



an agency of the
Department of Arts and Culture

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South African Heritage Resources Agency | 111 Harrington Street | Cape Town
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www.sahra.org.za

Enquiries: Natasha Higgitt

Tel:

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CaseID: 19343

Date: Tuesday September 20, 2022

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Final Comment

In terms of Section 38(4), 38(8) of the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999)

Attention: Mapulana Canyon (Pty) Ltd

Mapulana Canyon (Pty) Ltd, in partnership with the Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency (MTPA) via a Public Private Partnership Agreement intends to develop a new state of the art tourist facility at God's Window. The development will include (but is not limited to) a skywalk, a sky bridge, restaurants and dining areas, an auditorium, administrative offices and the upgrading of existing walkways. The project is proposed at God's Window on the Remainder of the farm De Houtbosch 503 KT and Portion 2 of the Farm Lisbon 531 KT. This is in the Thaba Chweu Local Municipality in the Ehlanzeni District Municipality of the Mpumalanga Province.

Zutari (Pty) Ltd has been appointed by Mapulana Canyon (Pty) Ltd to conduct an Environmental Authorisation (EA) Application for the proposed God's Window Skywalk Project at the God's Window tourist facility, near Graskop, Mpumalanga Province.

A draft Basic Assessment Report (DBAR) has been submitted in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (NEMA) and the 2017 NEMA Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations. The proposed development will include a visitors centre that will contain a restaurant, dining area, cafes and cocktail bars, a museum area, reception lobbies, courtyards and foyers, an auditorium and conference facilities, lecture rooms, formalised craft market, ablution facilities, and administrative offices; skywalk viewing area, a skybridge, possible zero gravity room, stormwater attenuation pond, on-site Waste Water Package Plant, formalised parking area and upgrading of existing pathways.

A previous SAHRIS application assessed the proposed development in 2015 (SAHRIS Case ID 7111 <https://sahris.sahra.org.za/cases/skywalk-project-god%E2%80%99s-window>). In a Final Comment issued on the 23/03/2015, SAHRA noted no objections to the development and provided some conditions for the development.

Prof Marion Bamford and Adansonia Heritage Consultants were appointed to provide heritage specialist input into the EA process as required in terms of section 38(8) of the National Heritage Resources Act, Act 25 of 1999 (NHRA) and section 24(4)b(iii) of NEMA.



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Bamford, M. 2022. Palaeontological Impact Assessment for the proposed God's Window Skywalk, Blyde River, Mpumalanga Province

The proposed development area is underlain by the Lower and Upper Wolkberg Group quartzites, sandstones and minor shales that do not contain fossils, however there is small chance that stromatolites may be present. A Fossil Chance Finds Protocol is recommended to be implemented.

Van Wyk Rowe, C. 2022. Specialist Report Phase 1 Archaeological / Heritage Impact Assessment for the God's Window Skywalk Project on Portion 2 Of The Farm Lisbon 531KT & the Farm De Houtbosch 503KT, Graskop, Mpumalanga Province.

No heritage resources were identified as part of the field assessment. A Chance Finds Procedure is recommended to be followed.

Final Comment

The following comments are made as a requirement in terms of section 3(4) of the NEMA Regulations and section 38(8) of the NHRA in the format provided in section 38(4) of the NHRA and must be included in the Final BAR and EMPr:

- 38(4)a – The SAHRA Archaeology, Palaeontology and Meteorites (APM) Unit has no objections to the proposed development;
- 38(4)b – The recommendations of the specialists are supported and must be adhered to. Further additional specific conditions are provided for the development as follows:
 - The conditions provided in the Final Comment issued on SAHRIS Case ID 7111 (<https://sahris.sahra.org.za/node/255467>) remain valid and must be adhered to;
 - A report of the final walk down (as per the conditions issued on 2015) after ground clearance must be submitted to SAHRA, as it was noted that the remaining areas of the development footprint were thickly forested during the latest field assessment;
- 38(4)c(i) – If any evidence of archaeological sites or remains (e.g. remnants of stone-made structures, indigenous ceramics, bones, stone artefacts, ostrich eggshell fragments, charcoal and ash concentrations), fossils or other categories of heritage resources are found during the proposed development, SAHRA APM Unit (Natasha Higgitt/Phillip Hine) must be alerted as per section 35(3) of the NHRA. Non-compliance with section of the NHRA is an offense in terms of section 51(1)e of the NHRA and item 5 of the Schedule;

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- 38(4)c(ii) – If unmarked human burials are uncovered, the SAHRA Burial Grounds and Graves (BGG) Unit (Thingahangwi Tshivhase/ Ngqalabutho Madida), must be alerted immediately as per section 36(6) of the NHRA. Non-compliance with section of the NHRA is an offense in terms of section 51(1)e of the NHRA and item 5 of the Schedule;
- 38(4)d – See section 51 of the NHRA regarding offences;
- 38(4)e – The following conditions apply with regards to the appointment of specialists:
- With reference to the mitigation work noted above, a qualified archaeologist must be appointed to undertake the work in terms of the permit applied for as noted above;
- If heritage resources are uncovered during the course of the development, a professional archaeologist or palaeontologist, depending on the nature of the finds, must be contracted as soon as possible to inspect the heritage resource. If the newly discovered heritage resources prove to be of archaeological or palaeontological significance, a Phase 2 rescue operation may be required subject to permits issued by SAHRA;
- The Final BAR and EMPr must be submitted to SAHRA for record purposes;
- The decision regarding the EA Application must be communicated to SAHRA and uploaded to the SAHRIS Case application.

Should you have any further queries, please contact the designated official using the case number quoted above in the case header.

Yours faithfully

Natasha Higgitt
Heritage Officer
South African Heritage Resources Agency

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Phillip Hine

Manager: Archaeology, Palaeontology and Meteorites Unit
South African Heritage Resources Agency

ADMIN:

Direct URL to case: <https://sahris.sahra.org.za/node/603838>
(DARDLEA, Ref: 1/3/1/16/1E-401)

Terms & Conditions:

1. This approval does not exonerate the applicant from obtaining local authority approval or any other necessary approval for proposed work.
2. If any heritage resources, including graves or human remains, are encountered they must be reported to SAHRA immediately.
3. SAHRA reserves the right to request additional information as required.