

**Kitso Mine Burial Ground**  
**Kitso Mine, Tsantsabane Local Municipality, Northern Cape**

**CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN**

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**SAHRA CASE ID NO: 13152**

Thursday, 16 December 2021



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## DOCUMENTS CONTROL

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This Conservation Management Plan (CMP) has been prepared for a burial ground on Kitso Mine near Postmasburg in the Tsantsabane Local Municipality, Northern Cape Province.
2. The burial ground became a subject of public interest when on 2 August 2017 an excavator inadvertently encroached into a portion of the burial ground which resulted in the exposure of human bones. It is not certain how many graves were affected, but the act offended public sensibilities about burial grounds as sacred places, which sparked protests by members of the Maremane community. The Maremane community are an important stakeholder with surface rights over the mining area through a Community Property Association. The demonstrations and picketing nearly turned violent, as at the time all overtures by the mine officials for a peaceful settlement were rejected by the community.
3. The CMP foregrounds stakeholder engagement and participation. This is an open process in which every citizen (anyone) has the right to express views which are duly considered in decision making. This CMP recognises the Maremane Community as playing a pre-eminent role as they are the local community and custodian of the burial ground. It is important to underline that stakeholder consultation and public participation is not a once-off event.
4. The CMP sets out the parameters for stakeholder participation to continue in the future as the Mine ought to engage them in all decisions made on the protection of the burial ground.
5. *Statement of Cultural Significance (or Value) of the Heritage*  
The purpose of the CMP is to put in place measures to conserve the burial ground. What is being conserved is not only the tangible elements of the burial ground but also its spiritual essence, the underpinning belief that the local community has a connection with the spirits of the deceased. A statement of cultural significance foregrounds associated values of the

heritage, and justifies the allocation of resources (time, money, and personnel) for its conservation and management. Cultural value or significance underlines the imperative for conservation and by extension the relationship between the heritage, local communities and the broader public.


The burial ground at Kitso Mine must be protected in view of public sensitivities on the treatment of graves, burial grounds and human remains. The subject of graves, burial grounds and human remains is firmly situated in public heritage discourse in South Africa. The burial ground is significant as a large informal burial ground of the colonial period holding hundreds of graves. It is a silent archive with records of a mine labour force which succumbed to an epidemic. As such it is an important epitaph for those who perished in the line of service for the early development of modern mining. This is an important heritage site considering that there is little that is acknowledged in public documents about this episode.

#### *6. Conservation Management Planning Key Issues*

Key issues essentially translate into intended objectives of the CMP and in a project implementation table responsibility for implementation and delivery of results are clearly defined.


7. Table of Conservation Management Key Issues


	Key Issue	Description	Lead parties	Stakeholders
1	Stakeholder consultation	Concerning the burial ground, stakeholder Engagement and Public Participation on matters concerning graves is an open process in which every citizen (anyone) has the right to express views which are duly considered in decision making. It is important to underline that stakeholder consultation and public participation is not a once-off event. From the commencement of the project, it is continuous until the project comes to an end. It is therefore imperative that all stakeholder continue with a constructive dialogue until they find closure on the matter on the disturbed graves.	Kitso Mine, Maremane CPA	SAHRA, DMR, SAPS, Maremane CPA
2	Re-interment of human remains exposed by the excavations	The human remains that were exposed including those which are in the custody of SAPS must be reburied at the site with dignity and in accordance with local cultural traditions and norms. The developer must pay the costs of rehabilitating the graves that were disturbed including costs attendant with the holding of traditional ritual rituals and procurement of funerary goods in accordance with local customs	Kitso Mine, Maremane CPA	SAHRA, DMR, SAPS, Maremane CPA
	Application to SAHRA BGG for the rehabilitation of the graves	An application was lodged with the SAHRA BGG Unit and a reburial permit had been withheld because a segment of the Maremane Community complained that they had not been consulted. Subsequently the matter was resolved and the petition withdrawn. In light of this SAHRA BGG must now be approached to issue a Reburial Permit.	Kitso Mine	

	Key Issue	Description	Lead parties	Stakeholders
2	Rehabilitation of the disturbed portion of the burial ground	The onus is placed on Kitso Mine to rehabilitate the trenches which were opened accidentally by backfilling them. A landscaping plan must be prepared which includes the reburial of the human bones which were unearthed and proposal on the type of grave markers which will be used.	Kitso Mine, Maremane CPA	SAHRA, DMR, SAPS, Maremane CPA
		<p>Backfilling and landscaping must be supervised by a qualified heritage expert and a report submitted to the heritage authority</p>  <p><i>A portion of burial ground with an excavated ditch which must be rehabilitated by backfilling</i></p>		


	Key Issue	Description	Lead parties	Stakeholders
3	Construction of a memorial plaque/epitaph	<p>A memorial monument must be constructed at the site. Its shape and the material used can be a subject of discussion and agreement by all key stakeholders. Such a monument may take the form of a plinth, obelisk or wall. Granite is commonly used in the construction of such structures. Inscriptions will include a brief history of the burials, their significance, and in a closing statement a commitment to protect the site.</p>  <p><i>SAHRA monument dedicated to the Regent Jongintaba Dalindyebo at Mqhekezweni, Eastern Cape</i></p>	Kitso Mine, Maremane CPA	SAHRA, DMR, SAPS, Maremane CPA




