

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF THE DICOMA PV FACILITY AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE NEAR LICHTENBURG, NORTH WEST PROVINCE

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
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CaseID: 17356

Date: Tuesday February 15, 2022

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Final Comment

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

Attention: Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd

PO Box 148
Sunninghill
2157

The Applicant, Dicoma PV (Pty) Ltd, is proposing the construction of a photovoltaic (PV) solar energy facility (known as the Dicoma PV facility) located on a site approximately 5km north west of the town of Lichtenburg in the North West Province. The solar PV facility will comprise several arrays of PV panels and associated infrastructure and will have a contracted capacity of up to 75MW. The development area is situated within the Ditsobotla Local Municipality within the Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality. The site is accessible via an existing gravel road which provides access to the development area off the R505, located east of the development area. The development area for the PV facility and associated infrastructure will be located on the following properties: Portion 1 of the Farm Houthaalboomen 31 Portion 9 of the Farm Houthaalboomen 31 Portion 10 of the Farm Houthaalboomen 31 Portion 0 of Farm Talene 25 Portion 7 of Farm Elandsfontein 34 Two additional 75MW PV facilities (Barleria PV and Setaria PV) are concurrently being considered on the project site (within Portion 1, Portion 9, and Portion 10 of the Farm Houthaalboomen 31) and are assessed through separate Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) processes.

Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd has been appointed by Dicoma PV (Pty) Ltd to conduct an Environmental Authorisation (EA) Application for the proposed construction of a Photovoltaic (PV) solar facility on Portion 1 of the Farm Houthaalboomen 31, Portion 9 of the Farm Houthaalboomen 31, Portion 10 of the Farm Houthaalboomen 31 located approximately 5 km west of the town of Lichtenburg, Ditsobotla Local Municipality, Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality, North West Province..

A Draft Scoping Report (DSR) has been submitted in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, no 107 of 1998 (NEMA) and the NEMA Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations. The proposed development will include the construction of a PV solar facility and associated infrastructure.

CTS Heritage was appointed to provide heritage specialist input as part of the EA process as required by section 24(4)b(iii) of NEMA and section 38(8) of the National Heritage Resources Act, Act 25 of 1999 (NHRA).



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Lavin, J. October 2021. Heritage Screening Assessment for the Proposed Development of a PV Facility Near Lichtenburg, North West Province.

The Heritage Screener has identified that the proposed development is located in an area of an approved PV facility within a belt of approved renewable energy facilities. It is noted that significant archaeological resources and burials were identified within the development area previously (Van der Walt 2014). It is therefore, recommended that a 10m no-go buffer is implemented around the known sites with SAHRIS IDs 51468, 51470, and 51472. Based on the sensitivity of the area it is further recommended that a specialist archaeological assessment and a specialist palaeontological assessment are conducted for integration into the Heritage Impact Assessment.

In an Interim Comment issued on 12/11/2021 (<https://sahris.sahra.org.za/node/589473>), the SAHRA's APM Unit acknowledged receipt of the DSR and Heritage Screening Report and recommendations provided therein. SAHRA requested that an HIA be undertaken in terms of section 38(3) of the NHRA to include an assessment of the impact to archaeological and palaeontological resources. Since the issuing of an Interim Comment both AIA and PIA components of the HIA as well as the DEIR have been submitted.

Levin, J. January 2022. Heritage Impact Assessment: The Proposed Development of the Dicoma PV Facility and Associated Infrastructure Near Lichtenburg, North West Province.

The specialist undertook a field survey of the project area. It is stated that the findings of the survey largely correlate to the outcomes of Van der Walt (2014) and a number of additional heritage resources were identified.

- **Stone Age:** The identified Stone Age archaeological resources identified were all ex situ and are of low heritage significance. The findings are given a grade IIIC field rating and not mitigation is required. The findings are sufficiently recorded in the report.
- **Burial Sites:** A stone structure was identified within the development area. This is likely to be a burial site (LICBUR?1, LUCBUR2, L19). These features are given a grade IIIA field rating and a 10m no-development buffer is recommended for the sites. It is further recommended that a Heritage Management Plan is developed for the sites to ensure ongoing conservation of the sites for the duration of the project.

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Bamford, M. September 2021. Palaeontological Impact Assessment for the Proposed Houthaalbomen PV Cluster Near Lichtenburg, North West Province.

The proposed site lies on the potentially fossiliferous (stromatolites) rocks of the Oaktree and Monte Christo Formations of the Malmani Subgroup (Chuniespoort Group, Transvaal Supergroup). No dolomites and no stromatolites were found during the site survey. There were no rocky outcrops. It is not known if stromatolites occur below the soils, therefore, a Fossil Chance Find Protocol should be added to the EMP. No further palaeontological studies are recommended.

Final Comment

The following comments are made as a requirement in terms of section 3(4) of the NEMA Regulations and section 38(8) of the NHRA in the format provided in section 38(4) of the NHRA and must be included in the Final EIA and EMP:

- 38(4)a – The SAHRA Archaeology, Palaeontology and Meteorites (APM) Unit has no objections to the proposed development;
- 38(4)b – The recommendations of the specialists are supported and must be adhered to. Further additional specific conditions are provided for the development;
- A Fossil Chance Find Protocol is recommended for Inclusion in the EMP;
- A 30m no-go buffer zone is recommended for the potential burial sites (LICBUR?1, LICBUR2, L19),
- A Heritage Management is recommended for burial sites for implementation for lifespan of the project. The management plan must be submitted to SAHRA for commenting before construction. Construction may not commence without comments from SAHRA on the report. If the potential burial sites cannot be avoided, a section 36 social consultation must be undertaken to identify any next-of-kins. In the event that no next-of-kins are identified, a section 35 permit must be obtained for Test Excavations or GPR Scans to determine the burials.
- 38(4)c(i) – 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 (Elijah Katsetse/Phillip Hine 021 462 4502) must be alerted as per section 35(3) of the NHRA. Non-compliance with section of the NHRA is an offense in terms of section 51(1)e of the NHRA and item 5 of the Schedule;
- 38(4)c(ii) – If unmarked human burials are uncovered, the SAHRA Burial Grounds and Graves (BGG) Unit (Thingahangwi Tshivhase/Ngqalabutho Madida 012 320 8490), must be alerted immediately as

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per section 36(6) of the NHRA. Non-compliance with section of the NHRA is an offense in terms of section 51(1)e of the NHRA and item 5 of the Schedule;

- 38(4)d – See section 51(1) of the NHRA regarding offences;
- 38(4)e – The following conditions apply with regards to the appointment of specialists:
 - i) If heritage resources are uncovered during the course of the development, a professional archaeologist or palaeontologist, depending on the nature of the finds, must be contracted as soon as possible to inspect the heritage resource. 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;
- The Final EIA and EMPr must be submitted to SAHRA for record purposes;
- The decision regarding the EA Application must be communicated to SAHRA and uploaded to the SAHRIS Case application.

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

Yours faithfully

Elijah Dumisani Katsetse
Heritage Officer
South African Heritage Resources Agency

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

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ADMIN:

Direct URL to case: <https://sahris.sahra.org.za/node/587487>

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.