

A. J. Cutten

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING CONSULTANT
LAND AND MINE SURVEYOR
GEOLOGIST

TELEPHONE : 22-8955 EXT. 107.
RESIDENCE : 42-4167

TOP FLOOR, ROOM No. 2
BARTLE'S BLOCK
196 MARSHALL STREET
BOX 8569
JOHANNESBURG

ackd.

25th April, 1950.

The Hon. Secretary,
S. Transvaal Regional Committee,
1 Lothbury Rd.,
AUCKLAND PARK.

Dear Mrs. Rheinallt Jones,

I am enclosing a scheme I have drawn up regarding the proposed removal of the Western Native Township, etc., which I thought might be brought up at our next meeting.

Yours sincerely,

A. J. Cutten
A. J. CUTTEN.





Very important
For Dr. Le Seuer -
Please return to me
by Friday morning.

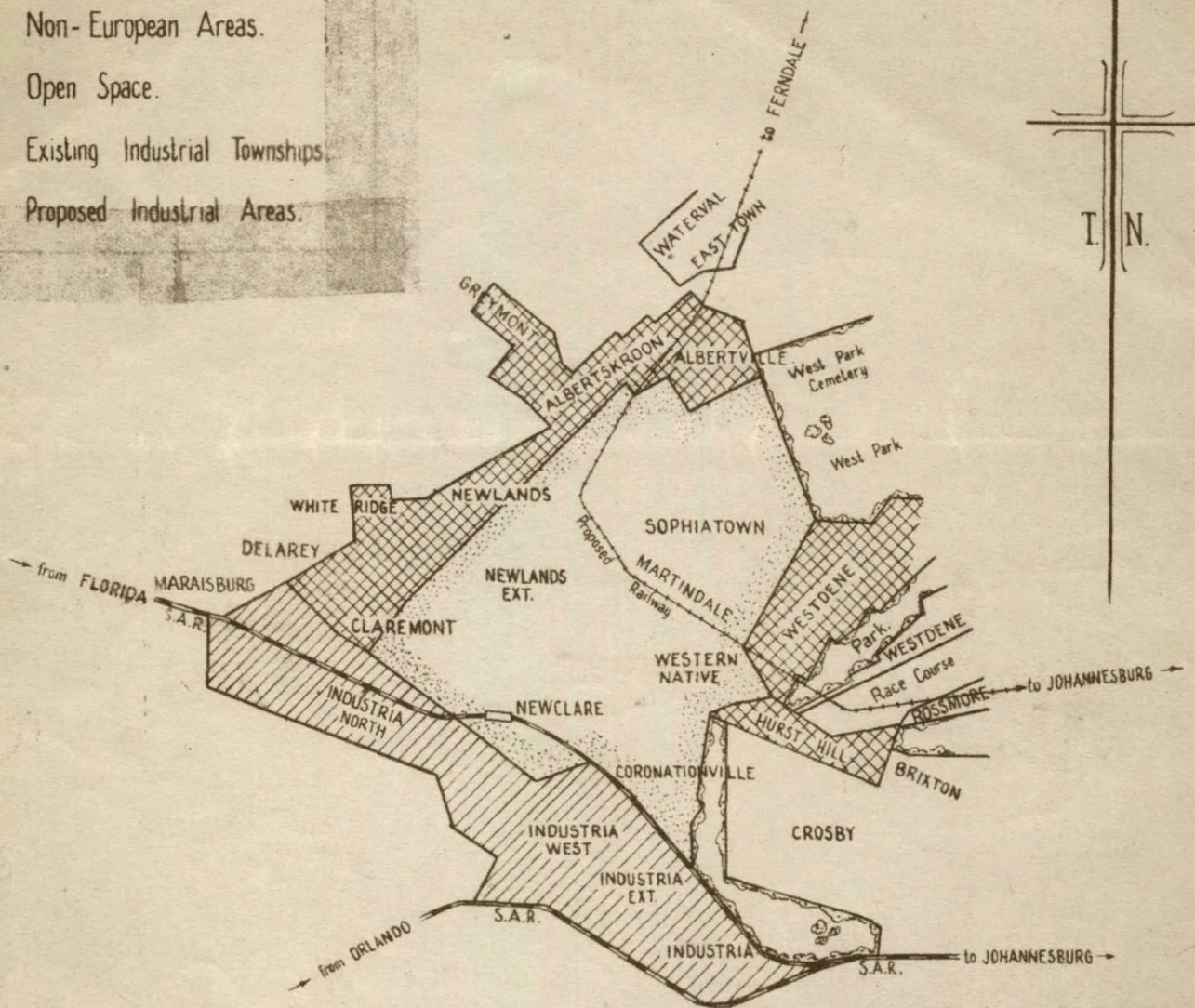
CR.J

AJC/SAD.

*This has already
been used.*

— LEGEND —

-  Non-European Areas.
-  Open Space.
-  Existing Industrial Townships.
-  Proposed Industrial Areas.



PLAN SHOWING

SUGGESTED REZONING OF CERTAIN TOWNSHIPS
TO SURROUND THE NATIVE AREAS WITH AN INDUSTRIAL ZONE.

A. J. Cutler.

A SOLUTION FOR SOPHIATOWN.

Considering the fact that a great deal of criticism has been levelled at the present Government's Apartheid theories, it is, to say the least of it, astonishing to learn that the Johannesburg City Council has so far succumbed to the apartheid argument as to contemplate the removal of the natives in the Sophiatown-Western Native areas to "an area specially prepared and set apart for them". At a time when 11,000 families in the present controlled squatters camps are requiring proper housing, and the Municipality has an authentic waiting list of 15,000 names, it does appear to the interested observer perfectly ludicrous that a scheme should even be investigated that requires the displacement of, and construction of new homes for, a further 20,000 families. And for what reason? Because the Natives in these areas, driven desperate by their appalling housing conditions; impoverished by their low wage earnings which in face of the steadily rising cost of living are daily worth less and less; restricted and harassed by laws and regulations, and suppressed by lack of educational and cultural facilities, - have allowed themselves to be carried away by irresponsible hotheads and caused unpleasant disturbances and riots. And so, with only a cursory glance at the root cause of the trouble, the suggestion is made that they should be cleared out, and, in accordance with the principles of Apartheid about 100,000 black people should be moved to appease some 20,000 neighbouring Whites.

