

Our Ref:



an agency of the  
Department of Arts and Culture

T: +27 21 462 4502 | F: +27 21 462 4509 | E: info@sahra.org.za  
South African Heritage Resources Agency | 111 Harrington Street | Cape Town  
P.O. Box 4637 | Cape Town | 8001  
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Enquiries: Natasha Higgitt  
Tel: 021 462 4502  
Email: nhiggitt@sahra.org.za  
CaseID: 19760

Date: Friday November 18, 2022  
Page No: 1

## Final Comment

**In terms of Section 38(4), 38(8) of the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999)**

Attention: SANRAL

Private Bag X 17  
Lynnwood Ridge  
0040

**The proposed Borrow Pits and Quarries are required for the SANRAL (TRAC N4) Road Upgrades of the Schoemanskloof Route (R539), in the province of Mpumalanga. The Schoemanskloof N4 (R539) is an alternative route to the Elands Valley N4 national toll route which serves as a road corridor between Pretoria, South Africa and Maputo, Mozambique. Three (3) locations have been selected along the length of the Schoemanskloof Road R539 between Crossroads Interchange with N4 and Montrose T-junction with N4. The road is 61 km long and situated approximately 30 km west of the town of Mbombela (Nelspruit). The proposed borrow pits from west to east along the R539 road are named Borrow Pit 10 (EBP10), Borrow Pit 11 (BP11/Q10/Q11), and Borrow Pit 7 (EB7).**

Prism Environmental Management Services was appointed by SANRAL to conduct an Environmental Authorisation Application for proposed mining activities on remainder of portion 10 of the farm Schoongezigt 347 JT, portion 1 & 13 of the farm Somerset 150 JT, and portion 19 of the farm Elandshoek 302 JT, Mpumalanga Province (Ref no: TBA).

A draft Basic Assessment Report (DBAR) has been submitted in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (NEMA) and the EIA Regulations for activities that trigger the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act, 2002 (MPRDA)(As amended). The proposed mining activities will include three borrow pits, two quarries, laydown areas, blasting, access and haul roads, site preparation, fencing, stockpiles, site camps and workshops, site drainage and storm water management, and screening of material.

Dr Marion Bamford and Beyond Heritage have been appointed to provide heritage specialist input as part of the EA application in terms of section 24(4)b(iii) of NEMA that complies with section 38(3) of the NHRA as required by section 38(8) of the National Heritage Resources Act, Act 25 of 1999 (NHRA).

*Bamford, M. 2022. Palaeontological Impact Assessment for the proposed N4 Schoemanskloof R539 road upgrade, Mpumalanga Province*

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The proposed development is underlain by sediments of the Transvaal Supergroup, Malmani Subgroup and Quaternary alluvium. Stromatolites may be present within the Transvaal Supergroup and Malmani Group rocks. A Chance Finds Procedure is recommended.

*Van der Walt, J. 2022. Heritage Impact Assessment For the proposed Borrow Pits and Quarries required for the SANRA (Trac N4) road upgrade of the Schoemnakloof (R539) Route, Mpumalanga*

A total of 18 heritage resources were identified within the propose development footprints. These include destroyed Iron Age, stone walling stone cairns and old roads of low heritage significance, a small cement bridge or culvert; Bokoni type stone walled settlements and terracing of low to medium and medium heritage significance.

Recommendations provided in the report include the following:

- Implementation of a Chance Finds Procedure;
- In situ preservation of recorded heritage features is the preferred course of action. This can be achieved through small impact footprints to exclude recorded heritage sites with a 30 m buffer;
- If avoidance if the features is not possible, extensive archaeological mitigation of the sites will be required prior to construction. It will include test excavations and detailed recording of the sites;
- Monitoring of the area during initial clearing and mining activities by the ECO.

An in-depth PIA was submitted on the 14/11/2022.

*Bamford, M. 2022. Palaeontological Impact Assessment for three proposed borrow pits for the N4 upgrade, Maputo Development Corridor, Mpumalanga Province (MDC – Section 6N: PE293-BP01 to BP03).*

The proposed borrow pit 1 is underlain by the Silverton Formation (Pretoria Group, Transvaal Supergroup), borrow pit 2 by the Dwaalheuvél Formation (Pretoria Group, Transvaal Supergroup) with a Quaternary cover, and borrow pit 3 by the Nelspruit Suite. The Dwaalheuvél Fm and Nelspruit Suite are unfossiliferous but stromatolites may be present within the Silverton Formation (borrow pit 1). A Chance Finds Procedure is recommended.

### Final Comment

The following comments are made as a requirement in terms of section 38(8) of the NHRA in the format

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provided in section 38(4) of the NHRA and must be included in the Final BAR and EMPr:

- 38(4)a – The SAHRA Archaeology, Palaeontology and Meteorites (APM) Unit has no objections to the proposed development;
- 38(4)b – The recommendations of the specialists are supported and must be adhered to. Further additional specific conditions are provided for the development;
- If it not possible to adhere to the recommended 30 m buffer zone, permits in terms of section 35 of the NHRA must be applied for prior to construction from SAHRA. No mitigation may commence without permits issued in this regard;
- 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) Unit (Thingahangwi Tshivhase/Ngqabutho Madida 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 section 51(1) of the NHRA regarding offences;
- 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 must be submitted to the SAHRIS application for record purposes;
  - The decision regarding the EA application must be submitted to the SAHRIS application for record purposes.

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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Natasha Higgitt  
Heritage Officer  
South African Heritage Resources Agency

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

**ADMIN:**

Direct URL to case: <https://sahris.sahra.org.za/node/606435>  
(DMR, 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.