

Our Ref:



an agency of the  
Department of Arts and Culture

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South African Heritage Resources Agency | 111 Harrington Street | Cape Town  
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CaseID: 20122

Date: Tuesday July 25, 2023  
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## Interim Comment

**In terms of Section 38(8), 38(3) of the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999)**

Attention: Khwezi Solar PV (RF) Pty Ltd

**The activities entail the development of a photovoltaic solar facility and associated infrastructure on the Remaining Extent, Portion 1 and Portion 2 of the Farm Koppiesdam No. 511, Registration Division Winburg, situated within the Mantsopa Local Municipality area of jurisdiction. The town of Excelsior is located approximately 10km southeast of the proposed development. The project entails the generation of up to 300MW electrical power through photovoltaic (PV) panels. The total footprint of the project will approximately be 500 hectares (including supporting infrastructure on site) that is located within the larger 750 hectares to be assessed.**

Environamics Environmental Consultants has been appointed by Khwezi Solar PV (RF) (Pty) Ltd to undertake the Environmental Authorisation (EA) Application for the proposed 300 MW photovoltaic solar facility and associated infrastructure on the Farm Koppiesdam No. 511 (PV facility); Farm Welgegund No. 100 and Farm Noodshulp No. 2052 near Excelsior in Free State Province (DFFE Reference No. : 14/12/16/3/3/2/2316).

The Final Scoping Report (FSR) has been submitted in terms of the National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998, as amended) (NEMA) and the 2017 amended NEMA Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations. The proposed development footprint is 750 hectares for the entire project including supporting infrastructure.

J A van Schalkwyk and Banzai Environmental (Pty) Ltd were appointed to provide heritage specialist input 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).

*van Schalkwyk, J. 2022. Phase 1 Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment: The Development Of The Khwezi Solar Power Plant, Near Excelsior, Free State Province*

An Informal burial site containing at least 5 graves is located within the development area. The site is not fenced and looks very neglected.

Recommendations Mitigation

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**Avoidance/Preserve:** This is viewed to be the primary form of mitigation and applies where any type of development occurs within a formally protected or significant or sensitive heritage context and is likely to have a high negative impact. This measure often includes the change / alteration of development planning and therefore impact zones in order not to impact on resources.

If it is decided to retain the burial site, it should be fenced off permanently by means of a wire fence or brick wall, with a buffer zone of at least 20m.

*Butler, E. 2023. Palaeontological Impact Assessment: The Development Of The Khwezi Solar Power Plant Near Excelsior, In The Free State Province*

The study area is overlain by the Quaternary alluvium on the riverbanks of the Klipspruit and underlain by Permian aged sandstone and shale of the Balfour Formation (Adelaide Subgroup, Beaufort Group, Karoo Supergroup).

Quaternary deposits are important due to the palaeoclimatic changes that are reflected in the different geological formations. The Balfour Formation is divided in the Daptocephalus (DAZ) which in turn is divided in the upper *Lystrosaurus maccaigi* - *Moschorhinus* and lower *Dicynodon*-*Therapsid* Subzones. Several pebble-sized fragments of petrified wood reworked from the bedrocks into the overlying soils and surface gravels were identified. However, these derived fossils are commonly found in the Karoo Basin and are of Low conservational value. A Low palaeontological Significance has been allocated to the development as no other fossils were identified. It is considered that the proposed development will not lead to damaging impacts on the palaeontological resources of the area.

### **Interim Comment**

The SAHRA Development Application Unit (DAU) notes the heritage studies along with the recommendations provided therein. Further comments will be issued upon submission of the Draft Environmental Impact Assessment (DEIA) report along with its appendices.

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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South African Heritage Resources Agency

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**ADMIN:**

Direct URL to case: <https://sahris.sahra.org.za/node/609046>

**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.