



Enquiries: Bernadet Pawandiwa
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CaseID: 12206

Date: Monday March 05, 2018

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Interim Comment

**In terms of Section 38(8) of the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999) and the
KwaZulu-Natal Heritage Act (Act 4 of 2008)**

Attention: Enviroedge
PO Box 1009
Kloof
KwaZulu Natal
3640

The Sibudu Caves are located on the property described as Portion 10 of the Farm Sinembe No. 16902-FU, which is 4.3 hectares in extent, KwaZulu-Natal Province, and an application for Re-zoning from “Agricultural” to Conservation Area” in terms of the PDA and SPLUMA Planning Legislation is being compiled by Simon Vines Town and Regional Planners. The Sibudu Caves Heritage Site was inhabited by humans over 150,000 years ago and they are the longest continuously-occupied caves in Southern Africa. The Sibudu Caves Trust have appointed Simon Vines Town and Regional Planners to try and protect this valuable archaeological site. The farm within which the Sibudu Caves property is situated is subject to the provisions of the Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act, (Act 43 of 1983). However, consent has been granted to subdivide the property in terms of the Subdivision of Agricultural Land Act, Act 70. Simon Vines Town and Regional Planners have, accordingly, obtained permission from the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, (DAFF), to subdivide a portion of 4,3 ha off the Farm Sinembe (118ha in total) and to seek a rezoning that is an appropriate land use in order to ensure the responsible management of this Heritage resource in the future. Simon Vines Town and Regional Planners intend to rezone the subdivided portion from “Agriculture” to “Conservation Area”, which zoning can include an area declared as “Conservation” in terms of the KwaZulu-Natal Heritage Act, (Act 4 Of 2008). Enviroedge cc. has been commissioned to undertake the application process to Amafa for the proposed development. As part of this process, this Background Information Document has been prepared, together with the Town Planning Motivation document for submission to Amafa.

The application on the proposed rezoning of the farm on which the Sibudu Cave is located from Agricultural to Conservation as outlined above has been considered . In principle, Amafa supports the rezoning of the area into a conservation zone subject to complete/exhaustive consultation with affected parties as it will create a protective buffer .The proposed action is in line with what was originally recommended by Amafa when the Wewe Driefontein development became controversial. Creating a buffer area that could be proclaimed proved not feasible at that time due to differing views of the various landowners.

It is therefore important to note that the proposed conservation zone falls under different local authorities. The area to the north of the river, while part of a municipal zoning scheme, does cut across two landowners. The area to the south of the river is located within the jurisdiction of the Qwabe Traditional Council, and therefore this would require a different subdivision under the Ingonyama Trust. There is already an understanding with Qwabe TC that the proposed area as highlighted in the document is not used for any activity except traditional agricultural practice by the closest homestead.



**Amafa AkwaZulu-Natali
Heritage KwaZulu-Natal
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It is therefore essential that this process considers the opinion or comment from the landowners and specifically the Qwabe Traditional Council as their cooperation is key to the success of managing this site. Failure to do so would compromise the good working relationship held by the Provincial Heritage Resources Authority, Amafa, with the Traditional Council that relates to the site management plan.

Your attention is also drawn to the following points highlighted in your submission that need to be corrected. The Sibudu site is incorrectly listed as a World Heritage Site in the submitted documents yet it is only on the Tentative List of World Heritage Sites. It is currently graded as a National Heritage Site/Grade 1 Site but proclamation is still to occur. The document is also incorrect in stating that the Wewe Development would impact negatively on the site. This was never determined to be so, and the attempts by Amafa to create a buffer area were designed to add additional security to the heritage value of the site.

Amafa therefore has no objection to the proposed subdivision of a portion of 4,3 ha off the Farm Sinembe (118ha in total) and rezoning from agriculture to conservation provided the issues raised above are taken into consideration. A heritage practitioner should be appointed to assist in determining the most plausible buffer that ensures that the integrity of the site is not compromised.

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

Yours faithfully

Bernadet Pawandiwa
Senior Heritage Officer
Amafa/Heritage KwaZulu Natal

James van Vuuren
Deputy Director: Support Services, Technical
Amafa/Heritage KwaZulu Natal

ADMIN:

Direct URL to case: <http://www.sahra.org.za/node/488252>
(, Ref:)





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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 Amafa immediately.
3. Amafa reserves the right to request additional information as required.



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