



## **Final Comment**

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

Attention: Groundwater Consulting Services

**Gold Mining application: Phase 1 of the SOFS Mining Operation, namely the DBM Project, is situated in the Free State Province of central South Africa.**

**Van Vollenhoven, A. November 2011. A Report On A Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment For The Proposed Wits Gold DBM Project Close To Virginia, Free State Province**

The proposed development entails mining operations on a number of farms across an area of approximately 4,024ha. It covers portions of the following farms: Hakkies 695, Schoonheid 540, Tweepan 678, Florida 633, Millo 717, Winterhoek Zuid 28, Kaallaagte 562, Mooiuitzig 352, Weltevreden 443, Stilte 138, Dora 287, Christiana 452, Bloemhoek 509, Le Roux 717 and Kriegers Kraal 708. The project area will extend to the township of Meloding, approximately 1.8km from the proposed shaft area. The TSF location is proposed to be situated on an existing Brownfield Tailings Storage Facility in the area.

Most of the mining operation will be carried out underground. Surface infrastructure will include shafts, offices, stores and a marshalling yard, a clinic, workshops, sewage and waste disposal, roads and storm water handling, tailing storage facilities and waste rock dump, rock handling and conveyors, change house, main fans, shaft headgears, winders, ice plant and cooling towers, and and a metallurgical plant.

The report notes two sites of heritage significance:

Site 1: A graveyard of approximately 40 graves. The author notes that there probably are more graves as the dense grass cover made it very difficult to do an accurate count. Grave dressing of packed stone or cement borders were identified, while some graves are marked with metal markers. The graves that do have headstones have cement or stone headstones and some surnames identified are Moenvana and Hlokahetse. Dates identified range between 1908 and 1978. The author notes that this site will be impacted by the development, either directly or through secondary impact.

Site 2: The remains of an old station, consisting of at least three buildings, most likely dating to the 1930s or 1940s, and the ruins of more buildings. The author notes that the site will not be directly affected by the development and that the buildings should remain intact and may even be re-utilised. Any structural changes should be communicated with the Provincial Heritage Resources Authority of the Free State Province and a



Our Ref:

Enquiries: Andrew Salomon  
Tel: 021 462 4502  
Email: [asalomon@sahra.org.za](mailto:asalomon@sahra.org.za)  
CaseID: 1233

Date: Thursday January 31, 2013

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permit will be required to do so. The author further recommends that the buildings should not be demolished.

**Case Decision**

As there is apparently no evidence of any significant archaeological material in this area, the SAHRA Archaeology, Palaeontology and Meteorites Unit has no objection to the development (in terms of the archaeological component of the heritage resources) on condition that the developer ensures that a professional Palaeontological Impact Assessment study is undertaken to assess whether or not the development will impact upon palaeontological resources. If this is deemed unnecessary, a letter of recommendation for exemption from a professional Palaeontologist is needed. If the area is deemed sensitive, a full Phase 1 Palaeontological Impact Assessment will be required and if necessary a Phase 2 rescue operation might be necessary.

Considering the impact of the development on Site 1, the SAHRA Burial Grounds and Graves Unit requires that the graves be relocated following a 60-day public participation process as required by Section 36 of the National Heritage Resources Act (No. 25 of 1999), that must be undertaken to identify any direct descendants of those buried on the property. The archaeologist must submit a permit application to SAHRA for the disinterment of the burials. This must include written approval of the descendants or, if there has not been success in identifying direct descendants, written documentation of the social consultation process, which must indicate to SAHRA's satisfaction, the efforts that have been made to locate them. It must also include details of the exhumation process and the place to which the burials are to be relocated. Permission must be obtained before exhumation takes place from the landowner where the graves are located, and from the owners/managers of the graveyard to which the remains will be relocated. Other relevant legislation must be complied with, including the Human Tissues Act and any ordinances of the Provincial Department of Health.

Please note that, for Site 2, decisions on Built Environment must be referred to the Free State Provincial Heritage Resources Authority.

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

Yours faithfully



The South African Heritage Resources Agency

Street Address: 111 Harrington Street, Cape Town 8000 \* Postal Address: PO Box 4637, Cape Town 8000  
\* Tel: +27 21 462 4502 \* Fax: +27 21 462 4509 \* Web: <http://www.sahra.org.za>



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Andrew Salomon  
Heritage Officer: Archaeology  
South African Heritage Resources Agency

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Colette Scheermeyer  
SAHRA Head Archaeologist  
South African Heritage Resources Agency

**ADMIN:**

Terms & Conditions:

1. This approval does not exonerate the applicant from obtaining local authority approval or any other necessary approval for proposed work.
2. If any heritage resources, including graves or human remains, are encountered they must be reported to SAHRA immediately.
3. SAHRA reserves the right to request additional information as required.



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