

**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF  
OUDE MOLEN, 'VALKENBURG EAST',  
CITY OF CAPE TOWN, WESTERN CAPE**

ERF 26439-RE, Cape Town



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# 1. INTRODUCTION

The subject site (*Figure 1*), is located in the designated Two Rivers Urban Park in the suburb of Pinelands, City of Cape Town, Western Cape. It is situated Alexandra Road, Pinelands, and stands on Erf 26439-RE, Cape Town, as part of the Oude Molen Eco Village established in 1997 on the defunct Valkenberg East mental health hospital precinct. The site includes the Oude Molen mill house and possible fabric of an adjacent barn, as well as the site of the 1717 windmill after which the property was named, and various 20th-century hospital buildings related to the mental health facility for ‘non-white’ patients that closed in the early 1990s.

Situated next to the Black River, a historic fresh water source and a boundary of the 17th-century Cape settlement, the Oude Molen site could potentially contain archaeological traces from various stages of prehistory, from the Early Stone Age onwards, and particularly to around 2 000 years ago when Khoekhoen pastoralists settled on the Peninsula, to the 18th-century Free Burgher farms that were granted along the river (T. Hart 2003: 3).

## Site name

Erf 26439-RE, Cape Town; Oude Molen Eco Village, Pinelands, Two Rivers Urban Park, Cape Town

## Locality plan



**Figure 1:** Oude Molen Eco Village (Erf 26439-RE), Alexandra Road, Pinelands. (Property search, July 2020 version)

## 2. FINDINGS



*Figure 2: Oude Molen mill house front (north) façade, Oude Molen Eco Village (Jim Hislop, 6 Oct 2013)*

### 2.1. Historical background: Desktop research

The founding of a refreshment station at the Cape of Good Hope in 1652 by the Dutch East India Company (DEIC/VOC) resulted from a need for replenishing ships en route between India and Europe (D. Hart 1997: 23).

Apart from fruit, vegetables and meat, grain was also cultivated for passing ships as well as the growing settlement of Kaapse Vlek. Mills were needed to grind the grain for flour, as bread was a vital staple for the growing population (D. Hart 1997: 23).

The first mill (a water mill approximately where Shortmarket and Adderley streets now meet) was begun in 1659 by Wouter Cornelis Mostert, but due to lack of funds to complete the building, the VOC ended up financing it and owning it (Walton 1978: 3). Other Table Valley water mills succeeded it, including Hope Mill, which was begun in 1685 and stood at the upper (Orange Street) end of the Company Gardens (Walton 1978: 3).

The granting of land to nine free burghers along the Liesbeek River in 1657 resulted in more grain being produced once these new farms were established, and according to the *Burgher Council*, by 1693 this put additional pressure on the existing VOC water mill in the Table Valley, which already had “more than sufficient work to provide the officials, the ships, the slave-lodge and the hospital...” The Council pointed out that the Liesbeek River free burghers often had to get their grain ground in

Stellenbosch, which caused them great inconvenience (Walton 1978: 5). It was then decided to grant a piece of land on the Liesbeek River for the building of a new water mill that could be used by the free burghers. The water mill and mill house were named Molenvliet, and stood in the vicinity of what is now Mowbray Maternity Home off Durban Road, Mowbray (Walton 1978: 5).

By 1717, after a succession of crude, makeshift tower mills that had been built in the Table Valley had proved unable to withstand the south-easterly winds for any length of time, ground was granted next to the Black River “on the road to the Tyger Berg” (close to what is now Pinelands Station) to build a sturdier, permanent windmill. In order to construct the windmill, the Council of Seventeen had to send a group of masons and carpenters as well as 8 000 klinker bricks (imported on the *Meijnden*) as materials from Holland (Walton 1974: 133). This mill eventually became known as Oude Molen (after a second windmill, Nieuwe Molen, was built nearby in the early 1780s).

Because the windmill was visible from the road into the hinterland, and various other thoroughfares, it became somewhat of a landmark, and was shown on various early panoramas of Cape Town. One of the earliest depictions of the mill is on the Schneider/Schumacher panorama of c.1778 (*Figure 6*). Showing two windmills along the Black River; the mill closest to Table Bay was presumably Oude Molen, while the other would have been Clapperton’s Mill, next to the Campground/Rondebosch Common, already existing by 1773 (Walton 1974: 134); Nieuwe Molen was only completed in 1782 (Fransen 2004: 94). Louis Vidal’s (or possibly Cecelia Ross’s) c.1803 painting (*Figure 7*) depicts a remote-looking pair of buildings (presumably the Oude Molen mill house and barn for storing grain), and the windmill already in a bad state of repair without its sails.

Robert Semple, a traveller, who after crossing the Salt River and moving in the direction of the Hottentots Holland Mountains in 1800, described the journey as “very tiresome, being presently engaged among little sand hills, which reflected the heat of the sun in a violent degree, while the sand giving way at each step fatigued us greatly. The only green that we saw to refresh the eye was near two or three windmills, which grind almost all the wheat used in Cape Town” (D. Hart 1997: 24). One of these mills must have been Oude Molen.

With the increase in farming activities and production of grain along the Liesbeek and Black rivers in the late-18th century, a second windmill was built for the Burgher Council nearby (begun in 1780 and completed in 1782) and named Nieuwe Molen because it was the ‘new’ mill (Hart 1997: 24). The Nieuwe Molen’s massive tower, declared a National Monument under old NMC legislation in 1978 (and then mistakenly referred to as Oude Molen), still stands in the grounds of the Alexandra Hospital, adjacent to the Oude Molen property (Hislop 2014: 87). In 1801, it was decided by the Burgher Council that the Cape Government sell the adjacent Oude Molen and Nieuwe Molen properties at auction to a private buyer, possibly in order to avoid the expense of spending money on repairing the mill buildings on both estates (Hart 1997: 24).

In 1802 the Oude Molen farm (then measuring 5 morgen 599 square roods) was sold by then proprietor or owner Cornelis van der Poel to Jurriaan De Vries. De Vries then added an additional 11 morgen 270 square roods of land surrounding the windmill. When De Vries died and his estate trustees sold it in 1810, the price had increased dramatically, indicating that other structures may have been built by then (Fransen 2004: 93). The c.1803 painting (either by Louis Vidal or Cecelia Ross, *Figure 7*) already depicts a substantial farm complex, so it is possible that De Vries added buildings soon after obtaining the property.

