

PALAEONTOLOGICAL DESKTOP ASSESSMENT: PROPOSED MINING PERMIT APPLICATION FOR THE MINING OF SAND (GENERAL) ON A CERTAIN 5HA AREA OF THE FARM LAURENCEDALE 591, REGISTRATION DIVISION: IN, NORTHWEST PROVINCE. DMRE REG: NW30/5/1/3/2/10843MP

Compiled for: Milnex CC <u>Potchefstroom Office</u> Waterberry Street, Waterberry Square, 1st Floor, Office 5B P.O. Box 1086, 2780Tel: 018 011 1925 | Fax: 087 231 7021 Email: <u>info@milnex-sa.co.za</u> www.milnex.sa.co.za

> Prepared by Banzai Environmental AUGUST 2021

Declaration of Independence

I, Elize Butler, declare that -

General declaration:

- I act as the independent palaeontological specialist in this application
- I will perform the work relating to the application in an objective manner, even if this results in views and findings that are not favorable to the applicant
- I declare that there are no circumstances that may compromise my objectivity in performing such work;
- I have expertise in conducting palaeontological impact assessments, including knowledge of the Act, Regulations and any guidelines that have relevance to the proposed activity;
- I will comply with the Act, Regulations and all other applicable legislation;
- I will take into account, to the extent possible, the matters listed in section 38 of the NHRA when preparing the application and any report relating to the application;
- I have no, and will not engage in, conflicting interests in the undertaking of the activity;
- I undertake to disclose to the applicant and the competent authority all material information in my possession that reasonably has or may have the potential of influencing - any decision to be taken with respect to the application by the competent authority; and - the objectivity of any report, plan or document to be prepared by myself for submission to the competent authority;
- I will ensure that information containing all relevant facts in respect of the application is distributed or made available to interested and affected parties and the public and that participation by interested and affected parties is facilitated in such a manner that all interested and affected parties will be provided with a reasonable opportunity to participate and to provide comments on documents that are produced to support the application;
- I will provide the competent authority with access to all information at my disposal regarding the application, whether such information is favorable to the applicant or not
- All the particulars furnished by me in this form are true and correct;
- I will perform all other obligations as expected a palaeontological specialist in terms of the Act and the constitutions of my affiliated professional bodies; and
- I realize that a false declaration is an offense in terms of regulation 71 of the Regulations and is punishable in terms of section 24F of the NEMA.

Palaeontological Desktop Assessment: Mining Permit Application for the Mining of sand (general) on a certain 5ha Area of the Farm Laurencedale 591in Northwest Province

Disclosure of Vested Interest

I do not have and will not have any vested interest (either business, financial, personal or other) in the proposed activity proceeding other than remuneration for work performed in terms of the Regulations.

PALAEONTOLOGICAL CONSULTANT: CONTACT PERSON:

Banzai Environmental (Pty) Ltd Elize Butler Tel: +27 844478759 Email: <u>elizebutler002@gmail.com</u>

SIGNATURE:

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This Palaeontological Impact Assessment report has been compiled considering the National Environmental Management Act 1998 (NEMA) and Environmental Impact Regulations 2014 as amended, requirements for specialist reports, Appendix 6, as indicated in the table below.

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Palaeontological Desktop Assessment: Mining Permit Application for the Mining of sand (general) on a certain 5ha Area of the Farm Laurencedale 591in Northwest Province

Requirements of Appendix 6 – GN R326 EIA Regulations of 7 April 2017	Relevant section in report	Comment where not applicable.
(h) A map superimposing the activity including the associated structures and infrastructure on the		
environmental sensitivities of the site including areas to be avoided, including buffers;	Section 5 – Geological and Palaeontological history	
 (i) A description of any assumptions made and any uncertainties or gaps in knowledge; 	Section 7.1 – Assumptions and Limitation	-
 (j) A description of the findings and potential implications of such findings on the impact of the proposed activity, including identified alternatives, on the environment 	Section 1 and 10	
(k) Any mitigation measures for inclusion in the EMPr	Section 11	
(I) Any conditions for inclusion in the environmental authorisation	Section 11	
(m) Any monitoring requirements for inclusion in the EMPr or environmental authorisation	Section 11	
 (n)(i) A reasoned opinion as to whether the proposed activity, activities or portions thereof should be authorised and 	Section 1 and 10	
 (n)(iA) A reasoned opinion regarding the acceptability of the proposed activity or activities; and 		
 (n)(ii) If the opinion is that the proposed activity, activities or portions thereof should be authorised, any avoidance, management and mitigation measures that should be included in the EMPr, and where applicable, the closure plan 	Section 1 and 10	-
 (o) A description of any consultation process that was undertaken during the course of carrying out the study 	N/A	Not applicable. A public consultation process will be conducted as part of the EIA and EMPr process.
(p) A summary and copies if any comments that were received during any consultation process	N/A	
(q) Any other information requested by the competent authority.	N/A	Not applicable.

