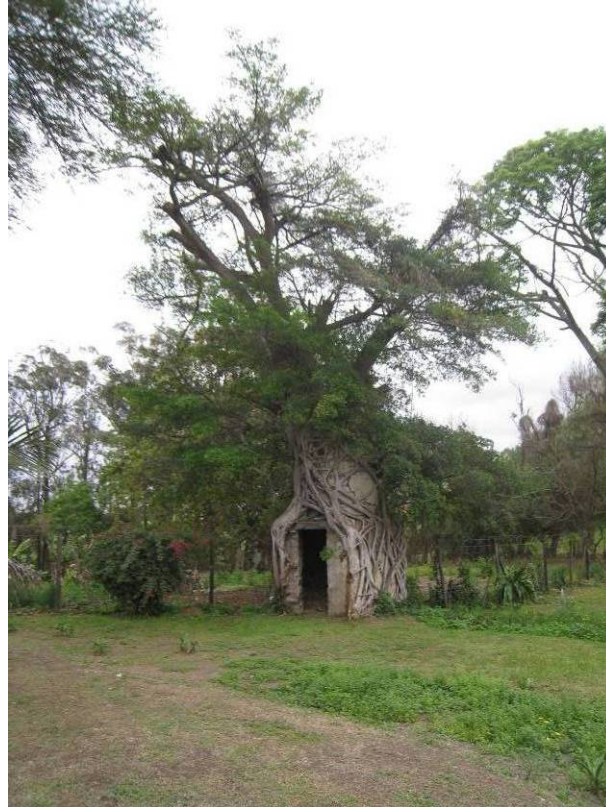


Heritage impact assessment of ancillary sites with potential heritage on the Cornubia development, Mount Edgecombe



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1. Introduction

Debbie Whelan of Archaic Consulting was contacted by Mr. Rory Wilkinson from Tongaat Hulett Developments regarding the proposed demolition of buildings on three sites on the Cornubia development, located close to the main Verulam / Umhlanga Road. This is located in the high development zone north west of the Gateway Precinct at Umhlanga Ridge, and north of much of the Mount Edgecombe developments (see Fig 1). These buildings are intended for demolition in order to make way for an intensive mixed use development. This report intends to assess these buildings for significance in terms of the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Heritage Act no 4 of 2008.



Fig 1: Scope of site inspections as required by Tongaat Hulett Developments (Pty).Ltd.

2. Methodology

A site inspection was carried out by Debbie Whelan on 7 November 2014. Prior to the site visit, preliminary investigations were carried out, assessing the basic history of the property in order to inform the direction of the research. However, although this property was found to be a swathe of Byrne Settlement lands, little subsequent information was found, except that found in the land registers and documented in the relevant chapter hereunder.

The original name is understood to have been 'Cornubia', being part of the cane plantation which holds that name. This property does not feature in Professor Walter Peter's North Coast Survey, commissioned by Amafa in 1996.

The information in the land registers was used to try to alleviate this issue, by correspondence with the names and addresses given in the Natal Almanacs from between 1880 and 1930. This held little further elucidatory information on the name of the farm, and, indeed, its primary owner at the turn of the 20th century appears nowhere.

Knowing that the property was part of Natal Estates, prompted consultation of the Campbell papers and photographs at the Killie Campbell Collections. However, this drew little success, as Campbell's primary operations were at Mount Edgecombe to the south. The Women's Institute *Early Days in Mount Edgecombe* provided scant information. Thus, with such dearth of information, for the purposes of this report the author assumes that there is no immediate connection with social, technical, historical or scientific processes, thus necessarily evaluating the buildings on their merits alone.

3. Brief history of Subdivision 31

Subdivision 31 was allocated to Joseph Byrne in 1851. He split it into smaller portions for resale as a speculative endeavour.

It appears as though the three sites are located on the original subdivisions 1, 2 and 3. The land histories of these properties reads as follows:

Lot 1 was granted to John Hawkins in 1851. This 60 acre lot was sold to the Natal Central Sugar Company Ltd in 1885, then transferred to Natal Estates Limited in 1895. This suggests that the property was used for sugar farming from very early on.