In 1810, Cornelis Mostert acquired the by now much-enlarged property (some 17 morgen). He increased the farmlands even further and intensified farming there. From *opgaafrolle* (tax census records) dated 1812, we know that he had 12 oxen and seven horses on the property, but no cereal

crops were being grown on the farm at the time (D. Hart 1997: 25). By 1821, however, he had acquired more livestock, and had harvested rye, oats (30 bags) and a large amount of hay (60 000 pounds). Having transformed the farm into a successful operation, Mostert sold it to William Hunt in 1834 (D. Hart 1997: 25).

By 1838 Hunt had died and his widow Hannah Hunt sold Oude Molen to Andries Carel Bam (D. Hart 1997: 25). The property remained largely unchanged for three decades of Bam's ownership until 1869 when he was declared insolvent, and it was sold at a very low price (£425, compared to the sum of his purchase price of £1 500 – a sign of reduced farming activities and the neglected state of the mill) to James Heelas (D. Hart 1997: 25). It was probably around this time that the old windmill was last used (steam mills were now replacing windmills), due to its degraded state (D. Hart 1997: 25). It was supposedly eventually destroyed by a South-Easter gale (Sustainability Institute: 1).

A quick succession of owners followed: in 1873 John Thurston Koller bought the property at an even lower price (£400), and sold it in 1874 to William Coleman for a profit (£686), whereafter it went to William Coleman the same year and to Louis Godlieb Francois Biccard for £650 in 1875 (D. Hart 1997: 25). The farm, though much reduced in value without the mill, remained operational, however, and in 1880 Oude Molen the Colonial Government appropriated the property in order to house a political prisoner, the last independent Zulu king, Cetshwayo (Fransen 2004: 94).

In 1881, Cetshwayo, was captured by the British in Zululand and brought to Cape Town. Because of poor conditions at the Castle he was moved as a 'State guest', along with his entourage to Oude Molen while awaiting transfer for an audience with Queen Victoria in England. He was visited the same year at Oude Molen by Queen Victoria's grandsons, the princes George Frederick Ernest Albert (to become George V) and Albert Victor (Sustainability Institute: 1).

Following the departure of Cetshwayo to Zululand once he had been granted permission to return, the Colonial Government decided to lease out the property, before selling it in 1885 to David McKenzie (who remained there for the duration of the century) for an increased sum of £1 500 (D. Hart 1997: 26).

After McKenzie's death, the trustees of his estate sold Oude Molen in 1912 to the Government Union of South Africa (D. Hart 1997: 26). It was then converted into a government mental health facility: the Oude Molen Mental Hospital – the eastern branch of Valkenberg Hospital (Valkenberg East), reserved for 'non-white' patients (Fransen 2004: 94). Farming operations, however, were continued on the property for the hospital, until the N2 highway was built in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century (D. Hart 1997: 26), and continue on a smaller scale today in the form of vegetable gardens.

The 'Valkenberg East' buildings (including the mill house) owned by the Department of Public Works were vacated after the apartheid legislation that required separation of races was repealed, and many of the structures were vandalised while standing empty (T. Hart 2003: 3). Project Development Services, a private company, stepped in under the auspices of the Friends of Valkenberg organisation to re-use the complex. They set up the Oude Molen Farm Village (now Eco Village) in 1997, where micro enterprises are run by tenants, which generates income for the Valkenberg Hospitals patient programme (Hislop 2014: 94). The thatched Millstone Café was built next to the mill house, and was a popular eatery with locals before it closed down some years ago. It has recently reopened.

## 2.2. The mill house and barn



**Figure 3:** Oude Molen mill house voorkamer, looking approximately north to the front door. The thick walls, traditional voorkamer layout of casement windows on either side of the front door, and thick timber beams (supposedly yellowwood) strongly suggest an 18<sup>th</sup>-century or latest early 19<sup>th</sup>-century origin. The front door appears to be an early 20<sup>th</sup>-century replacement, and the original fanlight opening has been partially filled in, probably when the veranda was added in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. (Jim Hislop, 6 Oct 2013)

Early artworks and panoramas showing the Oude Molen windmill show that it also had associated buildings standing next to it. The Schneider panorama (*Figure 6*), supposedly based on the c.1778 Johannes Schumacher panorama, shows two mills standing in the vicinity of the Black River and nearby sandy flats. At that date, only Oude Molen and Clapperton's Mill (on the Campground/Rondebosch Common) had been built, as Nieuwe Molen was only begun in 1780 and completed in 1782 (Fransen 2004: 94). That would make the windmill seen on the left of *Figure 6* Oude Molen, as Clapperton's Mill stood further south on the edge of the Campground (Rondebosch Common) and would presumably be the windmill shown on the right. Although the accuracy of the artwork is debatable (for example, some known single-storey buildings are portrayed as double-storeyed on the Bo-Kaap side), it is interesting to note that associated buildings (presumably the mill house and barn) are shown next to the mill.

There is a mid-19<sup>th</sup> century painting by Thomas Bowler (*Figures 8 and 8A*) that shows a double-storey, three-bay building standing next to a windmill in the vicinity of the Salt/Black rivers. There are only two possible buildings that this could be: either Valkenberg or Oude Molen, as they were the only opstals with double-storey dwellings in the vicinity; the only other nearby double-storey homestead was Bellevliet (now part of the Observatory YMCA), but that stood near the Liesbeek River (Hislop 2014: 50). Bowler's painting is more likely to be of Oude Molen because it is depicted as standing on a

prominent rise next to the river, and a comparative modern photograph showing the present mill house from the river (*Figure 10*) appears to confirm this. Bowler's artwork reveals then that the Oude Molen homestead (if that is indeed what was depicted in the painting) was already double-storeyed by then and had two three-bay facades; one facing north and one facing west (towards the river). It also shows that the windmill was still standing and in fairly good condition (still with its sails) in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.

An engraving depicting King Cetshwayo at Oude Molen (*Figure 9*) published on the cover of *The Graphic* newspaper in 1882, shows what appears to be the double-storeyed mill house and thatched barn in the background. This is a rare visual record of the farm buildings as they appeared before the hospital's male hostel additions were constructed in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

An archival photograph of the homestead from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (*Figure 11*), appears to show the same structure seen in *Figures 8* and *8A*, with six-paned mid-Victorian sash windows on the second floor and a creeper-covered pergola over the front door. It appears that a fourth bay had also been added on the east side of the earlier three-bay front façade by then (*Figure 11*). By 1914, a male hostel wing (*Figure 12*), still standing, had been added to the east side of the mill house, and a diagram of the hospital from around this time (*Figure 22*) shows numerous other structures had been added behind the homestead and barn, including a dairy, stables and a cow byre (since demolished).

