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T: +27 21 462 4502 | F: +27 21 462 4509 | E: info@sahra.org.za
South African Heritage Resources Agency - Head Office | 111 Harrington Street | Cape Town
P.O. Box 4637 | Cape Town | 8001

SAHRA Report for the Vele Colliery Site Visit during 13 October 2021.

Report Author:

Sabelo Khumalo
nkhumalo@sahra.org.za

Signature:  _____

Date: 10/06/2022

Reviewed by:

Phillip Hine: phine@sahra.org.za
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Signature: _____

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1. Summary

SAHRA officials from the Archaeology, Palaeontology, and Meteorites (APM) Unit, and Mr Freeman Chauke, a representative of MC Mining (Pty) Ltd spent a day inspecting all the sites within the mining area and along the mine access route. These sites include Sites 1; 2; 5; 8; 12; 23; 25a and 25b; 30; 32; 34; 37; 38. Which are all the sites that were investigated last year by Natasha Higgitt and Ragna Reidelstorff from SAHRA APM Unit. A meeting to discuss the site visit observations was held at the end of the day.

2. Purpose for SAHRA Site Visits

The site visit was requested by SAHRA Archaeology, Palaeontology and Meteorites (APM) Unit for the following reasons:

- SAHRA is a member of the Vele Colliery (now MC Mining Limited) Environmental Management Committee (EMC). The objective of the committee is to monitor compliance of the provisions for the conservation of heritage resources, as defined in the EAs and IWUL, and the implementation of the DEA objectives for the Mapungubwe World Heritage Site.
- MC Mining regularly appoints Mr. Frans Roodt to undertake quarterly monitoring inspections of the heritage sites within the Mine Right area, as of October 2016. The methodology in which sites are chosen for monitoring are not known to SAHRA, and they are not clarified in the quarterly reports. However, it is noted that the significant sites in the mining area are consistently monitored in each reporting cycle.
- In addition to the above, the aim of the SAHRA site visits are to monitor the conservation of the sites identified in the mine right area, the efforts put in place by the mine to conserve sites and to inspect the monitoring process undertaken by the appointed archaeologist.
- The SAHRA APM Unit undertakes a one-day site visit prior to the Vele Colliery HBSc and EMC site visiting meeting held at Dongola Ranch. A feedback meeting was held after the EMC meeting to discuss the findings of the visit
- Due to COVID-19 restrictions, no EMC or HBSc meetings were held on site during this time. Mr Frans Roodt, the independent Heritage Specialist was not able to undertake monitoring of the heritage sites in 2021, all monitoring was undertaken by Mr Freeman Chauke. SAHRA officials were the only heritage specialists to inspect sites in the mining area in 2021.
- The site visit took place on 13 October 2021 at the Vele Colliery Mine.



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3. Personnel at the site visit

The SAHRA APM Unit representatives for the site visit were Mr. Elijah Katsetse (EK) and Ms. Nokukhanya Khumalo (NK). Mc Mining’s Vele Colliery was represented by Mr. Freeman Chauke (FC). Mr. Frans Roodt did not join the site visit due to COVID-19 reasons.

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5. Background

Vele Colliery was established in 2011 and operated between 2012 and 2013 before it was placed under care and maintenance. The mine right area is 8663 hectares in extent, covering farms Bergen op Zoom 124 MS, Voorspoed 836 MS, and Portions 3,4,5,6, 13 and the remainder of the farm Overvlakte 125 MS. The western boundaries of the mine right area are located less than 10 km from the Mapungubwe National Park (MNP), in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province. Due to the mine proximity to the boundaries of the MNP, which is a National Heritage Site as declared in terms of section 27 of the National Heritage Resources Act, Act 25 of 1999 (NHRA) as well as a World Heritage Site, any heritage sites located within the mine right area will be of overall high heritage significance. A Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) was conducted in 2009 and second HIA was conducted in 2012 following the UNESCO impact assessment guidelines. Both HIA's and subsequent monitoring activities have helped to identify a total of 36 heritage sites within the mine right area.