Lot 2 was granted to John Russom in 1851, transferred to Horace Acutt in 1868, Alfred Darling in 1870, and then in 1872 Subdivision A was sold to Mary Sinfell. In the same year the remainder was sold to Alfred Evans. In 1977 George Mayer and Lawrence de Chazal purchased the property. In 1885 the Deceased Estate of Alfred Evans transferred the property to the Natal Central Sugar Company Ltd in 1885, then transferred to Natal Estates Limited in 1895. This also suggests that the property was used for sugar farming from very early on.¹

Lot 3 was granted to Francis Harvey in 1851. On 1864 James Lean purchased the farm, selling it to William and Charles Fielders in 1867. In 1868 Francis and William Lean purchased subdivision A, leaving the Remainder in the hands of the London and Natal Bank. In 1869 William Hartley purchased the Remainder, selling to Francis and William Lean in 1872, who again, perhaps lost the property as it was registered in the name of Natal Bank in 1877. In 1884 this lot was sold to the Natal Central Sugar Company Ltd, then transferred to Natal Estates Limited in 1895. This suggests that the property was used for sugar farming from very early on. This is plausible since this area was the epicentre of sugar production and milling.

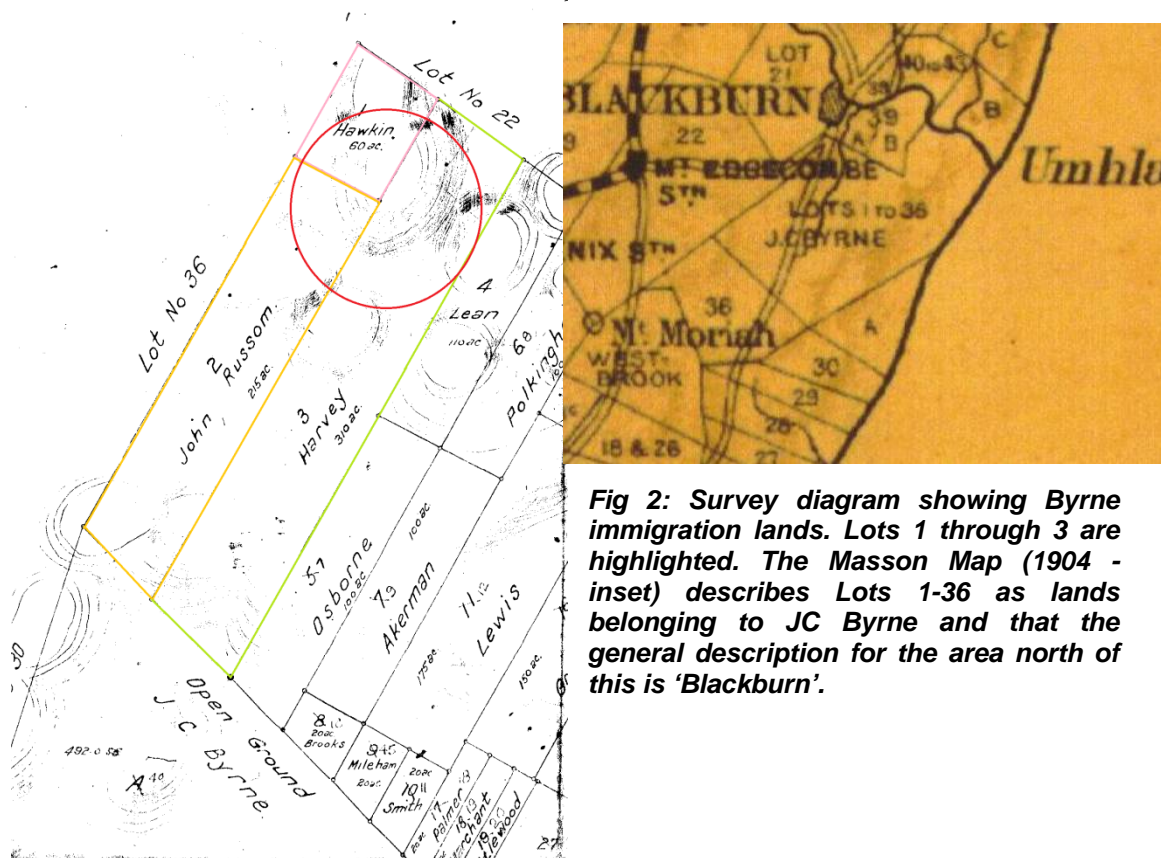


Fig 2: Survey diagram showing Byrne immigration lands. Lots 1 through 3 are highlighted. The Masson Map (1904 - inset) describes Lots 1-36 as lands belonging to JC Byrne and that the general description for the area north of this is 'Blackburn'.