At some point in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, the mill house's upper floor was given metal windows at the front and side, though older wooden sashes and casements on either side of the front door survive on the ground floor. It is possible that the homestead once faced the river and was re-orientated to face north at some point. Vidal/Ross's painting shows a long, east-facing barn attached to the homestead. It still appears to be there (*Figure 28*), partially incorporated into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century male hostel wing (Fransen 2004: 93).

The mill house is now in a bad state of repair after the western wall partially collapsed in 2017 (*Figure 15*). It appears to have collapsed due to prolonged water damage from a damaged/missing downpipe that saturated the west wall over many years. By August 2017, the roof had been stabilised with joists, but the wall is still awaiting repairs some three years later.

The core of the building, with its massively thick walls, may be of 18<sup>th</sup> century origin (D. Hart 1997: 4), and contains a discernable traditional *voorhuis* and flanking rooms with an *agterhuis* (Fransen 2004: 93), now separated by a wall with arched mid-Victorian double doors, instead of a traditional wooden screen. Old yellowwood ceiling beams and some wide doorways survive, but all old joinery has been smothered in layers of paint (D. Hart 1997: 4). The remaining casement windows in the *voorhuis* are falling apart.

Another small, thatched building (built for the Eco Village in the 1990s) houses the Mill Stone Café, where members of the public can buy organic produce grown on the farm and order coffee, recently reopened after being closed for some years.

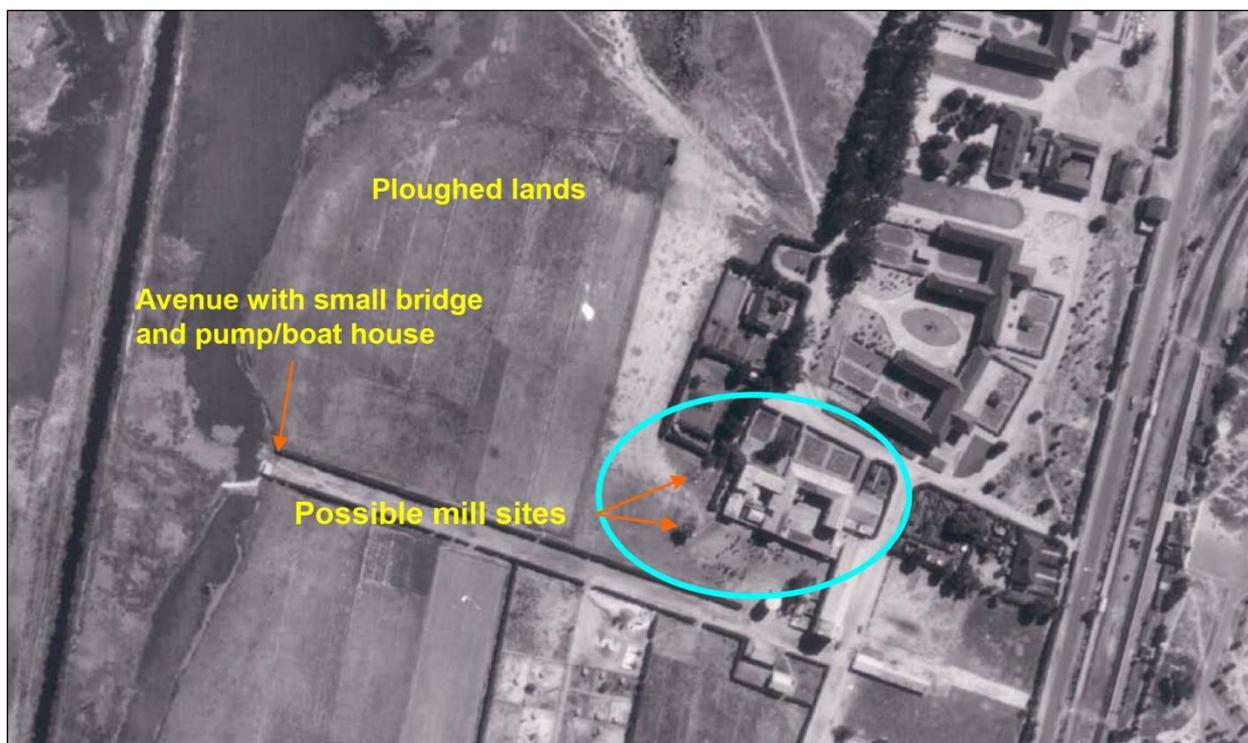
It was motivated as early as 1997 to the then National Monuments Council that the Oude Molen mill house/historic complex should be declared a National Monument/Provincial Heritage Site due to its connection to King Cetshwayo (*see Appendix, pages 24 and 25*). This is still yet to happen, and in the subsequent 23 years, the buildings have become increasingly decrepit and unsafe, with the collapsed wall and damaged roof structure exposed to the elements since 2017, increasing the chances of total collapse.

### 2.3. The windmill site



**Figure 4:** Oude Molen windmill and farm, shown in relation to the Nieuwe Molen and 'Falkenburg' (Valkenberg) estates and Black River (running from top to bottom) on a portion of the military map commissioned by Governor van der Graaff in 1781. (Castle Military Museum, Castle of Good Hope)

No discernable trace of the Oude Molen windmill remains on the property, apart from a large old mill stone that can be seen in the garden, west of the mill house and near an ancient tree, next to the now defunct café building. It stood approximately 50-80 metres west of the mill house, as seen on Thibault's 1813 map (Figure 19). Possible sites for remaining archaeological material relating to the 18<sup>th</sup>-century windmill include the vegetable garden, horse paddocks and a 'flattened patch of land just west of the boundary fence' (T. Hart 2003: 6).



**Figure 5:** Possible sites of the 1717 Oude Molen windmill, shown in relation to the mill house and hostel buildings (which are seen to the right of the arrows) on this 1937 aerial photograph. (Chief Directorate: National Geo-spatial Information; annotations by Tim Hart, reproduced from page 9 of the Archaeological Sensitivity Assessment of Valkenberg East, Cape Town (Archaeology Contracts Office, Department of Archaeology, 2003)

### 3. VISUAL CHRONOLOGY



**Figure 6:** Detail of the Schneider panorama, based on Schumacher's c.1778 panorama. It is likely that the windmill (and farm buildings, possibly including the mill house, then thatched) seen on the middle left is Oude Molen, and that on the right is Clapperton's Mill, built on Raapenburg estate, next to the Campground (Rondebosch Common). (Swellengrebel Collection, ...)