Requirements of Appendix 6 – GN R326 EIA Regulations of 7 April 2017	Relevant section in report	Comment where not applicable.
(2) Where a government notice by the Minister provides for any protocol or minimum information requirement to be applied to a specialist report, the requirements as indicated in such notice will apply.	Section 3 compliance with SAHRA guidelines	

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Banzai Environmental was appointed by Milnex CC to conduct the Palaeontological Desktop Assessment assessing the proposed Mining Permit Application for the Mining of sand (general) on 5ha Area of the Farm Laurencedale 591, Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District Municipality Naledi Local Municipality, Northwest Province. To comply with the National Heritage Resources Act (No 25 of 1999, section 38) (NHRA), this PDA is necessary to confirm if fossil material could potentially be present in the planned development and to evaluate the impact of the proposed development on the Palaeontological Heritage.

The proposed Mining Permit Application on 5ha of the Farm Laurencedale 591, Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District Municipality Naledi Local Municipality, Northwest is primarily underlain by the Vryburg Formation of the Transvaal Supergroup. According to the PalaeoMap of the South African Heritage Resources Information System (SAHRIS) database, the Palaeontological Sensitivity of the Vryburg Formation of the Transvaal Supergroup is moderate (Almond and Pether, 2009; Almond *et al.*, 2013).

A Low significance has been allocated to the development site. It is therefore considered that the proposed development will not lead to detrimental impacts on the palaeontological resources of the area. The construction and operation of the mine may be authorised as the whole extent of the development footprint is not considered sensitive in terms of palaeontological resources. However, if fossil remains or trace fossils are discovered during any phase of construction, either on the surface or exposed by excavations the Environmental Control Officer (ECO) in charge of these developments must be informed. These discoveries ought to be protected and the ECO must report to SAHRA (Contact details: SAHRA, 111 Harrington Street, Cape Town. PO Box 4637, Cape Town 8000, South Africa. Tel: 021 462 4502. Fax: +27 (0)21 462 4509. Web: www.sahra.org.za) so that mitigation can be carry out by a paleontologist.

It is consequently recommended that no further palaeontological heritage studies, ground truthing and/or specialist mitigation are required pending the discovery of newly discovered fossils. Preceding any collection of fossil material, the palaeontologist would need to apply for a collection permit from SAHRA. Fossil material must be curated in an accredited collection (museum or university collection), while all fieldwork and reports should meet the minimum standards for palaeontological impact studies required by SAHRA.

Palaeontological Desktop Assessment: Mining Permit Application for the Mining of sand (general) on a certain 5ha Area of the Farm Laurencedale 591in Northwest Province

TABLE OF CONTENT

1	INTRODUCTION	1
2	QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE OF THE AUTHOR	1
3	LEGISLATION	1
3.1	National Heritage Resources Act (25 of 1999)	1
4	OBJECTIVE	6
5	GEOLOGICAL AND PALAEONTOLOGICAL HISTORY	7
6	GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF THE SITE	14
7	METHODS	14
7.1	Assumptions and Limitations	14
8	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONSULTED	15
9	IMPACT ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY	15
9.1	Impact Rating System	15
	9.1.1 Summary of Impacts	18
10	FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	19
11	REFERENCES	20

List of Figures

Figure 1: Google Earth Image (2020) indicating the locality (in yellow) of the proposed Mining Permit Application for the Mining of sand (general) on 5ha Area of the Farm Laurencedale 591, Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District Municipality Naledi Local Municipality, Northwest Province.

 Figure 3: Extract of the 1:250 000 2624 Vryburg Geological Map (Council of Geoscience,

 Pretoria) indicating the Mining Permit Application on 5ha of the Farm Laurencedale 591, Dr

 Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District Municipality Naledi Local Municipality, Northwest Province in

 yellow. Surface geology indicates that the development footprint is primarily underlain by the

 Vryheid Formation.
 10

 Figure 4: Extract of the 1 in 250 000 SAHRIS PalaeoMap map (Council of Geosciences).