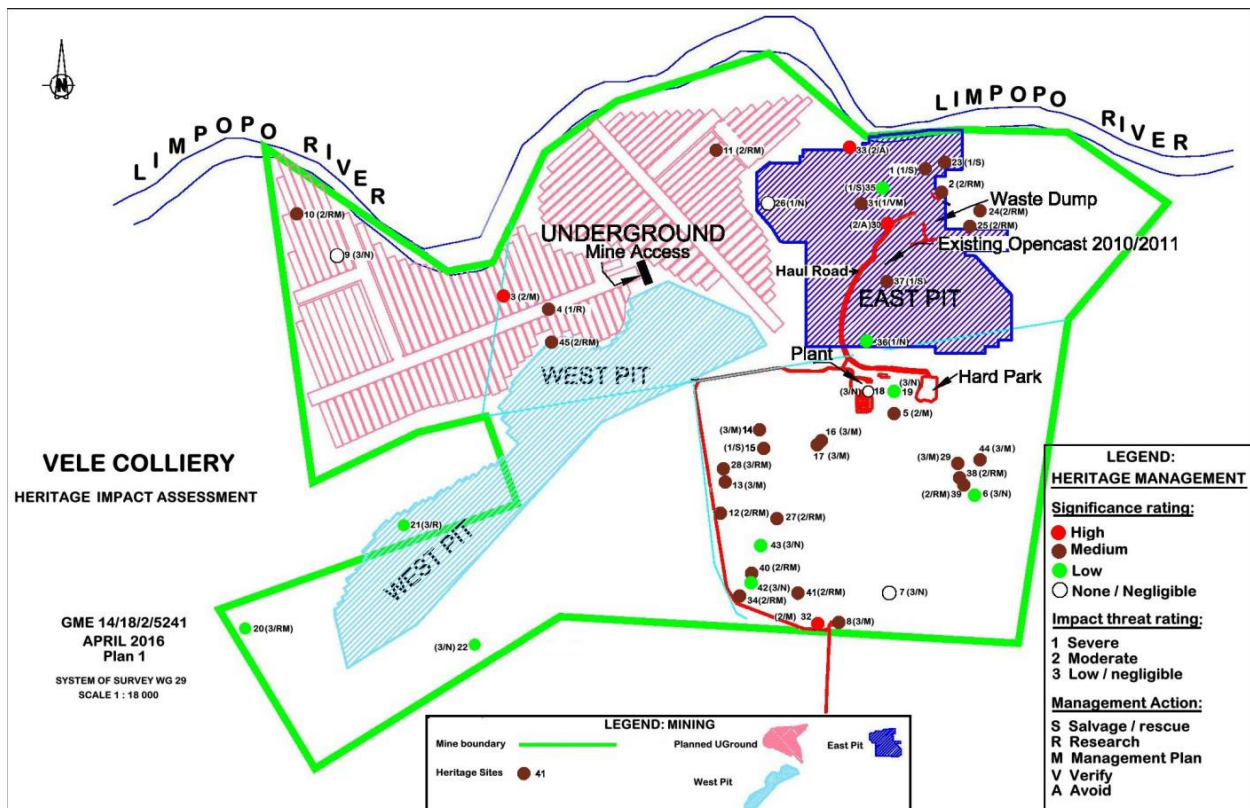


Figure 1: Map of Vele Colliery Mine Right Area (taken from Vele 2nd Quarter Monitoring Report 2017).



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The sites located within the Vele Colliery mine right area are mostly associated with the K2 to Mapungubwe period using decorated potsherds visibly on the surface or exposed by animal burrowing. Few of the sites have pottery decorations indicative of Zhizo pottery, and some pottery are indicative of Bambatha pottery (Roodt 2009; Roodt pers comm). The most significant site within the mine right is the salt works site named Site 2. This is the closest salt works site to the Mapungubwe Hill. The site has a midden deposit alongside the saline spring with decorated pottery in the style of the K2-Mapungubwe period (Roodt 2009). The surrounding sites (Sites 24; 25a; 25b) also represent large settlements consisting of dense concentrations of grain bin stands unique for the region (Roodt Pers comm). These sites are a good representative of the Mapungubwe period peripheral sites, which have become a research focus in the scientific community.

Site Visit

The sites below are listed in order of inspection. The table below also summarises the previous year's observations and recommended actions.

Table 1: Site visit

Site no.	Photo no.	Brief description	Significance rating	Planned mitigation as per HIA and HMP	2020 Observations	2021 Observations	SAHRA Recommendations
1	Figure 2	K2 site	Medium	Excavate (Section 35 permit)	No change in conditions from previous year. No erosion observed	There is good grass cover, no visible erosion, but there were animal burrows on site.	Section 35 permit to be applied for the planned mitigation
2	Figure 3	Salt Spring Site	High	Manage and monitor	No further erosion observed. One decorated potsherd still in same position on side of mound as of last year.	The decorated potsherd observed previously has dislodged from the mound and was obscured. It was observed at the bottom of the midden mound. The rehabilitation work on the spring has managed to make it flow and pond again.	Recommended monitoring every 3 months by the consulting archaeologist. Spot checks after heavy rainfall to be done by consulting archaeologist.



