

Our Ref: 11743



an agency of the
Department of Arts and Culture

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CaseID: 11743

Date: Wednesday March 14, 2018
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Final Comment

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

Attention: Exxaro Coal Mpumalanga (Pty) Ltd

Environmental Impact Assessment for the Expansion of Pit 1 and construction of a water pipeline

Exxaro Central Coal (Pty) Ltd operates the Dorstfontein East Mine and the Dorstfontein West Mine. They propose to extend their mining operations in the Opencast Pit 1 by 85 ha located in the Dorstfontein East Mine and to construct an 11km water pipeline, from the Dorstfontein West Mine to the Dorstfontein East Mine. SRK Consulting (Pty) Ltd have been appointed to undertake the Scoping and Environmental Impact Assessment process in support of an Environmental Authorisation Process in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 107 of 1998, as amended (NEMA) for listed activities in the NEMA Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations, 2014 as amended. A Heritage Impact Assessment and a Palaeontological Impact Assessment have been submitted to SAHRA, in terms of section 38 (8) of the National Heritage Resources Act, 25 of 1999 (NHRA).

Coetzee, F.P and Fivaz, H. June 2017. Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment: Phase 1 Investigation for a Proposed Extension of Pit 1 and Pipeline from Dorstfontein West to Dorstfontein East and the Disposal of Discard into the Opencast Pit, north east of Kriel, eMlahleni Local Municipality, Nkangala District Municipality, Mpumalanga.

A field survey by the author, of the expansion area and the proposed 3 water pipeline route alternative, identified 9 sites of heritage significance. Sites 3, 4, 5, and 8 are burial grounds which are of high significance. Sites 3 and 4 are located along alternative route 1, Site 5 is in between alternative 1 and 2 and Site 8 is located well outside the proposed expansion and pipeline area. Sites 1, 6 and 9 are historical structures, site 9 is located at the edge of the opencast pit expansion area and site 1 and 6 are farmstead complexes located along alternative 1 and 3. Sites 2 and 7 are modern structures not protected by the NHRA.

The author recommends that water pipeline alternative 2 is chosen as the preferred route, the mine geologist or ECO monitors all mining activities of the extended pit 1 so as not to damage Site 9 a buffer zone of 10 m should be maintained always. A buffer zone of 30 m must be maintained for Sites 3, 4 and 5 and a fence around each of these burial grounds must be erected after a social consultation period, to identify the relatives of the burial grounds.

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Fourie, H. August 2017. Opencast Mine Extension of Pit 1 and Water Transportation Pipeline from the Exxaro Dorstfontein West to Dorstfontein East Mine Nkangala District Municipality, eMalahleni Local Municipality, Mpumalanga Province - Palaeontological Impact Assessment: Phase 1 Field Study.

The author undertook a field assessment of the underlying geology of the proposed pipe line and expansion pit area, and found the area is underlain by Permian aged rocks of the Vryheid Formation, Ecca Group, Karoo Supergroup. This formation is of Very High palaeontological significance. Appendix 1 and 2 of the report must be included in the EMPr, so it is implemented throughout the life of the mine.

Final Comment

SAHRA Archaeology, Palaeontology and Meteorites (APM) Unit accepts the HIA and PIA reports and the recommendations contained within the reports.

SAHRA endorses the recommendation for alternative 2 as the preferred pipeline route. If alternative 1 or 3 are chosen, then the following must be implemented: A buffer zone of 100 m must be maintained for Sites 3, 4 and 5 and a fence around each of these burial grounds must be erected after a social consultation period as per Chapter IX of the NHRA Regulations, to identify the relatives of the burial grounds. A Mini Heritage Management Plan must be developed for the long term maintenance of the burial grounds within the mine right area.

SAHRA endorses the recommendation as follows:

The ECO monitors all mining activities of the extended pit 1 so as not to damage Site 9, a buffer zone of 10 m should be maintained always around each pylon. In addition, the ECO must monitor the waste rock dumps and stockpiles for *Glossopteris* Flora fossils and inspect exposed sandstone and shale layers for fossils. Once a month for the first 6 months of mining the expansion area, a palaeontologist must be appointed to inspect the pit for any exposed fossils.

It should be noted that the case was not submitted when the heritage reports were uploaded, it was left in Draft.

The recommendations provided in the HIA and PIA reports, the Fossil Chance Finds Procedure and well as SAHRA's recommendations must be included in the EMPr for implementation.

The Final EIA and its appendices must be uploaded to the case and the Record of Decision from the Competent Authority once it's received.

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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

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

ADMIN:

Direct URL to case: <http://www.sahra.org.za/node/408507>
(DMR-MP, Ref: (MP) 30/5/1/2/3/2/1 (51) EM)

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.