



an agency of the
Department of Arts and Culture

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CaseID: 11571

Date: Thursday March 29, 2018

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Interim Comment

In terms of Section 38(8) of the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999)

Attention: Ntshovelo Mining Resources (Pty) Ltd

Ntshovelo Mining Resources (Pty) Ltd, a subsidiary of Mbuyelo Coal (Pty) Ltd, has appointed Geo Soil and Water cc (GSW) as the Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) to assist with undertaking the necessary authorisation and amendment processes for Vlakvarkfontein Coal Mine. In turn GSW has appointed EIMS as well as various specialist sub-consultants to assist with compiling the necessary reports and undertaking the statutory consultation processes, in support of proposed extensions to the Vlakvarkfontein Coal Mine. It is anticipated that several listed activities contained in the National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998) (NEMA), National Environmental Management Waste Act (Act 59 of 2008) (NEMWA) and National Water Act (Act 36 of 1998) (NWA) will be triggered by the proposed extension.

Ntshovelo Mining Resources (Pty) Ltd a subsidiary of Mbuyelo Coal (Pty) Ltd is proposing to amend their Environmental Authorisation and EMPr for Vlakvarkfontein Coal Mine, to extend existing mining activities in their approved mine right area. This application will include an additional opencast coal pit area, the re-location of the administration facilities and a pollution control dam, the construction of a new water treatment facility and a coal processing plant. The mine is located on Portions 5; 13; and 18 of the farm Vlakvarkfontein 213 IR, in Victor Khanye Local Municipality of Mpumalanga Province.

The Environmental Impact Management Services (EIMS) have been appointed by Ntshovelo to undertake the Environmental Impact Assessment Process in support of an Environmental Authorisation in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 107 of 1998, as amended (NEMA) for listed activities in the NEMA Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations, 2014 as amended. A Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) and Palaeontological Impact Assessment (PIA) report have been submitted to SAHRA, in terms of section 38 (8) of the National Heritage Resources Act, 25 of 1999 (NHRA).

Thomose, N. May. 2011. Phase I Heritage Impact Assessment Proposed Vlakvarkfontein Colliery Expansion Project.

The author undertook a field assessment of the proposed Vlakvarkfontein expansion area and found 8 heritage resources within the mine right area. Sites VVF01 to VVF04 and VVF08 are built structures, and Sites VVF05 to VVF07 are cemeteries. Sites VVF05; VVF06 located in the expansion area, Site VVF07 located

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outside the mine expansion area.

Baker, S. October 2017. Palaeontological Impact Assessment for the Expansion of Open Cast Mining, a New Integrated Water Use License and the Establishment of a Coal Processing Facility by Ntshovelo Mining Resources (Pty) Ltd on Farm Vlakvarkfontein 213R, Victor Khanye Local Municipality, Mpumalanga Province.

The author undertook a field assessment of the proposed Vlakvarkfontein expansion area and found shale and sandstone layers of the Vryheid Formation, Ecca Group, Karoo Supergroup. This formation has a Very High palaeontological significance and sensitivity for *Glossopteris* Flora fossils however there have been no reports of *Glossopteris* fossils in the Delmas area and the field survey did not document any fossils in the exposed Vryheid Formation layers.

Interim Comment

SAHRA Archaeology, Palaeontology and Meteorites (APM) Unit accepts the Palaeontological Impact Assessment report and the recommendations provided therein. However, SAHRA APM Unit is unable to provide a comment on this case, as Heritage Impact Assessment report is outdated and does not assess the current proposed developments on the mine as indicated in the EIA report.

The HIA must be updated to reflect the current EIA application amendment areas, and it must clarify which heritage resources are still present in the Mine Right Area. The HIA report must also assess whether or not the current proposed activities will/may impact on the existing heritage resources.

Should you have any further queries, please contact the designated official using the case number quoted above in the case header.

Yours faithfully

Nokukhanya Khumalo
Heritage Officer
South African Heritage Resources Agency

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Phillip Hine

Acting Manager: Archaeology, Palaeontology and Meteorites Unit
South African Heritage Resources Agency

ADMIN:

Direct URL to case: <http://www.sahra.org.za/node/407327>