



Project Reference:  
755.01052.00004

File Ref. Black Ridge EMP Amendment

Date: 21 November 2014

**AQUILA STEEL (S AFRICA) (PTY) LTD**  
**NOTIFICATION OF AMENDMENT**  
**TO ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR PROSPECTING**  
**BLACKRIDGE PROJECT**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Aquila Steel (S Africa) (Pty) Ltd (Aquila) has the prospecting rights for base metals at the Blackridge area between Groblershoop and Griekwastad, in the Siyancuma Local Municipality of the Pixley Ka Seme District Municipality, in the Northern Cape.

Aquila intends to amend its existing prospecting right, to include additional prospecting boreholes at the Blackridge prospecting right area. In terms of Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act (No. 28 of 2002), Aquila is required to amend their Environmental Management Plan (EMP) to cater for the environmental management of the additional prospecting boreholes on site.

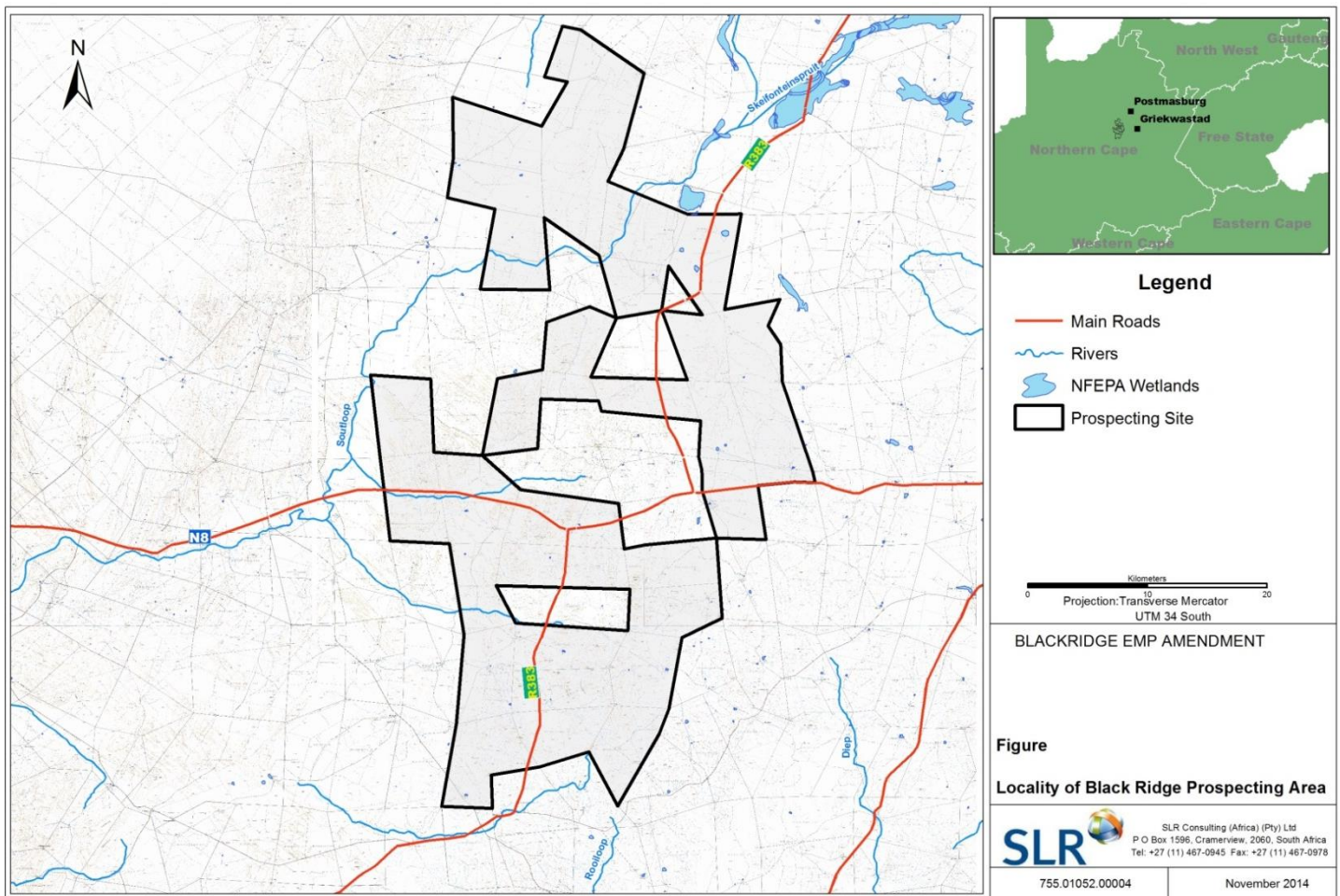
Synergistics Environmental Services (Pty) Ltd has been appointed as independent environmental assessment practitioners responsible for undertaking the necessary environmental processes and conducting the public participation process required in support of the application of amendment to the EMP.

