

Our Ref:



an agency of the
Department of Arts and Culture

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CaseID: 20743

Date: Monday July 10, 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).

Environamics Environmental Consultants have been appointed by Virgo Solar Power Plant (RF) (Pty) Ltd to conduct an Environmental Authorisation (EA) Application for the proposed Virgo Solar Power Plant near Kathu, Northern Cape Province.

A draft Scoping Report (DSR) has been submitted in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (NEMA) and the 2017 NEMA Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations. The proposed development will include the construction of a PV panel array, writing to invertors, powerlines, internal reticulation network, on-site substation, Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), Operation and Maintenance Buildings, access and internal roads, and fencing within an application area of 600 ha.

Banzai Environmental (Pty) Ltd and Dr Van Schalkwyk have been appointed to provide heritage specialist input into the EA process in terms of section 24(4)b(iii) of NEMA and section 38(8) of the National Heritage Resources Act, Act 25 of 1999 (NHRA).

Butler, E. 2023. Palaeontological Desktop Assessment: The Development of the Virgo Solar Power Plant, near Kathu, Northern Cape Province.

The proposed development area is underlain by the Campbell Rand Subgroup which is overlain by Quaternary aged sediments of the Kalahari Group. The development will have a low impact in terms of palaeontological

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heritage. A Chance Finds Protocol is recommended to be implemented.

Van Schalkwyk, J. 2023. Phase 1 Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment: Development of the Proposed Virgo Photovoltaic Solar Energy Facility near Kathu, Northern Cape Province

No heritage resources were identified within the proposed development area. One grave of high heritage significance was identified adjacent to the proposed development area.

Recommendations provided in the report include the following:

- A 50 m buffer zone must be adhered to around the burial ground for the duration of the construction activities;
- A Chance Finds Procedure is recommended.

Interim Comment

The SAHRA notes the submitted heritage specialist reports. SAHRA will provide further comments upon receipt of the Draft EIA and associated 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

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ADMIN:

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