¹ These concerns were associated with Marshall Campbell and David Don (Osborn 1964:252)

4. Assessment of various structures on Site 1

Site 1 consists of a homestead with associated buildings, located on a low hill (see fig below).



Fig 3: Aerial view of site 1, showing layout of buildings under discussion

4.1 Site 1 - Building 1

The main house faces north. It is of conventional construction, of brick and mortar under a hipped Marseilles tiled roof. To the north, a raised veranda has been more recently roofed with a shallow pitched corrugated sheeting 'afdak'. The walls have a facebrick dado base, with walls plastered and painted. The windows are steel and timber mixed. Internally, the house has suspended timber floors which are generally in good condition with a plasterboard ceiling.

It is a utilitarian, solid building, with few unique features. It is most likely over 60 years old, and thus protected in terms of the KwaZulu – Natal Provincial Heritage Resources Act no 4 of 2000.



Fig 4: Main house from the south



Fig 5: Main house from the east



Fig 6: Main house from the west



Fig 7: Main house from the north



Fig 8: Main house north west view



Fig 9: Interior of living spaces

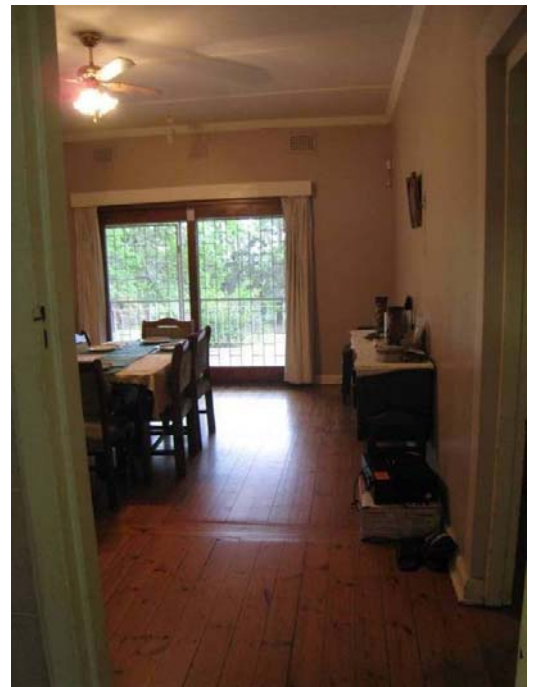


Fig 10, 11 and 12: Main house, interior

Summary: This house is of good solid construction and is in good condition. However, it is a utilitarian structure similar to many others, and has few features which grant it merit. It is recommended that demolition be allowed, and that materials such as the suspended timber floors be delivered to Amafa for recycling in the Building Materials Bank.

Significance:

| Building 1 / 1 | Local | Regional | National | International |
|----------------|-------|----------|----------|---------------|
| Architectural | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Social | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Historical | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Technical | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Scientific | Low | Low | Low | Low |

4.2 Site 1 - Building 2

This rectangular cottage is located close to the main house, on the northern edge. It is of conventional construction, with steel windows and a thatched, hipped roof, which looks as though it is in need of repair. It has a small veranda to part of the north side which is supported in part by a gumpole post.



Fig 13: Thatched cottage from south



Fig 14: thatched cottage from north

Summary: *This cottage is of good solid construction and is in reasonably good condition. However, it is a utilitarian structure similar to many others, and has few features which grant it merit. Demolition, should it be sought, is an option.*

Significance:

| Building 2 / 1 | Local | Regional | National | International |
|----------------|-------|----------|----------|---------------|
| Architectural | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Social | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Historical | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Technical | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Scientific | Low | Low | Low | Low |

4.3 Site 1 - Building 3

This is a masonry constructed building being used as a garage with a monopitch sheeting roof set on gumpole rafters. It is utilitarian and has little merit.



