

The Improvement of the National Route N2 from Bloemendal (km 34) to Piet Retief (km 63.3)

Our Ref: 11498



an agency of the
Department of Arts and Culture

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CaseID: 11498

Date: Monday August 15, 2022

Page No: 1

Final Comment

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

Attention: SANRAL

Private Bag X 17
Lynnwood Ridge
0040

The Improvement of the National Route N2 from Bloemendal (km 34) to Piet Retief (km 63.3) and associated borrow pits and quarries, Gert Sibande District Municipality, Mopumalanga Province

SANRAL (SOC) Ltd is proposing to upgrade the existing National Route 2 section 33 between Bloemendal (km 34.0) and Piet Retief (km 63.3) in Msukaligwa Local Municipality of the Mpumalanga Province. They proposing to make the section into a divided 4 lane dual carriageway 62m wide. They will also be upgrading Assegai River bridge, construct 6 new bridges and 3 culverts.

Chameleon Environmental cc have been appointed to undertake an environmental assessment as part of the Basic Assessment process in support of an Environmental Authorisation (EA) in terms of the National Environment Management Act, Act 107 of 1998 (NEMA) for activities that trigger the NEMA EIA 2014 Regulations. The burrow pits were assessed in a separate environmental application.

A Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) by Palaeontological Impact Assessment (PIA) by Professor Marion Bamford was submitted to the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) for commenting in terms of section 38(8) of the National Heritage Resources Act, Act 25 of 1999 (NHRA).

Van Schalkwyk, J. May 2017. Cultural heritage impact assessment for THE PLANNED BORROW PITS AND QUARRIES FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE NATIONAL ROUTE N2, KM 34 (BLOEMENDAL) TO KM 63.3 (PIET RETIEF), GERT SIBANDE DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE.

The author undertook a field assessment of the N2 road upgrade planned borrow pits where SANRAL will source the gravel material for the road upgrades. The surveyed burrow pits would not impact on the identified homestead remains and the author did not identify other types of heritage in the area. However, the HIA did not assess the road upgrades for any heritage resources that may be impacted.

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Page No: 2

Van Schalkwyk, J. Cultural heritage impact assessment for THE PLANNED IMPROVEMENT OF THE NATIONAL ROUTE N2, KM 34 (BLOEMENDAL) TO KM 63.3 (PIET RETIEF), GERT SIBANDE DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE.

The author undertook a field assessment of the N2 road upgrade section 33 and identified a burial ground (Site 7.3.3.1) consisting of 10 graves at marker (N2-33; 39.8N). The site is of high significance but the road construction will not impact the site. The author recommends the temporary fencing of the burial grounds for the duration of the road construction and maintaining a 20m buffer zone around the cemetery to prevent any unintended damage to the graves. The author also recommended chance finds procedures in section 9 of the HIA report and additional measures in the The Management Plan under appendix 4 of the report.

Final Comment

The SAHRA Archaeology, Palaeontology and Meteorites (APM) accepts the HIA reports and the recommendations contained in the report. SAHRA has no objections to the proposed project on the following conditions:

As the BAR speaks to the road upgrades alone, the SAHRA will only provide comment on the N2 road upgrades. It is noted that the pg13 of the BAR states that the burrow pits will be assessed in a separate application.

The development is located in a grey/negligible palaeo-sensitivity zone and according to the SAHRIS palaeomap policy

In the unlikely event that fossils are uncovered during construction then construction must cease within the immediate vicinity, a buffer of 30 m must be established, and a palaeontologist called in to inspect the finds. The palaeontologist must obtain a section 35(4) permit in terms of NHRA and Chapter IV NHRA Regulations, before any fossils are collected.

If there are any new heritages resources are discovered during construction and operation phases of the proposed development, then a professional archaeologist or palaeontologist, depending on the nature of the finds, must be contracted as soon as possible to inspect the findings at the expense of the developer.

If the newly discovered heritage resources prove to be of archaeological or palaeontological significance, a

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Page No: 3

Phase 2 rescue operation may be required at the expense of the developer. Mitigation will only be carried out after the archaeologist or palaeontologist obtains a permit in terms of section 35 of the NHRA (Act 25 of 1999). You may contact SAHRA APM Unit for further details: (Nokukhanya Khumalo/Phillip Hine 021 202 8654).

The SAHRA Burial Grounds and Graves (BGG) Unit accepts the recommendations provided in the HIA report regarding site 7.3.3.1 burial ground. The burial ground must be demarcated with danger tape until construction is completed and a buffer zone of 20m is strictly adhered to. If SANRAL road construction crew cannot adhere to these conditions then the graves will have to be removed following the SAHRA section 36 grave relocation application process in terms of chapter XI of the SAHRA 2000 Regulations.

If any unmarked human burials are uncovered and the archaeologist called in to inspect the finds and/or the police find them to be heritage graves, then mitigation may be necessary and the SAHRA Burial Grounds and Graves (BGG) Unit must be contacted for processes to follow (Thingahangwi Tshivhase/Ngqalabutho Madida 012 320 8490).

Since this comment is provided after the public participation period, the SAHRA requests that it is forwarded directly to the competent authority and the SAHRA requests that the Record of Decision from the competent authority is submitted to the case.

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

Yours faithfully

Nokukhanya Khumalo
Heritage Officer
South African Heritage Resources Agency

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Page No: 4

Phillip Hine

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

ADMIN:

Direct URL to case: <https://sahris.sahra.org.za/node/406692>

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.