



an agency of the  
Department of Arts and Culture

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CaseID: 17423

Date: Friday February 25, 2022

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## **Final Decision**

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

Attention: Mrs Alta van Dyk

Alta van Dyk Environmental Consultants cc

4 Garcia Peak

Midlands Estate

Centurion

1692

### **VLNR Weather Tower, Limpopo Province**

Beyond Heritage (Pty) Ltd and Alta van Dyk Environmental Consultants (Pty) Ltd have submitted a section 38(1) of the National Heritage Resources Act, no 25 of 1999 (NHRA) application, on behalf of their applicant, to obtain a SAHRA decision in terms of section 38(2) of the NHRA for the construction of a weather tower in the De Beers Consolidated Mine (Pty) Ltd's Venetia Limpopo Nature Reserve (VLNR). The weather tower will be constructed on the farm Faure 33 MS, Makhado Local Municipality of Limpopo Province.

The proposed weather radar tower will be between 20 – 40m in height, with a footprint area of approximately 900 m<sup>2</sup> (30 x 30 m). An existing farm road will be used to gain access to the proposed site, and an existing power line will be utilised for electricity supply. No reservoirs will be developed as part of this project, and a maximum of 1 000? (1 m<sup>3</sup>) of diesel will be stored on site. The proposed development activities do not trigger the listed activities that require an Environmental Authorisation (EA) in terms of the National Environment Management Act, Act 107 of 1998 (NEMA), and the NEMA EIA 2014 Regulations. However, a decision on the project is sought from the SAHRA due to its proximity (within 10km) of the Mapungubwe National Park, which is a declared National Heritage Site (NHS) and a World Heritage Site (WHS).

The study area is in a region of high palaeontological significance and according to the SAHRIS palaeomap, a desktop Palaeontological Impact Assessment (PIA) is recommended. The NID states that there are two known archaeological sites located close to the two proposed weather tower footprint alternatives, however, there will be no impact to these sites. The author recommends an exemption from undertaking a full HIA on the following conditions:

A site visit to the proposed options to confirm the lack of archaeological heritage features in these areas;  
Palaeontological desktop study is submitted to SAHRA;



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Avoidance of known heritage sites during construction and implementation of a chance finds procedure as outlined under Annexure A.

The SAHRA issued an Interim Comment dated 12/11/2021 requesting a Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) and a Palaeontological Impact Assessment (PIA), the reports were submitted on 24/01/2021.

*Bamford, F. January 2022. Palaeontological Impact Assessment for the proposed VLNR weather tower on Farm Faure 33, Limpopo Province.*

The study area is underlain by sandstones and shales of the Tshipise Member of the Clarens Formation, Stormberg Group, Karoo Supergroup. This has a very high palaeontological sensitivity with known fossil vertebrate and plants of the middle Triassic Age. No fossilised rocks have been identified within the region therefore there is low likelihood of fossils being impacted by this proposed development. The author recommends no further studies, but the chance finds procedure must be handed to the construction manager for implementation during construction.

The Visual Impact Assessment conducted by Erwee, S: 2021, found that the weather radar tower is located on relatively flat land surrounded by hills in the distance. The natural bushveld vegetation assists the tower to blend into the landscape keeping the calm and tranquil sense of place. It also shields the weather tower from being visible on the Mapungubwe road and by extension the Mapungubwe National Park (MNP) and the day visitors centre at the park. Therefore there is a very low impact on sensitive visual receptors.

### **Final Decision**

The SAHRA Archaeology, Palaeontology and Meteorites (APM) accepts the HIA, Palaeontology Desktop Assessment, and the Visual Impact Assessment reports and the recommendations contained in them. The SAHRA has no objection to the development going ahead on the following conditions:

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 discovered during construction and operation phases of the proposed

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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 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 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).

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: <https://sahris.sahra.org.za/node/588031>

**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.