Fig 15: Garage building

Summary: *This building is in good condition. However, it is a utilitarian structure with few features which grant it merit. It is recommended that demolition be allowed.*

Significance:

| Building 3/1 | Local | Regional | National | International |
|---------------|-------|----------|----------|---------------|
| Architectural | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Social | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Historical | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Technical | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Scientific | Low | Low | Low | Low |

4.4 Site 1 - Building 4

This is perhaps the most interesting building on the site. It is a small cottage, with entrance off the front veranda, and an extension to the north which runs backwards of the building. It is roofed with a saddle corrugated sheeting roof, with a veranda at a lower pitch. It is situated to the right of the main entrance gates, adjacent to a facebrick garage (building 5) of more recent construction.



Fig 16: Labourer's cottage rear (east) view



Fig 17: Labourer's cottage, west view



Fig 18: Labourer's cottage extension



Fig 19: Labourer's cottage, rear



Fig 20: Labourer's cottage north view



Fig 21: Labourer's cottage, north west

Summary: *This house is of good solid construction and is in reasonably good condition. However, it is a utilitarian structure similar to many others, and has few features which grant it merit. It is recommended that demolition be allowed, and that any appropriate materials be delivered to Amafa for recycling in the Building Materials Bank.*

Significance

| Building 4/1 | Local | Regional | National | International |
|----------------------|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Architectural | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Social | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Historical | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Technical | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Scientific | Low | Low | Low | Low |

4.5 Site 1 - Building 5



This is a face-brick garage located next to building no 4 with mono-pitch corrugated sheeting roof and roller garage shutter. This is of conventional construction and has little or no merit from any point of view.

Fig 22: Building no 5, garage

Summary: *This building is of solid construction and is in good condition. However, it is a utilitarian structure similar to many others, and has few features which grant it merit. It is recommended that demolition be allowed.*

Significance:

| Building 5/1 | Local | Regional | National | International |
|---------------|-------|----------|----------|---------------|
| Architectural | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Social | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Historical | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Technical | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Scientific | Low | Low | Low | Low |

4.6 Site 1 – building 6

This is a poultry pen of mixed construction located outside the perimeter fence of the main complex comprising Site 1. This structure is of no heritage value and of limited interest from an architectural, scientific, historical or technical point of view.



Fig 23: Building no 6, poultry pen

Summary: *This building is utilitarian similar to many others, and has few features which grant it merit. It is recommended that demolition be allowed.*

Significance:

| Building 6/1 | Local | Regional | National | International |
|---------------|-------|----------|----------|---------------|
| Architectural | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Social | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Historical | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Technical | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Scientific | Low | Low | Low | Low |

4.7 Site 1 – building 7

This building is an old outbuilding in the garden of the complex which has been enveloped with a large fig tree. It has little heritage value, rather an aesthetic nostalgia.



Fig 24: Outbuilding and fig tree

Summary: *This building is of picturesque value and few features which grant it cogent merit. It is recommended that demolition be allowed.*

Significance:

| Building 7/1 | Local | Regional | National | International |
|---------------|-------|----------|----------|---------------|
| Architectural | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Social | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Historical | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Technical | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Scientific | Low | Low | Low | Low |

4.8 Site 1 – building 8



Fig 25: Outbuilding adjacent to main house

This structure is of uncertain use, but is constructed with mixed headers and stretchers, placing it as being most likely over the age of 60 years.

