

NATURA VIVA cc
Palaeontological Impact Assessments & Heritage Management,
Natural History Education, Tourism, Research

Attn: Ms Belinda Huddy
EOH Coastal & Environmental Services
The Point, Suite 408, 4th Floor
76 Regent Road
Sea Point
Cape Town, RSA

Date: 10 August 2016

PALAEONTOLOGICAL HERITAGE COMMENT:

**AMENDED LAYOUT FOR THE PROPOSED 140 MW BRANDVALLEY WIND ENERGY
FACILITY NEAR MATJIESFONTEIN, NORTHERN AND WESTERN CAPE
PROVINCES, SOUTH AFRICA**

Dear Ms Huddy,

I have reviewed the proposed amended layout for the Brandvalley WEF near Matjiesfontein, Western and Northern Cape in the context of my earlier palaeontological assessment report for this development (Almond 2016). I note in particular that the new layout – as outlined in Figure 1 below - has reduced the total development footprint by 34% by eliminating an additional 10 turbines (over and above original turbine nos. 38 and 40) and by reducing road width from 12 m to 9 m. The proposed revisions will undoubtedly reduce the anticipated negative impacts on local fossil heritage resources and are therefore welcome from a palaeontological heritage conservation viewpoint.

The conclusions made in my original report concerning the impact significance of the Brandvalley WEF and the recommended mitigation for this development still stand, *viz*:

- The overall impact significance of the construction phase of the proposed wind energy project is assessed as LOW (negative) in terms of palaeontological heritage resources.
- There are no preferences on palaeontological heritage grounds for any particular layout among the various options under consideration (This includes various location options for the on-site substation).
- There are no fatal flaws in the Brandvalley WEF development proposal as far as fossil heritage is concerned. Providing that the recommendations for palaeontological monitoring and mitigation outlined below are followed through, there are no objections on palaeontological heritage grounds to authorisation of the Brandvalley WEF project.
- The Environmental Control Officer (ECO) responsible for the WEF development should be

made aware of the potential occurrence of scientifically-important fossil remains within the development footprint. During the construction phase all major clearance operations (*e.g.* for new access roads, turbine placements) and deeper (> 1 m) excavations should be monitored for fossil remains on an on-going basis by the ECO. Should substantial fossil remains - such as vertebrate bones and teeth, or petrified logs of fossil wood - be encountered at surface or exposed during construction, the ECO should safeguard these, preferably *in situ*. They should then alert the relevant provincial heritage management authority as soon as possible - *i.e.* Heritage Western Cape for the Western Cape (Contact details: Protea Assurance Building, Green Market Square, Cape Town 8000. Private Bag X9067, Cape Town 8001. Tel: 086-142 142. Fax: 021-483 9842. Email: hwc@pgwc.gov.za) and SAHRA for the Northern Cape (Contact details: Dr Ragna Redelstorff. Heritage Officer Archaeology, Palaeontology & Meteorites Unit, SAHRA. 111 Harrington Street, Cape Town, 8001. Tel: +27 (0)21 202 8651. Fax: +27 (0)21 202 4509. E-mail: rredelstorff@sahra.org.za). This is to ensure that appropriate action (*i.e.* recording, sampling or collection of fossils, recording of relevant geological data) can be taken by a professional palaeontologist at the developer's expense.

Yours sincerely,



Dr John E. Almond
Palaeontologist
Natura Viva cc

REFERENCES

ALMOND, J.E. 2016. Proposed Brandvalley Wind Energy Facility near Laingsburg, Western & Northern Cape Provinces. Palaeontological heritage assessment: combined desktop & field-based study, 69 pp. *Natura Viva cc*, Cape Town.

