



REPORT ON TEST EXCAVATIONS OF TWO GRAVES POSSIBLE GRAVES

Ivanhoe Mines: Platreef Project

FARM Turfspruit 241 KR, Mokopane, Limpopo

**TEST EXCAVATION OF TWO ALLEGED GRAVES WITHIN THE BOX CUT,
POINTED OUT BY COMMUNITY MEMBERS DURING THE SOCIAL CONSULTATION PROCESS**

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SAHRA PERMIT NUMBER: 2104; Case ID: 8319

Declaration of Independence

The report has been compiled by PGS Heritage, appointed Heritage Specialist for Ivanhoe Mines. The views stipulated in this report are purely objective and no other interests are displayed during the decision making processes discussed in this document.

HERITAGE CONSULTANT: PGS Heritage

REPORT COMPILED BY: Stephany van der Walt and Marko Hutten

CONTACT PERSON: Stephany van der Walt
Tel: +27 (0) 12 332 5305
Cell: +27 (0) 83 573 1722
Email: stephany@pgsheritage.co.za

SIGNATURE:



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT

CLIENT: Ivanhoe Mines

CONTACT PERSON:
Werner Botha
Tel: +27 (0) 15 491 0655
Cell: +27 (0) 82 411 1656
Email: wernerb@ivanplats.com

SIGNATURE:

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TEST EXCAVATION OF TWO ALLEGED GRAVES WITHIN THE PLATREEF PROJECT, BOX CUT AREA ON THE FARM TURFSPRUIT 241 KR, MOKOPANE, LIMPOPO

This report is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of:

- ❑ The South African Heritage Resources Agency, Permit No. 2104 (CaseID: 8314), issued under Section 36(3) of the National Heritage Resources Act, Act no. 25 of 1999 to Coen Nienaber.
- ❑ The agreement between *PGS Heritage* and *Ivanhoe Mines* for services rendered for the management and relocation of graves located within the Platreef project area.

PGS Heritage was contracted by *Ivanhoe Mines* to investigate by means of an archaeological excavation two (2) possible graves, which were situated within the Box Cut on the Farm *Turfspruit 241 KR*. The graves were pointed out by concerned community members during a SARHA site inspection on 26 June and 10 May 2015. If the existence of the graves were verified, the two graves would potentially be included in the scope of social consultation and eventual relocation.

This report documents the findings of the test excavations conducted on Friday 23 October 2015. It was concluded that no evidence of either skeletal remains or a burial pit was present in both locations of IVN_PGS_22_03 and _04.

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1 INTRODUCTION

PGS Heritage was contracted by *Ivanhoe Mines* to investigate existence of possible graves that were identified within the box cut of the Platreef Project. A comprehensive social consultation process which began in March 2014 is currently in the process of concluding with the full identification of all graves accounted for with the Platreef project area.

As part of the social consultation process, on the 26 June eight (8) exact locations were pointed out within the box cut by the grandson of concerned family, accompanied by Aubrey Lange and members of KOPANO. This was the first knowledge of the existence of these graves. As there were no indications on the surface of the exact location of the alleged graves, it became a matter of hearsay as to whether the graves truly existed.

A GPR survey was carried out on the 4 July of these eight (8) locations. Further investigation was required of two (2) of these locations where anomalies consistent with graves were observed. Ground trothing or test excavations were required in these two areas in order to comprehensively conclude the existence or non-existence of graves. This report documents these test excavation activities of these two locations which subsequently, revealed the non-existence of graves or burial pits.

2 LOCATION

The mining area is located approximately 13km northwest of Mokopane along the N11. The main project area is on the farm Turfspruit 241 KR (Figure 1, 2, 3), where the area was fenced in February this year. Within the project area there is a box cut where the first shaft is currently being sunk. The box cut was walled in late 2013.



Figure 1: Platreef bulk sample area (focused area of activity in the centre), within the project area.



Figure 2: Platreef box cut or bulk sample area with the IVN22 graves 1-8 indicated.



Figure 3: IVN_PGS_22 Test Excavation activities with in the north western corner of the box cut

3 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

A heritage impact assessment of the project area conducted by Digby Wells and was submitted to SAHRA in October 2013. Further, a focussed survey of the bulk sample area was conducted in October 2013.

4 SOCIAL CONSULTATION BACKGROUND

The grave identification process on the Platreef project began in March 2014. The local community were invited to site to identify their graves and the Platreef community Liaison officers recorded their information. In some cases, where possible, the families were visited personally to register the graves their family had within the project area. From this process 181 graves were registered of which 60 fell within the fenced project area. The families of these 60 graves were continually met with during the first half of 2015 as part of a focused social consultation process. Coupled with this, the Chief of the wider Mokopane region, the local headmen of the four affect villages as well as the graveyard committees were all met with and included in the focused social consultation process. a sequence of the social consultation process can be found in the social consultation summary report heading of the motivation.