	Key Issue	Description	Lead parties	Stakeholders
4	Construction of a fence around the graveyard	Perimeter fencing is required. With the benefit of experience recyclable material such as a steel posts/panels, barbed wire strands and diamond steel mesh should not be used as they are likely to be removed for recycling.	Kitso Mine, Maremane CPA	SAHRA, DMR, SAPS, Maremane CPA
		<p>It is recommended that the mine uses soil discard from the opencast mining pits to construct a high pitch earth embankment around the burial ground. This is a low cost option, it has no negative impact on the environment. It is not likely to be vandalised. It will serve to warn trespassers that they are encroaching into the burial ground</p>  <p><i>An example of a low earth embankment near Vosloorus, Johannesburg</i></p>	Kitso Mine, Maremane CPA	SAHRA, DMR, SAPS

	Key Issue	Description	Lead parties	Stakeholders
		 <p><i>A linear topsoil stockpile at an Eskom construction site near Roossenekal, Limpopo, which can serve as an embankment</i></p>		
5	Delimit a servitude (buffer) for the burial ground	In view of uncertainty regarding the limits of the burial ground an archaeologist must be appointed to carry out a ground survey after which the placement of the perimeter earth embankment can be determined.	Kitso Mine	SAHRA, DMR, SAPS, Maremane CPA
6	Trimming grass and bushes	On the northern part of the burial ground untrimmed grass impairs visibility. On a southern portion hooked thorn bushes constrain access. The mine must put in place a maintenance programme - cutting the grass once during the rainy season, and again at the end of the rainy season; and clearing the thorn bushes.	Kitso Mine, Maremane CPA	SAHRA, DMR, SAPS

	Key Issue	Description	Lead parties	Stakeholders
		<p>Limited duration contracts for vegetation control can be awarded to local SMMEs using transparent criteria of appointment.</p>  <p><i>A photograph taken on 6 July 2021 shows grass cover on a northern portion of the burial ground</i></p>	Kitso Mine, Maremane CPA	DMR, SAPS, Maremane CPA

	Key Issue	Description	Lead parties	Stakeholders
		 <p><i>A photograph taken on 19 April 2018 shows stone cairns which mark the graves visible at the end of the rainy season after grass had been trimmed</i></p>		
7	Future development of the Mine	No further development will take place in the vicinity of any graves on the property	Kitso Mine, Maremane CPA	SAHRA, DMR, SAPS, Maremane CPA
		(i) A 20 m to 30 m buffer zone must be reserved on the eastern side of the burial ground where mine earthworks are close to the limits of the burial ground.		

	Key Issue	Description	Lead parties	Stakeholders
		<p>(ii) On the north side of the burial ground set along a rural access road the proposed earthwork barrier must be constructed alongside the road as there is no room for a buffer.</p> <p>(iii) On the west and south side of the burial ground the standard 100 m buffer must be reserved.</p>  <p><i>Google Earth Map shows the approximate limits of the burial ground, the proposed buffer in relation to the footprint of mine operations</i></p>		
8	Prepare a conservation Management Plan (CMP)	This document is a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) prepared in terms of Section 47(3) of the NHRA.	Kitso Mine, Maremane CPA	SAHRA, DMR, SAPS, Maremane CPA

	Key Issue	Description	Lead parties	Stakeholders
9	Closure Report	When the Management Plan goes into implementation phase a Close Out Report will be prepared and submitted to SAHRA BGG Unit and DMR	Kitso Mine, Maremane CPA	SAHRA, DMR, SAPS, Maremane CPA

#### *8. Monitoring programme*

A Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Intervention (MELI) tool should be established for the CMP. **Monitoring** is the action of determining where implementation of the Action Plan stands. It is the ongoing, systematic collection of data to provide management and the main stakeholders with a good indication of the progress in terms of the Action Plan. **Evaluation** informs the manager and stakeholders of the degree of effectiveness in terms of outcomes and impacts of the activities. **Evaluation** must also assess unplanned outcomes and impacts for which established baseline values may not exist. **Learning** refers to continuous learning, and the insights gained from the results of the monitoring and evaluation. **Intervention** is the evidence-based action on the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning that must be taken to overcome obstacles or challenges faced during the implementation of the CMP.

## **ABBREVIATIONS**

CPA	Community Property Association
DMR	Department of Mineral Resources
ECO	Environmental Control Officer
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EMP	Environmental Management Plan
EMPr	Environmental Management Programme
HIA	Heritage Impact Assessment
PHRA	Provincial Heritage Resources Authority
NHRA	National Heritage Resources Act
SAHRA	South African Heritage Resources Agency
SAHRA BGG	South African Heritage Resources Agency Burial Grounds and Graves



## **1. INTRODUCTION**

This Conservation Management Plan (CMP) has been prepared for a burial ground on Kitso Mine near Postmasburg in the Tsantsabane Local Municipality, Northern Cape Province

The burial ground became a subject of public interest when on 2 August 2017 an excavator inadvertently encroached into a portion of the burial ground which resulted in the exposure of human bones. It is not certain how many graves were affected, but the act offended public sensibilities about burial grounds as sacred places, which sparked protests by members of the Maremane community. The Maremane community are an important stakeholder with surface rights over the mining area through a Community Property Association. The demonstrations and picketing nearly turned violent, as at the time overtures by the mine officials for peaceful settlement were rejected by the community.