As part of this process, you are invited to comment, raise issues and concerns regarding the proposed amendment.

**2. LOCATION**

The Blackridge prospecting area covers approximately 88 330 ha and includes the following properties (Figure 1):

Portion 2 of Farm No. 218	Farm No. 210	R/E Farm Zaaiplaats No. 83
Remaining Extent) (R/E) Farm Tapfontein No.212	R/E Farm Paauwvontein No.209	R/E, Portions 1&2 of Farm Vaalwater No.84
R/E & Portion 1 of Farm Klip put No.204	R/E, Portion 1&2 of Farm Cone No.82	R/E, Portions1&2 of Farm Dell No. 92
Farm Turnfell No.173	Farm Hartebeeshoek No. 601	Farm Sandridge No.191
Farm Eden No. 97	Farm Prairie No. 604	Farm Farfell No.174
R/E & Portion 1 of Farm Range No. 93	R/E & Portion 1 of Farm Blackridge No. 193	R/E & Portion 1 of Farm Camelport No.186
Farm Margaux No.108	Farm Waterkloof No. 95	Farm Bendermere No.178
Farm Rudesheim No.109	Farm Farfield No. 120	Farm Westfield No. 175
R/E & Portion 1 of Farm Bosch Aar No. 105	Remander & Portion 1 of Farm Westbourne No. 177	R/E, Portions 1&2 of Farm Eland No.163
R/E & Portion 1 & Farm Koodoosdell No.162	R/E & Portion 1 of Farm Camel Thorns No.187	R/E & Portion 1 of Farm Cairntop No.188
Portion 1 of Farm Prairie No.98	R/E & Portion 1 of Farm Koodooskop No.159	



**FIGURE 1. LOCALITY MAP OF BLACKRIDGE PROSPECTING AREA**

### 3. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROSPECTING ACTIVITIES

The proposed EMP amendment is to drill additional prospecting boreholes over a period of 3 years. All prospecting activities are undertaken in consultation with, and the consent of the landowner.

Prospecting involves the drilling of narrow diameter holes to evaluate the sub-surface geology in a particular area. Drill rigs are positioned at predetermined positions where chip samples are removed to identify the underlying geology (Figure 2). A small area is cleared to allow access for the drill rig and associated infrastructure (Figure 3). A general layout for a typical prospecting site is displayed in Figure 2; this diagram gives a general indication of the type of infrastructure on a typical prospecting site and will not necessarily be duplicated exactly.

