

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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Enquiries: Natasha Higgitt
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CaseID: 19843

Date: Monday September 18, 2023
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Final Comment

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

Attention: Department of Water and Sanitation - National

185 Francis Baard Street
PRETORIA Private Bag X313
PRETORIA
0001
South Africa

Proposed Casteel Dam Safety Rehabilitation Project at Farm Kasteel 231-KU, south of Acornhoek, Bushbuckridge Local Municipality, Ehlanzeni District Municipality, Mpumalanga Province

Naledzi Environmental Consultants have been appointed by the Department of Water and Sanitation to undertake an Environmental Authorisation Application for the proposed Casteel Dam Safety Rehabilitation Project on the remaining extent of the farm Kasteel 231-JU, near Bushbuckridge, Mpumalanga Province.

A Draft Basic Assessment Report (DBAR) has been submitted in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (NEMA) and the NEMA Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations. The proposed activities will include the rehabilitation of the embankment, spillway, outlet works, intake tower, donga erosion rehabilitation, proposed pedestrian bridge, access road re-alignment, laydown area, and new alternative access road.

Agri Civils Geo-Tech & Heritage were appointed to provide heritage specialist input as part of the EA process as per section 24(4)b(iii) of NEMA and section 38(8) of the National Heritage Resources Act, Act 25 of 1999 (NHRA).

Coetzee, T. 2023. Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment for the Proposed Casteel Dam Safety Rehabilitation Project on a Portion of the Remaining Extent of the Farm Kasteel 231 KU, Acornhoek, Mpumalanga

No heritage resources were identified within the proposed development area. One heritage site of low heritage significance was identified adjacent to the development area. Community rituals take place at the dam and may be impacted by the proposed development. It is noted in the DBAR that due respect to local community

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customs and rituals will be considered. There may be temporary restriction on cultural rituals and customs during the construction phase.

Recommendations provided in the report include the following:

- Due to cultural aspects that include certain rituals taking place at the dam, as well as the belief that a watersnake is present in the dam, liaising with the local community regarding the potential impact of the project on these activities and beliefs is advised;
- A Chance Finds Procedure is recommended to be followed.

In an Interim Comment issued on the 31/07/2023, SAHRA requested the results of consultation with communities regarding the impact to rituals performed at the dam before comments may be issued. The minutes of meetings held on the 12th and 13th July with the communities were submitted. No comments were made regarding the rituals at the dam.

Final Comment

The following comments are made as a requirement in terms of section 38(8) of the NHRA in the format provided in section 38(4) of the NHRA and must be included in the Final BAR and EMP:

- 38(4)a – The SAHRA Development Applications Unit (DAU) has no objections to the proposed development;
- 38(4)b – The recommendations of the specialists are supported and must be adhered to. No further additional specific conditions are provided for the development;
- 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 DAU (Natasha Higgitt 021 202 8660/ nhiggitt@sahra.org.za) must be alerted as per section 35(3) of the NHRA. Non-compliance with this 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 DAU (Natasha Higgitt 021 202 8660/ nhiggitt@sahra.org.za) must be alerted immediately as per section 36(6) of the NHRA. Non-compliance with this 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;

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- 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

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

ADMIN:

Direct URL to case: <https://sahris.sahra.org.za/node/606907>
(DFFE, Ref: Pending)

Terms & Conditions:

1. This approval does not exonerate the applicant from obtaining local authority approval or any other necessary approval for

Proposed Casteel Dam Safety Rehabilitation Project

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- 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.