



an agency of the
Department of Arts and Culture

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CaseID: 19812

Date: Friday July 07, 2023

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Interim Comment

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

Attention: Vanadium Solar Power Plant (RF) (Pty) Ltd

The activities entail the development of an up to 250MW photovoltaic solar facility and associated infrastructure, on Portion 1 of the farm Makayskraal No. 18 and Portion 2 of the farm Zwartdoorns No. 421, Limpopo Province situated within the Thabazimbi Local Municipality area of jurisdiction. The town of Northam is located approximately 2 km north of the proposed development. The project entails the generation of up to 250MW electrical power through photovoltaic (PV) panels. The total footprint of the project will be approximately 645 hectares (including supporting infrastructure on site).

Vanadium Solar Plant (RF) (Pty) Ltd have appointed Environamics (Pty) Ltd to undertake a Scoping and Environmental Impact Assessment application process in support for an Environmental Authorisation (EA) in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, Act no 107 of 1998 (NEMA) as amended, for activities that trigger the NEMA Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) 2014 Regulations, as amended.

Vanadium Solar Plant is proposing to construct a 250MW Solar PV facility with associated supporting infrastructure on 645 ha of land and 461ha in extent for the development footprint area. This will include a 132KV substation and transformer, as well as a BESS and a 88kV power line to the Eskom Spitskop substation, via the existing Eskom 275kV or 400kV lines from Spitskop 400/275/88/kV MTS Substation. The PV plant will be located on Portion 1 of the farm Makayskraal No.18 and Portion 2 of the farm Zwartdoorns No. 421 in Thabazimbi Local Municipality of the Limpopo Province.

A BID has been submitted to SAHRA for commenting in terms of section 38 of the National Heritage Resources Act, no. 25 of 1999 (NHRA). An Interim Comment acknowledging the BID was issued by SAHRA on 31/01/2023. The Scoping Report was submitted 06/06/2023.

The SAHRA issued an Interim Comment dated 31/01/2023 requesting the submission of a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) report, and a Palaeontology Impact Assessment (PIA). The HIA report by APelser Archaeological Consulting cc and PIA report by Banzai Environmental were submitted on 06/06/2023.

Pelser, A. December 2022. REPORT ON A PHASE 1 HERITAGE ASSESSMENT FOR THE PROPOSED VANADIUM & PALLADIUM SPP DEVELOPMENT ON VARIOUS FARMS AND FARM PORTIONS NEAR



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NORTHAM, LIMPOPO PROVINCE.

The author undertook a field assessment and identified 9 heritage sites in the study area, five of the sites were assessed to be of low (Sites 2, 3, 5, 6 & 9) these sites do not have historical significance in terms of the act and is sufficiently recorded in the report; one site is of Medium to High significance (Site 4 & 7), this site is a historical farmstead; and three sites which are graves are of High significance (Sites 1 & 8), these sites are burial grounds. The author recommends the retention of sites 1, 4, 7, and 8) *in situ*, sites 1 and 8 must be fenced with an access gate, and the vegetation must be kept short that all identified sites in the development must be included in a Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP).

Butler, E. March 2023. Palaeontological Impact Assessment. The Development of the Vanadium Solar Power Plant Near Northam, Limpopo Province.

The study area is underlain by igneous rocks of the Nebo Granite (Lebowa Granite Suite) and the Rustenburg Layered Suite of the Bushveld Complex as well as sedimentary rocks of the Timeball Hill Formation of the Pretoria Group (Transvaal Supergroup). Updated geology maps indicates that the development is underlain by Nebo Granite and the Bierkraal Subsuite as well as the Timeball Hill Formation (Pretoria Group, Transvaal Supergroup). The granite suites are of negligible palaeosensitivity, and high for the Timeball Hill Formation. The author recommends the following:

The ECO for this project must be informed that the Timeball Hill Formation has a Very High Palaeontological Sensitivity.

If Palaeontological Heritage is uncovered during surface clearing and excavations the Chance find Protocol attached should be implemented immediately. Fossil discoveries ought to be protected and the ECO/site manager must report to South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) so that mitigation (recording and collection) can be carried out.

Before any fossil material can be collected from the development site the specialist involved would need to apply for a collection permit from SAHRA. Fossil material must be housed in an official collection (museum or university), while all reports and fieldwork should meet the minimum standards for palaeontological impact studies proposed by SAHRA (2012).

These recommendations should be incorporated into the Environmental Management Plan for the Vanadium Solar Power Plant.

Interim Comment

The SAHRA Development Applications Unit (DAU) notes the submission of the Scoping Report and the

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Heritage reports. The case will be processed further once the draft EIAr documents and the appendices are submitted to the case.

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

Natasha Higgitt
Manager: Development Applications Unit
South African Heritage Resources Agency

ADMIN:

Direct URL to case: <https://sahris.sahra.org.za/node/606719>