



## Interim Comment

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

Attention: Northern Coal (Pty) Ltd  
P. O. Box 52651  
Saxonwold  
2132

### NEMA application for the proposed Weltevreden Open Cast Coal Mine, Belfast, Mpumalanga Province

Thank you for notifying SAHRA of the proposed Weltevreden Open Cast Mine located near the town of Belfast, on Portions 15 and 16 of the Weltevreden 381 JT in Emkhazeni Local Municipality, Mpumalanga. SAHRA had issued a formal response comment to this development on 19/05/2014, the comment had requested a revised AIA and a PIA that included a field assessment. It is noted that the revised HIA dated August 2014 has been uploaded to the case for SAHRA comment.

Higgitt, N. and Khan, S.H. August 2014. *Environmental Impact Assessment for the Weltevreden Open Cast Coal Mine, Weltevreden 381JT, Belfast, Mpumalanga Province: Heritage Impact Assessment.*

Miss Natasha Higgitt and Miss Shahzaadee Khan undertook a field assessment of the Weltevreden Open Cast Coal Mine on June 2014. The aim was to identify heritage resources on the property of the Weltevreden project, and the impacts that may occur to the heritage resources due to the Open Cast Coal Mine planned for the area. There was a total of 5 heritage resources found on the property of the mine and a further 2 heritage resources located outside the property of the mine.

The following resources are in danger of being negatively impacted by the Weltevreden Open Cast Coal Mine:

**Site S.34-001:** Historical Mine Shaft, this site is located near the planned Pit 2, it is rated of low significance, however it is recommended in the heritage report that is fully mapped and recorded should destruction be necessary. Under section 34 of the National Heritage Resources Act (25 of 1999), it is stated that no built structure older than 60 years old may be disturbed and/or damaged by developments without a permit issued by the provincial heritage resources authority. Therefore destruction of the site must be permitted by the Mpumalanga Provincial Heritage Resources Authority (an application for a destruction permit should be made to Mr Benjamin Moduka ([bmoduka@mpg.gov.za](mailto:bmoduka@mpg.gov.za))).

**Site S.35-005:** A rectangular shaped dry packed Stone Walled Site, this site is located near the proposed haul road. This site is rated of low significance and the recording included in this report is sufficient not to require a destruction permit before impacting on site.

**Site S.35-004:** This site is also a rectangular shaped dry packed Stone Walled Site, this site is located near the existing dams but at some distance to the planned activities. Since according to the specialist the site is younger than 60 years, no permission is necessary to impact on it.



**Site S.36-007:** this site is a possible grave, that is stone packed, not fenced and is located near the planned Pit 3 of the mine. This is an unknown grave and it is rated of high significance and it should not be disturbed/damaged by mine activities without a permit issued by SAHRA under s. 36 of the NHRA. Due to its close proximity to the open cast pit 3 this grave should be fenced off, and a buffer zone of a 100m be in place, meaning the development footprint of the pit would be required to change to make allowances for the grave.

**Site S.36-006:** this site is a graveyard that consists of at least 10 graves, most of them are unknown graves that will be treated as heritage graves that are older than 60 years old and therefore protected under s. 36 of the NHRA. However there is one grave that is younger than 60 years and it is protected by the Human Tissues Act (65 of 1983). This site is rated as being of high significance and the graves should not be disturbed/damaged by mine activities. Due to its close proximity to the open cast pit 3 this grave yard should be fenced off, and a buffer zone of a 100m be in place, meaning the development footprint of the pit would be required to change to make allowances for the graveyard.

It should be noted that the requested PIA has not been uploaded to the case, it is required as per the comment issued on 19/05/2014.

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SAHRA requires that:

- since site s. 34-001 may be affected in the long term by blasting activities, recording and mapping of the site should occur before blasting activities commence.
- sites s.34-002 and s.34-003 will be affected by blasting vibrations also and both these historical werfs are older than 60 years old. These sites should be fully recorded and mapped before mining begins, even though they lie outside the mine right area.
- Pit 3 should be moved 100m from any burial grounds or graves at s. 36-006 and 36-007. If relocation of Pit 3 is not possible, a permit application for relocation of the graves is required in terms of Section 36 of the NHRA for graves older than 60 years and for unknown graves. The permit needs to be applied for at SAHRA's Burial Grounds and Graves Unit (Itumeleng Masiteng at 012 320 8490). SAHRA's preferred option is always for the graves to be conserved *in situ*. Since s.36-007 has not been confirmed to be a grave, before a process of relocation begins, test excavations must be undertaken with a permit under Section 35 of the NHRA.

The heritage report, on page 33 includes the geology and palaeontology significance, however no recommendations or assessment was made about the palaeontology of the mine area. From a comment made on 19/05/2014 to this case, it was requested that a Palaeontological Impact Assessment be conducted including a field assessment.

Since there is no PIA attached to this heritage report, or uploaded to this case, SAHRA cannot issue a final comment to this case.

SAHRA awaits for further information (PIA) before it can issues a final comment.



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

Yours faithfully

Mariagrazia Galimberti  
Heritage Specialist

Colette Scheermeyer  
SAHRA Head Archaeologist  
South African Heritage Resources Agency

**ADMIN:**

Direct URL to case: <http://www.sahra.org.za/node/162663>  
(DMR, Ref: MP302/5/1/1/2/358 MR) (MDEDET, Ref: DEDET Ref No17/2/3N-272)

