

City of Greater Bendigo: Marong Heritage Study Mining Sites

KING OF PRUSSIA MINE

Other Names

Location Parcel No. P127987, State Forest, west side of Whipstick Road and opposite the Lightning Hill shaft, Hustler's Reef, Eaglehawk

Map Reference Campaspe 2.3 1:10,000 - BV547.347

Victorian Heritage Register No

National Estate Register No

Planning Scheme No



Description Intact mullock heap with two dumping lines. On the east side of the heap, close to the road, is a filled shaft. 16 metres south west of the shaft is a rectangular stone structure measuring 32 by 22 feet. The stone walls are largely buried, with the stone set in mud mortar.

History Period of activity: 1871-1885
Line of reef: King of Prussia/Lightning Hill
Maximum recorded annual production: 934ozs obtained from 2200 tons by tributers in 1879
Total production: 1329ozs obtained from 2847 tons
Deepest working level: 150 feet
Deepest shaft: 240 feet (below water level)

Thematic Context Mining

Comparative Examples The site is one of a number of representative medium-level low-production mine sites in the study area, namely: Lightning Hill (1852-1907), Old Tom Reef (1857-1898), Black Forest (1858-1907), Frühling Reef (1860-1931) and Lancashire Reef (1890-1908).

Statement of Significance The site is representative of a sequence of uses or functions over time: open cutting and shaft mining and is part of a group or network of sites, the totality of which is considered to be significant (criterion D). This is a well-preserved mining site which has the ability to answer timely and specific archaeological research questions, because of the possibility of buried remains (criterion C).

Level of Significance Regional

Recommendation The site should be protected by inclusion in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay Table in the City of Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme, by registration with the Victorian Heritage Council, in accordance with the general principles of the conservation policy for mining sites, and should be included as a significant sub-area in the proposed Lightning Hill Mining Heritage Area.

Heritage Boundaries The Lightning Hill Mining Heritage Area is bounded on the south by Hodgson Street, on the east by the Raywood Channel as far as the junction between Whipstick Road and Rifle Range Road, on the north-west by a line 150 metres west of Whipstick Road (between Rifle Range Road and Mill Street and excluding all private property) and on the west by a line joining a point at the

junction of Whipstick Road and the western access track to Lightning Hill and a point at the junction of Hodgson Street and the southern access street to Lightning Hill.

- References**
1. "Mining intelligence. The recently discovered rich lode on Lightning Hill, near Eaglehawk." The Bendigo Advertiser, Saturday, 12 February 1876, p3, cols.2/3.
 2. "King of Prussia Company." The Bendigo Advertiser, Monday, 26 June 1876, p3, col.5.
 3. "King of Prussia Company." The Bendigo Advertiser, Monday, 14 August 1876, p3, col.4.
 4. Reports of the Mining Surveyors and Mining Registrars, Sandhurst mining district, Sandhurst division.
 5. "Mining intelligence." The Bendigo Advertiser, Friday, 3 November 1876.
 6. "Mining intelligence. Lightning Hill." The Bendigo Advertiser, Friday, 8 June 1877, p3, col.3.
 7. "Mining intelligence. Review of the share market for the week." The Bendigo Advertiser, Monday, 11 June 1877, p2, col.5.
 8. "Mining intelligence. The Lightning Hill claims." The Bendigo Advertiser, Wednesday, 8 August 1877, p3, col.5.
 9. "Mining intelligence. North King of Prussia." The Bendigo Advertiser, Saturday, 2 November 1878, p3, col.3.
 10. "Mining intelligence." The Bendigo Advertiser, Monday, 2 June 1879, p3, col.4.
 11. "Mining meetings. King of Prussia." The Bendigo Advertiser, Monday, 26 July 1879, p6, col.3.
 12. "North King of Prussia Company." The Bendigo Advertiser, Monday, 26 July 1879, p6, col.3.
 13. Perry, "Tales of the Whipstick: a history of the Whipstick, Neilborough, Sebastian, Raywood and Myers Creek gold rushes, Victoria." Eaglehawk, Perry, 1975.
 14. Department of Mining and Industrial Development Records - Files.
 15. R. A. F. Murray, "Report on survey of extension of quartz reefs northwards from Eaglehawk, Sandhurst." Progress Report No.7, Geological Survey of Victoria, 1884, 4-8.
 16. "Mining intelligence. King of Prussia Company." The Bendigo Advertiser, Monday, 19 July 1880, p3, col.4.
 17. "Mining intelligence. North King of Prussia Company." The Bendigo Advertiser, Monday, 7 March 1881, p3, col.5.
 18. "Mining intelligence. North King of Prussia Company." The Bendigo Advertiser, Monday, 21 March 1881, p3, col.3.
 19. "Mining intelligence. King of Prussia Company." The Bendigo Advertiser, Monday, 28 March 1881, p3, cols.3/4.
 20. "North King of Prussia Company." The Bendigo Advertiser, Monday, 13 June 1881, p3, col.5.
 21. "Mining intelligence. King of Prussia Company." The Bendigo Advertiser, Monday, 29 August 1881, p3, col.4.
 22. "Mining intelligence. Imperial King of Prussia Company." The Bendigo Advertiser, Monday, 29 August 1881, p3, col.4.
 23. "Mining intelligence. North King of Prussia Company." The Bendigo Advertiser, Monday, 5 September 1881, p3, col.5.
 24. "Mining intelligence. Imperial King of Prussia Company." The Bendigo Advertiser, Monday, 10 October 1881, p3, col.5.
 25. "Mining intelligence. Imperial King of Prussia Company." The Bendigo Advertiser, Tuesday, 13 December 1881, p3, col.3.
 26. "Mining intelligence. King of Prussia Company." The Bendigo Advertiser, Monday, 13 March 1882, p3, col.3.
 27. "Mining intelligence." The Bendigo Advertiser, Monday, 21 May 1883, p3, col.3.