Let us remember that the Native townships were here before the White areas, and that it is these latter that have developed towards the locations and not vice-versa. If therefore we can be honest with ourselves and let justice temper our reasoning, should we not attempt to solve this problem from the viewpoint rather of clearing up the living conditions in the Native areas and allowing these to remain. The Council's scheme involves, at terrific expense, the compulsory purchase of the Native-owned properties and their conversion in some cases to Industrial areas. What possible logic can be found in creating new

Industrial areas and immediately removing the labour some 10 miles away from them? Would it not be more rational to retain the labour source and surround it with Industries that could use this labour? On this basis the present affected areas (Westdene, Hurst Hill, Newlands, etc.) would be the areas to be converted to Industrial, and all the residents in the rezoned areas finding the value of their stands trebled or quadrupled would then only have themselves to blame if they continued to reside there.

The accompanying plan indicates how the Native areas could thus be completely surrounded with industrial townships or open space - e.g. the West Park cemetery, the Westdene Valley, the Race Course, and the Coronationville barrier. Furthermore, the route of the railway suggested for the North Western Suburbs by the Joint Technical Committee to advise the Minister, lies right through this area and would greatly assist the development of the new industrial zones.

Even with the fulfilment of this scheme, however, it is still necessary to clear up the slum conditions of Sophiatown etc., where at present nine or ten families may be found living in one house with one sanitary point and one water tap between them. But the prelude to this is the provision of adequate housing facilities elsewhere, first. Then the surplus could be drained off, and the residential population given respectable sanitary and living conditions. This act alone will quell a considerable portion of the unrest and discontent, and with the introduction of the industrial belt described above, both black and white will benefit tremendously and harmonious relations again be restored.