While this process was on going, continual objection was received by members of KOPANO in particular a Mr Aubrey Langa. Mr Aubrey Langa is not related to any of the deceased buried on the project but has

partnered with several of the affected families in order to derail the grave relocation process. Platreef has continued to meet with the affected families and accommodate their requests. The social consolation process is nearing a conclusion and all parties involved are satisfied with the outcome apart from members of Kopano.

As part of an objection to the process Mr Aubrey Langa contacted SAHRA and laid a complaint that certain graves were being damaged by mining activities within the Platreef project area. The following sequence of events then transpired.

26 May 2015 – First site visit from SAHRA by Ms Masiteng. An extensive inspection was carried out on foot to all graves Kopano were insisted were being damaged. No graves were seen to be directly / physically affected by any mining activity and no damage was noted. A report was to be prepared by SAHRA in response to this visit. On this particular visit, one (1) location inside the wall was pointed out by members of Kopano (22_03), where one grave was said to be located. This was the first this that Platreef was made aware of this location.

10 June 2015 – Second site visit from SAHRA by Mrs Machete who also invited a DMR delegate. After a boardroom meeting, a further 7 locations within the wall were pointed out by members of Kopano (22_01 through to 22_08). These sites had not been identified in the previous inspection with SAHRA 2 weeks earlier or at any time over the 18 months Platreef social liaison officers had been working in the community. Mrs Machete requested that PGS conduct GPR survey of the 8 sites within the wall to verify the existence of graves.

A similar exercise to that which was conducted with Mr Masiteng was then followed outside the wall. The same graves that Kopano has previously pointed out to SAHRA were visited on foot.

4 July 2015 – GPR survey was conducted inside the wall as requested by SAHRA. Platreef complied and contracted a focused GPR survey to be conducted on the graves pointed out at the second SAHRA inspection on 10 June.

5 July 2015 - Mr Nienaber was requested by Kopano to survey additional sites outside the wall. After some confrontation was received from Kopano, Mr Nienaber vacated the site and returned to Pretoria.

13 July 2015 – A draft report was submitted to Ivanplats on the findings of both GPR surveys. The alleged graves sites within the all were of most importance. In conclusion of the eight (8) sites

within the wall two (2) displayed anomalies consistent with that of graves. Therefore, test excavations of these two (2) sites (22_3 and 22_4) are necessary to verify the graves.

23 October 2015 – Test Excavations of the sites 22_3 and 22_4 were carried out. Due to previous confrontation with Kopano it was suggested that should SAHRA insist members of the community be present, that SAHRA would be present to host the community members.

5 LEGAL COMPLIANCE

As there was a chance of discovering a grave it was deemed necessary to obtain a test excavation permit prior to excavating in this area. An exaction permit was granted through the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999). South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA). Permit No 2104 (CaseID: 8314) was issued in this regard.

6 METHODOLOGY

On 23 October 2015 the PGS team including Marko Hutten, Stephany van der Walt, Thomas Mulaudzi and Edward Khorombi conducted the test excavations under the supervision of the mine safety staff. The methods employed during the test excavation are aimed to remove enough top soil until a clear display of the soil stratigraphy is understood. To begin, with each case, the surface was cleared of all debris and photographed. All observations regarding construction, materials and characteristics of the surface features were documented. A 1.5m square grid was set in the centre of the area concerned. The top soil was then carefully removed in layers of 30cm at a time between observations. A burial pit would be demarcated by ascertaining differences in the soil matrix. This would include a change in soil colour and or texture due to prior disturbance if a pit or other alteration in the stratigraphy occurred. It is this very change in the matrix, a change in soil density, that the GPR measures and records as an anomaly. Layers of 30cm were continually removed until sterile soil was reached at a satisfactory depth below the top soil. Both test trenches were 1.5m square and were dug to a depth of 0.5m.

With other scenarios, after the indication of the presence of the burial pit is documented, the in-fill is excavated to expose the human remains and associated cultural materials. It was decided prior to the test excavations, should a burial pit be discovered, that further excavations would cease and the full social consultations would continue with the affected family in order to obtain all the necessary permits.

7 FINDINGS

IVN_PGS_22_3

GPS Coordinates: -24.082068°, 28.960487°

This site was of particular interest as it was the first possible grave location to be pointed out by the community members on 26 May 2015. It was then pointed out for a second time by the same individual (the grandson of the relatives of the alleged deceased).

