



an agency of the
Department of Arts and Culture

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South African Heritage Resources Agency | 111 Harrington Street | Cape Town
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CaseID: 9404

Date: Thursday May 19, 2016

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Interim Comment

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

Attention: Umcebo Mining (Pty) Ltd
Private Bag X 1838
Middelburg
1050

Umcebo Mining (Pty) Ltd (Umcebo) is proposing the development and operation of a new underground coal mine with associated infrastructure at a site situated approximately 10 - 22 kilometres (km) southeast of Hendrina in Mpumalanga Province. A Mining Right Application (MRA) must be submitted to the Department of Mineral Resources (DMR) for the Project.

Thank you for informing SAHRA of the proposed establishment of an underground coal mine, by the applicant Umcebo Mining (Pty) Ltd a subsidiary of Glencore Operations (Pty) Ltd. The mine right area applied for is south-east of the town of Hendrina in Mpumalanga Province. The proposed mine will consist of 3 underground sections named: Mooivley East and West to be operational concurrently, and Hendrina South to be operational after Mooivley East is decommissioned. The farms in the mine right area are Mooivley 219 IS; Tweefontein 203 IS; Uitkyk 220 IS; Orange Vallei 201 IS; Elim 245 IS; Geluksdraai 240 IS; Bosmanskrans 217 IS and Orpenskraal 238 IS, all in the local municipalities of Steve Tshwete and Msukaligwa.

The construction of the proposed underground mine will consist of 3 box cuts and incline mine shafts, a crushing and screening plant, stockpile areas and waste rock dump, access roads and administrative areas. Currently listed in the Notification of Development, the surface disturbances will be limited to 14 ha and the underground sections will be 6710 ha in extent.

Du Piesane, J. April 2016. Environmental Impact Assessment for the Proposed Hendrina Underground Coal Mine, Mpumalanga Heritage Scoping Report.

The author undertook a field survey of the proposed mine right area. The preliminary field survey identified 6 heritage resources, which are three cemeteries, two rock art sites and one farmstead. The rock paintings are faded with the rock surface showing signs of erosion. One of the cemeteries was not assessed well because of site access restrictions. All the sites identified are located outside the planned construction area but within the mine right area.

A palaeontological desktop assessment was also conducted and included in the Heritage Scoping Report referenced above.



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It finds that the underlying geology consist of sandstone, shales and coal seams of the Vryheid Formation (Ecca Group, Karoo Supergroup). The Karoo sequence is at a depth between 32 to 128 metres below the ground, which is why the coal mine will be using underground methods of mining the coal.

An exemption from conducting a Palaeontological Impact Assessment is suggested because the very high fossil sensitive rock strata are deep underground and the likelihood of finding fossils on the surface is low. They suggest instead to develop a chance fossil finds procedure as there is low possibility of fossils being impacted during surface construction.

Interim Comment

SAHRA Archaeology, Palaeontology and Meteorites Unit agrees with the recommendations made in the Heritage Scoping Report for conducting a Heritage Impact Assessment in the Environmental Impact Assessment phase of the environmental authorisation process.

SAHRA APM Unit does not accept the recommendation for exemption for further palaeontological studies as the underground coal mining operations will impact the underground fossil heritage resources in and surrounding the coal. As such the following should be submitted:

- A Palaeontological Desktop Assessment for the project area should be conducted and submitted to SAHRA. The assessment should be done by a suitably qualified palaeontologist.
- A Chance Fossil Finds procedure for the mine should to be developed and submitted to SAHRA, the procedure of which will be used during construction operation and decommissioning of the mine. The procedure should include monitoring by a suitably qualified palaeontologist during construction of surface infrastructure and box cut for the entrances to the mine shaft.
- Monitoring intervals should be agreed upon between the developer or ECO and a qualified palaeontologist. The mine geologist should monitor during the periods when the palaeontologist is not on site. This should be a procedure to be followed throughout the life of the mine.
- The schedule of monitoring should be set up between the mine and palaeontologist and the agreement letter submitted to SAHRA.

SAHRA will make further comment about this proposed mine once the HIA and PIA and Chance Fossil Finds procedure is submitted to the case.

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

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Yours faithfully

Nokukhanya Khumalo
Heritage Officer
South African Heritage Resources Agency

Phillip Hine
SAHRA Head Archaeologist (Acting)
South African Heritage Resources Agency

ADMIN:

Direct URL to case: <http://www.sahra.org.za/node/361573>
(DMR-MP, Ref:)