Surely from every point of view - the saving of expense, the shortness of time it would take to put into operation, the ultimate benefits to be derived by all parties - this scheme should be given serious and immediate consideration.

A.J. CUTTEN.

A. J. Cutten.

Mr. Schwane

ESTATE AND TOWN PLANNING CONSULTANT
RAILWAY LOCATION ENGINEER
LAND SURVEYOR

TELEPHONE: ~~XXXXXX~~ 23-5351.
RESIDENCE: 42-4167

TOP FLOOR, ROOM NO. 2

BARTLE'S BLOCK
196 MARSHALL STREET
BOX 8569
JOHANNESBURG

** Mr. Whyte
strongly speaking, a B
regional meeting, but I
think the inst. shd
- say jointly with
the Regional Council
(a very good article
by Mr. Cutten revealing
a really admirable situation)
JW*

21st May, 1952.

The Director,
Institute of Race Relations,
P.O. Box 97,
JOHANNESBURG.

Dear Quentin,

This is the original of the article that appeared in the
"Mail" - in case you are interested.

Further, Dr. Xuma has addressed a lengthy letter to the City
Council which I think you will also find interesting.

How about the Institute seeking an interview with the Mayor
on this topic?

Yours sincerely,

Jack Cutten.

A. J. CUTTEN.

Encls.

AJC/AB

26 MAY 1952

WESTERN AREAS SCHEME

There can be no question whatsoever, even amongst the Natives themselves, that the social and living conditions in the Townships of Sophiatown, Martindale, Newclare, and to a lesser extent Albertville, are so appallingly bad as to be intolerable in any country and by whatever standard they are assessed.

With, on the average, over 8 families living on one stand of 50' x 100' ; with 10,000 families living in only one room each, and a further 5,000 sharing a room or shack with another family; with anything up to 10 persons sleeping in one room; with sometimes only one water tap in the yard, and one W.C.; and the yard so cluttered with "structures" that even the M.O.H. has on occasions found it impossible, for lack of space, to demand an additional closet - with nearly 60% of the population living in such overcrowded conditions, it can well be imagined what the living, social and moral conditions are like. It is estimated that under such conditions the first child to be born has only a fifty-fifty chance of life, while subsequent children have a 9: 1 chance.

In an attempt perhaps to escape the realisation of their depraved surroundings, most residents have become addicts of the beer or brews they concoct. Newclare is worst in this respect and this no doubt accounts for the frequent outbreaks of violence.

No self-respecting human being who could possibly avoid it would continue to remain in such surroundings, but the fact that these Townships are so much closer to Town than the larger recognised locations, and also the fact that, with health control measures practically abandoned, there is virtually no limit to the overcrowding possible, the poorer or destitute Native is practically compelled to live here. Furthermore, as these conditions make ideal hiding places for the lawbreaker and the criminal, it is apparent that circumstances have combined to bring about the situation that at any rate in Newclare, Sophiatown and Martindale there has collected the very dregs of Johannesburg's Native Urban population.

/So.....

So low has the social standard dropped that there is a perpetual undercurrent of distrust and even viciousness. In Newclare Tsotism is ripe and little attempt is made to earn money the hard way. The poverty of the people is indicated by their earning capacity. 20% of the heads of families are unemployed or unemployable. 4% earn less than £5 per month, 21% between £5 and £10 and 50% between £10 and £15. Thus even with the smallest possible transport charge and the rents reduced to a minimum by sharing a room, 75% of the total population (i.e. 40,000 persons) are sub-economic.

That such conditions should ever have been permitted to develop is scandalous, and as the Native leaders declare, there can be no doubt that these conditions are in a very great measure attributable to the reluctance or refusal on the part of the City Council to provide sufficient alternative housing during the decade 1940-1950.