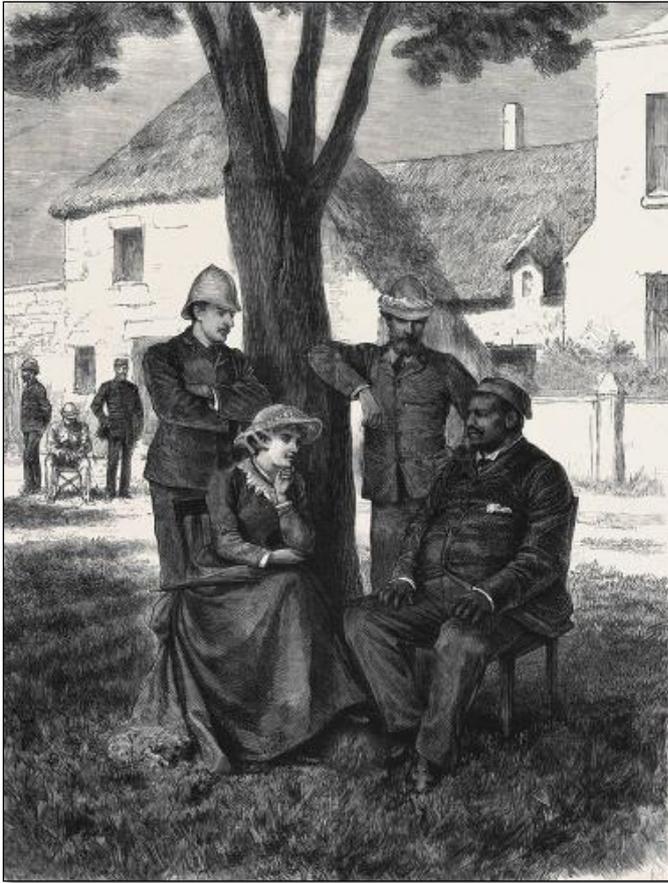
**Figure 7:** A c.1803 artwork that has been variously attributed to Louis Vidal and Cecelia Ross. It shows what appear to be the double-storeyed Oude Molen mill house, barn and werfmuur on the left (comparable to the layout seen on the 1813 Thibault survey, Figure 19) and the derelict-looking windmill at centre, with another free-standing building to its right. (Museum Africa: MA2106)



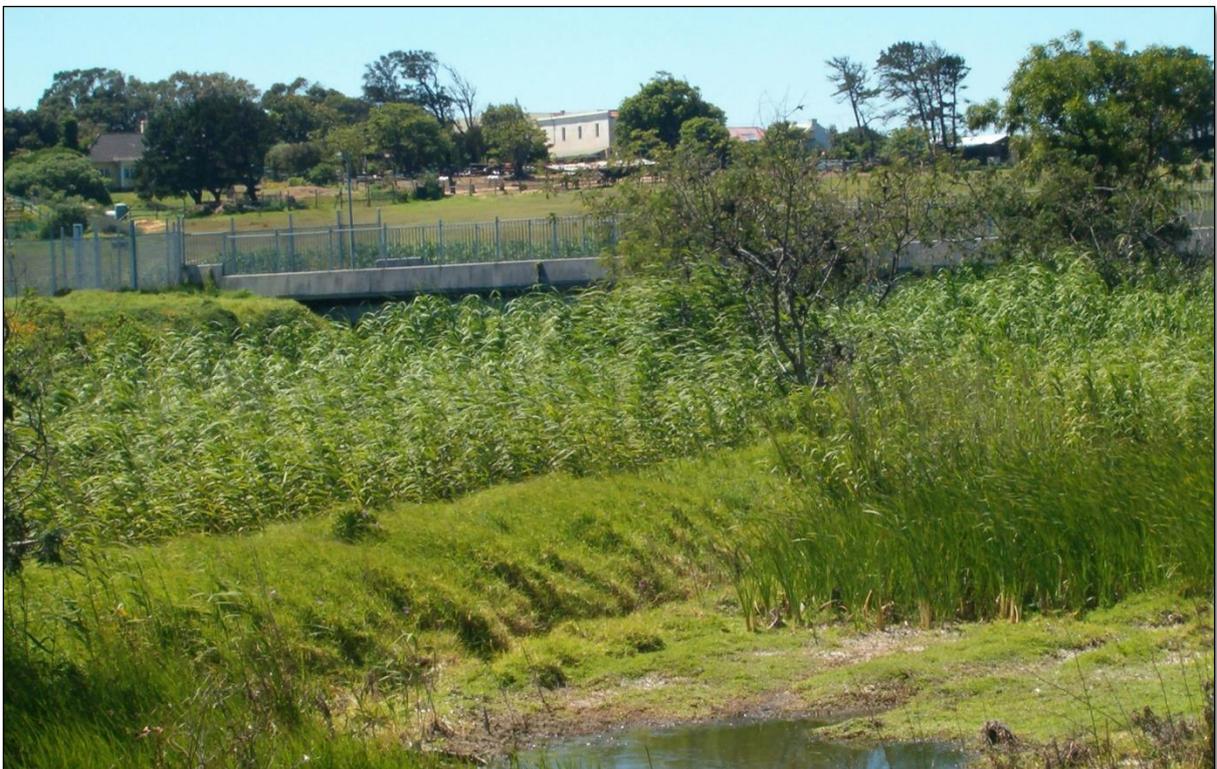
**Figure 8** A mid-19<sup>th</sup> century Thomas Bowler watercolour titled 'Near the Observatory'. In the distance a large windmill and three-bay, square, double-storey mill house/homestead can be seen standing on a prominent rise; the layout of these structures also appears to correlate with the 1813 Thibault map of Oude Molen (Figure 19) (ArtVault)



**Figure 8A:** Detail of Thomas Bowler watercolour shown above in Figure 8. The mill/house homestead bears a strong resemblance to the existing mill house at the Oude Molen Eco Village, and shows a three-bay façade facing the river. This would be the western wall that has recently partially collapsed. The rear wing, presumably the barn, can be seen between the windmill and the mill house. (ArtVault)



