

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: 20104

Date: Monday December 12, 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

**WKN Wind current (Pty) Ltd proposes the development of a solar PV facility comprising an up to 240MW Solar PV facilities, and Grid connection infrastructure, located approximately 15km north east of Stilfontein in the North West Province. The project area falls within the Matlosana Local Municipality within the Dr Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality. The solar PV facilities will be developed on the following properties: Portion 56 of Farm Rietfontein 388 Portion 79 of Farm Rietfontein 388 Remainder of Portion 10 of Farm Rietfontein 388 Portion 0 of farm Rietfontein 3 Access to the project site is ample with the presence of existing roads mainly consisting of national and regional roads. The N12 is located to the south of the project site and the R30 is located to the west of the project site. A facility development area which will include the PV facility, BESS and grid connection solution will be identified taking into consideration the identified sensitivities. The infrastructure associated with this 240MW PV facility includes: PV modules and mounting structures Inverters and transformers Cabling between the project components, to be laid underground where practical. Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Access roads, internal roads and fencing around the development area. Laydown area. Operation and Maintenance buildings including a gate and security building, control centre, offices, warehouse, and workshop areas for maintenance and storage. A grid connection solution is required to connect the project/s to the Eskom grid (assumed within a 300m wide corridor approximately 20km in length) and will form part of a separate application for Environmental Authorization. The development area will be larger than the area needed for the construction of a 240MW PV facility and will provide the opportunity for the optimal placement of the infrastructure, ensuring avoidance of major identified environmental sensitivities by the development footprint. To avoid areas of potential sensitivity and to ensure that potential detrimental environmental impacts are minimised as far as possible, the development footprint within which the infrastructure of the PV facility and its associated infrastructure will be located will be fully assessed.**

Savannah Environmental has been appointed by WKN Windcurrent SA (Pty) Ltd to conduct an Environmental Authorisation (EA) Application for the proposed Highveld Solar PV Facility on Portion 56 of the Farm



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Rietfontein 388, Portion 79 of the Farm Rietfontein 388, Portion 10 of the Farm Rietfontein 388, Portion 0 of the Farm Rietfontein 3 near Stillfontein, Matlosana Local Municipality, Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality, North West Province.

A Draft Basic Assessment Report (DBAR) has been submitted in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, no 107 of 1998 (NEMA) and the NEMA Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations, 2017 (as Amended). The scope of work entails the construction of a 240 MW Solar PV facility and grid connection infrastructure.

CTS Heritage and Prof. M Bamford have been appointed to provide heritage specialist input as part of the EIA process as required by section 24(4)b(iii) of NEMA and section 38(3) and 38(8) of the National Heritage Resources Act, Act 25 of 1999 (NHRA).

*Lavin, J. October 2022. Heritage Impact Assessment: Proposed Development of the Highveld PV Cluster near Potchestroom, North West Province.*

It is stated that the survey proceeded with some constraints and limitations. However, the project area was comprehensively surveyed for heritage resources. Some LSA archaeology of limited scientific value was identified. The majority of significant heritage resources identified relate to the historic Farm occupation of this property. These resources include remnants of an old farm werf as well as three burial sites that were identified.

According to the specialist none of the heritage resources identified fall within the layout for the PVs of the OHL grid connection provided and as such no direct impact to significant heritage resources is anticipated. To ensure that no impact to the identified resources occurs during the construction or operational phases of the development, a number of recommendation are made as follows:

- The recommendations in the VIA are implemented,
- A no development buffer of 100m is implemented around the burials sites identified within the broader development area,
- proposed widening of the road takes place to the south, away from the identified burial at Site 117,
- The identified sensitive archaeological areas in figure 7 are not impacted the development of any new infrastructure,
- Ongoing community access to these burials, as well as their conservation into the future, must be



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ensured, (this can be managed through the development of a Heritage Management Plan for the burials to be implemented for the duration of the project)

- Should any buried archaeological resources or human remains or burials be uncovered during the course of development activities, work must cease in the vicinity of these finds. The SAHRA must be contacted immediately to determine an appropriate way forward.

*Bamford, M. September 2022. Site Visit Report: Palaeontological Impact Assessment for the Proposed Highveld Solar Cluster, Near Potchestroom, North West Province.*

The proposed site lies on the potentially fossiliferous Malmani Subgroup (Transvaal Supergroup) that could preserve trace fossils such as stromatolites or microbialites in the dolomites. The site visit and walk through was conducted which confirmed that dolomites were common in only some areas but trace fossils were extremely rare (only one seen below existing powerline). The area for the proposed Solar collectors and substation is on cherts and soil and no dolomites were present. Nonetheless, a Fossil Chance Find Protocol should be added to the EMPr. Based on this information it is recommended that no further palaeontological impact assessment is required unless fossils are found by the contractor, developer, environmental officer or other designated responsible person once excavations for pole foundations or Solar collector and infrastructure have commenced. Since the impact will be Low, as far as the palaeontology is concerned, the project should be authorised.

### **Final Comment**

The SAHRA's APM Unit has received the draft BAR as part of the Environmental Authorisation process, attached to the BAR are heritage specialist studies. SAHRA supports the recommendation made in the reports by respective specialists and has no objections to the project.

SAHRA inserts the following comments 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 BAR and EMPr:

- 38(4)a – The SAHRA Archaeology, Palaeontology and Meteorites (APM) Unit has no objections to the proposed expansion;
- 38(4)b – The recommendations of the specialists are supported and must be adhered to. No further additional specific conditions are provided for the development;

# Proposed development of the Highveld PV Cluster near Potchefstroom, North West Province

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- 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 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;
- 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 BAR 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.

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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Elijah Dumisani Katsetse  
Heritage Officer  
South African Heritage Resources Agency

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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/608906>

## 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.