Meanwhile the mine took all the precautions recommended in dealing with Chance Finds Procedures:

- (i) Suspending operations in and around the portion of the burial ground which had been disturbed;
- (ii) Attempt to establish a conservation buffer zone around the affected area;
- (iii) Notification of the local South African Police Services at Dingleton;
- (iv) Notification of the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA).

Subsequently, on the same day, the South African Police Service (SAPS Dingleton) collected the exposed bones for safe keeping. The matter was also brought to the attention of the Department of Minerals Resources, which issued a directive to suspend all mining operations until the site was examined by an archaeologist. SAHRA recommended that the mine hire a heritage specialist with experience in burial grounds, human remains and emotional matters as they related to communities affiliated to the graves.

Negotiations between the mine and the executive committee of the Maremane CPA were protracted, as some members felt that criminal charges must be preferred

against the mine. Eventually the parties agreed that they should work together to defuse the standoff and to take the necessary measures to remediate the situation.

## 2. LOCATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The operations at Kitso Mine are centred on a north-south trending manganese rich ridge extending from Kathu in the north through Glosam to Postmasburg in the south. Manganese ore extraction commenced in the 1930 with hiatus from the 1950s to the 1980s when demand slumped. The mine re-established again in the 1990s responding to rising demand from China.

The burial ground is situated on the north-western limits of the mining area below the ridge that hosts the manganese ore. A northern portion of the burial ground is under a thick cover of grass which impairs visibility, while black thorn bushes (*Swarthaak - Acacia mellifera subsp. Detinens*) constraints access in a southern portion of the burial ground.



Figure 1: Google Earth map shows the location Kitso Mine south of Kathu along the R325 Rd



Figure 2: Photograph of the graves taken on 19 April 2018



Figure 3: Inscriptions in Setswana on a headstone

## **2.1. Why is a Conservation Management Plan necessary?**

Conservation Management Plans are necessary for the protection and sustainable management of heritage resources. They are intended to be manuals for the handling of such resources and are aligned with the heritage protection law and regulations. Management Plans contribute significantly in lowering the risk of uncertainty inherently present in ad hoc decision making and reactive interventions.

Generically, a Conservation Management Plan, also referred to as a Heritage Management Plan (HMP) is prepared with the following aims:

- (i) Develop and implement a sound management system based on the respect of best international practices in the conservation of cultural heritage sites,
- (ii) Set out priorities for sustainable conservation and development of heritage resources,
- (iii) Encourage research to shed more light on the history of the resources as well as well as the best means of preserving them,
- (iv) Create local and national awareness, and building an understanding of the conservation planning process among stakeholders,
- (v) Encourage partnership initiatives and collaboration with key stakeholders such as local communities, government departments and research institutions and
- (vi) Develop educational, cultural and visitation programmes that will create an appreciation among the public for the value of the heritage resources, thereby reinforcing protection measures.

## **2.2. Heritage and Conservation**

This CMP takes a conservation approach. Conservation is a broad concept which encompasses all the process of looking after a place (such as graves and burial grounds) so as to retain its cultural significance. Conservation embraces many treatment processes such maintenance, preservation, restoration, reconstruction, repair and adaptation, presentation and interpretation. Broadly it also includes ceremonies, public programmes, financing and many other activities associated with the management of heritage sites.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Illustrated Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance (2004). Articles 1.4 – 1.9, Article 14.

### **3. LEGAL CONTEXT AND MANAGEMENT CONTEXT**

#### **3.1. The National Heritage Resources Act (No 25 of 1999)**

Section 36 of the NHRA provides for the protection of certain graves and burial grounds. Graves are generally classified under the following categories:

- (i) Graves younger than 60 years;
- (ii) Graves older than 60 years, but younger than 100 years;
- (iii) Graves older than 100 years;
- (iv) Graves of victims of conflict;
- (v) Graves of individuals of royal descent; and
- (vi) Graves that have been specified as important by the Ministers of Arts and Culture.

This HMP is mindful of public sensibilities about the sanctity of graves and burial grounds whether they are protected by the law or not.

Under Section 47(3) of the National Heritage Resources Act (No 25/1999) a Conservation Management Plans are prescribed under circumstances which requires such discretion to be applied.

#### **3.2. The National Environmental Management Act (No 107 of 1998)**

Section 2(2) of the National Environmental Management Act (No 107/ 1998) states principles of sustainable environmental management as they relate to the welfare of communities regarding their physical, psychological, developmental, cultural and social interests.

#### **3.3. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (No 108 /1996)**

Section 31 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act (No 108 /1996) provides guarantees for the rights of cultural, religious and linguistic communities.

#### **3.4. The Burra Charter on Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance**

Generic principles and standards for the protection of heritage resources in South Africa are drawn from international charters and conventions. In particular South Africa has adopted the **ICOMOS Australia Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance (the Burra Charter 1999)** as a benchmark for best practice in heritage management.