**Figure 9:** King Cetshwayo at Oude Molen, used as a cover image for *The Graphic* newspaper on 10 June 1882. Here the king is seen being interviewed by Florence Dixie for the British newspaper as two British soldiers/guards look on. In the background, the double-storeyed mill house can be seen on the far right, with the thatched barn wing seen on the left. The homestead was later extended leftwards to add an extra bay, while the male hostel wing was added in front of the barn. (*The Graphic*, 20 June 1881)



**Figure 10:** The mill house seen from a comparative viewpoint to that seen in the 19th-century Bowler painting (Figures 8 and 8A). The similarity of the two buildings shown in each image is notable, as well as the similar rise of land above the river, on which the site stands. (Jim Hislop, c.2013)



**Figure 11:** The mill house photographed by Arthur Elliott in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, by then four bays wide (one bay is cut off on the right of the photograph). There were mid-Victorian sash windows on the upper floor (later replaced with steel windows). It appears there was a pergola (later replaced with a veranda) supporting a creeper over the front door, and a fence with pillars (now gone). (Western Cape Archives & Records Service: E897)



**Figure 12:** The mill house (partially obscured by a tree on the right) in December 1914 after the hostel wing (left) had been added. Six-paned sash windows can be seen on the visible west façade that faces the river. Figure 8A appears to show a door or middle window on the ground floor of the west façade, which had been blocked up by 1914. A rear wing on the far right had also been added. (Western Cape Archives & Records Service: AG12280)



**Figure 13:** The mill house when used as part of the mental health facility for ‘non-white’ patients. The stepped parapet indicates that the three-bay house was extended to the left after the core three-bay section was built. The ground floor façade retains its voorkamer entrance with casements on either side of a (later) central front door with mid-Victorian sash windows on either side. Previously there were identical windows on the upper floor, as seen in Figure 11. (Jim Hislop, c.1989)



**Figure 14:** The mill house's west façade (a century later than Figure 12) in 2014, when the Millstone Café was still in operation. The old millstone at bottom left presumably came from the Oude Molen windmill, which stood nearby. The upper sash windows shown in Figure 12 have since been replaced by a door and a steel window. The missing downpipe at centre no doubt caused the wall collapse in 2017. The iron roof of the barn wing can be seen at right. (Jim Hislop, 2014)



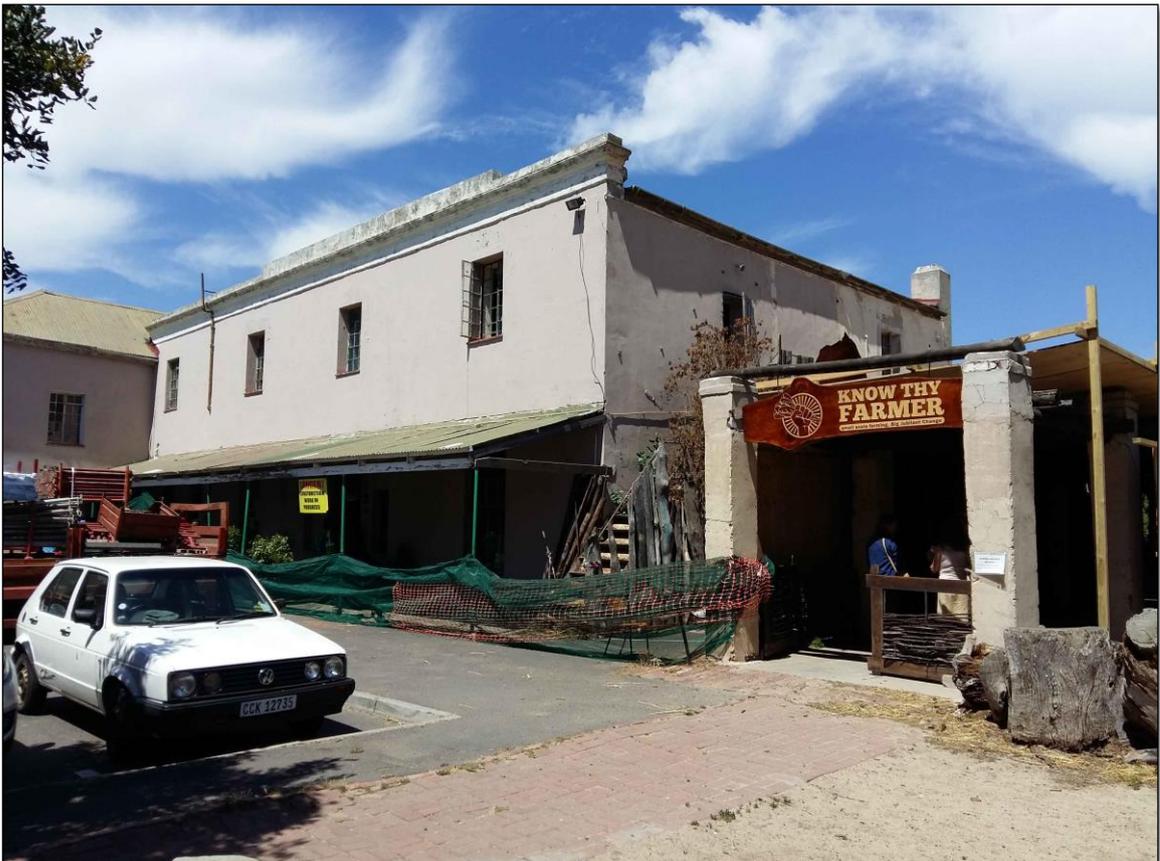
**Figure 15:** The collapsed western wall (river-facing façade) in 2017, following years of water damage presumably caused by the missing downpipe. (Jim Hislop, 22 Aug 2017)



**Figure 16:** Interior water damage to painted timber ceiling structure in the mill house in 2017, following the western wall collapse. (Jim Hislop, 22 Aug 2017)