Notes The ground was originally worked by three companies: the King of Prussia (1871-1883), the Imperial King of Prussia ((1881-1883) and the Rose/North King

of Prussia (1878-1881). The last company was not particularly successful. In 1883 the first two merged as the New King of Prussia (1883-1885) and this was amalgamated with other companies working the northern slope of Lightning Hill to form the general Gordon (1885-1896).

Assessed by David Bannear in February 1992 and reviewed by Peter Milner in June 1998.

Chronology 12.02.1876□The King of Prussia Company's ground, which is comprised of a ... has been prospected at various periods without much success. A party of tributers, however, have been tributing with that company to work at 10 per cent for a period, at the termination of which ... 20 loads were tested in the usual manner, and they gave so ... than 12ozs of retorted gold; this parcel of stone was taken from the 110 foot level, and it cannot be denied that a very fine sample of gold was produced, several pieces weighing from 1 to 1½ozs of pure gold, each respectively, and the 15ozs of amalgam gave 12ozs of gold, so that the coarse and heavy character can be easily judged. Several other claims are in following further north, but on account of the northern dip of this rich lode, they have not as yet met with any signal success in cutting the continuation of the above run of rich stone. So far then there is nothing whatever in this case to warrant the assumption of this gold being a "patch" only, for already some 500 feet in length of it have been proved rich in gold, and the facilities for raising the stone are also an extremely favourable character. [1]

□26.06.1876□King of Prussia - 16 tons of stone were cleaned up today for a yield of 16ozs of amalgam, it is intended in another week to keep a battery going from this level; and from the quantity of stone, and the good prospects of gold obtained, fair yields are anticipated. [2]

14.08.1876□King of Prussia - Owing to the large quantities of stone being now crushed at the machines in the district, we are unable to procure a battery at any of them, in consequence of which a battery had to be taken at Koch's machine, Long Gully. This was caused through the stoppage of the Eagle machine. [3]

09.1876□King of Prussia, Lightning Reef: 241ozs 16dwt obtained from 356 tons of stone at 150 feet in a reef 6 feet wide. [4.29-30]

□03.11.1876□The King of Prussia Tribute Company are principally working at the 110 and 170 foot levels; they are now getting out a crushing from the higher level, which they expect will give over an ounce per ton, and their mine is a most valuable mining property, when it is taken into consideration that the stone is fully 15 feet wide, and that they have over 500 feet of backs to rise on. The gold is coarse generally, and pretty evenly distributed through the quartz, though the best of it occurs west of the back. At the next lower level (170 feet), however, it appears that they have a strong lode of an extraordinarily rich character, some of the stone broken during this and last week being estimated to go as high as 10ozs per ton. An empty powder keg was filled with specimens last week, and 30ozs of gold were said to be the value of its contents. The deeper stone (Belvidere?), it is satisfactory to note, is very regular in its mode of occurrence, and is fully 8 feet wide; they are now driving north on it at the water level, and when it is fully opened up the yields will doubtless increase very considerably. These tributers have already crushed over 2000 tons of stone from their mine for very satisfactory profits after paying all working expenses. There are a number of claims and leases taken up north, none of which are, however, at work, which is a surprising circumstance, for which such prospects there should be very little trouble to obtain the means for sinking, and also for the purchase of steam machinery if such were required, whilst there are good indications for the location of untried stone. [5]

□08.06.1877□Other claims on the line are busily at work, and for some time past the King of Prussia Company has been getting payable stone. Lightning Hill has merely been touched on the surface, and untold wealth, without doubt, lies in its dep interior. [6]

□11.06.1877□An entirely new line, or, at least, one that has stood in a very shady back ground, has come to the front - Lightning Hill Reef, Eaglehawk. For a number of years prospecting has been carried on, but only small patches of payable quartz obtained. For some time the King of Prussia Company have

been crushing for an average of half an ounce to the ton, ... [7]

06.1877 □ King of Prussia, Lightning Reef: 131ozs 16dwt 12 grains obtained from 249 tons of stone at 150 feet in a reef 3 to 8 feet wide. [4.28-30]

□ 08.08.1877 □ The King of Prussia Company comes next, and is the last one on the line getting gold. It is let on tribute to Herbert and party. The shaft is down 1709 feet, being the deepest on the line, and is now at the water level. They crushed from the stone (coming off the same back as in Pascoe's claim) between their 170 and 140 foot levels a quantity of quartz which yielded an average of 12dwt to the load, and are at present stoping at the 140 foot level, 150 feet north of the shaft, from which last week's return was 11ozs 6dwt from 22 loads. They are starting a new shaft on the south-east boundary of the claim to pick up Pascoe's run at a higher level. The percentage from these tributers enabled the King of Prussia Company to declare a small dividend a short time ago, and they have a creditable balance on hand now. The Rose Company is the last on the line, but up to the present time they have not succeeded in striking the run, but are prospecting vigorously. [8]

□ 02.11.1878 □ North King of Prussia - A meeting of the shareholders of the Rose Company was held on Thursday evening. ... called for the purpose of considering the advisability of registering the company under the Limited Liability Act. ... It was unanimously agreed to name the company the North King of Prussia Company. ... The company's ground is situated immediately north of the King of Prussia Company's ground,, and stands in almost the same position as to the run of stone as the above company. They have a shaft down to water level, and intend to commence sinking as soon as the King of Prussia Company drain the ground. Their shaft is in an excellent position and has stone in the bottom. ... [9]

□ 02.06.1879 □ A large body of stone has been struck in the King of Prussia's claim at the 240 foot level which is believed to be a continuation of the run now being worked in Pascoe and Simmonds' claim. Should this prove to be the case a bright future is in store, and will be the means of inducing other claims further north to push on with their work. [10]

□ 26.07.1879 □ King of Prussia - The half-yearly meeting of this company was held ... on the 17th instant ...

Directors' report - At the date of our last report we had just finished the plat at the 240 foot level. The eastern wall was cut at 32 feet from the shaft, but, not finding any stone there we opened levels north and south on the west side of the slate, 22 feet west of the wall. The south level has been extended 100 feet and the north level 70 feet. One winze 40 feet south of the main shaft has been sunk from the old water level to the lower level, another has also been sunk 100 feet south of the main shaft through to the bottom level. In these winzes permanent shoots have been erected and tramway laid, all ready to work the stone above the 240 foot level. A main crosscut has also been put through to the west a distance of 96 feet. At 44 feet from the shaft a slide was cut on which lay a large quantity of stone, but on trying about 20 tons of it it did not pay. It is now evident that the top of the stone worked by the tributers against the eastern wall from which they crushed 2200 tons for a yield of 934ozs 10dwt of gold has gone underfoot at the 170 foot level, and although we have sunk two winzes through it with but poor results, we are of opinion that this block of ground should be worked. As a proof of this opinion two men were put on last week in No.2 winze to drive north on the stone, and nearly every day they see gold in the stone being broken. We also strongly recommend that the 200 foot level be continued north of the slide against the last wall, where every foot of driving will bring us more into the gold-bearing line of stone. We are also of opinion that a crosscut should be put in at the bottom of the whip shaft west, to cut the western run of stone on the slide, which was previously worked by the company at the 110 foot level, where the stone is about 8 feet thick, and from which 350 tons were crushed for a yield of 61ozs 11dwt 12 grains of gold.

Mining manager's report - I was appointed to take charge of your mine on the 8th of May last. Since then the west crosscut has been driven 90 feet. At 40 feet a reef was cut, showing gold. Two trial lots were taken from this reef; which were not payable. The ground driven through from the shaft to the reef is

sandstone, with large spurs running through it, dipping west. After cutting the reef the ground driven through is all slate. The crosscut is stopped for the present. I recommend that it be continued as soon as funds will allow, as there is a western reef. A level has been driven north 70 feet - all slate ground, full of small spurs. No payable gold has been met with in this level, and it has been discontinued for the present. The south level has been driven 112 feet without meeting any stone. This level is also stopped at present. At the 170 foot level, 30 feet south of the shaft, a winze was sunk to the 240 foot level; a large body of stone was gone through. Trial crushings were taken, but were not payable. A second winze, 100 feet south of shaft was sunk down to the 240 foot level. The stone followed the eastern back down 25 feet, when it goes off to the west. So long as the stone keeps close on the back it carries good gold, but when it leaves the back it becomes very poor. In driving north at this level the last two shifts have seen gold frequently in breaking the stone. There is also a level being driven north at the 170 foot plat. The tributers' old level has just been broken into, showing a good face of stone. There have been 410 feet of main levels and crosscuts driven during the six months and 140 feet of winzes sunk. In the whip shaft trial crushings were taken from the 110 and 170 foot levels, which only yielded one and 2dwt to the ton. At the 80 foot level a crosscut was put in from the shaft 42 feet, when the tributers' old workings were broken into, which was full of mullock. No stone was cut in this crosscut. ... [11]

North King of Prussia - The half-yearly meeting of the above company was held ... on 22nd July. ...

Directors' report - Since the date of our appointment as directors we have repaired the shaft down to the 170 foot level; had the ladders all removed from the west side of the shaft and put in on the east side, which is much more convenient. We also divide the shaft with sawn timber, and fixed the ladders with stages down to the 100 foot level. From this level we carried the ladders down the winze to the lower level, which is now a safe and permanent travelling way. In May last we called for tenders to sink the shaft a further depth of 60 feet, which we anticipate will carry us within 10 feet of the water level in the King of Prussia mine. At our last fortnightly meeting the contractors had finished 42 feet 6 inches, making the shaft 215 feet 6 inches, and when finished the depth will be 233 feet, where we would recommend a plat to be cut on the east of the shaft, and then drive for the eastern wall. We expect the contractors will finish the sinking and timbering to the required depth during the week. [12]

□ 1879 □ Whipstick. By 1879, much profitable work had already been accomplished on the quartz reefs of the Bendigo goldfield. Several lines of reef had been prospected or worked for some miles but after tracing them from Bendigo to the northern boundary of the Eaglehawk Borough, little effort had been made to locate them further. Beyond this point, several reefs disappeared beneath the dense bush and scrub of the Whipstick. Except for the occasional exposure on hilltop or gully, little trace of them was visible. In 1879, Reginald A F Murray, a geologist with the Victorian Department of mines was engaged to trace two lines of reef, the Garden Gully and Lightning Hill for a distance of three miles northwards into the Whipstick, from the Eaglehawk boundary. The Eaglehawk Borough Council supplied the labour for clearing along these lines. Much quartz mining had already been done on the Lightning Hill Reef, particularly on Lightning Hill itself. On the Garden Gully line the Robin Hood Company had, with little success, been engaged with mining operations for some years. Although this mine was actually on the Garden Gully line, the locality was known as the Moon Reef .. [Murray's survey] ... disclosed that the two reefs, although three quarters of a mile apart, were practically parallel. ... A number of companies worked on the Lightning Reef over the ... years with mostly disappointing results. The Lightning Reef Gold Mining Company was formed in 1864, working on a claim which had previously yielded from 4 to 7ozs. to the ton. ... Other early companies on this reef were the King of Prussia, the Excelsior and Rifle Companies, none of them particularly successful. The best claim on Lightning Hill was that of Pascoe and Simmonds who in the late 1870's and 80's worked a big reef of 20 to 30 feet wide from the surface to 220 feet. They crushed 12,000 loads for 11,000ozs. of gold. After Pascoe and Simmonds