### **3.5. The Vermillion Accord on Human Remains**

Adopted in 1989 at WAC Inter-Congress, South Dakota, USA, the Vermillion Accord is an international code of ethics on the handling of human remains and therein are 6 principles:

1. Respect for the mortal remains of the dead shall be accorded to all, irrespective of origin, race, religion, nationality, custom and tradition.
2. Respect for the wishes of the dead concerning disposition shall be accorded whenever possible, reasonable and lawful, when they are known or can be reasonably inferred.
3. Respect for the wishes of the local community and of relatives or guardians of the dead shall be accorded whenever possible, reasonable and lawful.
4. Respect for the scientific research value of skeletal, mummified and other human remains (including fossil hominids) shall be accorded when such value is demonstrated to exist.
5. Agreement on the disposition of fossil, skeletal, mummified and other remains shall be reached by negotiation on the basis of mutual respect for the legitimate concerns of communities for the proper disposition of their ancestors, as well as the legitimate concerns of science and education.
6. The express recognition that the concerns of various ethnic groups, as well as those of science are legitimate and to be respected, will permit acceptable agreements to be reached and honoured.

## **4. APPROACH TO CMP PLANNING AND METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1. Situational analysis**

A number of heritage specialist studies have been undertaken at Kitso Mine and the immediate locality as part of heritage impact assessments for the mining activities ongoing. In an HIA study dated 2008 Peter Beaumont reported the burial ground and noted that the mine would have no impact on the burial ground provided that protective measures are taken to secure it. He recommended that the entire burial ground must be fenced off. He recommended that an existing fence on the north side of the graveyard be extended to its other sides to enclose the graveyard, and access control be applied.

Following the accidental machine excavations on a north-eastern portion of the burial ground in 2017, archaeologist Nelius Kruger of Exigo Sustainability was contracted by the Mine to carry out an assessment in mitigation of the impact of the excavations. One of the key tasks was to determine the boundaries of the burial ground, which entailed a walkthrough. Kruger conceded that it was difficult to determine with any degree of certainty the limits of the burial ground, although in his view it was likely that the footprint of the graveyard was within the following coordinates defining a perimeter around the burial ground (page 16):

Position	Latitude	Longitude
South-western corner	S28.03872°	E23.02951°
South-eastern corner	S28.03955°	E23.03133°
North-western corner	S28.03793°	E23.02979°
North-eastern corner	S28.03833°	E23.03196°

Kruger went on to recommend mitigation measures which he called Site Management Actions. These have been further examined and they are considered together with the key issues in this CMP.

#### **4.2. Understanding Public Sensibilities about Graves and Human Remains**

While there has always been a commitment by developers to act within the prescripts of the law, communities have expressed regret, even anger that local customs are sometimes disrespected and taboos crossed. On the other hand the issue of graves can be a fertile ground for opportunistic claims for compensation for alleged cultural offenses. To date regulating institutions have not been able to establish the social and cultural parameters within which such demands can be negotiated and resolved. In spite of this, in South Africa and worldwide there has been mounting advocacy to respect local traditions on the treatment of human remains. All South African cultural communities in their diversity cherish the sanctity of graves and burial grounds, and the protection of human burials is upheld as a human right. Dead people are sacred.

In principle and in practice Kitso Mine has been empathetically engaging with the Maremane Community concerning the graves located in the Mine Lease Area. People's spiritual attachment to graves is rooted in a belief system which cuts across

many cultures. Living relatives and descendants may be emotionally and religiously connected with graves and obliged to visit them in supplication. This CMP is a formal way of acknowledging these feelings of attachment and the ongoing constructive engagement between Kitso Mine and the local communities in matters pertaining to the graves.

#### **4.3. Conservation principle**

Conservation is a broad concept which encompasses all the processes of looking after a place so as to retain its cultural significance. The process of conservation includes maintenance, preservation, restoration, reconstruction, repair, adaptation, presentation and interpretation. Ceremonies, public programmes, financing and many other things associated with keeping a place are part of meaning of conservation. This CMP is a conservation plan for the burial ground at Kisto Mine within which a routine maintenance programme for the burial grounds will be implemented. The following key issues are prioritised:

- (i) Reburying the exposed human remains;
- (ii) Rehabilitation of the excavated ditches by backfilling;
- (iii) Constructing and maintaining perimeter fence for the burial ground;
- (iv) Put in place regular maintenance programme for the burial grounds; vegetation control programme particularly during the rainy season;
- (v) Erecting a Memorial Plaque at each of the burial ground.

#### **4.4. Memorialisation**

Where graves have been destroyed or are missing the erection of a memorial monument has been found to be effective as a form of restoration or compensatory remedy. Memorials take many physical forms. In this case a granite plaque with a brief history of the burial ground can be considered.

#### **4.5. Burial Grounds and Human Rights**

In seeking the protection of graves and respect for the dead, host communities are asserting basic human rights. Kitso Mine has in turn demonstrated its commitment to uphold those human rights. What are Human Rights? Human Rights are basic rights and freedoms that belong to every person in the world and must be enjoyed for a lifetime, i.e. from birth to death. Human rights are a generally accepted value



system encompassing things such as human dignity, fairness, equality, respect and independence. The idea of human rights has its roots in many doctrines including religious books such as the Bible. Britain for instance passed landmark human rights doctrines such as the Magna Carta (1215), the Habeas Corpus Act (1679) and the Bill of Rights (1689). The Second World War (1939-1949) brought the subject of human rights into sharp focus as public opinion reacted to the mass executions perpetrated by the Nazis. The United Nations formed in 1945 just when the war ended completed the final draft of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which came into force in 1948. This was the first attempt to set global standards for the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms shared by all human beings.

Cognisant of the diversity of cultures and religion in the country, the Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities (CRL) was established in terms of Section 181(1)(c) of the Constitution of South Africa. It is a board to which communities appeal in cases of infringement of group rights.

