



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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CaseID: 10184

Date: Wednesday October 26, 2016
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Interim Comment

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

Attention: Ms Jasandra Nyker
BioTherm Energy
BioTherm Energy (Pty) Ltd
PO Box 69408
BRYANSTON
2021

BioTherm Energy (Pty) Ltd has proposed the development of three Wind Energy Projects within the Western Cape and a portion of the Northern Cape. The wind energy developments will have a capacity of up to 250 MW. This application is specific to the Maralla East Wind Energy Facility. The facility is located on Farm Welgemoed RE/268, Farm Schalkwykskraal RE/204, and Portion of Farm Drie Roode Heuvels RE/180. This project is located within the Northern and Western Cape Provinces.

WSP| Parsons Brinckerhoff was appointed by BioTherm Energy (Pty) Ltd to conduct an Environmental Impact Assessment Process for the proposed Maralla East Wind Energy Facility near Sutherland, Northern Cape Province and Western Cape Province. A Draft Scoping Report was completed in term of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (NEMA) and the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations 2014. The proposed development will comprise the construction of a 250MW wind energy facility of up to 125 turbines covering approximately 200 ha. Turbines will be up to 120 m high and the foundations will be 20 m in diameter by 3 m deep. Associated infrastructure will include turbine transformers, operations and maintenance building assessment site, construction camp, laydown area, cement batching plant, internal roads (60 km), fencing, sewage systems, on-site substation, underground cables, powerlines, access roads, administration, control and warehouse buildings. The powerlines will be assessed through a separate Basic Assessment Processes.

It must be noted that SAHRA can only provide comments on the portion of the proposed development located within the Northern Cape Province. Comments regarding the portion of the development located within the Western Cape must be sought from Heritage Western Cape (HWC).

ACO Associates cc: Archaeology and Heritage Specialists and Natura Viva cc were appointed to conduct the Heritage Scoping Assessments and Palaeontological Impact Assessment (PIA) for the project respectively.

Halkett, D and Webley, L. 2016. Maralla East WEF: Scoping Heritage Assessment: Proposed Construction of

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the Esizayo, Maralla West and Maralla East Wind Energy Facilities near Laingsburg in the Western and Northern Cape

The Scoping Report showed that archaeological resources such as Stone Age occurrences, dry stone kraals and structures, rock art sites, colonial historical buildings, and traces of the South Africa War and burial grounds may be present within the proposed project area. Potential impacts to archaeological resources that were identified include direct negative impacts during the construction phase of the proposed development. Recommendations for further study within the pending Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) include a field survey of the proposed study area including proposed routes of linear infrastructure. Visual impacts on heritage resources in the area must be integrated into the heritage study and the HIA should consider the cumulative impact of a number of solar facilities in the surrounding area.

Almond, J. 2016. Maralla Wind Energy Facility near Sutherland, Northern Cape and Western Cape: Palaeontological Heritage

The proposed project area is underlain by the Abrahamskraal Formation which is overlain by Late Caenozoic superficial deposits. A four day site visit was conducted where the fieldwork indicated that fossil material such as vascular plants, rare and fragmentary vertebrate remains and a small range of invertebrate and vertebrate fossils are present within the Abrahamskraal Formation. However, unique scientifically-important fossils are very scarce and no highly sensitive palaeontological no-go areas were identified within the proposed development footprint. The overall impact significance of the proposed project is rated as very low. Impacts on palaeontological heritage resources are probable but will only be moderately severe since (1) highly significant fossil sites are unlikely to be affected and (2) in many cases these impacts can be mitigated.

Mitigation of chance fossil finds reported by the Environmental Control Office (ECO) would involve the recording, sampling and/or recording of chance fossil finds and associated geological data by a professional palaeontologist during the construction phase of the development. The palaeontologist concerned with mitigation work would need a valid fossil collection permit from SAHRA and any material collected would have to be curated in an approved repository.

Interim Comment

SAHRA Archaeology, Palaeontology and Meteorites (APM) Unit accepts and promotes the recommendations of the Archaeological and Palaeontological Scoping Reports. The pending HIA must take the following aspects (but not limited to) into consideration when assessing impacts:

- Archaeological and Historical heritage resources;

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- Burial grounds and graves;
- The detailed Palaeontological Impact Assessment conducted by John Almond must be incorporated into the HIA;
- Visual Impact of the proposed development on heritage resources; and
- Any comments provided by the public regarding heritage resources.

The EIA with all appendices must be submitted along with the heritage reports in order for further comments to be issued.

Comments regarding the portion of the development located within the Western Cape must be sought from Heritage Western Cape (HWC).

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

John Gribble
Manager: Maritime and Underwater Cultural Heritage Unit / Acting Manager: Archaeology, Palaeontology and Meteorites Unit
South African Heritage Resources Agency

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ADMIN:

Direct URL to case: <http://www.sahra.org.za/node/373749>
(DEA, Ref:)