

**Our Ref:**



an agency of the  
Department of Arts and Culture

T: +27 21 462 4502 | F: +27 21 462 4509 | E: info@sahra.org.za  
South African Heritage Resources Agency | 111 Harrington Street | Cape Town  
P.O. Box 4637 | Cape Town | 8001  
www.sahra.org.za

Enquiries: Phillip Hine  
Tel: 021 462 4502  
Email: phine@sahra.org.za

Date: Thursday January 25, 2018

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CaseID: 7920

## **Letter**

### **In terms of Section 35(4) of the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999)**

Attention: Ms Bianca van Zyl  
Eskom Distribution Division  
06th floor Eskom Tower  
04 George Street  
Kimberley  
8301  
Northern Cape

**The scope of this project includes electricity distribution lines (6 – 8 distribution lines varying between 50Kv and 132kV) and servitude (100 meter wide) from the existing Ferrum Substation to the new proposed Sekgame Switching Station.**

SAHRA has been notified via email of the Amendment of the Environmental Authorisation (EA) issued on the 27 July 2015 for the construction of the 132kV Distribution line from Ferrum Substation to the new Sekgame Switching Station, Gamagara Municipality, Northern Cape Province (Ref no. 14/12/16/3/3/1/1409/AM1).

The Amendment as described in the amended EA issued on the 6 May 2016 is as follows:

- Change the holder of the EA from Sishen Iron Ore Company (Pty) Ltd to Eskom Holdings SOC Limited.

While SAHRA did not issue comments during the Basic Assessment process, the Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) conducted for the Basic Assessment Report (BAR) notes the following:

*Kruger, 2014. Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) of demarcated surface Portions on the Farm Sekgame 461 for the Proposed Sekgame Electricity Infrastructure Expansion Project, Sishen Mine, Northern Cape Province*

Recommendations provided in the report include the following:

- A low density Middle Stone Age (MSA) scatter (EXIGO-SG461-SA01) was identified along the proposed electricity distribution line in associated with a shallow quarry. The site is located within the larger Kathu Stone Age Complex. It is therefore recommended that all construction activities be



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monitored by a Stone Age archaeologist familiar with the archaeological sequence of the Kathu Archaeological Complex;

- Larger scatters of MSA material (EXIGO-SG461-SA02 and EXIGO-SG461-SA03) were identified towards the southern offset and eastern sector of the proposed Sekgame switching yard. It is recommended that the infrastructure be realigned to avoid impact on the sites. A buffer of 5 m should be maintained around the identified sites. Should this not be possible, the sites must be subjected to Phase 2 mitigation conducted by a professional archaeologist with experience in Stone Age archaeology of the area. A permit in terms of Section 35 of the National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (NHRA) will have to be obtained from the responsible authority; and
- A Palaeontological Impact Assessment is recommended for the study area, and should fossil remains such as fossil fish, reptiles or petrified wood be exposed during construction, these objects should be safeguarded and the relevant heritage authority should be notified immediately so that the appropriate action can be taken by a professional palaeontologist.

The Final BAR noted the following regarding heritage resources:

- A Phase 2 HIA will have to be conducted on the MSA site, if the layout cannot be shifted to avoid this site entirely.

In a Letter issued on the 26/05/2016, the following was noted:

No official comments could be issued, however the following conditions should apply to the authorised distribution line:

- The issued EA and conditions should be uploaded to the case file for record keeping;
- If the identified heritage sites are to be impacted by the development, a permit in terms of section 35 of the NHRA must be applied for in order to conduct mitigation measures prior to construction. No impacts may occur to heritage sites without an issued permit. Mitigation can include excavations, surface collection and sub-surface testing. An agreement with a recognized repository must be sought for the long term curation of excavated and collected material. The results of the mitigation must be collated in a Permit Report that must be submitted to SAHRA upon completion;
- As no PIA was conducted as part of the BAR, a Palaeontological Desktop Study should be completed prior to the construction phase and submitted to SAHRA for comments. No construction may commence without comments from SAHRA; and
- If any evidence of archaeological sites or remains (e.g. remnants of stone-made structures, indigenous ceramics, bones, stone artefacts, ostrich eggshell fragments, charcoal and ash concentrations), fossils

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or other categories of heritage resources are found during the proposed development, SAHRA APM Unit (Natasha Higgitt/Phillip Hine 021 462 5402) must be alerted. If unmarked human burials are uncovered, the SAHRA Burial Grounds and Graves (BGG) Unit (Itumeleng Masiteng/Mimi Seetelo 012 320 8490), must be alerted immediately. A professional archaeologist or palaeontologist, depending on the nature of the finds, must be contracted as soon as possible to inspect the findings. If the newly discovered heritage resources prove to be of archaeological or palaeontological significance, a Phase 2 rescue operation may be required.

Since the Letter issued on 26/05/2016, a Walk-down of the final route has been completed by Archaetnos Culture and Cultural Resources Consultants.

*Van Vollenhoven, A. 2017. A Report on a Walk Down Archaeological Impact Assessment for the Proposed Construction of 132kv Distribution Lines from Ferrum Substation to the Proposed New Sekgame Switching Station, Gamagara Local Municipality, Northern Cape Province.*

No additional heritage resources were identified as part of the walk down. The three sites highlighted in the AIA were visited during the walk-down and were subsequently rated as sites of low significance that did not require mitigation as they contained very little artefacts.

Recommendations provided in the walk down report include the following:

- It is the opinion of the author that none of the four locations where stone tools were found warrant being called sites. The artefacts are too few and of a bad quality and should therefore be called occurrences. All of these are of negligent heritage significance and only two will be impacted on;
- A Chance Finds Procedure should be followed.

## **Comment**

SAHRA accepts the Walk down report and the amended significance and impact assessment to identified heritage resources. As stated previously, SAHRA cannot provide any comments in terms of section 38(4) or section 38(8) as the EA application process has been completed, however, SAHRA urges the applicant to abide by the following conditions in order to avoid damaging heritage resources as per section 35(4) of the NHRA:

- The recommendations of the specialist walk down report should be adhered to;
- No further mitigation of identified heritage resources as noted in the AIA or walk-down report is

# AIA FOR THE PROPOSED SEKGAME ELECTRICITY INFRASTRUCTURE EXPANSION PROJECT, SISHEN MINE

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required;

- The conditions provided as part of the Letter issued on 26/05/2016 must still be addressed i.e. a Palaeontological Desktop Study must be completed prior to construction and submitted to SAHRA for comment; and
- If any evidence of archaeological sites or remains (e.g. remnants of stone-made structures, indigenous ceramics, bones, stone artefacts, ostrich eggshell fragments, charcoal and ash concentrations), fossils or other categories of heritage resources are found during the proposed development, SAHRA APM Unit (Natasha Higgitt/Phillip Hine 021 462 5402) must be alerted. If unmarked human burials are uncovered, the SAHRA Burial Grounds and Graves (BGG) Unit (Thingahangwi Tshivhase/Mimi Seetelo 012 320 8490), must be alerted immediately. A professional archaeologist or palaeontologist, depending on the nature of the finds, must be contracted as soon as possible to inspect the findings. If the newly discovered heritage resources prove to be of archaeological or palaeontological significance, a Phase 2 rescue operation may be required subject to permits issued by SAHRA.

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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Phillip Hine  
Acting Manager: Archaeology, Palaeontology and Meteorites Unit  
South African Heritage Resources Agency

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## ADMIN:

Direct URL to case: <http://www.sahra.org.za/node/279907>