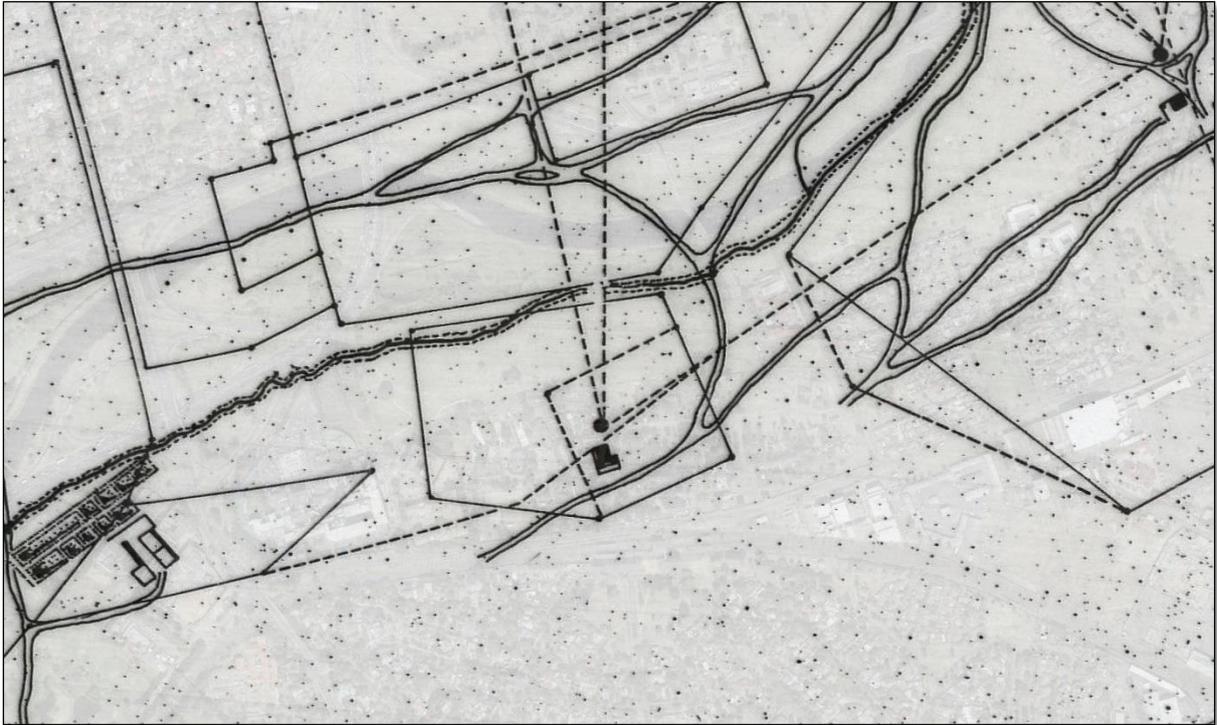


**Figure 17:** View of the agterkamer showing painted joinery and thickness of the walls in the wide door opening. The arched double door at the right leads into the voorkamer (Jim Hislop, 22 Aug 2017)



**Figure 18:** The front façade of the mill house in 2017, following the western wall collapse. (Jim Hislop, 22 Aug 2017)