 Approximate location of the proposed development is indicated in red.
 13

List of Tables

Table 1 - NEMA Table	<i>iv</i>
Table 2: Mining Co-ordinates	. 14
Table 3: The rating system	. 15

Appendix A: CV.

1 INTRODUCTION

Information provided by Milnex:

The mineral proposed to be mined is Sand. The method to be implemented is a very basic form of Open Cast Mining. Extraction of sand will be facilitated using an excavator and/or front-end loader. An area of 5ha will be accurately demarcated for mining in accordance with the specific sketch plan and will not compromise any infrastructure. An excavator and/or front-end loader will be used to strip a ±30cm layer of topsoil which will be stockpiled along boundaries of the pit for use in later rehabilitation. The topsoil stockpiles will be positioned to create a wind barrier thus preventing wind erosion across the pit and to shield the working equipment and prevent the creation of excessive dust. The excavator and/or front-end loader will excavate sand from the pit to a depth of 1m to 3m and stockpile the sand. The sand will be deposited onto the stockpile area within the permit site and loaded onto tip trucks by the front-end loader for transport off the site and for sale to the local market.

2 QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE OF THE AUTHOR

This present study has been conducted by Mrs Elize Butler. She has conducted approximately 300 palaeontological impact assessments for developments in the Free State, KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern, Central, and Northern Cape, Northwest, Gauteng, Limpopo, and Mpumalanga. She has an MSc (*cum laude*) in Zoology (specializing in Palaeontology) from the University of the Free State, South Africa and has been working in Palaeontology for more than twenty-five years. She has experience in locating, collecting, and curating fossils, including exploration field trips in search of new localities in the Karoo Basin. She has been a member of the Palaeontological Society of South Africa (PSSA) since 2006 and has been conducting PIAs since 2014.

3 LEGISLATION

3.1 National Heritage Resources Act (25 of 1999)

Cultural Heritage in South Africa, includes all heritage resources, is protected by the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999) (NHRA). Heritage resources as defined in Section 3 of the Act include "all objects recovered from the soil or waters of South Africa, including archaeological and palaeontological objects and material, meteorites and rare geological specimens".

The identification, evaluation and assessment of any cultural heritage site, artefact or finds in the South African context is required and governed by the following legislation:

- National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) Act 107 of 1998
- National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA) Act 25 of 1999
- Minerals and Petroleum Resources Development Act (MPRDA) Act 28 of 2002

Palaeontological Desktop Assessment: Mining Permit Application for the Mining of sand (general) on a certain 5ha Area of the Farm Laurencedale 591 in Northwest Province

 Notice 648 of the Government Gazette 45421- general requirements for undertaking an initial site sensitivity verification where no specific assessment protocol has been identified.

The next section in each Act is directly applicable to the identification, assessment, and evaluation of cultural heritage resources.

GNR 982 (Government Gazette 38282, 14 December 2014) promulgated under the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) Act 107 of 1998

- Basic Assessment Report (BAR) Regulations 19 and 23
- Environmental Impacts Assessment (EIA) Regulation 23
- Environmental Scoping Report (ESR) Regulation 21
- Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) Regulations 19 and 23

National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA) Act 25 of 1999

- Protection of Heritage Resources Sections 34 to 36
- Heritage Resources Management Section 38

MPRDA Regulations of 2014

Environmental reports to be compiled for application of mining right – Regulation 48

- Contents of scoping report Regulation 49
- Contents of environmental impact assessment report Regulation 50
- Environmental management programme Regulation 51
- Environmental management plan Regulation 52

The NEMA (No 107 of 1998) states that an integrated EMP should (23:2 (b)) "...identify, predict and evaluate the actual and potential impact on the environment, socio-economic conditions and cultural heritage".

In agreement with legislative requirements, EIA rating standards as well as SAHRA policies the following comprehensive and legally compatible PIA report have been compiled.

Palaeontological heritage is exceptional and non-renewable and is protected by the NHRA. Palaeontological resources and may not be unearthed, broken moved, or destroyed by any development without prior assessment and without a permit from the relevant heritage resources authority as per section 35 of the NHRA.

