

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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CaseID: 20743

Date: Friday March 24, 2023
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Interim Comment

In terms of Section 38(3), 38(8) of the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999)

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

The activities entail the development of an up to 350MW photovoltaic solar facility and associated infrastructure on Portion 2 (Rozenvlei) of the farm Bishops Wood No. 476, Registration Division Kuruman, situated within the Gamagara Local Municipality area of jurisdiction. The town of Kathu is located approximately ~14 km east of the proposed development (refer to the attached locality maps). The project entails the generation of up to 350MW electrical power through photovoltaic (PV) panels. The total footprint of the project will be approximately 600hectares (including supporting infrastructure on site)within the assessed 949ha EIA footprint. The property on which the facility is to be constructed will be leased by Virgo Solar Power Plant (RF) (Pty) Ltd from the property owner, for the lifespan of the project (minimum of 20 years).

Thank you for notifying SAHRA of the Environmental Authorisation (EA) Application for the proposed Virgo Solar Power Plant on the farm Bishops Wood No. 476, near Kathu, Northern Cape Province.

As the proposed development is undergoing an EA Application process in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 107 of 1998 (NEMA), NEMA Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations as amended, it is incumbent on the developer to ensure that an application specific **Heritage Impact Assessment** (HIA) is done as per section 38(3) and 38(8) of the National Heritage Resources Act, Act 25 of 1999 (NHRA) as required by section 24(4)b(iii) of NEMA. This must include an archaeological component, palaeontological component and any other applicable heritage components. The HIA must be conducted **as part of the** EA Application in terms of NEMA and the NEMA EIA Regulations.

SAHRA requests that an assessment of the impacts to heritage resources that complies with section 38(3) of the NHRA as required by section 38(8) of the NHRA and section 24(4)b(iii) of NEMA be conducted as part of the EA process.

The assessment must include an assessment of the impact to archaeological and palaeontological resources. The field-based assessment of archaeological resources must be conducted by a qualified archaeologist and the report comply with the SAHRA 2007 Minimum Standards: Archaeological and Palaeontological Components of Impact Assessment Reports (see www.asapa.co.za or www.aphp.org.za for a list of qualified

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archaeologists).

The proposed development is located within an area of moderate and high Palaeontological Sensitivity as per the SAHRIS PalaeoSensitivity map. As such, a desktop Palaeontological Impact Assessment (PIA) must be undertaken by a qualified palaeontologist. (See <https://www.palaeosa.org/heritage-practitioners.html> for a list of qualified palaeontologists). The report must comply with the 2012 Minimum Standards: Palaeontological Components of Heritage Impact Assessments.

Any other heritage resources as defined in section 3 of the NHRA that may be impacted, such as built structures over 60 years old, sites of cultural significance associated with oral histories, burial grounds and graves, graves of victims of conflict, and cultural landscapes or viewsapes must also be assessed.

Further comments will be issued upon receipt of the draft Scoping documents inclusive of appendices.

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:

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Direct URL to case: <https://sahris.sahra.org.za/node/613349>