

Interim Comment

In terms of Section 38 of the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999)

Attention: Dr Jenine Bothma
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0054

Upgrade of National Route 1 section 17 between Ventersburg (km 0.0) and Kroonstad (Km 44.9)

Van Schalkwyk, J. December 2013. Cultural heritage impact assessment for the Upgrade Of A Section Of National Route 1, Between Kroonstad And Ventersburg, Free State Province.

Almond, J. January 2014. Palaeontological specialist assessment: combined desktop and field-based study Proposed Upgrade Of National Route 1, Section 17, From Ventersburg (Km 0.0) To Kroonstad (Km 44.9), Free State.

The proposed development entails the upgrading of the N1, Section 17 for a distance of approximately 44.9km. Fourteen existing borrow pits and quarries have been identified that will be expanded to supply material to be used for the upgrade.

The archaeological assessment revealed:

- An informal cemetery dating to recent times, west of the road, within 10m from the boundary fence, containing at least 5 graves, of which only one has a headstone with a name and date on it. The other graves are marked with cement slabs or stone cairns. The author states that, as the road will only be widened here on the eastern side, there will not be an impact on the graves. The author recommends that the cemetery should be fenced off with danger tape for the duration of the construction in order to prevent any accidental damage.
- Two old farm labourer homesteads were identified at Borrow pit 8. The author notes that dating these features is difficult as little remains of the various structures and, considering the fact that very little apart from foundations and stone walling remain, these sites are viewed to have low significance. It is, however, a cultural practice that premature babies or infants that died very young are sometime buried within the homestead. As all these feature seem to occur on the western edge of the borrow pit, it would be possible to avoid them and the author recommends that these sites are left in place and that they are fenced off with danger tape with a buffer of at least 10 metres from the outer most edge of the visible structures for the duration of the activities at the borrow pit.
- A stone cairn which might be an informal burial place was identified in close proximity of the two house structures Borrow pit 8. This feature seems to occur on the western edge of the borrow pit and it would be



possible to avoid it. The author recommends that it be left in place and that it is fenced off with danger tape with a buffer of at least 10 metres for the duration of the upgrade of the road.

The palaeontological assessment revealed that, of the twelve borrow pit sites and two quarry sites associated with the N1 upgrade project, almost all are excavated into fresh to deeply-weathered Karoo dolerite that is of no palaeontological heritage significance. Karoo Supergroup sandstones occur in the vicinity of borrow pit 2.4B near Ventersburg, but no fossil remains were recorded here and the sedimentary bedrocks are baked by nearby dolerite intrusions. The author recommends that, pending the discovery of significant new fossil remains during excavation, no further palaeontological studies or professional mitigation are therefore recommended for any of these borrow pits or quarries, with the exception of the Q42.5 quarry site. The Q42.5 is a key fossil site with significant research potential and the author recommends that that before any construction commences, a professional palaeontologist be commissioned by the developer to record and judiciously sample near-surface fossil material at the site. The palaeontologist should also make recommendations for realistic conservation or mitigation measures during the construction phase of the Q42.5 quarry development, in consultation with the developer. Any mitigation measures proposed should be incorporated into the Environmental Management Plan (EMP) for the N1 road upgrade project, and the palaeontologist concerned with recording, sampling and mitigation work would need a valid collection permit from the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA).

Final Comment

In terms of archaeological heritage, the SAHRA Archaeology, Palaeontology and Meteorites (APM) Unit supports the recommendations of the author that the heritage sites be fenced off with danger tape and avoided for the duration of the construction activities. If these recommendations are followed, the SAHRA APM Unit has no objection to the development, in terms of archaeological heritage. If any new evidence of archaeological sites or artefacts, palaeontological fossils, graves or other heritage resources is found during development, SAHRA and an archaeologist and/or palaeontologist, depending on the nature of the finds, must be alerted immediately.

In terms of palaeontological heritage, the SAHRA Archaeology, Palaeontology and Meteorites (APM) Unit supports the recommendations of the author that, pending the discovery of significant new fossil remains during excavation, no further palaeontological studies or professional mitigation is required for any of these borrow pits or quarries, with the exception of the Q42.5 quarry site. Considering that the Q42.5 site is a key fossil site with significant research potential, the SAHRA APM Unit does not regard the re-opening of this site as appropriate, and requires that the Q42.5 quarry site be excluded from any development activities.

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



Upgrade of N1 between Ventersburg and Kroonstad

Our Ref: 9/2/234/0004

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CaseID: 5105

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an agency of the
Department of Arts and Culture

Yours faithfully

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South African Heritage Resources Agency

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South African Heritage Resources Agency

ADMIN:

Direct URL to case: <http://www.sahra.org.za/node/159457>

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.



The South African Heritage Resources Agency

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