This Palaeontological Impact assessment forms part of the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) and adhere to the conditions of the Act. According to **Section 38 (1)**, an HIA is required to assess any potential impacts to palaeontological heritage within the development footprint where:

Palaeontological Desktop Assessment: Mining Permit Application for the Mining of sand (general) on a certain 5ha Area of the Farm Laurencedale 591 in Northwest Province

- the construction of a road, wall, power line, pipeline, canal or other similar form of linear development or barrier exceeding 300 m in length;
- the construction of a bridge or similar structure exceeding 50 m in length;
- any development or other activity which will change the character of a site—
- (exceeding 5 000 m² in extent; or
- involving three or more existing erven or subdivisions thereof; or
- involving three or more erven or divisions thereof which have been consolidated within the past five years; or
- the costs of which will exceed a sum set in terms of regulations by SAHRA or a provincial heritage resources authority
- the re-zoning of a site exceeding 10 000 m² in extent;
- or any other category of development provided for in regulations by SAHRA or a Provincial heritage resources authority.

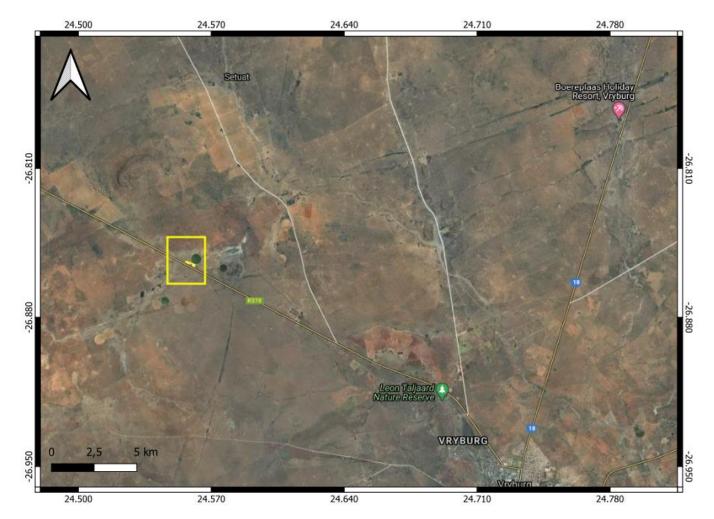


Figure 1: Google Earth Image (2020) indicating the locality (in yellow) of the proposed Mining Permit Application for the Mining of sand (general) on 5ha Area of the Farm Laurencedale 591, Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District Municipality Naledi Local Municipality, Northwest Province.

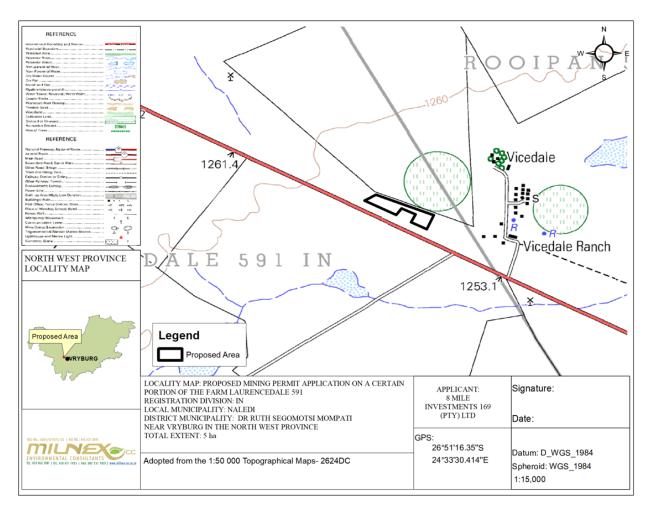


Figure 2: Locality of the proposed Mining Permit Application on 5ha of the Farm Laurencedale 591, Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District Municipality Naledi Local Municipality, Northwest Province.

4 OBJECTIVE

The aim of a Palaeontological Impact Assessment (PIA) is to decrease the effect of the development on potential fossils at the development site.

According to the "SAHRA APM Guidelines: Minimum Standards for the Archaeological and Palaeontological Components of Impact Assessment Reports" the purpose of the PIA is: 1) to identify the palaeontological importance of the rock formations in the footprint; 2) to evaluate the palaeontological magnitude of the formations; 3) to clarify the impact on fossil heritage; and 4) to suggest how the developer might protect and lessen possible damage to fossil heritage.

The palaeontological status of each rock section is calculated as well as the possible impact of the development on fossil heritage by a) the palaeontological importance of the rocks, b) the type of development and c) the quantity of bedrock removed.