The complaints of the adjoining European population to disorderly conduct and rioting is readily understandable, as is likewise the Governments' determination to force the City Council to take action in the matter. The great pity now, however, is that the Government for obvious political reasons is endeavouring to rush things, and in this rush to do, (or even to plan) in a short space of time what should have been done over the last ten years, inevitably mistakes will be made, feelings will run high, and unless great care is exercised, much damage will be done to the already poor relations that exist between white and black.

It is apparent, however, that the stage has been reached where drastic measures must be taken. One obvious solution, of course, is merely to build other houses elsewhere and so attract away the tenants and sub-tenants. But, unfortunately, with 15,000 other families also waiting for housing, this process will take too long. It is, therefore, imperative that a special re-housing scheme is provided for the purpose

of accommodating these tenants only and that firm steps are taken to see that they move. It is, of course, only just that the holders of freehold title are fully compensated, either in cash or with similar rights in another Township. Why the Government should be so opposed to freehold title is difficult to imagine. One reason advocated for the short term lease is that "one never knows when the land might be needed for European purposes," - but the brain child of this very Government, the Group Areas Act, is intended to overcome just this difficulty and it is clearly obvious that in time it will be inevitable that the Native will ^{ac} require land. Moreover, it is only on this basis of ownership that Natives will be encouraged to invest in properties and thus, by means of contributing to the Assessment Rate, assist their less fortunate brothers.

One big difficulty in the scheme envisaged is finance. The Government has offered £5,000,000, but it appears to me that the costs will be nearer the £9,000,000 mark, of which £1,160,000 is needed for compensation on condemned buildings, and £1,000,000 for the provision of services outside the Township, (i.e. trunk water mains, sewerage disposal works, etc.,) Further, it is estimated that 30% of the population can afford no rent whatsoever, so that a subsidy of at least £100,000 a year for, say, 20 years will be necessary, until these people are rehabilitated morally and socially and made productive and economic. Thus a loss of over £4,000,000 can be envisaged which can never be retrieved from the Native, and it is doubtful whether the European is going to be willing to foot this bill, and also doubtful whether the Government even to achieve its apartheid aims, will make a free grant of such a large amount.

Further, it has always been stated that this removal scheme must in no way interfere with the Council's normal housing plans. These plans as presently envisaged entail the building of some 25,000 houses over 5 years. This means almost £2,000,000 in services and at least £7,000,000 in houses - a total of £9,000,000, which itself is

/going to.....

going to strain to the utmost firstly, the ability of the Government to finance, and secondly, the Reef's resources of building material and personnel. The undertaking of the Western Areas re-housing Scheme will be, therefore, putting an utterly impossible strain on both these resources, and in these days of financial stringency, it is extremely doubtful whether the total capital of £18,000,000 required is going to be found by the Government. The provision of this capital and the terms under which it is lent will be a serious test of the genuineness of the Government's intentions.

But, whatever the financial details, wherever the site of the new Township, and whatever title is given, I would state emphatically that this scheme is not so much a matter of building houses of bricks and mortar, it is rather a sociological problem involving the rehabilitation of some 60,000 people - to assist them to find again their self respect, to restore to them social and moral values, to make them respectable members of this heterogeneous community of ours, productive in labour and, if possible, self sufficient economically.

This is a great responsibility and not to be lightly undertaken.

CA/6/1

14th December, 1953.

A.J. Cutten, Esq.,
Third Floor,
City Trust House,
106, Fox Street,
JOHANNESBURG.

Dear Mr. Cutten,

Thank you very much for your letter of the 27th November which I received on my return to the office today.

I am very sorry that you had to wait a few minutes on the day you called to see me. Actually, I telephoned you a couple of times the next day but could not get in touch with you at your office. I also telephoned your house in the evening and got hold of one of your children with whom I left a message. To that extent I did my best to contact you subsequently.

With regard to the pamphlet on the Western Areas -- I appreciate very much your willingness to continue to guarantee our account but I have discussed the matter with my Publications Committee, which has decided that we shall release you from your undertaking with regard to the cost of the pamphlet. The Institute will bear the expenses of the production of "Western Areas -- Mass Removal?"