had abandoned their lease, their extensive system of tunnels in the hillside became a rendezvous for several generations of Eaglehawk boys.[13.214-227] Reef shown marked in Murray's map of the northwards extension of the quartz reefs at Eaglehawk. [15]

19.07.1880□King of Prussia - Work was resumed in the main shaft last Monday. Everything was got in readiness for sinking on Thursday, when the contractors started with 6 men. The ground is very favourable, and the contractors are sanguine of doing well out of the contract. The machinery and everything is in splendid working order. [16]

07.03.1881□North King of Prussia - work in the mine has been resumed. We are now putting the shaft in repair and tenders will be called for and opened out to sink the main shaft on the 15th instant. [17]

21.03.1881□North King of Prussia - the directors at their last meeting decided not to accept any of the tenders sent in, and agreed to commence with 4 men to sink the shaft. They started on Tuesday last to sink and timber the shaft 100 feet deeper. [18]

28.03.1881□King of Prussia - during the past fortnight, the western crosscut has been extended 16 feet, total from shaft 116 feet. At 108 feet, we came on a large stone in the roof of the drive, which had every appearance of being the western reef, but, on driving, it proved to be about 2 feet in the roof and going west, broke up in rubbly spurs, which are still going west, and, in the face now, there are some spurs coming on, which would lead to the belief that there must be more stone west, the western lava has not yet been reached; we have now the safety hooks at work, and boiler erected; machinery and everything is in good working order. [19]

13.06.1881□North King of Prussia - the lower crosscut has been extended 18 feet, total 24 feet; chiefly through slate ground and small veins of quartz. The winze has also been sunk 17 feet, total 29 feet; we now expect in a few feet to cut the runs of stone coming away from the back. [20]

29.08.1881□King of Prussia - The rise above 240 foot level has been put up 15 feet; now coming into stone, but no gold had been seen yet. Work has been stopped in the mine for a few days to make a few repairs and clean out the boiler. No satisfactory arrangement has been made about drainage yet, and work in all probability will be stopped in the lower levels. [21]

Imperial King of Prussia - A contract has been let to cut down and retimber the shaft below the 150 foot plat. This portion of the shaft is to be divided into 3 compartments, 2 for hauling purposes and one for a ladderway. [22]

□05.09.1881□North King of Prussia - The western crosscut has been extended during the past fortnight 19 feet, total 35 feet; ground very good. This company has agreed to pay drainage to the King of Prussia Company for sinking. [23]

□10.10.1881□Imperial King of Prussia - The contractors for cutting down and retimbering the shaft have cut down 26 feet and timbered 18 feet. This portion of the shaft is 8 feet by 4 feet within the timbers and divided into 3 compartments. [24]

□13.12.1881□The first half-yearly meeting of the Imperial King of Prussia Company was held last evening. [25]

□13.03.1882□King of Prussia - All work has been suspended for a few weeks to give time to collect calls, when preparations will be made to sink main shaft. [26]

21.05.1883□An extraordinary meeting of shareholders in the King of Prussia Company was held ... on Friday, the 16th instant, for the purpose of winding up the company. ... The proposal to amalgamate with the Imperial King of Prussia was agreed to, shares to be allotted as follows: King of Prussia Company, 16,000; Imperial King of Prussia Company, 8000. ... A meeting of shareholders in the two companies was held immediately afterwards, and a new company formed, the name of the new company to be called the New King of Prussia Company. ... Preparations will be made to go to work as soon as the new company is registered, as the machinery is all in good order. With the exception of erecting a new exhaust tank very little time will be lost in getting out the water. [27]