#### **4.6. Negotiation and Conflict Resolution**

The key issues and action programme in the CMP arise from a negotiated settlement between Kitso Mine and Maremane community, in particular relating to the treatment of graves and burial grounds. Negotiation is a specialized and formal version of conflict resolution most frequently employed when important issues must be agreed upon. It is "a process of combining conflicting positions into a common position under a decision rule of unanimity, a phenomenon in which the outcome is determined by the process". The aim of negotiating is to build a shared environment leading to long-term trust and may involve a third, neutral party to extract the issues from emotions and keep the parties concerned focused. A broker is also critical in correcting the power asymmetry between a stronger and weaker party that often causes most negotiation processes to founder. In the case of the Mine and host communities both parties have acted rationally to close gaps of potential conflict, making trade-offs between conflicting values and to prioritize clear goals. In the end trust has been cultivated, and the outcomes spelt out in the resolutions and recommendation in this CMP are shared and binding. The CMP is a broad statement

of principle advocating peaceful resolution of disagreements and disputes that may arise especially regarding the management of graves.

#### **4.7. Cleansing Ceremonies / Ritual Cleansing**

Meaning and practice of mortuary ceremonies vary depending on religious and cultural backgrounds. The need for cleansing ceremonies was recognised and accepted by Kitso Mine. It is predicated on the belief that the violated or disturbed spirits bode ill for those who did it and those (family members or next of kin) if they did not act or seek atonement. Cleansing is thus good for both the wellbeing of Kitso Mine as well as that of the Maremane Community. Cleansing is a practice rooted in African cultures, but which also resonates with Christian belief.

#### **4.8. Consultation with Stakeholders**

Stakeholders form the human context within which the CMP will operate, and therein are the social and political dynamics underpinning the success or failure of a project. A stakeholder analysis is a management tool to understand the magnitudes of influence of different stakeholders and in particular to identify key stakeholders. Key stakeholders have levers to determine whether a project is a success or not. These people, groups of individuals or institutions can make or break the project, and Kitso Mine must ensure that they support the project. There has been a concerted effort by Kitso Mine to find a common approach with Maremane community on the management of the burial ground.

### **5. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT**

The burial ground may hold more than 400 individual graves. Prospecting for manganese on the ridges between Kathu and Postmasburg started in 1922, although mining only commenced in the 1930s in response to rising demand for the mineral used in the strengthening of steel. Manganese is often used as a deoxidizing and desulfurizing agent and as an alloying constituent to improve rolling and forging qualities as well as the strength, and wear resistance of steels.

Little is known about the mining activities beyond what was published by Hocking in 1983. The manganese ore deposits were mined by a company, SA Manganese, until

it was closed in the 1950s. The mine employed a labour force of which according to records 600 succumbed to a mystery fever in the 1930s, which was later diagnosed as relapsing fever. There is an apparent connection between the epidemic and the many graves. This presents a puzzle about the grave of Mrs Salima with a date of 1944 which was inscribed in wet cement, and her race stated in the inscription as Shangani. A plausible explanation is that Mrs Salima continued to stay in the area after the death of her husband in the 1930s and decided to be buried beside him.



Figure 5: Cement headstone of the grave of Mrs Salima dated 1944 and designation of “race” as Shangani

The mine was closed as demand slumped. From the 1990s there has been a resurgence of demand for Manganese with China emerging as the world’s largest producer of steel and accounting for a lion’s share of the consumption market. About 80% of the world’s manganese reserve is found in South Africa (Gajigo, Mutambatsere & Adjei 2011, p7) which makes manganese a critical mineral.

### **5.1. Precolonial communities**

The area between Kathu and Postmasburg falls within the historical land of the Tswana, specifically the Tlaro and Tlhaping. The historical footprint of the Tlhaping stretches from Kuruman to the Vaal and Orange River valleys, while the Tlaro occupy the region of Kuruman, Kathu and Olifantshoek. The interface between the Later Iron Age with the Tswana is a grey area in terms of the existing state of research. For now we can postulate that they are descendant from LIA farming communities from the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium AD.

### **5.2. Beginning of the historical period**

In the prelude to colonial occupation the Ghaap Plateau was traversed by European explorers described variously as travellers, hunters and missionaries (Truter and Somerville (1801), Lichtenstein (1805), Cowan & Donovan (1808), Campbell 1822, Burchell 1811, Smith 1834- 1836, Moffat 1829 and Harris 1852), whose writings provide insight into the history of the pre-colonial communities.

## **6. STATEMENT OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (OR VALUE) OF THE HERITAGE**

The purpose of the CMP is to put in place measures to conserve the burial ground. What is being conserved is not only the tangible elements of the burial ground but also its spiritual essence, the underpinning belief that the local community has a connection with the spirits of the deceased. A statement of cultural significance foregrounds associated values of the heritage, and justifies the allocation of resources (time, money, and personnel) for its conservation and management. Cultural value or significance underlines the imperative for conservation and by extension the relationship between the heritage, local communities and the broader public.

The burial ground at Kitso Mine must be protected in view of public sensitivities on the treatment of graves, burial grounds and human remains. The subject of graves, burial grounds and human remains is firmly situated in public heritage discourse in South Africa. The burial ground is significant as a large informal burial ground of the colonial period holding hundreds of graves. It is a silent archive with records of a mine labour force which succumbed to an epidemic. As such it is an important

epitaph for those who perished in the line of service for the early development of modern mining. This is an important heritage site considering that there is little that is acknowledged in public documents about this episode.