The site was barricaded with danger tape to prevent any disturbance to the area, which was removed on arrival by PGS (Figure 4). The TLB was then supervised while carefully removing the top soil from the site (Figure 5). By removing the top soil, no changes in the soil matrix were noted that indicated the presence of a burial pit. Further, a test trench of 1.5m square was excavated within an area where the soil seemed less compacted. After systematically removing 30cm of the soil in the test trench it was concluded that no evidence of a grave was present (Figure 6).



Figure 4: IVN_PGS_22_03 with the barricade partially removed on arrival before excavation work began



Figure 5: PGS staff supervising the TLB during the removal of the over burden and top soil.



Figure 6: IVN_PGS_22_03 Test trench revealing no evidence of a burial pit

IVN_PGS_22_4

GPS Coordinates: -24.081210°, 28.960339°

This site was pointed out by the grandson only during the second visit when an additional 7 sites were pointed out inside the box cut, walled area on 10 June 2015. The area had barricaded with danger tape since the initial identification until 23 October 2015 (Figure 7). A test trench of 1.5m square was excavated. By removing the top soil, no changes in the soil matrix were noted that indicated the presence of a burial pit. After systematically removing 30cm of the soil in the test trench it was concluded that no evidence of a grave was present (Figure 8).



Figure 7: IVN_PGS_22_04 with the barricade partially removed on arrival before excavation work began



Figure 8: IVN_PGS_22_04 Test trench revealing no evidence of a burial pit

8 CONCLUSION

This report documents the findings of the test excavations conducted on Friday 23 October 2015. It was concluded that no evidence of either skeletal remains or a burial pit was present in both locations of IVN_PGS_22_03 and _04.

Platreef test excavation

Our Ref: 8314

Enquiries: Itumeleng Masiteng
Tel: 012 9414967
Email: imasiteng@sahra.org.za
CaseID: 8314

Date: Monday September 21, 2015
Page No: 1

PermitID: 2104



an agency of the
Department of Arts and Culture

PERMIT: Test Excavation

In terms of Section 36(3) of the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999)

Permit Holder: Mr Marko Hutten
Hutten Heritage Consultants
P.O. Box 4209
Louis Trichardt
0920

Site: Ivanplats - Platreef Resources (Ivanplats - Platreef Resources)

Conditions: From a previous GPR survey two of the 8 sites that were scanned presented anomalies that were consistent with the characteristics of a grave. It has been advised that prior to continuing any further construction or mitigation measures that the two sites are confirmed as grave of not graves. The method used to accomplish this will be to remove the top soil and verify whether and change in the soil matrix can be seen to confirm the existence of graves.

1. If the permit holder is not to be present on the site at all times then the heritage authority must be provided with the names and qualifications of the authorised representatives.
2. Adequate recording methods as specified in the Regulations and Guidelines pertaining to the National Heritage Resources Act must be employed. Note that the position of all excavations and objects collected must be marked on a plan of site.
3. A standard site record form must be lodged on SAHRIS.
4. Human remains must at all times be handled with respect and graves should not be disturbed except where unavoidable. The consultation procedures as indicated in the Regulations and the National Heritage Resources Act must be observed as appropriate. The recommendations for removal of graves and exhumations and for re-burial stipulated in SAHRA's Policy 'What to do when graves are uncovered', section 3, must be observed as far as possible. A report on the specimens recovered and their origin must be submitted to the heritage authority annually on or before 30 September 2016 for the duration of the permit.
5. All remains recovered, including relics and artefacts, must be kept with the skeletal material *in situ* not to be exhumed or tampered with.
6. Reprints of all published papers or copies of theses and/or reports resulting from this work must be lodged with the relevant provincial heritage authority and SAHRA.
7. If a published report has not appeared within three years of the lapsing of this permit, the report required in terms of the permit will be made available to researchers on request.
8. It is the responsibility of the permit holder to obtain permission from the landowner for each visit, and conditions of access imposed by the landowner must be observed.
9. It is the responsibility of the permit holder to fill in excavations and protect sites during and after excavation to the satisfaction of the heritage authority and the landowner.
10. The heritage authority shall not be liable for any losses, damages or injuries to persons or properties as a result of any activities in connection with this permit.



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>

Platreef test excavation

Our Ref: 8314

Enquiries: Itumeleng Masiteng
Tel: 012 9414967
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11. The heritage authority reserves the right to cancel this permit by notice to the permit holder.

This permit is valid from **21/09/2015 to 21/09/2016**.

Itumeleng Masiteng
Heritage Officer: BBG Permitting
South African Heritage Resources Agency

Mimi Seetelo
Manager: Burial Grounds & Graves Unit
South African Heritage Resources Agency

Additional Info:

Please note that this permit may be suspended should an appeal against the decisions be received by SAHRA within 14 days from the date of the permit. SAHRA may not be held responsible for any costs or losses incurred in the event of the suspension or retraction of this permit.



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