

Archaeological Research - Mgungundlovu

August 1986

After careful deliberation, the main entrance and nearby middens were selected as a priority in the current field season at Mgungundlovu. This decision was made on two important factors.

- a) In the Natal Museum and Library Services general plan to rebuild parts of the complex and develop a site Museum, the entrance or main gate, would naturally be an important part of the reconstruction project.
- b) Up to the present; most of the archaeological research has concentrated on the high status Royal enclosure (the isiGodlo and associated middens) and hut floors, to the detriment of the lower status middens and features. Experience from a similar site indicates that to gain an overall picture of the economy and social dynamics, archaeological work will have to investigate the entire spectrum of the remains available to us.

The Grid system developed by past field workers, and adopted by the management of the Museum, was extended, and four, fifty meter square blocks were surveyed and pegged (see Plan). The work will therefore be concentrated, initially, in Blocks L5 and 6 and M5 and 6. Furthermore each Block is divided up into 5 meter square sections.

A Series of test trenches have been pegged and (see Plan) to sample ~~blocks~~ the inner and outer middens (mens gathering/social areas and rubbish dumps respectively). Other trenches will be used to determine the position of the main gate.

Needless to say the above strategy may alter substantially during the coming weeks as information gathered demands a change of plan.

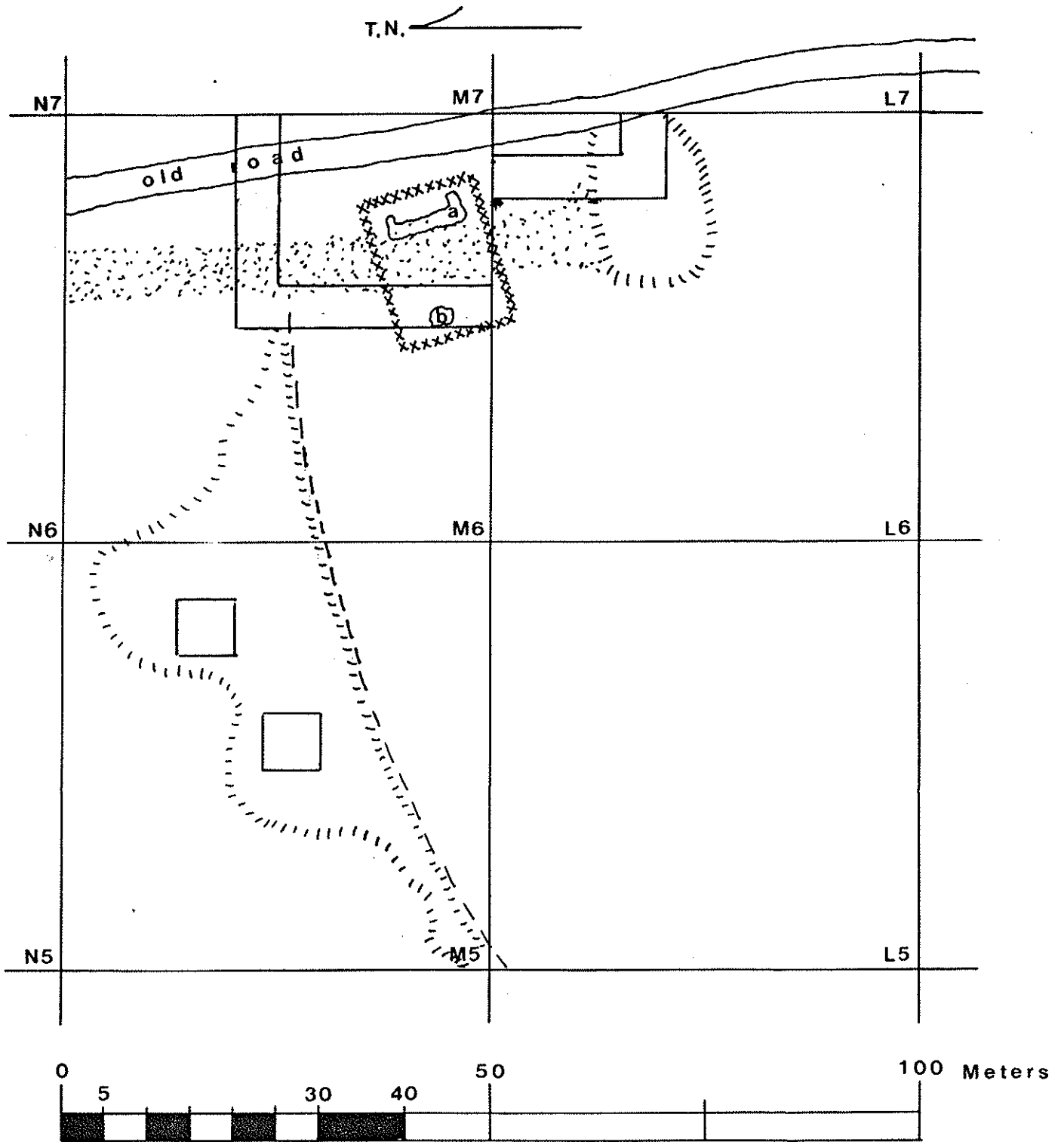
The four Blocks were extensively covered by bush, shrubs, aloc and prickly pear with the result that the 5 labourers recruited have spent a considerable part of the month clearing the landscape. This was absolutely necessary for both identifying archaeological features, and, in the long run, allowing easy access for visitors.




Excavation has begun on the two outer middens and they have been sunk to a depth of about 40 cms. It is yet too early to assess the content of the assemblage or draw any conclusions. However fauna, flora, pottery, metal goods and glass beads are being recovered.

R Rawlinson

# MGUNGUNDLOVU

Main entrance



- |   |                          |  |                                    |
|---|--------------------------|--|------------------------------------|
| a   | Old trench               | b  | Exposed floor                      |
| XXX   | Barbed wire fence        | - - -  | Approx. position of outer palisade |
|  | Approx. midden perimeter |  | Depression                         |
|  | Excavation trenches      |  |                                    |