## 7. KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND CONTACT DETAILS

Stakeholder engagement is a critical process to integrate social concerns to environmental and cultural planning. The CMP should be a product of an inclusive and transparent stakeholder involvement process providing all relevant stakeholders (in particular local communities) an opportunity to contribute their opinions to the conservation management plan. Since 2017 several meetings have been convened between the Mine, representatives of the Maremmane community and other stakeholders including officials from DMR and SAHRA. On the SAHRA information database (SAHRIS) this matter has been allocated a Case ID No: 13152, repository for all information connected with this matter. Stakeholder consultation in a matter of this nature is a continuous process of engagement, and is at the present time ongoing. See Tables 1 & 2 for the list of institutional and individual stakeholders respectively.

Table 1. Institutional Stakeholders

	Organisation	Role
1	Maremane Community Property Association	Surface lease, sense of belonging to and ownership of the place
2	Dept. of Mineral Resources (DMR)	Government ministry, oversight
3	South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA)	Regulation
4	SAHRA Burial Grounds & Graves Unit	Regulation
5	Tsantsabane Local Municipality	Administrative
	South African Police Service	Law enforcement
6	Kitso Mine	Corporate, developer

Table 2: Individual stakeholders

Person	Position	Affected	Interested	Authority	Developer	Contact Details
Michael Kgotlaekae	Chairman Maremane Community Property Association	x	x			Cell: 082 061 1182
Paulus Mphafi	Secretary, Maremane Community Property Association	x	x			<a href="mailto:pmpahfi@saymail.co.za">pmpahfi@saymail.co.za</a>
Simon Moitaletsi	Maremane Community Property Association	x	x			<a href="mailto:Neo.moitaletsi@webmail.co.za">Neo.moitaletsi@webmail.co.za</a>
Boniface Masiane	Maremane Community Property Association	x	x			<a href="mailto:Mdmasian@gmail.com">Mdmasian@gmail.com</a>
Asatha Masiane	Maremane Community Property Association	x	x			Cell: 073 569 7011
Julia Theo	Maremane Community Property Association	x	x			Cell: 067 319 0218
James Pule	Community Member	x	x			<a href="mailto:jamespule633@gmail.com">jamespule633@gmail.com</a>
Ms Bev Baker	Kitso Mine Executive				x	<a href="mailto:bevbaker@mnmine.com">bevbaker@mnmine.com</a>

Person	Position	Affected	Interested	Authority	Developer	Contact Details
Mr Lebohang Lesetedi	Kitso Mine Stakeholder Relations Manager				x	<a href="mailto:lesetedi@gmail.com">lesetedi@gmail.com</a>
Captain Oostruis	SAPS Station Commander, Dingleton			x		Cell: 087 630 1000
Sergeant Hikwane	SAPS, Dingleton			x		<a href="mailto:hikwane@gmail.com">hikwane@gmail.com</a>
Mimi Seetelo	SAHRA BGG			x		<a href="mailto:MSeetelo@sahra.org.za">MSeetelo@sahra.org.za</a>
Thinga Tshivase	SAHRA BGG			x		<a href="mailto:ttshivhase@sahra.org.za">ttshivhase@sahra.org.za</a>


## **8. CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLANNING KEY ISSUES**

This section contains an analysis of the key issues which must be addressed by the CMP. The key issues essentially translate into intended objectives of the CMP and in a project implementation table responsibility for implementation and delivery of results are clearly defined. At the present time it is not possible to specify timelines for the implementation of the CMP. This is a matter for decision by all key stakeholders after which the CMP can accordingly be updated.





Table 1: Conservation Management Key Issues

	Key Issue	Description	Lead parties	Stakeholders
1	Stakeholder consultation	Concerning the burial ground, stakeholder Engagement and Public Participation on matters concerning graves is an open process in which every citizen (anyone) has the right to express views which are duly considered in decision making. It is important to underline that stakeholder consultation and public participation is not a once-off event. From the commencement of the project, it is continuous until the project comes to an end. It is therefore imperative that all stakeholder continue with a constructive dialogue until they find closure on the matter on the disturbed graves.	Kitso Mine, Maremane CPA	SAHRA, DMR, SAPS, Maremane CPA
2	Re-interment of human remains exposed by the excavations	The human remains that were exposed including those which are in the custody of SAPS must be reburied at the site with dignity and in accordance with local cultural traditions and norms. The developer must pay the costs of rehabilitating the graves that were disturbed including costs attendant with the holding of traditional ritual rituals and procurement of funerary goods in accordance with local customs	Kitso Mine, Maremane CPA	SAHRA, DMR, SAPS, Maremane CPA
	Application to SAHRA BGG for the rehabilitation of the graves	An application was lodged with the SAHRA BGG Unit and a reburial permit had been withheld because a segment of the Maremane Community complained that they had not been consulted. Subsequently the matter was resolved and the petition withdrawn. In light of this SAHRA BGG must now be approached to issue a Reburial Permit.	Kitso Mine	


