described in terms of the following categories:

- (a) construction of a road, wall, power line, pipeline, canal or other similar form of linear development or barrier exceeding 300m in length.
- (b) construction of a bridge or similar structure exceeding 50m in length; and
- (c) any development, or other activity which will change the character of an area of land or water-----
  - (i) exceeding 10 000m<sup>2</sup> in extent
  - (ii) involving three or more existing erven or subdivisions thereof; or
  - (iii) involving three or more erven, or subdivisions 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; or
  - (v) any other category of development provided for in regulations.

shall at her/his own initiative and at the very earliest stages of initiating such a development, notify the Council and furnish it with details regarding the location, nature and extent of the proposed development.