



## **Interim Comment**

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

Attention: Clean Stream Environmental Services  
P.O. Box 647  
Witbank  
1035

### **The proposed establishment of a Rural Village on the Remaining extent of the Farm Toevlugt 320 JS, Middelburg.**

Pistorius, J. (June 2011). *A Phase 1 Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) study for a proposed new residential development in the Botshabelo Nature Reserve near Middelburg in the Mpumalanga Province of South Africa.*

Thank you for submitting the above HIA and related Scoping Assessment to SAHRA for comment.

The proposed development is located on approximately 130ha in the north eastern corner of a 2755ha property that encompasses the Botshabelo Nature Reserve and forms part of the Farm Toevlugt 320 JS. The proposed development is situated approximately 7.5km north of the town of Middelburg and falls along the N11 national road. The project entails the proposed development of approximately 1000 residential stands of 500 sq m each as well as a business stand, community facilities and a school.

The submitted HIA did not identify any heritage resources of significance that will be affected by the proposed development.

In terms of Section 38(8) of the National Heritage Resources Act, the relevant heritage resources authority must be satisfied that the heritage studies completed as part of the NEMA process are satisfactory. The submitted HIA does not comply with the Minimum Standards for Impact Assessments as published by SAHRA in 2006 and amended in 2013. The submitted HIA fails to provide track paths and does not assess impacts to all heritage resources, including palaeontology and visual impacts.

In addition, the submitted HIA fails to identify the significance of the two known heritage sites located in the vicinity of the proposed development - Fort Merensky which is a Provincial Heritage Site and thus is afforded the highest level of protection available through the National Heritage Resources Act, and the Botshabelo Village, which was provisionally protected in 1989 for its heritage significance. Although this protection has lapsed, it indicates that this site is a heritage resource of some significance. In addition, the Botshabelo Mission Station is of heritage significance and is currently the subject of archaeological investigation.

In assessing the submitted scoping report, SAHRA concurs with the concerns raised by Heritage South Africa and by the Simon van der Stel Foundation. In addition, justifiable concerns have been raised regarding the legitimacy of this kind of extensive residential development within a Nature Reserve, and in an area identified as Nature Reserve in the relevant SDP. Development of this type that falls outside of the identified urban edge contradicts best-practice in terms of town planning.





According to the scoping report, the proposed development is underlain by the Dwyka and the older Wilgerivier Formations. The Dwyka Formation is known for trace fossils, organic-walled microfossils, rare marine invertebrates (eg molluscs), fish and vascular plants and as such, has some heritage significance.

**Interim Comment:**

The submitted HIA is not accepted as satisfying the requirements of SAHRA.

As such, an integrated Heritage Impact Assessment is required that assesses the direct and indirect impacts of the proposed development on the identified heritage resources including but not limited to Fort Merensky, the Botshabelo Mission Station and Village, on palaeontological resources as well as the visual impact of the proposed development on the Nature Reserve. This report must be completed by suitably qualified professionals.

SAHRA looks forward to receiving the above report before issuing a Final Comment for this proposed development.

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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Jenna Lavin  
Heritage Officer  
South African Heritage Resources Agency

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Colette Scheermeyer  
SAHRA Head Archaeologist  
South African Heritage Resources Agency

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**ADMIN:**



## Botshabelo Rural Village

Our Ref: 16/5/1 Botshabelo Rural Village

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CaseID: 3141

Date: Wednesday August 14, 2013

Page No: 3



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Direct URL to case: <http://www.sahra.org.za/node/126546>  
(DEDET, Ref: 17/2/3 N-167)



The South African Heritage Resources Agency

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