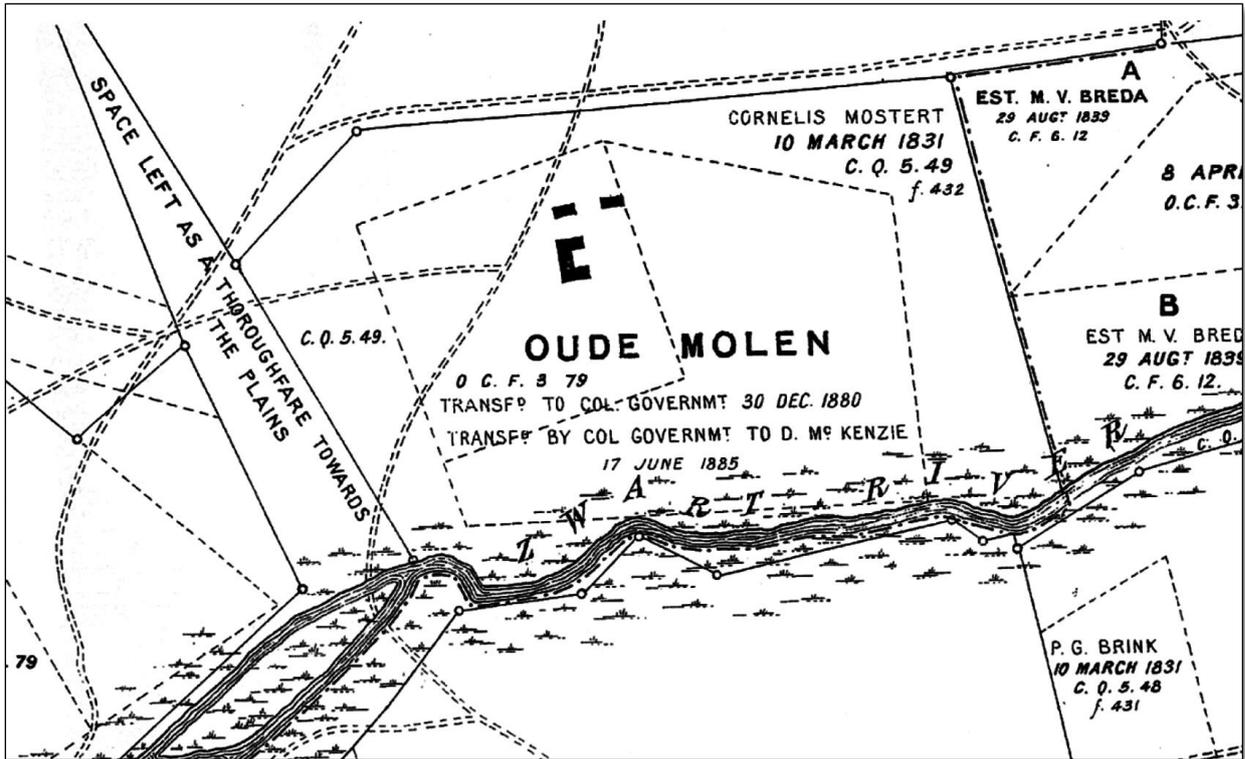
#### 4. MAP/DIAGRAM CHRONOLOGY



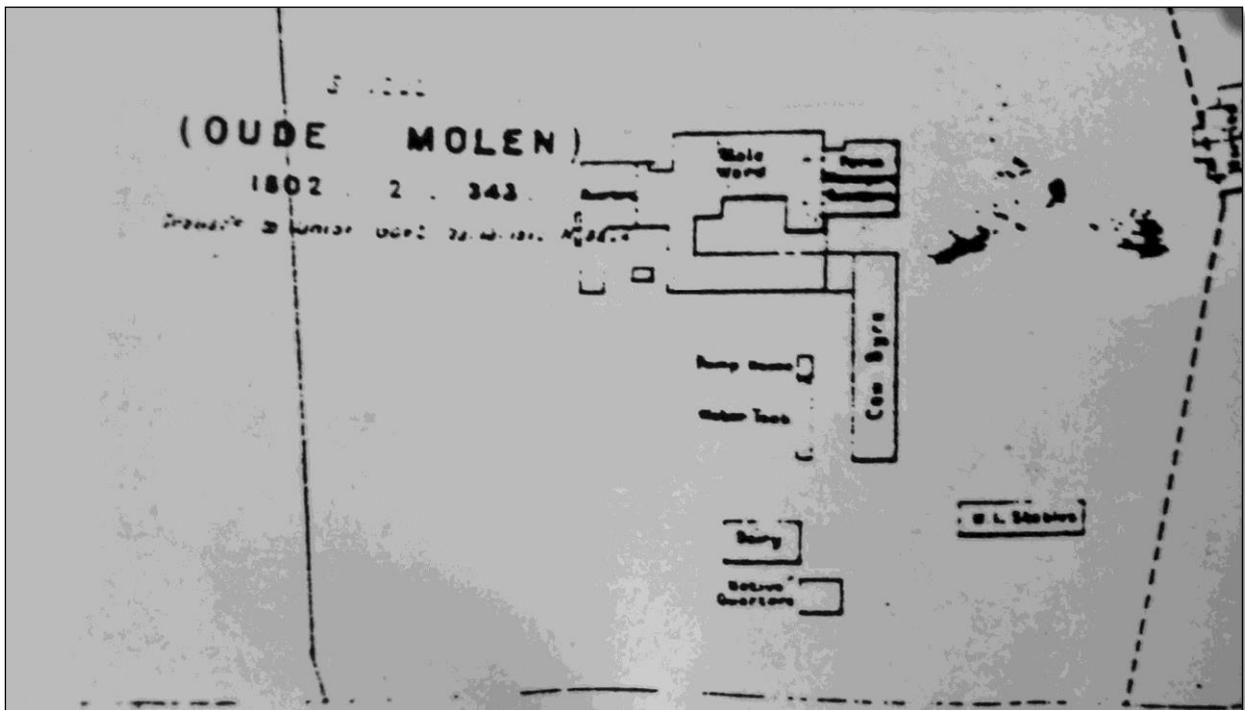
**Figure 19:** The 1813 Thibault survey showing Oude Molen windmill at centre with the Black River above it (west). On the bottom left is Raapenburg (now the site of City Lodge Hotel, Pinelands) and at top right is the Nieuwe Molen windmill. The Oude Molen homestead is shown at centre with a werfmuur enclosure and side wing, presumably the barn seen in Figure 7.



**Figure 20:** A portion of the Surveyor General's 1891 municipal sewerage map showing Oude Molen estate at centre. The windmill is no longer shown and a small wing has been added on the left (south) of the core homestead/mill house, while a separate building has been constructed on the right of the house (approx. to the north-east). (UCT Library Special Collections)



**Figure 21:** A portion of the Surveyor General's 1897 municipal map showing Oude Molen at centre with the Black River below (to the west). The main mill house complex was now U-shaped, and two additional free-standing buildings are shown above it (to the east). (Western Cape Archives & Records Service: M2/49)



**Figure 22:** A diagram of Oude Molen Hospital made after the hostel wing (male ward) had been added in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The homestead is shown to the left of the male ward/hostel wing, and a cow byre (since demolished) is shown extending behind the complex. A free-standing dairy and stable block are also shown (bottom right). (Reproduced from D. Hart 2007: 31)

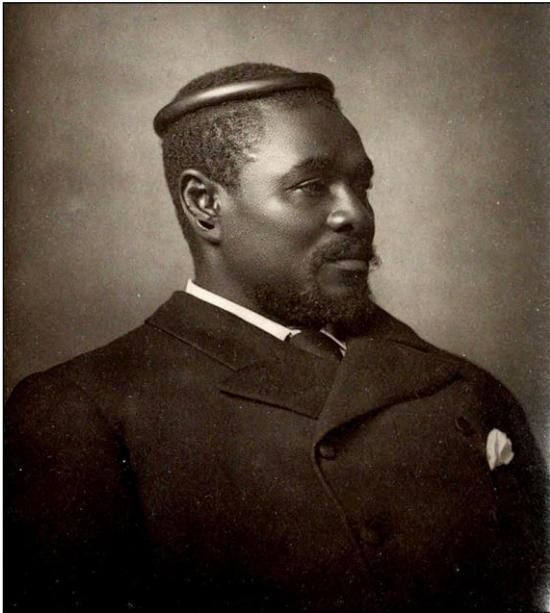


**Figure 23:** A 1934 aerial photograph of the Oude Molen complex. The mill house can be seen on the far left, with the male hostel wing to its right. The cow byre can be seen extending behind the complex aligned to the diagonal street. This has since been demolished, see Figure 24. (Chief Directorate: National Geo-spatial Information)



**Figure 24:** Recent aerial photograph showing the Oude Molen complex. (Google maps; annotated by Jim Hislop)  
**1:** Possible site of 1717 windmill; **2:** mill house; **3:** old barn wing presumably seen in Figures 7 and 9; **4:** 20<sup>th</sup>-century male hostel wing; three-bay house (late-19<sup>th</sup>/early 20<sup>th</sup> century)

## 5. KING CETSHWAYO KA MPANDE (C.1826-1884)



*Figure 25: A portrait of King Cetshwayo by Alexander Bassano, London. He was kept as a 'State guest' at the Oude Molen homestead in the early 1880s.*

Born in c.1826, Cetshwayo (or Cetewayo) ka Mpande (*Figure 25*) was a relative of King Shaka who became the last independent king of the Zulu nation following his father Mpande's death in 1872 (Hart 1997: 62).

His refusal to recognise British rule in southern Africa led to the British invasion of Zululand in 1879 in the Anglo-Zulu War; and after he was captured at Ulundi he was sent to Cape Town as an exile (History.com). The Oude Molen farm was procured by the government to house him in 1880 and the following year he was relocated from the Castle of Good Hope. He was kept at the Oude Molen mill house for three years and was visited by numerous people of note there during his stay.