Summary: *This building is utilitarian and has few features which grant it cogent merit. It is recommended that demolition be allowed.*

Significance:

| Building 8/1 | Local | Regional | National | International |
|---------------|-------|----------|----------|---------------|
| Architectural | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Social | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Historical | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Technical | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Scientific | Low | Low | Low | Low |

5. Assessment of various structures on Site 2

Site 2 is a complex site of ramshackle buildings that has been operating as a livery yard / stables for some time. These buildings have been constructed itinerantly over the years, and are mostly of mixed material and have very little architectural merit. However, the owner of the stables indicated that it was connected with the 'Tongaat' mules. Whilst there is scant mention of the mules in Saunders' comprehensive volumes on the Tongaat – Hulett history, mules were used in the operations of cane farms. It is important to note that there is strong evidence of this site on the 1953 aerial photographs, but any detail of the buildings is hazy: most likely, given the usually random manner in which stables and loose boxes are constructed, this could well have been an established 'yard' for the Tongaat mules² for many years in the past.



Fig 26: Buildings on site 2 under discussion

5.1 Site 2 – building 1

This is a large barn which houses a number of loose boxes. It is constructed out of mixed materials, largely masonry, with a corrugated sheeting double pitched roof. It has had many accretions over the years, which make it a ramshackle arrangement of space. It has additions to the south east and high level clerestory windows to the north- west.



Fig 27: Barn from east



Fig 28: Barn from south east

² The proprietor of the livery yard notes that this complex as far as she was aware, was associated with the 'Tongaat Mules' – beasts of burden working in the sugar fields prior to mechanization.



Fig 29: Barn to the right, building 4 in the background and building 2 to the left



Fig 30: Barn from the north



Fig 31: Barn from south west



Fig 32: Interior of barn

Summary: *This building has elements of structures much older than at face value, and it is suspected that these elements formed the kernel of the structure evident in the 1953 aerial photograph. It is much altered. However, albeit of certain picturesque value, it has few features which grant it cogent merit. It is recommended that demolition be allowed.*

Significance:

| Building 1/2 | Local | Regional | National | International |
|---------------|-------|----------|----------|---------------|
| Architectural | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Social | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Historical | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Technical | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Scientific | Low | Low | Low | Low |

5.2 Site 2 – building 2

This building is another utilitarian structure of recent construction, of mixed materials. It has no value on any level.



Fig 32: Building 2 from south west



Fig 33: Building 2 with barn to the left

Summary: *This building is of recent construction and has no heritage value. It is recommended that demolition be allowed.*

Significance:

| Building 2/2 | Local | Regional | National | International |
|---------------|-------|----------|----------|---------------|
| Architectural | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Social | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Historical | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Technical | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Scientific | Low | Low | Low | Low |

5.3 Site 2 - building 3

These structures are prefabricated timber loose – boxes. They are insubstantial, ramshackle, of recent construction, and have no heritage or architectural value.



Figs 33 and 34: Building 3

Summary: *This building is of recent construction and has no architectural or heritage value. It is recommended that demolition be allowed.*

Significance:

| Building 3/2 | Local | Regional | National | International |
|----------------------|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Architectural | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Social | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Historical | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Technical | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Scientific | Low | Low | Low | Low |

5.4 Site 2 - building 4

This is a wood – and – iron barn that is most likely over 60 years old, and dating back to the period of the Tongaat mules. It is not in good condition, and has very limited value in recycling.



Fig 35: Building 4, wood and iron barn

Summary: *This building is most likely over 60 years old, but is not in good condition, and has limited possibilities for recycling. It is recommended that demolition be allowed.*

Significance:

| Building 4/2 | Local | Regional | National | International |
|----------------------|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Architectural | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Social | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Historical | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Technical | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Scientific | Low | Low | Low | Low |

5.5 Site 2 - building 5



This building is of brick and mortar, with a corrugated sheeting mono-pitch roof. It also serves as stables. It has little architectural or historical merit.

Fig 36: Stables

Summary: *This building is utilitarian, of more recent construction, and has little heritage value. It is recommended that demolition be allowed.*

Significance:

| Building 5/2 | Local | Regional | National | International |
|---------------|-------|----------|----------|---------------|
| Architectural | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Social | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Historical | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Technical | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Scientific | Low | Low | Low | Low |

5.6 Site 2 - building 6



This building is of block with a corrugated iron mono - pitch roof. It also serves as loose boxes.

