



SOUTH AFRICAN HERITAGE RESOURCES AGENCY

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DATE: 12 December 2007
ENQUIRIES: Mrs Mary Leslie
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OUR REF: 9/2/055/0005

Michael Chazan
University of Toronto,
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Copy David Morris: 053 839 2700
Copy: Colin Fortune: 053 839 2700

Dear Michael and David

Wonderwerk Dating and Excavation Permit

I attach as agreed a permit for dating samples and excavation of a square metre of early material in Square Q32 in a baulk of early material in Area 1 of the Wonderwerk excavation. The reason for this is that this will allow yourselves and the authorities to assess what time will be required for the excavation of the other squares before work on conservation of the site commences.

Please note the following

1. SAHRA APM unit requires that a full **research proposal** (see SAHRA *Guidelines for Research Proposals*) accompanies applications for work at Grade 1 or national heritage sites. Other criteria may also apply (see SAHRA *Guidelines for Archaeological Permitting*). Permit committee, stakeholders or reviewers may make other suggestions that SAHRA may incorporate in permit conditions. However for sites of national importance greater details may be required. For these sites the permit committee is consulted after the permit application and proposal have been circulated to two reviewers. It is therefore necessary to allow at least six weeks for the permit application and advisable to ensure that it has reached SAHRA.

2. It should be noted that the research proposals need to indicate not only immediate **priorities and plans for research** at the site but also future or long term plans and priorities in order to assess proposals properly.
3. SAHRA requires that **interim and final reports are received in good time** and certainly before further permits are issued. These should be at least of the standard of Phase 2 AIA reports (see *SAHRA Minimum Standards: Archaeological and Palaeontological components of Impact Assessments*) and the minimum standards for those are attached. (A copy of the Minimum Standards for AIA reports is attached and if you email me I can send the others if you do not already have them).
4. It is SAHRA policy that the ID numbers or Passport Numbers of applicants appear on all permits. Please supply these for our records.
5. Permit fees will be determined by the CEO and are payable before permits are issued.
6. Local permit partners are crucial for SAHRA to ensure long term conservation of sites, also for continuity and to ensure that the national estate records are kept up to date. They must therefore be included in all planning and reporting on the site. This also applies to the local institution which houses the material (as well as all field and survey records from the site), especially in cases like this where the local institution represents in many ways the ownership and management authority for the site.
7. Permit reports are required as indicated above. However as there was a decision from permit committee that further excavation seasons must be preceded by analysis of material already excavated a full report (as opposed to a list) on the status of this work is also required for permit committee to be satisfied that conditions have been met and for reviewers to fully understand the situation.
8. Permits must be obtained before materials are exported. In future, if SAHRA has good reason to believe that this has not been done we will contact the customs of both our country and the recipient country. I am concerned that no urgent request has been made for a permit for export which was not issued after the last field season. SAHRA has recently had a serious capacity problem, which is unfortunate, but you will appreciate that we have many permit applications and other processes to which we must apply our minds and at times permit applications may have to wait. Most applicants have been exceedingly co-operative about this. Full data on permit applications and full research reports prevent unnecessary delays.

Before a further permit is issued, a full report will be necessary as indicated verbally to Liora earlier this year, and a full specification for the bridge will be needed. As this proposal is an alternative to a full wall, as per discussion yesterday it will be necessary that this includes:

1. Full specifications for the conservation wall (and if this is not to protect the whole section motivation/ rationalization for deviation from this both in height and width will be needed);
2. Full specifications for the bridge (with the concomitant plans for sandbagging and scaffolding). A permit application would need to indicate funding and how it is envisaged that this be done and who by.
3. Full details and motivation for any cutting back of sections or old baulks that will be required.
4. SAHRA will expect that conservation of the wall will receive priority over the bridge.

Finally, you will understand that this letter was written in haste and SAHRA may need to add further clarification in due course.

A management plan is urgently needed both for planning research and because the site is a nominated national heritage sites. SAHRA will urgently need at least a draft of the research chapters of this plan before further work is done to align with future planning. However it is considered that conservation of the tall section is urgent and excavation associated with this will take priority.

As you have indicated yourselves this is an irreplaceable site of inestimable value in understanding the past in South Africa. I am sure that you appreciate that we all need to work closely together to ensure that it is responsibly conserved and studied. We look forward to working with you on this and wish you well in the enormously significant research project.

Yours sincerely

Mary Leslie
Manager: Archaeology, Paleontology and Meteorites Unit
FOR: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Addenda to original letter to be added by email. (Not done entirely)

Please be aware that the specifications for the bridge will need to receive professional assessment and that this will need to be taken into account in timing of the application.

Please be aware that SAHRA is concerned about the break in continuity between the original excavator and the current excavation team and that every opportunity should be sought to redress this as it poses a risk of loss of significant information.

Please be aware that It is risky to assume a permit will be granted. Apply for the permit before applying for funding and before arranging visitors.

Ensure that the team comprises people with the appropriate expertise and a complement of members for the McGregor Museum or if that is impossible South Africa.

Visits to local authorities may cause confusion and should be undertaken through the Wonderwerk committee with both permitted excavators present and representation from the McGregor Museum as it is the repository and has managed the servitude.

Stakeholders PHRA WHC SAHRa grading unit and management and so on for buy in. It is suggested that the application be in good time.