I am very glad that we are doing this for I appreciate very much the very strenuous fight you have been putting up on this and related matters in and out of the City Council. I think you are doing an excellent job of work and wish to congratulate you on it.

Yours sincerely,

Quintin Whyte
Director

Report

Mr. Whyte. This matter was discussed in great detail at the last mtg of the Publications Committee. (Mr. Hecht has the minutes). It was decided that we should release Mr. Cutten from his undertaking regarding the costs.

JW

14/12/53.

3rd December, 1953.

A.J. Cutten, Esq.,
Third Floor,
City Trust House,
106, Fox Street,
JOHANNESBURG.

Dear Mr. Cutten,

I write to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 27th November, 1953. Mr. Whyte is, at the present time, in Capetown. He will not return to the office until the middle of next week at the earliest, when your letter will be passed to him.

Yours sincerely,

Naomi Buhai
Secretary to Director

/NB

1) *W H*
2) *M. Whyte*
A. J. Cutten

30 NOV 1953

MINE AND LAND SURVEYOR
RESIDENTIAL AND INDUSTRIAL
TOWNSHIP PLANNING CONSULTANT
TELEPHONES: OFFICE 33-6215
RESIDENCE 42-4167

THIRD FLOOR
CITY TRUST HOUSE
106 FOX STREET
P.O. BOX 8569
JOHANNESBURG

27th November, 1953.

The Director,
S.A. Institute of Race Relations,
P.O. Box 97,
JOHANNESBURG.

Dear Mr. Quentin Whyte,

I would record my disappointment and regret that you were unable to spare me a few minutes of your time when I called at your office the other day. I had hoped to settle in discussion the following matter which is perhaps a little difficult to reduce to writing.

It will be remembered that when the Regional Committee originally considered some sort of pamphlet on the Western Areas, I persuaded them to publish the record of the Conference on the understanding that I would guarantee the costs of the publication. On this basis we went ahead to the stage that a set of proofs were sent to me one evening, and these I used immediately to interest a certain individual in the production (particularly financially) and together we decided upon 5000 copies as the number to be printed. When, however, I contacted Mr. Hegt with this information and also advised him that we wished to make certain minor alterations in the format, he told me that the printing was already in progress on an order of 2000 and that if I wanted any more I must make my own arrangements with the printer.

This, of course, I have now done and I am meeting these costs, which therefore, must obviously be my first concern; and although I do not feel that what has happened is in accordance with my original arrangement, I will nevertheless continue to guarantee your account as well. I would ask, however, that you meet it in the meantime, and then after a reasonable period, and particularly after you have advertised the pamphlet a little more widely, I will make good whatever you have lost.

Yours faithfully,

A. J. Cutten
A. J. CUTTEN.

AJC/CEP

Collection Number: AD1646

SOUTH AFRICAN INSTITUTE OF RACE RELATIONS, Unrests, banishments, removals, 1948-1969

PUBLISHER:

Publisher:- Historical Papers Research Archive

Location:- Johannesburg

©2013

LEGAL NOTICES:

Copyright Notice: All materials on the Historical Papers website are protected by South African copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, or otherwise published in any format, without the prior written permission of the copyright owner.

Disclaimer and Terms of Use: Provided that you maintain all copyright and other notices contained therein, you may download material (one machine readable copy and one print copy per page) for your personal and/or educational non-commercial use only.

People using these records relating to the archives of Historical Papers, The Library, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, are reminded that such records sometimes contain material which is uncorroborated, inaccurate, distorted or untrue. While these digital records are true facsimiles of paper documents and the information contained herein is obtained from sources believed to be accurate and reliable, Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand has not independently verified their content. Consequently, the University is not responsible for any errors or omissions and excludes any and all liability for any errors in or omissions from the information on the website or any related information on third party websites accessible from this website.

This document is part of a collection held at the Historical Papers Research Archive at The University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa.