

Our Ref:



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: 13731

Date: Thursday May 30, 2019
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Final Comment

In terms of Section 38(4) of the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999)

Attention: ABO Wind Aggeneys 2 PV (Pty) Ltd

The development of grid connection infrastructure for the proposed 100MW solar photovoltaic (PV) facility and associated infrastructure located approximately 11km south-east of Aggeneys in the Northern Cape Province. The grid connection infrastructure is to be known as the Grid Connection Infrastructure for Aggeneys 2 and is situated within the Khâi-Ma Local Municipality of the greater Namakwa District Municipality. The associated infrastructure consists of a collector substation and a single-circuit power line of up to 220kV to connect the PV facility to the national grid. This proposed development will consider feasible alternatives for the power line corridor.. The assessment of the grid connection infrastructure will be undertaken within a corridor with a width of up to 1km and a length of up to 17km. The project site is located within Zone 8 of the Renewable Energy Development Zones (REDZ) (also known as the Springbok REDZ), and within the Northern Transmission Corridor. The procedure to be followed in applying for environmental authorisation for a large-scale project in a REDZ was formally gazetted on 16 February 2018 (in GN113 and GN114). As Bloemhoek 1 is located within one of the eight REDZ areas, the project is subject to a Basic Assessment and not a full EIA process, as well as a shortened timeframe of 57 days for the processing of an Application for Environmental Authorisation.

Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd has been appointed by ABO Wind Aggeneys 2 PV (Pty) Ltd to conduct an Environmental Authorisation (EA) Application process for the proposed grid connection infrastructure for the Aggeneys 2 solar PV facility, near Aggeneys, Northern Cape Province.

A draft Basic Assessment Report (dBAR) has been completed in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (NEMA) and the 2017 NEMA Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations. The proposed development will include the construction of a single-circuit power line (up to 220kV in capacity). Two alternative routes have been assessed of up to 1 km wide and up to 17 km long. Additional infrastructure will include a new collector substation/switching station, access tracks up to 6 m wide, and a new feeder bays within the existing HV yard at the Aggeneys Main Transmission Substation.

ASHA Consulting and Natura Viva CC were appointed to provide heritage input into the EA Application process as per section 38(8) of the National Heritage Resources Act, Act 25 of 1999 (NHRA).



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Orton, J. 2019. Heritage Impact Assessment: Proposed Grid Connection Infrastructure for the Aggeneys 2 Solar Photovoltaic Facility, Namakwaland Magisterial District, Northern Cape.

No significant heritage resources were identified within the proposed footprint, however, 9 occurrences of isolated artefact scatters and or small sites were noted as part of the landscape. Several isolated Stone Age lithics and ostrich eggshell fragments, a lower grindstone and a single historical ceramic fragment was identified within a low dune. Small stone-walled features were noted on a rocky hill 900 m east of the study area, and an ephemeral artefact scatter consisting of a small grindstone, two quartz flakes and two ostrich eggshell fragments was identified 500 m south of the proposed footprint. Two possible graves of an unknown age were identified 900 m south of the project area near a small rocky hill. As the project area is near the Gamsberg, there may be living heritage sites in the surrounding area due to the possible location of a San massacre site within the mountain.

Recommendations provided in the report include the following:

- Both corridor alternatives are seen as appropriate for the proposed development, with Alternative 1 lightly preferred due to being shorter than Alternative 2 and further from the N14;
- If any change in the authorised footprint occurs, then an archaeologist should be consulted for an opinion on whether a survey is required; and
- If any archaeological or palaeontological material or human burials are uncovered during the course of development, then work in the immediate area should be halted. The find would need to be reported to the heritage authorities and may require inspection by an archaeologist. Such heritage is the property of the state and may require excavation and curation in an approved institution.

Almond, J. E. 2018. Palaeontological Heritage Assessment: Desktop Study for the Aggeneys Proposed PV Solar Energy Facilities on the remaining extent of the farm Bloemhoek 61 and associated power line corridors near Aggeneys, Namakwa District Municipality, Northern Cape.

The proposed development area is underlain at depth by the Mid Proterozoic unfossiliferous Namaqua-Natal Province, which is overlain by Late Caenozoic superficial sediments of the Gordonia Formation (Kalahari Group) of low to very low palaeontological sensitivity. The overall impact of the development will be very low.

Recommendations provided in the report include the following:



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- Pending the potential discovery of significant fossil remains during the construction phase, in which case the Chance Fossil Finds Protocol appended here should be implemented, no further specialist palaeontological studies or mitigation are recommended for the PV solar projects and the associated grid connection;
- Ancient alluvial gravels (possibly calcretised) associated with Pleistocene or older fossil remains (e.g. mammalian bones and teeth) might be exposed in the existing borrow pit in the Koa River Palaeovalley area in the south-eastern portion of the Remaining Extent of the Farm Bloemhoek 61 (yellow circle in Fig. 2). If it is proposed to exploit alluvial gravel material from this pit as part of the PV solar facilities, a site inspection by a professional palaeontologist before excavations commence is recommended;
- These recommendations should be incorporated into the Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) for the proposed solar PV facilities and associated grid connection solutions.

Additional recommendations provided in the Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) on page 54 and 55 of the document are noted.

Final Comment

The following comments are made as a requirement in terms of section 3(4) of the NEMA Regulations and section 38(8) of the NHRA in the format provided in section 38(4) of the NHRA and must be included in the Final EIA and EMPr:

- 38(4)a – The SAHRA Archaeology, Palaeontology and Meteorites (APM) Unit has no objections to the proposed development;
- 38(4)b – Specific conditions for the development include:
 - i) – The recommendations of the heritage specialists and the recommendations contained within the EMPr with regards to heritage resources are supported;
 - ii) – A Fossil Finds Procedure must be developed for the construction phase of the development as per the recommendations of the SAHRIS PalaeoSensitivity map;
- 38(4)c(i) – If any evidence of archaeological sites or remains (e.g. remnants of stone-made structures, indigenous ceramics, bones, stone artefacts, ostrich eggshell fragments, charcoal and ash concentrations), fossils or other categories of heritage resources are found during the proposed development, SAHRA APM Unit (Natasha Higgitt/Phillip Hine 021 462 5402) must be alerted as per section 35(3) of the NHRA. Non-compliance with section of the NHRA is an offense in terms of section 51(1)e of the NHRA and item 5 of the Schedule;
- 38(4)c(ii) – If unmarked human burials are uncovered, the SAHRA Burial Grounds and Graves (BGG)

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Unit (Thingahangwi Tshivhase/Mimi Seetelo 012 320 8490), must be alerted immediately as per section 36(6) of the NHRA. Non-compliance with section of the NHRA is an offense in terms of section 51(1)e of the NHRA and item 5 of the Schedule;

- 38(4)d – See above;
- 38(4)e – The following conditions apply with regards to the appointment of specialists:
 - i) If heritage resources are uncovered during the course of the development, a professional archaeologist or palaeontologist, depending on the nature of the finds, must be contracted as soon as possible to inspect the heritage resource. If the newly discovered heritage resources prove to be of archaeological or palaeontological significance, a Phase 2 rescue operation may be required subject to permits issued by SAHRA;
- The Final BAR and EMPr must be uploaded to the SAHRIS application for record purposes;
- The decision regarding the EA Application must be communicated to SAHRA and uploaded to the SAHRIS Case application.

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

Phillip Hine
Acting Manager: Archaeology, Palaeontology and Meteorites Unit

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ADMIN:

Direct URL to case: <http://www.sahra.org.za/node/522856>
(DEA, Ref:)

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.