



an agency of the
Department of Arts and Culture

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CaseID: 20745

Date: Tuesday July 04, 2023

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Interim Comment

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

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

The activities entail the development of an up to 150MW photovoltaic solar facility and associated infrastructure on the farm Ruimte No. 720, Registration Division JR, situated within the Bela-Bela Local Municipal area of jurisdiction. The town of Pienaarsriver is located approximately 1km east of the proposed development (refer to the attached locality maps). The project entails the generation of up to 150MW electrical power through photovoltaic (PV) panels. The total footprint of the project will approximately be 365 hectares (including supporting infrastructure on site) within the assessed 500ha EIA footprint. The property on which the facility is to be constructed will be leased by Oribi Solar Power Plant (RF) (Pty) Ltd from the property owner, for the lifespan of the project (minimum of 20 years).

Environamics Environmental Consultants (Pty) Ltd has been appointed by Oribi Solar Power Facility (RF) to undertake a Scoping and Environmental Impact Assessment in support of an Environmental Authorisation (EA) in terms of the National Environment Management Act, Act 107 of 1998 (NEMA) for activities that trigger the NEMA EIA 2014 Regulations, for the construction of a solar power plant 365 ha in extent. Consisting of solar array panels, a BESS, an on-site substation and 132kV power line to connect to the Eskom Pelly / SAR Pienaarsrivier 132kV Overhead Line. The facility will be located in the Bela-Bela Local Municipality of Limpopo Province.

The Background Information Document (BID) has been submitted to SAHRA in terms of section 38(8) of the National Heritage Resources Act, 25 of 1999 for commenting. The report states that a Heritage Impact Assessment (PIA) and a Palaeontological Impact Assessment (PIA) will be commissioned for the EIA phase. The reports were submitted to the case on SAHRIS on 22/05/2023.

The SAHRA issued an Interim Comment dated 11/04/2023 requesting the submission of a Heritage Impact Assessment by a suitably qualified archaeologist and a Palaeontological Impact Assessment by a suitably qualified palaeontologist.

Lavin, J. May 2023. HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT In terms of Section 38(8) of the NHRA for the Proposed Oribi BESS and SPP.



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The Solar PV plant area has been assessed by the heritage specialists and identified 7 heritage resources within the development footprint area. The north eastern section of the farm portion has a cluster of archaeological remains near the chalk mine (site 007), the archaeological remains sites 006, and 005, are Middle Stone Age stone tool remains. Within the centre of development area, there are building remains (sites 002 and 004), and sites 001 and 003 are isolated archaeological finds. These sites are of low significance and adequately recorded in the AIA report of the HIA report. The author recommends the following:

Any palaeontological and archaeological material uncovered during construction must be kept in situ and the ECO must be informed of the findings.

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

The study area is underlain by the Letaba Formation (Lebombo Group, Karoo Igneous Province) with a small portion of Irrigasie Formation (Undifferentiated Karoo) in the south west of the development footprint. The updated geological maps indicate that the study area is underlain by mainly underlain by the Lahau Formation (Lebombo Group, Karoo-Ferrar igneous intrusions) and the Late Triassic Molteno Formation (Stormberg Group, Karoo Supergroup). A medium palaeontological significance has been assigned to the construction phase of the proposed development, the development will not affect any potentially fossiliferous rocks after the construction phase. The author recommends the following:

? The ECO for this project must be informed that the Irrigasie Formation/ Late Triassic Molteno Formation (Karoo Supergroup) 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 Oribi Solar Power Plant.

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

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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/613364>