	Key Issue	Description	Lead parties	Stakeholders
2	Rehabilitation of the disturbed portion of the burial ground	The onus is placed on Kitso Mine to rehabilitate the trenches which were opened accidentally by backfilling them. A landscaping plan must be prepared which includes the reburial of the human bones which were unearthed and proposal on the type of grave markers which will be used.	Kitso Mine, Maremane CPA	SAHRA, DMR, SAPS, Maremane CPA
		<p>Backfilling and landscaping must be supervised by a qualified heritage expert and a report submitted to the heritage authority</p>  <p><i>A portion of burial ground with an excavated ditch which must be rehabilitated by backfilling</i></p>		

	Key Issue	Description	Lead parties	Stakeholders
3	Construction of a memorial plaque/epitaph	<p>A memorial monument must be constructed at the site. Its shape and the material used can be a subject of discussion and agreement by all key stakeholders. Such a monument may take the form of a plinth, obelisk or wall. Granite is commonly used in the construction of such structures. Inscriptions will include a brief history of the burials, their significance, and in a closing statement a commitment to protect the site.</p>  <p><i>SAHRA monument dedicated to the Regent Jongintaba Dalindyebo at Mqhekezweni, Eastern Cape</i></p>	Kitso Mine, Maremane CPA	SAHRA, DMR, SAPS, Maremane CPA


	Key Issue	Description	Lead parties	Stakeholders
4	Construction of a fence around the graveyard	Perimeter fencing is required. With the benefit of experience recyclable material such as a steel posts/panels, barbed wire strands and diamond steel mesh should not be used as they are likely to be removed for recycling.	Kitso Mine, Maremane CPA	SAHRA, DMR, SAPS, Maremane CPA
		<p>It is recommended that the mine uses soil discard from the opencast mining pits to construct a high pitch earth embankment around the burial ground. This is a low cost option, it has no negative impact on the environment. It is not likely to be vandalised. It will serve to warn trespassers that they are encroaching into the burial ground</p>  <p><i>An example of a low earth embankment near Vosloorus, Johannesburg</i></p>	Kitso Mine, Maremane CPA	SAHRA, DMR, SAPS

	Key Issue	Description	Lead parties	Stakeholders
		 <p><i>A linear topsoil stockpile at an Eskom construction site near Roossenekal, Limpopo, which can serve as an embankment</i></p>		
5	Delimit a servitude (buffer) for the burial ground	In view of uncertainty regarding the limits of the burial ground an archaeologist must be appointed to carry out a ground survey after which the placement of the perimeter earth embankment can be determined.	Kitso Mine	SAHRA, DMR, SAPS, Maremane CPA
6	Trimming grass and bushes	On the northern part of the burial ground untrimmed grass impairs visibility. On a southern portion hooked thorn bushes constrain access. The mine must put in place a maintenance programme - cutting the grass once during the rainy season, and again at the end of the rainy season; and clearing the thorn bushes.	Kitso Mine, Maremane CPA	SAHRA, DMR, SAPS

	Key Issue	Description	Lead parties	Stakeholders
		<p>Limited duration contracts for vegetation control can be awarded to local SMMEs using transparent criteria of appointment.</p>  <p><i>A photograph taken on 6 July 2021 shows grass cover on a northern portion of the burial ground</i></p>	Kitso Mine, Maremane CPA	DMR, SAPS, Maremane CPA

	Key Issue	Description	Lead parties	Stakeholders
		 <p><i>A photograph taken on 19 April 2018 shows stone cairns which mark the graves visible at the end of the rainy season after grass had been trimmed</i></p>		
7	Future development of the Mine	No further development will take place in the vicinity of any graves on the property	Kitso Mine, Maremane CPA	SAHRA, DMR, SAPS, Maremane CPA
		(i) A 20 m to 30 m buffer zone must be reserved on the eastern side of the burial ground where mine earthworks are close to the limits of the burial ground.		



	Key Issue	Description	Lead parties	Stakeholders
		<p>(ii) On the north side of the burial ground set along a rural access road the proposed earthwork barrier must be constructed alongside the road as there is no room for a buffer.</p> <p>(iii) On the west and south side of the burial ground the standard 100 m buffer must be reserved.</p>  <p><i>Google Earth Map shows the approximate limits of the burial ground, the proposed buffer in relation to the footprint of mine operations</i></p>		
8	Prepare a conservation Management Plan (CMP)	This document is a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) prepared in terms of Section 47(3) of the NHRA.	Kitso Mine, Maremane CPA	SAHRA, DMR, SAPS, Maremane CPA



	Key Issue	Description	Lead parties	Stakeholders
9	Closure Report	When the Management Plan goes into implementation phase a Close Out Report will be prepared and submitted to SAHRA BGG Unit and DMR	Kitso Mine, Maremane CPA	SAHRA, DMR, SAPS, Maremane CPA

## **9. REBURIAL PLAN: STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES**

1. The underpinning legislation for the treatment of human remains is Section 36 of the National Heritage Resources Act (No 25 / 1999), National Heritage Resources Act Regulations No R548 of 2000, and the Human Tissue Act (No 65 of 1983).
2. The human skeletal remains which were exposed at Kitso Mine must be reinterred with dignity in accordance with local traditions and cultural norms.
3. Human remains are handled in accordance with the wishes of the Maremane community, next of kin and descendants of the deceased. It is often the case that the wishes of affected families align with local customs and beliefs.
4. The Maremane Community will be given an opportunity to perform ceremonies in accordance with local beliefs systems and cultural norms.
5. The developer has an onus to provide material support for accompanying ritual performances.
6. Maremane Community will provide an inventory of funerary goods that may be required for the reburial in accordance with local customs.
7. An archaeologist will document the reburial process as required in terms of SAHRA regulations in order to prepare a Closeout Report.
8. It is important to ensure that key stakeholders are satisfied that the process has been conducted in accordance with the wishes of affected community and in accordance with local cultural norms.

