



Final Comment

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

Attention: Carli Steenkamp
Environamics
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2526

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) PROCESS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A 75MW PHOTOVOLTAIC SOLAR PLANT AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE ON THE SOUTHERN PORTION OF THE FARM WATERLOO 992, REGISTRATION DIVISION IN, SITUATED WITHIN THE NALEDI LOCAL MUNICIPALITY AREA OF JURISDICTION

Almond, J. A. January 2013. Palaeontological Heritage Assessment for the proposed PV Solar Facility on a portion of the Farm Waterloo 992 near Vryburg, Naledi Local Municipality, North West Province.

DPS79 Solar Energy (Pty) Ltd is proposing a 75MW PV Facility on Farm Waterloo 992 with a footprint of 150ha including supporting infrastructure. A Heritage Impact Assessment that excluded an assessment of palaeontological impacts was submitted to SAHRA in October 2012. SAHRA required that a Palaeontological Impact Assessment, inclusive of a site visit, should be compiled for the proposed project, with recommendations regarding the actions necessary to record or preserve the algal stromatolites identified in the field. The above assessment was submitted to provide the outstanding information.

According to the submitted palaeontological assessment, the study area is underlain by late archaean sedimentary and volcanic rocks of the Vryburg Formation as well as shallow marine carbonates and siliclastic sediments of the Boomplaas Formation. A stratotype section of the Vryberg Formation has been designated on Waterloo Farm because of the exceptional exposure of basal quartzitic and volcanic successions. The Vryburg Formation is unfossiliferous however stromatolites are known from this geological unit to the south.

Within the proposed development footprint, secondarily silicified stromatolite assemblages are known from the Boomplaas Formation. These range in preservation from poorly to well-preserved. The exposures could not be mapped during this process due to the high levels of gravelly soil and dense vegetation covering the exposures. These stromatolites represent some of the oldest examples of stromatolites in South Africa, however, these have yet to be described in detail and their distributions are poorly understood.

The likelihood of the proposed development impacting on significant palaeontological heritage is therefore high and mitigation is required to limit this impact.





Decision

SAHRA has no objection to the proposed development on heritage grounds provided that the following mitigation measures are implemented:

1. After vegetation clearing but before the ground is levelled for construction, the well-preserved fossil stromatolites within the footprint of the proposed development must be surveyed, recorded, described in detail and judiciously sampled by a professional palaeontologist. This action requires a permit for collection from SAHRA in terms of Section 35 of the NHRA (Act 25 of 1999). On receipt of a satisfactory mitigation (Phase 2) permit report from the archaeologist, SAHRA will make further recommendations in terms of the sites such as their final destruction or additional sampling.
2. The two stone tool concentrations identified in the Heritage Impact Assessment (October 2012) should be avoided by the development. In order to protect them, a temporary fence should be erected 10m from their perimeters prior to any construction or development taking place and these fenced off areas should be no-go areas. If this is not possible, mitigation will be necessary in the form of systematic sampling and collection of artefacts, which must be undertaken before trenching and any other earth-moving activity resulting from this proposed project begin. The distribution of artefacts to be collected must be shot in with the aid of a surveying instrument and a photographic record must be established immediately before, during and after mitigation. The archaeologist will require a mitigation permit from SAHRA in terms of Section 35 of the NHRA (Act 25 of 1999). On receipt of a satisfactory mitigation (Phase 2) permit report from the archaeologist, SAHRA will make further recommendations in terms of the sites such as their final destruction or additional sampling.

If any new evidence of archaeological sites or artefacts, graves or other heritage resources are found during development, construction or mining, SAHRA and a professional archaeologist must be alerted immediately.

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

Yours faithfully

Jenna Lavin
Heritage Officer
South African Heritage Resources Agency





Colette Scheermeyer
SAHRA Head Archaeologist
South African Heritage Resources Agency

ADMIN:

(DEA, Ref: 14/12/16/3/3/2/308)

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.

