



Final Comment

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

Attention: Kathu Property Developers
Care of: Mr Marius Vivier
PO Box 3349, Tyger Valley
7536

Residential development on Remainder, and Portion 3 of Farm Bestwood 459 near the town of Kathu, Northern Cape.

Morris, D. February 2014. Rectification and/or regularisation of activities relating to the Bestwood Township near Kathu, Northern Cape: Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment

Almond, J. January 2014. Palaeontological Desktop Study: Residential development on Remainder and Portion 3 of farm Bestwood RD 459 in Kathu, Gamagara Municipality, Northern Cape Province.

A township development comprising 5 500 residential units is currently being developed on Remainder and Portion 3 of farm Bestwood 459 in the Gamagara Municipality, Kathu, Northern Cape Province. SAHRA APM Unit had requested that a Heritage Impact Assessment, comprising an archaeological and a palaeontological component be undertaken for this development on 2 October 2008. A Heritage Impact Assessment inclusive of a Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) (but no palaeontology desktop study) was submitted to SAHRA on 21 November 2008. The cover letter of the HIA was dated 13 November 2008, the same date as the Record of Decision from the Northern Cape Department of Environment and Nature Conservation (DENC). SAHRA rejected the original Phase 1 AIA and informed the Environmental Assessment Practitioner of this in a letter dated 9 December 2008. SAHRA reiterated compliance with section 38 of the NHRA and the Environmental Authorisation. Jeffares and Green, who currently manages the rectification process for this development, alerted SAHRA to the commencement of construction activities in December 2013. At this point, as a matter of urgency, SAHRA requested the outstanding heritage reports.

Two-hundred and eighty residential units have already been constructed as part of Phase 1 with another 50 units due to be transferred by the end of February 2014. Earthworks and concomitant services have been laid in both Phase 1 and Phase 2, with most development in Phase 1, whilst pockets of undisturbed land still exist in the area demarcated as Phase 2. Services currently installed include;

- roads,
- internal sewers,
- internal water reticulation,
- internal gas reticulation, and
- external works (borehole and rising main to the Municipal reservoir and water tower, water supply line from the Municipal reservoir and water tower to the Bestwood development, sewer pump station





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and rising main to the oxidation pond and Bestwood WWTW).

In addition to the current development a temporary sewage pipeline is proposed in order to temporarily transport sewage and wastewater generated by the current residents of the Bestwood Estates to the Gamagara Municipal Wastewater Treatment works.

Bestwood Estates is situated in close proximity to the Kathu archaeological complex, a suite of archaeological sites which includes the Kathu Pan Sites, Kathu Townlands, Bestwood sand quarries and Uitkoms, which holds a rich sequence of Early Stone Age (ESA) deposit. The Kathu archaeological complex is currently earmarked for National Heritage Site status. The potential negative impact that the Bestwood Estates may have on the eastern most extent of the Kathu archaeological complex is therefore real.

The archaeological field assessment was undertaken on the 23 January 2014, and focused on the areas of Phase 1 and Phase 2, the two construction camps, and the corridor for the proposed temporary sewage pipeline. The archaeologist indicated that the terrain in which the Bestwood Township development is situated is a flat plain underlain by a calcrete deposit and aeolian sand capping of between 15-20cm or less at the southern end and deepening to about a meter at the northern end.

No archaeological materials with the exception of a localised scatter of banded ironstone, with some stone artefacts were identified within the Phase 1 area. The author explained that the banded ironstone was derived elsewhere and used for stabilizing the sand. During the field survey the author investigated some of the trenches in the Phase 1 area and identified which ones yielded calcrete of 3 to 4 meters deep. The author indicated that at "no point within these modified parts of the landscape were any in situ archaeological materials noted". According to the report the deepest trenching was to a depth of 11 meters, still within the calcrete. The inspection of calcrete heaps yielded no archaeological material. The author was therefore of the opinion that the sediments beneath the aeolian capping are archaeologically sterile.

The inspection of undisturbed areas in Phase 2 yielded scattered/isolated jaspelite artefacts in locations where the sand is shallowest over the calcrete. The densities of these scatters were calculated to be approximately 1 per 10 x 10 meters. An inspection of one of the calcrete trenches several meters deep and capped by 40-50cm aeolian sands yielded no archaeological material. No archaeological sites or any artefacts were identified during inspection of the areas for the Wastewater Treatment Works, the temporary sewage pipeline and the two construction camps.

In terms of the palaeontological study the Bestwood Estates is underlain by Plio-Pleistocene to recent sediments of the Kalahari Group. According to the PIA desktop assessment the Kalahari Group succession east of Kathu comprises well-developed calcrete or surface limestones that may total 20m or more in thickness capped by a thin layer of aeolian sand. The palaeontologist indicated that in general the Kalahari Group calcretes and sands are of low palaeontological significance with widely occurring plant and animal trace fossils. The most important fossil heritage dates to the Pleistocene - Holocene and is present in solution hollows at Kathu Pan. According to the palaeontological and archaeological reports the presence of solution hollows is unlikely in the Bestwood Estates area and is most likely to occur towards the north of the area near



The South African Heritage Resources Agency

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CaseID: 4460

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SAHRA does not and cannot in terms of the NHRA condone work done before a decision or comment from the responsible heritage authority has been issued as this can result in the destruction of significant, non-renewable heritage resources. However, in this instance, due to the proximity of the proposed development from the heritage site of known significance and the unique geology of the area in the form of the calcrete horizon, the action is unlikely to have destroyed significant heritage resources.

SAHRA is satisfied with the recommendations of the specialist reports and support the conclusion that the development may continue in terms of the archaeological and palaeontological component of the heritage resources. This is applicable for:

- Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the development, the construction and laying of the Wastewater Treatment Plant and temporary sewage pipeline and the construction camps

The following recommendations must also be implemented;

- Further trenching activities on Erf 8434 as part of Phase 2 should be monitored for the presence of sub-surface doline features. It is recommended that the ECOs should familiarise themselves with the potential heritage resources that may be present within these features.
- Although the likely presence of palaeontological fossils is considered to be low, a protocol for chance fossils should be implemented.
- It is recommended that the EMP for this development be updated to make provision for the recommendations of the specialists reports and the recommendation contained in this review comment. Considering the nature of this development, its proximity to the Kathu archaeological complex, and the resulting increased human traffic some degree of impact is likely to occur on the archaeological sites. SAHRA therefore requires that a Management Plan be developed and submitted to SAHRA for approval that will mitigate the risk on the surrounding archaeological sites.

If any archaeological/palaeontological or any other heritage resources are found during further construction activities SAHRA APM (Mr Phillip Hine/ Mrs Colette Scheermeyer, tel. 021 462 4502) and a professional archaeologist or palaeontologist depending on the nature of the find must be alerted immediately. If the newly discovered heritage resource/s is considered significant a Phase 2 mitigation assessment with a permit from the responsible heritage authority may be required.



**RESIDENTIAL TOWNSHIP DEVELOPMENT ON THE FARM BESTWOOD RD 459
IN KATHU**

Our Ref: 9/2/055/0002



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Should you have any further queries, please contact the designated official using the case number quoted above in the case header.

Yours faithfully

Phillip Hine
Heritage Officer

Colette Scheermeyer
SAHRA Head Archaeologist
South African Heritage Resources Agency

ADMIN:

Direct URL to case: <http://www.sahra.org.za/node/152180>
(DENC, Ref: NC/KGA/BEST 1/12/2008)

Terms & Conditions:

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



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