## 6. MONITORING PROGRAMME

A Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Intervention (MELI) tool should be established for the CMP. MELI is described as follows:

**Monitoring** is the action of determining where implementation of the Action Plan stands. It is the ongoing, systematic collection of data to provide management and the main stakeholders with a good indication of the progress in terms of the Action Plan. **Evaluation** informs the manager and stakeholders of the degree of effectiveness in terms of outcomes and impacts of the activities. Evaluation must also assess unplanned outcomes and impacts for which established baseline values may not exist. **Learning** refers to continuous learning, and the insights gained from the results of the monitoring and evaluation. **Intervention** is the evidence-based action on the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning that must be taken to overcome obstacles or challenges faced during the implementation of the CMP.

A monitoring programme is a watching brief for threats anticipated to arise from the proposed activities. Monitoring is the responsibility of the Environmental Control (ECO) Officer appointed at the mine. SAHRA and DMR will undertake period inspection to make sure that conservation management plan implementation is on course.

## 7. GLOSSARY

**Archaeological material:** remains older than 100 years, resulting from human activities left as evidence of their presence, which are in the form of structure, artefacts, food remains and other traces such as rock paintings or engravings, burials, fireplaces etc.

**Artefact:** Any movable object that has been used modified or manufactured by humans.

**Catalogue:** An inventory or register of artefacts and / or sites.

**Conservation:** All the processes of looking after a site or place including maintenance, preservation, restoration, reconstruction and adaptation.

**Cultural Heritage Resources:** refers to physical cultural properties such as archaeological sites, palaeontological sites, historic and prehistoric places, buildings, structures and material remains, cultural sites such as places of rituals, burial sites or graves and their associated materials, geological or natural features of cultural importance or scientific significance. These include intangible resources such as religious practices, ritual ceremonies, oral histories, memories, indigenous knowledge.

**Cultural landscape:** a stretch of land that reflects “the combined works of nature and man” and demonstrates “the evolution of human society and settlement over time, under the influence of the physical constraints and / or opportunities presented by their natural environment and of successive social, economic and cultural forces, both internal and external”.<sup>2</sup>

**Cultural Resources Management (CRM):** the conservation of cultural heritage resources, management and sustainable utilization for present and future generations.

**Cultural Significance:** is the aesthetic, historical, scientific and social value for past, present and future generations.

**Early Iron Age:** refers to cultural remains dating to the first millennium AD associated with the introduction of metallurgy and agriculture.

**Early Stone Age:** a long and broad period of stone tool cultures with chronology ranging from around 3 million years ago up to the transition to the Middle Stone Age around 250 000 years ago.

**Excavation:** a method in which archaeological materials are extracted from the ground, which involves systematic recovery of archaeological remains and their context by removing soil and any other material covering them.

**Historic material:** means remains resulting from human activities, which are younger than 100 years and no longer in use; that include artefacts, human remains and artificial features and structures.

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<sup>2</sup> This definition is taken from current terminology as listed on the World Heritage Convention website, URL: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/culturallandscape/#1> accessed 17 March 2016.

**Historical:** means belonging to the past, but often specifically the more recent past, and often used to refer to the period beginning with the appearance of written texts.

**Intangible heritage:** something of cultural value that is not primarily expressed in material form e.g. rituals, knowledge systems, oral traditions or memories, transmitted between people and within communities.

**In situ material:** means material culture and surrounding deposits in their original location and context, for instance archaeological remains that have not been disturbed.

**Later Iron Age:** The period from the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium AD marked by the emergence of complex state society and long-distance trade contacts.

**Late Stone Age:** The period from  $\pm$  30 000 years ago up until the introduction of metals and farming technology around 2000 years ago, but overlapping with the Iron Age in many areas up until the historical period.

**Middle Stone Age:** a period of stone tool cultures with complex chronologies marked by a shift towards lighter, more mobile toolkit, following the Early Stone Age and preceding the Late Stone Age; the transition from the Early Stone Age was a long process rather than a specific event, and the Middle Stone Age is considered to have begun around 250 000 years ago, seeing the emergence of anatomically modern humans from about 150 000 years ago, and lasting until around 30 000 years ago.

**Monuments:** architectural works, buildings, sites, sculpture, elements, structures, inscriptions or cave dwellings of an archaeological nature, which are outstanding from the point of view of history, art and science.

**Place:** means site, area, building or other work, group of buildings or other works, together with pertinent contents, surroundings and historical and archaeological deposits.

**Preservation:** means the protecting and maintaining of the fabric of a place in its existing state and retarding deterioration or change, and may include stabilization where necessary.

**Rock Art:** various patterned practices of placing markings on rock surfaces, ranging in Southern Africa from engravings to finger paintings to brush-painted imagery.

**Sherds:** ceramic fragments.

**Significance grading:** Grading of sites or artefacts according to their historical, cultural or scientific value.

**Site:** a spatial cluster of artefacts, structures, organic and environmental remains, as residues of past human activity.

**Site Recording Template:** a standard document format for site recording.

## 8. REFERENCES

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