Cape Times reporter KW Murray visited Cetshwayo while he was held at Oude Molen. He encountered the king, "sitting outside the house on a small mound in the nook of the farm wall, and it seemed as if he had selected it out of his kraals in Zululand. He was seated on a chair with a blanket folded around him, and he wore it with some dignity." Murray returned to Oude Molen in 1883 and spoke to the king again through his interpreter. The reporter remarked that "captivity had not saddened Cetywayo's face, nor dulled his intellect, not taken off the edge of that marvellous diplomatic cunning which is peculiar to the native chieftains of South Africa."

Murray also provided a description of the Oude Molen farm at the end of the 19th century, writing: "Those who selected Oude Molen for Cetywayo (sic) must have been kindly disposed to the captive king. The farm, with its great range of buildings, its grounds covered with wild flowers, and the distant view of Table Bay and of Cape Town, could hardly have been seen to greater advantage than fell to my lot..." (D. Hart 1997: 6).

Cetshwayo sent numerous letters from Oude Molen to Queen Victoria and other leaders to plead his cause (his return to his homeland) and she sent her grandsons, the Princes Albert Victor and George Fredrick Ernest to visit him during their stay in Cape Town in 1881 (Sustainability Institute). His persistence paid off and he was escorted to London in 1882 where he was granted an audience with the queen (Anderson 2008: 2).

He was eventually allowed to return to Ulundi in 1883, where he was reinstated as the Zulu King, though he died in exile in 1884 after being forced again to leave his homeland, this time by his subjects (History.com).



**Figure 26:** Cetshwayo's attendants posing on a cannon on the Castle of Good Hope ramparts before the exiled Zulu king was relocated (with his attendants) to Oude Molen. (Royal Collection Trust)



**Figure 27:** A blue plaque erected in Kensington, London, where Cetshwayo stayed in 1882. A similar commemorative plaque could be erected at the Oude Molen mill house to mark the site of his exile there. (Alexander Williams)

## CONCLUSION

As shown in the preceding pages, the Oude Molen mill house is historically significant for its association with the 1717 Oude Molen windmill (Cape Town's first permanent windmill), and as the building that housed the last independent Zulu king, Cetshwayo, during his exile from Zululand in the early 1880s. A thorough archaeological investigation of the site (including the collapsed western wall area) and surrounds may provide more clues about the original layout and age of the house (which might originally have faced the Black River), as well as pinpoint the exact site of the Oude Molen windmill and possibly provide information about Khoekhoen activity in the area prior to the colonial era.

The Oude Molen mill house and historic complex is one of the noted structures/sites of Provincial Heritage Significance (indeed identified as "being of outstanding [provincial] significance") within the Two Rivers Urban Park precinct that have not yet been formally declared Provincial Heritage Sites (Attwell 2016: 23), despite this being motivated as early as 1997 to the then National Monuments Council (see *Appendix of this document, pages 24 and 25*).



**Figure 28:** The mill house's western façade (left), when the downpipe was still relatively intact, seen from the Black River, and the long 'barn wing' (right) that may incorporate the barn shown on the c.1803 artwork (Figure 7). The windmill stood in the vicinity of the area seen at the bottom left corner of the photograph. (Jim Hislop, 25 November 2012)

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**APPENDIX: Proposed declaration as a National Monument/heritage site,  
SAHRA, November 1997**

9/2/018/0269

SUBMISSION TO THE NATIONAL MONUMENTS COUNCIL: 13 7 14 NOVEMBER 1997

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**PROPOSED DECLARATION AS A NATIONAL MONUMENT: OUDE MOLEN,  
OBSERVATORY - THE PLACE OF CONFINEMENT OF CETSHWAYO, THE LAST  
INDEPENDENT KING OF THE ZULU KINGDOM**

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**Statement of Significance**

Cetshwayo, the last independent King of the Zulu Kingdom was taken prisoner by the British at Ulundi in August 1879, and exiled to Cape Town where he was incarcerated in the Castle of Good Hope. In February 1881 he was transferred to civil custody at the farm **Oude Molen**, which had been bought by the Colonial Government for this reason. He was based here until he was formally restored as king over portion of Zululand by Shepstone in January 1883.

The property is one of the original free burgher grants, and the existing building retains an early Dutch form, and historic joinery.

**Cetshwayo and the Anglo-Zulu War**

Cetshwayo was the oldest son of Mpande, brother of Shaka and Dingane. Mpande had succeeded his brother Dingane and held the official title as Zulu chief until his death in 1872, although Cetshwayo had been the de facto ruler of the Zulus from 1857. With the death of Mpande, he became the undisputed Zulu chief.

In 1874, the territory ruled by the Zulu chieftom extended from the border with Swaziland to the Tugela River. Sir Theophilus Shepstone, the Native Commissioner to Natal, had affirmed Cetshwayo's right of succession as early as 1861. Cetshwayo steadily increased his military strength, ignoring the border with the Transvaal. This created a problem for Shepstone, who was now Administrator of the Transvaal after its annexation by Britain in 1877. Shepstone and Sir Bartle Frere (British High Commissioner in the Cape Colony) were both convinced that Cetshwayo would in time incite all the Black tribes against the British and obstruct the federation of South African territories. Frere finally sent an ultimatum to Cetshwayo demanding the relaxation of the military system in Zululand.

Cetshwayo did not comply with the demands, and Lt. General Chelmsford invaded Zululand with three columns of British troops. One entire British regiment was virtually destroyed by Cetshwayo's forces at Isandhlwana on 22 January 1879. The Zulus were finally defeated at Ulundi in August 1879, and Cetshwayo taken prisoner.

**Current condition of Oude Molen**

The house in which Cetshwayo was held still exists, and despite alterations, retains its original form. The building is currently uninhabited, and its future undecided. The property is owned by the State, (Provincial Administration: Western Cape), and forms part of Valkenberg Hospital.

**Recommendation of the Western Cape Regional committee of 27 August 1997**

“That the property known as Oude Molen, together with as much open land surrounding it as can be negotiated, be declared a national monument.”

Since this submission to the Western Cape Regional Committee there has been further concern regarding the future of the Valkenberg Hospital itself, which could possibly be closed in the near future. If this were to happen this large estate could well be opened up for development. Given the undoubted significance of the building and surrounding land the Council is requested to give guidance to the Western Cape office as to how to proceed with the matter. It should be noted that State owned land may not be provisionally declared without the consent of the appropriate Minister.

It is suggested that with the support of Council negotiations at the highest level could be initiated with a view to ensuring the protection of the site.

**Compiled by: David Hart**

**Submitted by: Laura Robinson, Regional Manager: Western Cape**

**22 October 1997**