

# The Upgrading of Rural Access Road D281 between Volksrust and Daggakraal (17 Km) in the Gert Sibande District of Mpumalanga Province

Our Ref: 15375



an agency of the  
Department of Arts and Culture

T: +27 21 462 4502 | F: +27 21 462 4509 | E: [info@sahra.org.za](mailto:info@sahra.org.za)  
South African Heritage Resources Agency | 111 Harrington Street | Cape Town  
P.O. Box 4637 | Cape Town | 8001  
[www.sahra.org.za](http://www.sahra.org.za)

Enquiries: Nokukhanya Khumalo

Tel: 021 462 4502

Email: [nkhumalo@sahra.org.za](mailto:nkhumalo@sahra.org.za)

CaseID: 15375

Date: Monday November 09, 2020

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## Letter

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

Attention: Mpumalanga - Department of Public Works, Roads & Transport

Private Bag x 1313  
Thulamahashe  
1290

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PGS Heritage (Pty) Ltd have been appointed by NCC Environmental Services (Pty) Ltd on behalf of the Mpumalanga Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport, to request a reduction of their recommended buffer zone around the burial grounds and graves they had identified when undertook a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) in 2016. The HIA was to assess potential impacts to heritage resources for the upgrade of the Rural access road D281 between Daggakraal and Volksrust, in the Seme Local Municipality of Mpumalanga Province. The HIA recommendations included the following:

*Fourie, W. July 2016. Mpumalanga Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport (DPWRT) The Upgrading of Rural Access Road D281 between Volksrust and Daggakraal (17 Km) in the Gert Sibande District of Mpumalanga Province.*

The author identified 7 heritage features of which DGK001 to DGK004 and form part of one single heritage complex, and DGK005 to DGK007 can be viewed as separate features each. The potential impacts on the sites DGK001-005 will be High without any mitigation measures and sites DGK006-007 is medium without any mitigation measures.

The study area is underlain by the Volksrust Formation, Ecca Group, Karoo Supergroup. The outskirts of the study area is underlain by sedimentary deposits of the Adelaide Subgroup, Karoo Supergroup.

The proposed 4 borrow pits will be mining gravel and aggregate to supply the road construction. These borrow pits will have an impact on rock units of the Volksrust Formation.

The author recommends the following:

All graves and structures must be demarcated during construction so that no damage occurs from the road works and construction camps.

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A 20m buffer zone around all graves and structures must be adhered to throughout construction.  
A 70m buffer zone around Pixeley ka Seme's monument must be adhered to throughout construction.  
Before excavations into the areas proposed for the borrow pits begin, the author recommends that a palaeontologist conducts a field assessment.

**This application is to seek a reduction in the buffer zone area around the graves.**

This project has already received environmental authorisation without comments from SAHRA, and it is currently in its construction phase.

The SAHRA Burial Grounds and Graves (BGG) Unit request that the developer on applies for a section 36 permit application to relocate the graves because a bufferzone of 30 m cannot be maintained.

For further queries regarding this advice please contact the Manager of the BGG Unit, Ms Mimi Seetelo at [mseetelo@sahra.org.za](mailto:mseetelo@sahra.org.za) or call the manager at this number: 012 320 8490/ 4965.

The SAHRA Archaeology, Palaeontology and Meteorites (APM) Unit recommends that a chance finds procedure be implemented in the event that any heritage resources are identified.

However, because a palaeontological assessment did not form part of the EA application, SAHRA, recommends the contractor to appoint a palaeontologist to inspect road cuttings and borrow pits to identify any potentially exposed fossiliferous rock outcrops or fossils. This is because some fossilised plant impressions of the Glossopteris Flora were identified not far from the road upgrades.

- In the 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.

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- If the newly discovered heritage resources prove to be of archaeological or palaeontological significance, a 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).
- If any historical buildings or monuments will be impacted by the proposed development, then comment and permits in terms of section 34 must be sought from the Mpumalanga Heritage Resources Authority (MPHRA). Please contact Benjamin Moduka at [bmoduka@mpg.gov.za](mailto:bmoduka@mpg.gov.za) or call the offices at 013 766 5196.

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

Yours faithfully

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Nokukhanya Khumalo  
Heritage Officer  
South African Heritage Resources Agency

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Phillip Hine  
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/538964>  
(DARDLEA, Ref: 1/3/1/16/1 G-29)

## 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.