

# PART 2 AMENDMENT: THE PROPOSED SONNEBLOM PHOTOVOLTAIC ENERGY FACILITY NEAR BLOEMFONTEIN IN THE FREE STATE 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](mailto: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](http://www.sahra.org.za)

Enquiries: Sityhilelo Ngcatsha  
Tel: 0212028663  
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CaseID: 20109

Date: Tuesday December 06, 2022  
Page No: 1

## Final Comment

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

Attention: Sonneblom Solar Power Plant (Pty) Ltd.

P.O. Box 785553  
Sandton  
2196

**The holder of the Environmental Authorisation (EA) of the Sonneblom SPP is proposing amendments to the EA which mainly involves changes to the facility layout which was approved as part of the EA. The amendments are related to the relocation and resizing of project specific infrastructure associated with the layout within the assessed and authorised project area. The holder of the EA intends to commence with construction in February 2023 and therefore requires these changes to the layout to be considered and confirmed prior so that the necessary layout changes as reflected accordingly and can be implemented. Environamics has been appointed as the independent consultant to undertake the Part 2 amendment process on Sonneblom SPP's behalf. This Motivational report is compiled in accordance with the provisions of Regulation 32 (1) of the EIA Regulations 2014, (as amended). As part of this Part 2 Amendment Process specialist input was sought from suitably qualified independent specialists to provide an indication of what the implications will be in terms of environmental impact associated with the proposed amendments, as well as provide an indication of whether the mitigation measures included in the EMPr will be sufficient for the impacts associated with the updated layout. The assessment determined that the potential negative impacts resulting from the proposed layout are not significant and that it doesn't increase the significance ratings determined as part of the EIA process. The proposed layout has been refined an optimised from a technical perspective, as well as an environmental perspective.**

Environamics was appointed to undertake the Environmental Authorisation (EA) Application for the Part 2 Amendment of the Sonneblom Photovoltaic Solar Energy Facility which mainly involves changing the facility layout which was approved as part of the EA for the Sonneblom Solar Power Project (SPP). Sonneblom Solar Power Plant (Pty) Ltd was granted an EA (DEA Ref: 14/12/16/3/3/2/673AM1, 14/12/16/3/3/2/673/AM2, 14/12/16/3/3/2/673/AM3 and 14/12/16/3/3/2/673/AM4) for the development of an 115MW photovoltaic solar facility and associated infrastructure on Portion 1 of the farm Blydschap No. 504 located within the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality, Bloemfontein, Free State Province.

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A draft Motivational Report was submitted in terms of Nation Environmental Management Act (NEMA Act No. 107 of 1998) with the provisions of Regulation 32 (1) of the EIA Regulations 2014, (as amended). The amendment includes expansion of battery storage area from 2ha to approximately 4ha, decrease of the capacity of the facility from up to 115MW to up to 60MWdc and 45MWac and the solar PV panel height will increase from 3.5m to 4.5m, changing the facility layout as well as the sizes of the demarcated areas for the associated infrastructure.

The development application is related to case ID 5728 and 16048  
(<https://sahris.sahra.org.za/cases/sonneblom-part-2-amendment-application> and  
<https://sahris.sahra.org.za/cases/sonneblom-solar-pv>).

Banzai Environmental and J A van Schalkwyk were appointed to provide heritage specialist input as part of the EA amendment application report 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).

*van Schalkwyk, J. 2022. Letter of Exemption From Undertaking A HIA: SPECIALIST INPUT FOR THE PART 2 AMENDMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORISATION (EA): AS PART OF THE SONNEBLOM PHOTOVOLTAIC (PV) SOLAR POWER PROJECT NEAR BLOEMFONTEIN IN THE FREE STATE PROVINCE*

The letter confirm that the proposed amendments will not result in any additional impacts and will not increase the level or nature of the impact which was initially assessed and considered when application was made for an EA and subsequent amendments. The significance ratings will remain unchanged, and the proposed mitigation and management measures proposed as part of the EIA process will still suffice.

*Butler, E. 2022. Letter of Exemption From Undertaking A PIA: SPECIALIST INPUT FOR THE PART 2 AMENDMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORISATION (EA): AS PART OF THE SONNEBLOM PHOTOVOLTAIC (PV) SOLAR POWER PROJECT NEAR BLOEMFONTEIN IN THE FREE STATE PROVINCE.*

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## 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 Motivation Report and EMPr:

- 38(4)a – The SAHRA Archaeology, Palaeontology and Meteorites (APM) Unit has no objections to the proposed amendment to the authorised 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 as follows;
- The conditions contained within the Final Comments (Case ID 5728 and 16048) issued on the 21/01/2015 and 18/03/2021 (<https://sahris.sahra.org.za/node/187181> and <https://sahris.sahra.org.za/cases/sonneblom-part-2-amendment-application> ) are valid and must be adhered to;
- A field-based PIA must be conducted following the approval of the EA amendment, before construction starts to assess potential impacts and to propose site-specific mitigation measures. The PIA must be submitted to SAHRA for review prior to construction;
- 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 (Sityhilelo Ngcatsha/Phillip Hine 021 462 5402) 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;

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- The Final Motivation Report must be uploaded to the SAHRIS application for record purposes;
- The original EA document along with the decision regarding the EA Amendment Application must be communicated to SAHRA and uploaded to the SAHRIS Case application for record purposes.

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

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

### ADMIN:

Direct URL to case: <https://sahris.sahra.org.za/node/608940>