

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: Sityhilelo Ngcatsha
Tel: 0212028663
Email: sngcatsha@sahra.org.za
CaseID: 17558

Date: Wednesday December 08, 2021
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Final Comment

In terms of Section 38(8), 38(4) of the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999)

Attention: De Beers Consolidated Mines (Pty) Ltd

PO Box 616
Kimberley
8300

The Applicant (De Beers Consolidated Mines Proprietary Limited / DBCM) seeks the removal of three conditions from the Environmental Management Programme Report approval letter issued by the Free State Regional Branch of the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy (DMRE) pertaining to the Voorspoed Mine EMPr submitted in 2010 related to backfilling of the final void created resulting from diamond mining activities at the Voorspoed Mine, Free State Province

De Beers Consolidated Mines Proprietary Limited appointed GCS Water and Environmental Consultants Proprietary Limited (GCS) to undertake the amendment of Environmental Management Programme Report of the Voorspoed Mine, Free State Province.

The amendment application was made in terms of the National Environmental Management Act (Act No. 107 of 1998) (NEMA): Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations (2014), as amended in support of this application. The application is for removal of three backfilling conditions from the approval letter issued by the Free State Regional Branch of the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy (DMRE) pertaining to the Voorspoed Mine EMPr submitted in 2010 (FS 30/5/1/2/3/2/1 (12)) related to backfilling of the final void created resulting from diamond mining activities:

- Condition (d): "All mine waste (suitable for rehabilitation) must be taken back to the excavation area for backfilling purposes. Rehabilitation of the mining area must be done concurrently with mining activities (whenever and wherever possible)";
- Condition (f): "Dump structures must not be left on the surface, this includes topsoil stockpiles, overburden stockpiles, waste rock stockpiles, tailings dumps and slimes dams"; and
- Condition (g): "All excavations must be backfilled to the natural surface level; if a bulk factor exists it must be accommodated on the total area of disturbance".

It is noted that the study area contains heritage resources which include the historical Voorspoed Mine

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including a historical building and two graveyards

All identified archaeological and historic sites will be registered with the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA). Disturbance of the sites will be avoided where possible. If not possible, a permit to disturb the sites will be obtained from SAHRA and information held in the sites will be conserved. Permits will be obtained from SAHRA for the demolition of structures older than 60 years.

Permits will be obtained for the relocation of graves from SAHRA in terms of Section 36 of the National Heritage Resources Act. The mine will discuss the possible relocation of the gravesites with the identified relatives and agree with them on an appropriate course of action. If a decision were reached to relocate the graves, permits will be obtained for the relocation of graves by SAHRA in terms of Section 36 of the National Heritage Resources Act (25 of 1999).

Final Comment

As this is an amendment application of an EMP, the SAHRA Archaeology, Palaeontology and Meteorites (APM) Unit has no objection against the amendment subject to the following conditions that must be adhered to:

Should any objects of archaeological or palaeontological remains be found during the rehabilitation activities, work must immediately stop in that area and the Environmental Control Officer (ECO) must be informed.

The ECO must inform the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) and contact an archaeologist and/or palaeontologist, depending on the nature of the find, to assess the importance and rescue them if necessary (with the relevant SAHRA permit). No work may be resumed in this area without the permission from the ECO and SAHRA.

If the newly discovered heritage resource is considered significant a Phase 2 assessment may be required. A permit from the responsible heritage authority will be needed.

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

Yours faithfully

**Environmental Management Programme Amendment Application De Beers
Consolidated Mines Limited Voorspoed Diamond Mine, Free State Province**

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Sityhilelo Ngcatsha
Archaeology, Palaeontology, Meteorite Assistant
South African Heritage Resources Agency

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

ADMIN:

Direct URL to case: <https://sahris.sahra.org.za/node/589031>