

KING RIVER MINE

SITE INTERPRETATION - 13 - 14 OCTOBER 1994

Access to the King River Gold Mine is provided by a kilometre long foot track which joins Lynchford Road at a point approximately 5 kilometres south of Queenstown.

The easy-grade track leads directly to the mine battery, sheltering under light timber about 50 metres south of Lynch Creek. The site reveals an extensive area of scattered components of a 10 head stamper. The trench which housed a large waterwheel, is also evident close by. An extensive water race which serviced the waterwheel can be traced back to its source on Guilfoyle Creek about ½ kilometre to the east. Unexplainably, the waterwheel was located 300 metres to the east and alongside the southern bank of Lynch Creek.

It is important to mention at this point, that the access track to the mine, is a portion of the original pack track which joined Lynchford with Gormanston and the North Lyell workings during the earliest years of mining. The old track can be easily traced from the battery site for a distance alongside Lynch Creek. At the other end, the track can be seen arriving at the top of Gormanston Hill after climbing the northern slopes of Mt Owen.

The main workings are located immediately beyond the battery, with the first trench (open cut) approached, heading in a south easterly direction. The open cut had been sluiced to a width varying between 5 metres at the bottom, to about 20 metres at the head of the gully. The sides of the excavation are prominently punctuated with outcrops of white quartz. The area is free of undergrowth although sheltered from direct sunlight by an overhead canopy of trees.

Branching off to the south, a shallow alluvial gully leads to a spectacular line of open stopes. The stopes run for a distance of 150 metres, averaging 5 metres in width and up to 10 metres deep in places. Known as the Main Cut, it contains a 15 metre long pophole tunnel at the southern end. Vertical sides are maintained throughout its length.

Above the Main Cut and within 10 metres of its eastern flank are 2 shafts and 2 adits. The southern adit is probably the most imposing being 50 metres in length and the easiest to access.

Overall, I believe the whole area warrants a detailed investigation. Apart from the battery site, the remaining area presents a fine example of early alluvial mining.

With the probability of future mining (excluding battery site), it may be advisable to return the waterwheel and other battery components which have been scattered around the area, back to the original site in order to protect its integrity.



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