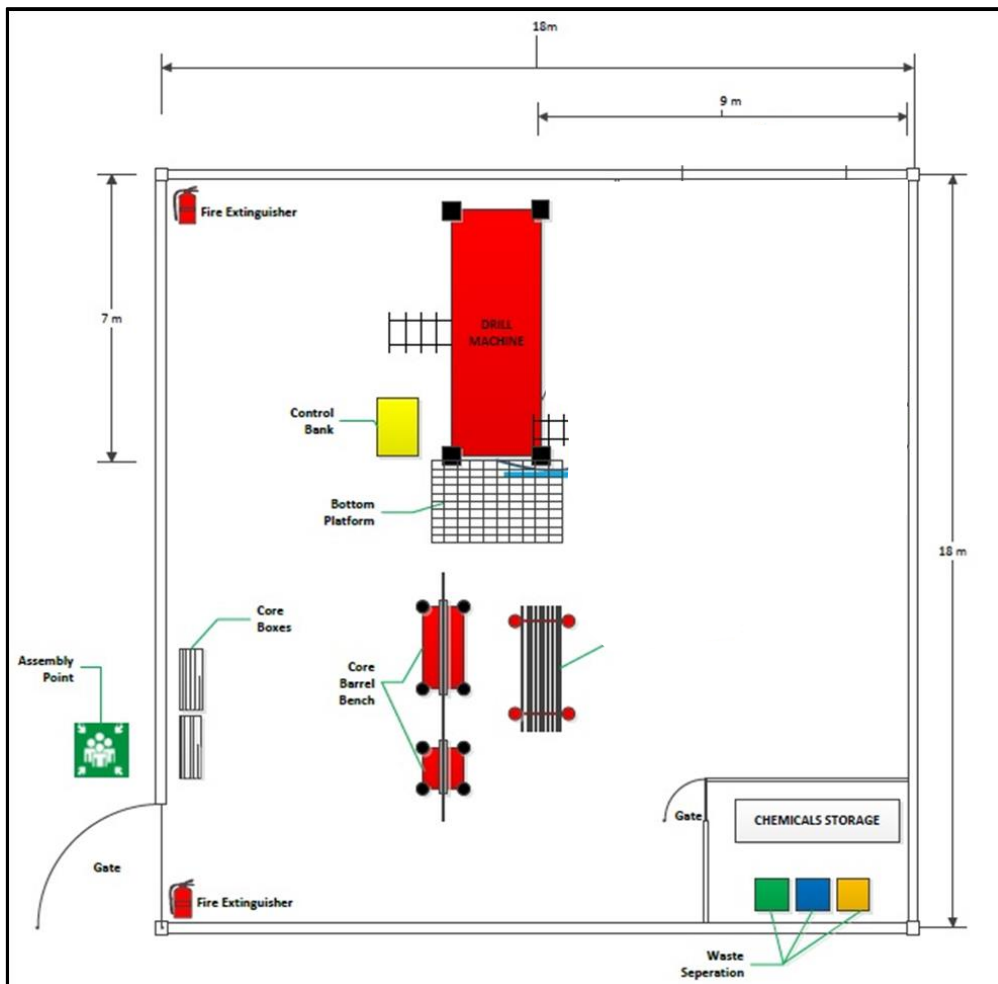


FIGURE 2. GENERAL LAYOUT OF A TYPICAL PROSPECTING SITE



**FIGURE 3. SMALL AREA CLEARED FOR DRILL RIG AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE**

Existing roads are used to access the sites as far as possible, but if necessary new road access routes may be constructed in consultation with the landowner.

Sumps are lined with plastic to prevent contamination of soils and water. Chemical toilets will be set up at each prospecting site and all household waste, including general and hazardous waste, is removed from site. Sludge is backfilled into the prospecting hole when complete.

After completion of drilling (approximately 1 week), the drill rig and all associated infrastructure is removed from site. The borehole is then sealed and capped.

The cleared footprint area is then rehabilitated. This is done by ripping or raking compacted areas to allow for natural vegetation re-establishment (Figure 4). With previous prospecting sites in Blackridge, the natural vegetation has been found to re-establish easily.





**FIGURE 4. EXAMPLE OF WHAT THE AREA LOOKS LIKE AFTER THE PROSPECTING SITE IS REMOVED PRIOR TO REHABILITATION. THE YELLOW CIRCLE SHOWS A CAPPED AND CLOSED PROSPECTING BOREHOLE.**

#### **4. DESCRIPTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT**

The prospecting area falls into the Olifantshoek Plains Thornveld and the Northern Upper Karoo. The typical setting includes undulating plains with hills of arid thorn veld and some sand dunes. Protected trees are prevalent including Camel Thorn (*Acacia erioloba*) and Shepherd's Trees (*Boscia albitrunca*). Other protected plants (such as bulbs and shrubs) can also be expected to occur in the area.

The area is used for livestock (e.g. cattle, sheep) and game farming. There are several ephemeral streams flowing through the prospecting area, with the Soutloop flowing to the north and there are also numerous depressions, pans and wetland areas.

#### **5. PROSPECTING IMPACTS**

The main environmental impacts associated with prospecting are to the landscape character as a result of vegetation removal for the roads and prospecting sites. Disturbance of existing farming activities is also of concern and consultation with landowners is key to the success of the prospecting operations.

Waste also needs to be managed properly and removed from site in order to prevent environmental pollution. These impacts can be mitigated through limitation of the disturbance footprint and the management of potential pollutants.

## 6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

You are hereby invited to submit comments, queries or concerns about the proposed Blackridge EMP amendment, which will all be considered and included in the EMP amendment submitted to the DMR.

To find out more about the project, or raise issues and concerns regarding, but not limited to:

- The existing cultural, socio-economic or biophysical environment of the project area; and/or
- The potential impacts that the proposed prospecting will have on the cultural, socio-economic or biophysical environment,

contact Chiara Kotze on the details below. Please find the comment sheet attached.

All comments are to be submitted by **10<sup>th</sup> December 2014**. Should you require additional time to comment, a request can be sent for consideration to Chiara Kotze by **1<sup>st</sup> December 2014**.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'K' followed by the name 'Kotze' written in a cursive script.

Chiara Kotze

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