



an agency of the
Department of Arts and Culture

T: +27 21 462 4502 | F: +27 21 462 4509 | E: info@sahra.org.za
South African Heritage Resources Agency | 111 Harrington Street | Cape Town
P.O. Box 4637 | Cape Town | 8001
www.sahra.org.za

Enquiries: Annlin Matabane
Tel: 0123204964
Email: amatabane@sahra.org.za
CaseID: 21743

Date: Friday July 28, 2023
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Interim Comment

In terms of Section 38(3), 38(8) of the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999)

Attention: Copper Solar Power Plant (RF) (Pty) Ltd

The activities entail the development of an up to 250MW photovoltaic solar facility and associated infrastructure, on on Portion 2, 3 and Remaining Extent Portion 1 of the farm Zwartdoorns No. 421, Limpopo Province situated within the Thabazimbi Local Municipality area of jurisdiction. The town of Northam is located approximately 2 km northwest of the proposed development (refer to the attached locality maps). The project entails the generation of up to 250MW electrical power through photovoltaic (PV) panels. The total footprint of the project will be approximately 739 hectares (including supporting infrastructure on site). The property on which the facility is to be constructed will be leased by Copper Solar Power Plant (RF) (Pty) Ltd from the property owner, for the lifespan of the project (minimum of 20 years).

Copper Solar Power Plant (RF) (Pty) Ltd intends to develop a 250 MW photovoltaic solar facility and associated infrastructure on the Remaining Extent of Portion 1 and Portion 5 of the Farm Zwartdoorns no. 421, situated within the Thabazimbi Local Municipality area of jurisdiction. The town of Northam is located approximately 2 km north of the proposed development (refer to Figure A and B for the locality and regional map). The total footprint of the project will approximately be 715 hectares (including supporting infrastructure on site).

A draft Scoping Report in support of an Environmental Authorisation (EA) application has been submitted in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (NEMA) and the 2017 NEMA Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations. The proposed project comprises cabling of the facility grid connection infrastructure. Associated infrastructure would include access roads, a substation comprising of electrical reticulation network, supporting infrastructure i.e. one sub-station, fencing, a battery energy storage system (BESS), roads, and offices.

Banzai Environmental (Pty) Ltd was appointed to provide heritage specialist input into the EA process as required by section 24(4)b(iii) of NEMA and section 38(8) of the National Heritage Resources Act, Act 25 of 1999 (NHRA).

Butler, E., 2023. A Palaeontological Desktop Assessment Copper solar Power Plant Near Northam, Limpopo

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Province.

The study area is underlain by the Nebo Granite of the (Lebowa Granite Suite, Bushveld Complex) and the Timeball Hill Formation (Pretoria Group, Transvaal Supergroup). The Palaeontological Significance of the proposed Copper SPP is rated as Low and the cumulative Impacts will thus also be Low-Negative after mitigation. The construction of the development may thus be permitted, and it consequently recommended that no further palaeontological heritage studies, ground truthing and/or specialist mitigation are required. A Chance Finds Protocol has been attached to be included into the EMPR and implemented during development.

Pelser, A. 2020. Report on a Phase: Heritage Assessment for the proposed Copper SPP Development on Various Farms & Farm Portions Near Northam, in the Waterberg in the Waterberg District Municipality Thamazimbi Local Municipality of the Limpopo Province.

A total of two heritage resources were identified within the proposed development area. These include a site consisting of two scatters of undecorated Iron Age pottery, and a recent historical cement/concrete water reservoir of low heritage significance.

Recommendations in the report include the following:

Chance Find Protocol be drafted and implemented for the development. This will ensure that, should any previously unknown and unrecorded sites, features and cultural material deposits be exposed during any development activities, that these could be investigated by a Heritage Specialist in order to provide recommendations on their significance and on the way forward in terms of possible mitigation measures.

Interim Comment

The SAHRA Development Applications Unit (DAU) notes the draft Scoping Report and the heritage studies along with the recommendations provided therein. The Draft Environmental Impact Assessment Report along with its appendices must be submitted to SAHRA before further comments can be issued.

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

Yours faithfully

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Annlin Matabane
Heritage Officer
South African Heritage Resources Agency

Natasha Higgitt
Manager: Development Applications Unit
South African Heritage Resources Agency

ADMIN:
Direct URL to case: <https://sahr.is.sahra.org.za/node/619624>