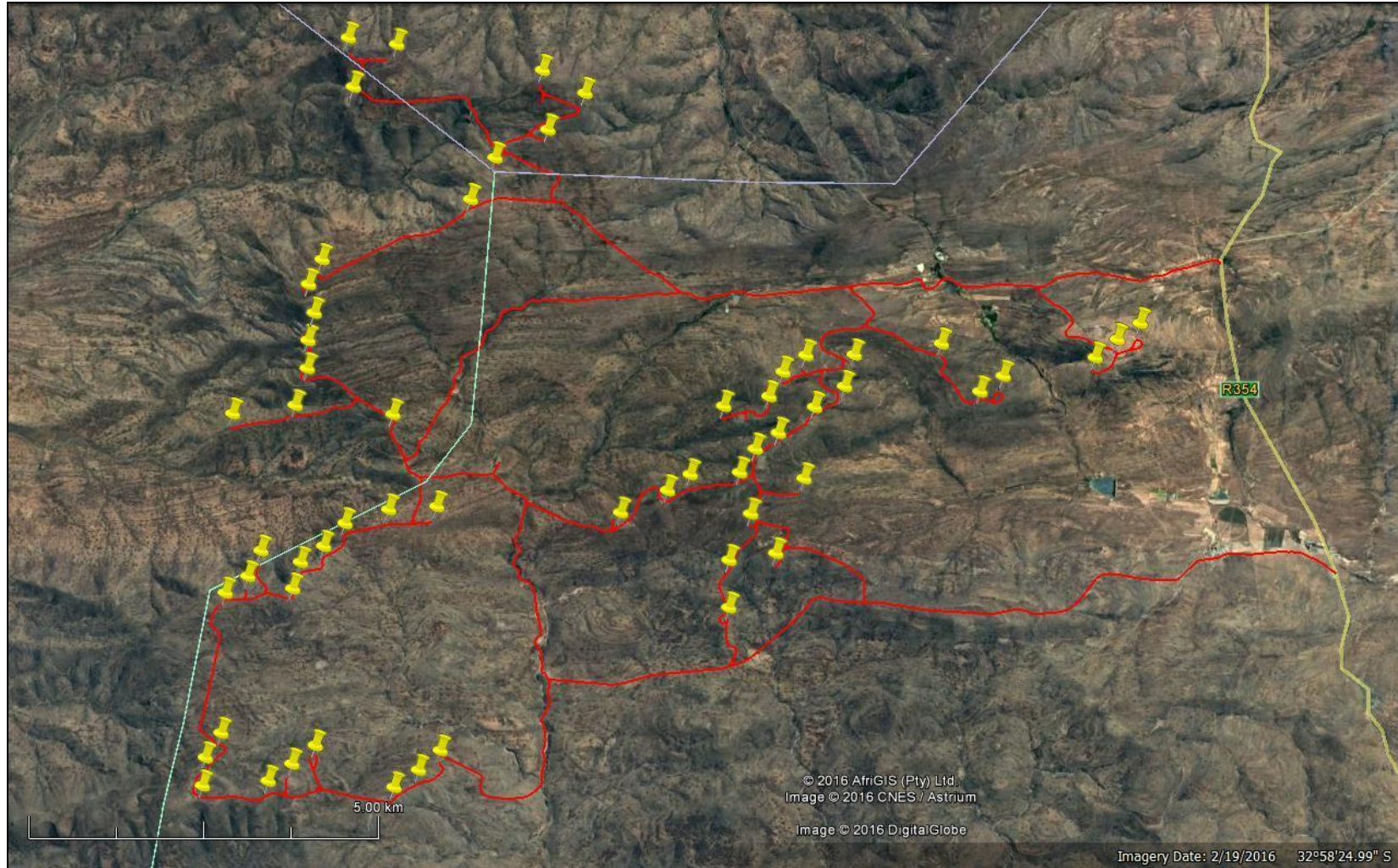


Figure 1: Google earth© satellite image of the proposed amended layout for the Brandvalley WEF near Sutherland showing revised wind turbine locations (yellow symbols) and access roads (red lines).

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