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5	Figure 4	K2 site	Medium	Manage and monitor	No change from previous year No erosion observed The plant is not yet operational.	Good grass cover and no erosion observed.	Recommended monitoring every 6 months; Monitor Erosion
8	Figure 5	Historical farmhouse	Low	Manage and monitor	House within property recently sold New owner cleaning and undertaking maintenance on structure MC Mining contacting LIHRA regarding electrification and maintenance	No change from previous year. The house still has old Dutch gables.	Recommended monitoring every 6 months; LIHRA to be contacted regarding any alterations and permits. It is understood that the farmstead will be monitored by the mine as it still remains part of its environmental regulatory requirements.
12	Figure 6	K2 site near road	Medium	Manage and monitor – PVC poles	No issues observed	No change from previous year due to good grass cover.	Recommended monitoring every 6 months
23	Figure 7	Foundations and hut floors- Birwa Site	Medium	Section 35 permitted excavation required	No issues observed	No changes from last year.	Section 35 permit to be applied for the planned mitigation
25a	Figure 8	Grain bins, pottery and slag	High	Toe berm, gabions, surface collection, recording	No issues observed	No change from previous year due to good grass cover.	A section 35 permit will be required for surface collection; Recommended to monitor every 3 months
25b	Figure 9	Grain bins, pottery and slag	High	Toe berm, gabions, surface collection, recording	No issues observed	No change from previous year due to good grass cover.	A section 35 permit will be required for surface collection; Recommended to monitor every 3 months



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30	Figure 10	11 graves	High	Fence, manage and monitor	No issues observed No visits requested.	No issues observed and no change from last year.	Recommended to monitor every 6 months; Remove rubble next to graves;
32	Figure 11	2 graves	High	Fence, manage and monitor	No issues observed No visits requested	No issues observed, still the same as this year.	Recommended to monitor every 6 months.
34	Figure 12	Kraal next to the road	Medium	Manage and monitor	Runoff being channeled away from site Some archaeological material noted in the section between road and wooden poles.	Road is being re-graded away from the site. There will be less damage to the site by continuous road use. There is no erosion observed on site due to good grass cover.	Recommended to monitor every 3 months; SAHRA notes that the portion of the road is being moved about a metre away from its current position and this will have less impact on the site. This will reduce the amount of erosion that occurs after the rains.
37	Figure 13	Bead and midden site Zhizo?	Medium	Near prospecting trench from Vele operations. Excavation planned.	No issues observed	Observed some surface artefacts like slag and pottery. The site has not changed since the previous year.	Recommended to monitor every 6 months; Section 35 permit to be applied for the planned mitigation.
38	Figure 14	K2 Site	Medium	Monitor and Manage	No issues observed New farm owner to repair dam wall below site and allow dam to fill.	Site lies on the Koppie above the dam that will be repaired. No visible surface changes observed.	Recommended to monitor every 6 months. If metal spear is found it must be sent to a registered repository and accessioned.



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Discussion

Table 2: Summary of Discussions

Items of Discussion	SAHRA Response/ Response to the raised questions
1. The EO has continued monitoring in 2021 due to Covid19 restrictions. But the mine hopes that by 2022, the consultant, Mr Roodt will be able to be on site for monitoring.	1. Noted.
2. SAHRA enquired about the name of the farm next to the mine on the access road. SAHRA also mentioned that they received an application for a dam on the farm Bergen Op Zoom and a portion of Overvlakte.	2. The EO mentioned that it is Noordkrans. The area where the dam wall will be constructed was visited during the site visit.
3. SAHRA mentioned that there are no immediate conservation concerns observed during the site visit.	3. Noted by all parties.
4. SAHRA noted that the new grading of the road by site 34 and observed that the small channel created during previous road maintenance work was corrected.	4. The EO mentioned that the road is being relocated to its original position away from site 34.
5. Vele mentioned that due to Covid19 restrictions they could not undertake maintenance work at the plant.	5. SAHRA noted the delay and concluded the meeting.



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Recommendations

SAHRA is satisfied with the conservation measures implemented by Vele Colliery. It was agreed that the next site visit will provisionally take place during winter/spring 2022. The following actions are to be completed prior to the next site visit or when the plant is operational.

- Once the plant is operational site 5 must be monitored on a quarterly basis when the plant becomes operational.
- Once the heritage consultant is able to carry out monitoring then biennial monitoring must resume, and the report must be submitted to SAHRA as and when it is completed.
- SAHRA requests that the wooden post lying on the ground next to site 32 be installed as a preventative measure for any encroachment from road maintenance.

Photo Log

The following photo are in order of site number.

