

GERMISTON'S PROBLEM

LOCATION SITE INQUIRY

FIRST SITTING FORMALITIES

PUBLIC BODIES' PROTEST

The committee appointed by the Minister of Native Affairs to inquire into the protests against the proposal of the Germiston Town Council to move the location site to the farm Witkoppies No. 7 began its work to-day.

The chairman is Mr. C. J. Sweeney, the Native Commissioner at Pretoria, and the other members of the committee are Mr. F. Walter Jameson, of the Central Housing Board, Mr. N. Kruger, of the Transvaal Provincial Administration, and Dr. B. Maule Clark, Senior Assistant Union Health Officer at Johannesburg. The committee this morning inspected the proposed site, and the sites on which the Kempton Park and Edenvale authorities also wish to build locations.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The committee's terms of reference are: To hear representations and submit a report and recommendations regarding the application of the Germiston Town Council for the approval of the Minister of Native Affairs to the acquisition by the Council of a portion of the farm Witkoppies No. 7, to establish a native location on it.

The committee is also required to make recommendations on the settlement of urban natives generally in the same area.

The inquiry results from a recent decision of the Germiston Town Council to rebuild the location on a portion of the farm Witkoppies No. 7, a site about five miles from Germiston, adjoining the Germiston-Pretoria main road and the Germiston-Pretoria railway line.

The decision evoked many protests from residents and public bodies in the area and in surrounding areas.

Replying to a question by Mr. J. Rose Innes, of Messrs. Wright, Rose Innes and Louw, Germiston (representing the Germiston Town Council), the chairman said that the committee would also consider the desire of the Kempton Park and Edenvale authorities to establish locations in the same neighbourhood. He informed Mr. A. M. Wise, of Messrs. Quinlan and Wise, Germiston (representing the Deputy-Mayor, Mr. H. J. Wannenburg, and various public bodies), that the committee would not at present consider the desirability of an alternative site at Natal spruit.

LEGAL REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. D. Robertson, of Messrs. Moodie and Robertson, Johannesburg, appeared for the Kempton Park Health Committee; Mr. A. M. Wise, of Messrs. Quinlan and Wise, Germiston, appeared for the Deputy Mayor, Mr. H. J. Wannenburg, in his capacity as councillor and in his private capacity; the Primrose-Oos Voorsorgsvereniging; the Edendale Health Committee; the Ravens Klip Health Committee; the Rietfontein No 9 Vigilance Association; the Primrose Vigilance Association; the Fishershill Vigilance Association; the Whitfield Vigilance Association.

Mr. H. Davidoff appeared for stand holders of the Asiatic Bazaar, Germiston location; Mr. H. Basner, for the Germiston location resident advisory board; Mr. J. N. Stegmann, of Messrs. Stegmann and Abel, Johannesburg, for 29 farmers of Serffontein, and the Modderfontein Dynamite Factory; Mr. J. Rose-Innes, of Messrs. Wright, Rose-Innes and Louw, appeared for the Germiston Town Council.

GERMISTON LOCATION

Evidence of the Location Native Advisory Board on the Proposed Removal of the Location

PRESSENT LOCATION:

- 1. The Board is opposed to the removal of the Location from its present site because it is the most conveniently situated spot as regards the places where the residents are employed and also as regards shopping and train facilities.
- 2. The present location could be improved section by section without the large scale removal of the residents, and thus a great deal of inconvenience and resentment avoided.

NEW LOCATIONS:

- 3. The Board cannot see why it is thought necessary that all the African people of Germiston should be herded together in one part of the town. They are employed in different parts of the town and it would be most convenient for them and their employers if they were accommodated in more than one area.

The Board therefore recommends that while the existing location should not be removed, one or more new locations should be established in suitable areas. The congestion in the old location could thus be relieved by the provision of housing accommodation for those who are now in the old location but who would find one of the new locations much nearer their working places. Similarly, the re-modelling of the old location section by section would be facilitated. One of the new areas should be the ground beyond the ^{ba}bankment.

NATIVE VILLAGE:

- 4. One of the new areas or a portion of an area should be set aside as a Native village where, under the Urban Areas Act, Africans could purchase ground in freehold and erect their own homes.

SIZE OF PLOTS:

- 5. One of the chief defects of the present location is the "pocket-handkerchief" size of the plots. The Board urges that in any new area set aside for Africans the plots should measure not less than x

DISTANCE FROM TOWN:

- 6. The Board appeals to the Native Affairs Department to prevent any location being placed a long distance from the town. It should be clear to everyone that it is unjust to push the lowest paid portion of the population furthest

from the town and to increase the living costs of the people by the additional cost of transport. The bad examples of Cape Town, Durban, Johannesburg and Pretoria in this respect should not be followed in Germiston. In these cities the African people suffer severely through the placing of the Native townships long distances from the places of employment.

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