



an agency of the
Department of Arts and Culture

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CaseID: 12164

Date: Friday April 12, 2019
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Interim Comment

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

Attention: Sasol Mining (Pty) Ltd

PO Box 5486
Johannesburg
2000

Environmental Regulatory Process in terms of the Thubelisha, Trichardtsfontein and Vaalkop Mining Right Areas, Mpumalanga Province

Sasol Mining (Pty) Ltd is proposing to consolidate their existing mining operations in terms of the Minerals and Petroleum Resources Development Act, 28 of 2002, as amended. As part of their consolidation, they wish to construct two ventilation shafts for the underground mining activities. The proposed mine right areas are located on various farms, with a total extent of 23 316 ha, in the Govan Mbeki Local Municipality of the Mpumalanga Province.

Digby Wells Environmental (Pty) Ltd have been appointed to undertake the Scoping and Environmental Impact Assessment (S and EIA) process in support of an Environmental Authorisation application in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 107 of 1998, as amended (NEMA). As regulated in the NEMA Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations, 2014 as amended. Their in-house heritage specialists have compiled a Heritage Impact Assessment with a Palaeontology assessment section, and the report was submitted to SAHRA, in terms of section 38 (8) of the National Heritage Resources Act, 25 of 1999 (NHRA). An Interim Comment was issued on 9/07/2018 requesting a Palaeontological Impact Assessment (PIA) by a suitably qualified palaeontologist to be undertaken and submitted to the case. This has since been submitted for commenting.

Bamford, M. February 2019. Palaeontological Impact Assessment for the proposed development of coal mining, Thubelisha Project, Mpumalanga Province.

The author conducted a field assessment with a colleague and found that the development area is underlain

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by hard sandstone rocks of the Vryheid Formation, Eccca Group, Karoo Supergroup. This formation is known to contain fossilised *Glossopteris flora* plant impressions and other microfossils. None have been recorded in the area and surface exposures of the sandstone rocks did not contain any plant impressions. Therefore, the author rates the potential impacts to the fossil heritage from mining coal in the area will be extremely low. The author recommends that the Fossil Chance Finds Procedure included in the report under section 8 must be added to the EMPr report for implementation. If any fossils are uncovered once construction begins, then a they must be conserved in situ and a palaeontologist called in to inspect the finds.

Interim Comment

The SAHRA Archaeology, Palaeontology and Meteorites (APM) Unit requires a map of the areas that were assessed in the PIA report. The map must indicate the proposed surface construction areas, waste rock dump areas, overlain by the tracklog of the field assessment.

SAHRA will process this case once the amended PIA report is uploaded to the case along with the Final EIA report and its appendices.

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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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/488131>
(DMR-MP, Ref: MP30/5/1/2/2/138/MR)