Site 1:

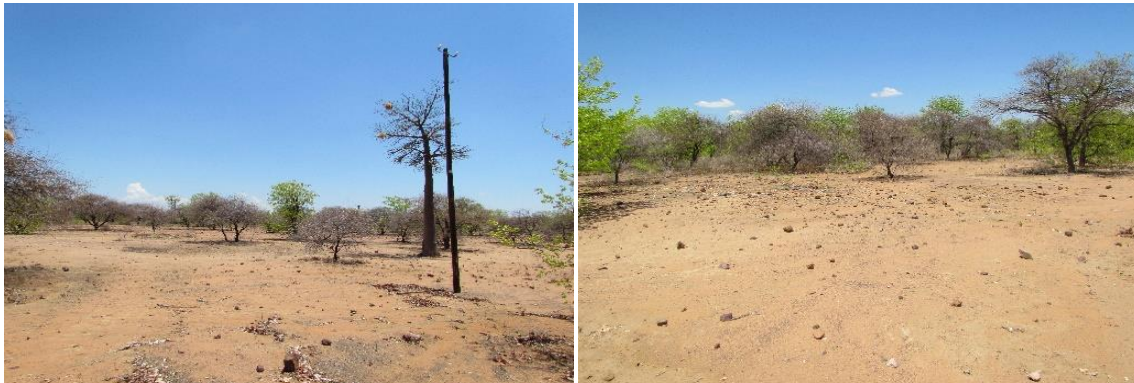


Figure 2: Site 1, telephone pole visible.

Site 2:



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Figure 3: Site 2 midden and small wall visible.

Site 5





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Figure 4: Site 5 view of the plant area from the site, view of the blocked off old farm road and the erosion on site.

Site 8



Figure 5: Site 8 view of the front and back of the old farmhouse.

Site 12



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Figure 6: Site 12 view of the installed wooden poles and the grain bin stands.

Site 23



Figure 7: Site 23 view of the hut foundations and grain bin stands.

Site 25 a and b



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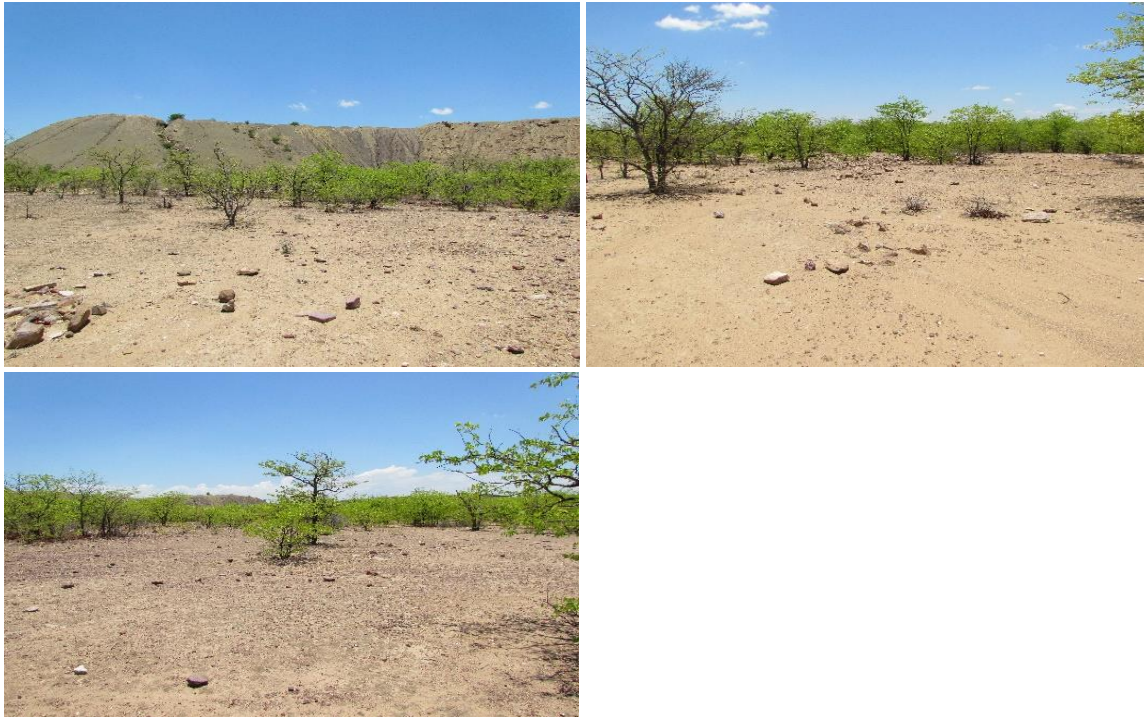


Figure 8: Site 25 a and b with berm in the distance.

Site 30:





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Figure 9: Site 30 fence repaired, and gate installed.

Site 32





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Figure 10: Site 32 images of the graveyard near the farmhouse.
Site 34



Figure 11: Site 34 view of the site, with animal burrows and the profile of the road and site edge with signs of erosion between the site edge and new road grading.

Site 37



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Figure 12: Site 37 view of the spindle whorl found on site and the mine pit area near the site.

Site 38



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Figure 13: Site 38 view of the kraal and the dam wall below it.

Kabida Dam Wall



Figure 15: View of the location where the Kabida dam wall will be constructed.