Fig 37: Loose boxes

Summary: *This building is of recent construction and has no architectural or heritage value. It is recommended that demolition be allowed.*

Significance:

| Building 6/2 | Local | Regional | National | International |
|---------------|-------|----------|----------|---------------|
| Architectural | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Social | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Historical | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Technical | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Scientific | Low | Low | Low | Low |

5.7 Site 2 - building 7

This building is a ramshackle timber structure to the west of the main barn.



Fig 38: Loose boxes

Summary: *This building is of recent construction and has no architectural or heritage value. It is recommended that demolition be allowed.*

Significance:

| Building 7/2 | Local | Regional | National | International |
|---------------|-------|----------|----------|---------------|
| Architectural | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Social | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Historical | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Technical | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Scientific | Low | Low | Low | Low |

5.8 Site 2 – building 8



Fig 39: Labour quarters

This building is most likely over 60 years old: it has mixed header and stretcher courses, and a simple Marseilles tiled roof.

Summary: *This building is of picturesque value and few features which grant it cogent merit. It is recommended that demolition be allowed.*

Significance:

| Building 8/2 | Local | Regional | National | International |
|---------------|-------|----------|----------|---------------|
| Architectural | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Social | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Historical | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Technical | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Scientific | Low | Low | Low | Low |

6. Assessment of various structures on Site 3

This site is also run as a riding school, and has a series of structures associated with it, as well as paddocks. However, all of the buildings are of recent construction, and lack any architectural value.



Fig 40: Buildings on site 3 under discussion

6.1 Site 3 – building 1

This is a long building comprising a tack shop and stables. It is of contemporary construction of face-brick under a double pitched roof.



Fig 41: Building from the north



Fig 42: Building from the east

Summary: This building is of recent construction and has no architectural or heritage value. It is recommended that demolition be allowed.

| Building 1/3 | Local | Regional | National | International |
|---------------|-------|----------|----------|---------------|
| Architectural | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Social | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Historical | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Technical | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Scientific | Low | Low | Low | Low |

6.2 Site 3 - building 2

Building 2 is a nondescript structure of plastered block with a double pitched corrugated sheeting roof.



Fig 43: Building 2 from the south

Summary: *This building is of recent construction and has no architectural or heritage value. It is recommended that demolition be allowed.*

| Building 2/3 | Local | Regional | National | International |
|---------------|-------|----------|----------|---------------|
| Architectural | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Social | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Historical | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Technical | Low | Low | Low | Low |
| Scientific | Low | Low | Low | Low |

7. Final Conclusions

Site 1:

The site as an established homestead is evident on the 1953 aerial photographs. How many of the buildings on the site date back to this date is not certain, as the photographs are not very clear. However, the structure identified as Building 4, the main house, and that building identified as Building 8 are all very likely to be over the age of 60 years.

- **Building no 4 is a good example of a labourer's cottage (most likely indentured labour). It is of mixed construction and has had random subsequent accretions to the north.**
- **The main house itself is not a striking example of architecture of the late 1940s and 1950s: it is generally well kept, and intact, although there are areas in which new windows have been inserted, as well as the addition of the veranda to the north.**
- **It is not clear what the function of outbuilding 8 was, but it shows evidence of pre-war construction.**

Whilst over the age of 60 years, and within the protection of the KwaZulu – Natal Provincial Heritage Resources Act, all three structures have limited heritage value.

Given the logisitics of preservation of individual buildings of reasonably negligible heritage value within the scale of the overall development, demolition of all structures is an option.

Site 2:

It is evident from aerial photographs that this site was developed by 1953. However, as with the above, the extent of the development is not evident. It is likely that parts of the main barn, the wood and iron barn and the labourers building all date back to this period, when the property was most likely associated with the residence of the “Tongaat mules’.

Whilst over the age of 60 years, and within the protection of the KwaZulu – Natal Provincial Heritage Resources Act, all three structures have limited heritage value.

Given the logisitics of preservation of individual buildings of reasonably negligible heritage value within the scale of the overall development, demolition of all structures is an option.

Site 3:

There is no structure on this site which is protected in terms of the KwaZulu – Natal Provincial Heritage Resources Act, thus demolition of all structures on this site is an option.

8. References

Osborn, R. 1964. *Valiant Harvest: the founding of the South African Sugar industry*. Durban, SASA.