When the development footprint has a moderate to high palaeontological sensitivity a field-based assessment is necessary. The desktop and the field survey of the exposed rock determine the impact significance of the planned development and recommendations for further studies or mitigation are made. Destructive impacts on palaeontological heritage usually only occur during the construction phase while the excavations will change the current topography and destruct or permanently seal-in fossils at or below the ground surface. Fossil Heritage will then no longer be accessible for scientific research.

Mitigation usually precede construction or may occur during construction when potentially fossiliferous bedrock is exposed. Mitigation comprises the collection and recording of fossils. Preceding excavation of any fossils a permit from SAHRA must be obtained and the material will have to be housed in a permitted institution. When mitigation is applied correctly, a positive impact as possible because our knowledge of local palaeontological heritage may be increased

The terms of reference of a PIA are as follows:

General Requirements:

- Adherence to the content requirements for specialist reports in accordance with Appendix
 6 of the EIA Regulations 2014, as amended.
- Adherence to all applicable best practice recommendations, appropriate legislation and authority requirements.
- Submit a comprehensive overview of all appropriate legislation, guidelines.
- Description of the proposed project and provide information regarding the developer and consultant who commissioned the study.

Palaeontological Desktop Assessment: Mining Permit Application for the Mining of sand (general) on a certain 5ha Area of the Farm Laurencedale 591 in Northwest Province

- Description and location of the proposed development and provide geological and topographical maps.
- Provide Palaeontological and geological history of the affected area.
- Identification sensitive areas to be avoided (providing shapefiles/kml's) in the proposed development.
- Evaluation of the significance of the planned development during the Pre-construction, Construction, Operation, Decommissioning Phases and Cumulative impacts. Potential impacts should be rated in terms of the direct, indirect and cumulative:
 - a. **Direct impacts** are impacts that are caused directly by the activity and generally occur at the same time and at the place of the activity.
 - b. **Indirect impacts** of an activity are indirect or induced changes that may occur as a result of the activity.
 - **c. Cumulative impacts** result from the incremental impact of the proposed activity on a common resource when added to the impacts of other past, present or reasonably foreseeable future activities.
- Fair assessment of alternatives (infrastructure alternatives have been provided):
- Recommend mitigation measures to minimise the impact of the proposed development; and
- Implications of specialist findings for the proposed development (such as permits, licenses etc).

5 GEOLOGICAL AND PALAEONTOLOGICAL HISTORY

The proposed Mining Permit Application on 5ha of the Farm Laurencedale 591, Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District Municipality Naledi Local Municipality, Northwest Province is depicted on the 1:250 000 2624 Vryburg Geological Map (1993) (Council of Geoscience, Pretoria) (Figure 3). The proposed sand mine is primarily underlain by the Vryburg Formation of the Transvaal Supergroup. According to the PalaeoMap of the South African Heritage Resources Information System (SAHRIS) database, the Palaeontological Sensitivity of the Vryburg Formation of the Transvaal Supergroup is moderate (Almond and Pether, 2009; Almond *et al.*, 2013).

Geological sediments present close to the development include the following (Figure 3)

- **Qa**; gravel, diamondiferous in places.
- **T-Qc**-Tertiary to Quaternary calcrete.
- Vb- Boomplaas Member; Schmidsdrift Formation, Campbell Group.
- **Ra** Allanridge Formation, Platberg Group and Ventersdorp Supergroup.

Palaeontological Desktop Assessment: Mining Permit Application for the Mining of sand (general) on a certain 5ha Area of the Farm Laurencedale 591 in Northwest Province

The proposed development site near Vryburg consists of characteristic flat-lying terrain of the Ghaap Plateau region. The climate is semi-arid and the vegetation cover of grassy thornveld is mapped as Ghaap Plateau Vaalbosveld. Small, low and scattered bedrock exposure may be present on the development site, but the literature states that the exposures are rare apart from along riverbanks and steeper hill slopes (Almond, 2013). Images from Google Earth show a flat relief and bedrock mantled by reddish-brown soils. These sandy soils contain abundant gravel clasts, primarily cherty material down wasted from the underlying Boomplaas Formation (Eriksson, *et al.*, 2006).

The proposed sand mine area is underlain by shallow marine or lagoon sediments as well as volcanic rocks of the **Vryburg Formation**. This Formation is roughly 140 m thick and overlies lavas of the Ventersdorp Supergroup. The lower portion of the Vryburg succession consists of basal conglomerates followed by the 20 m thick Kobaga beds which show prominent weathering of cross-bedded feldspathic quartzites. The Kobaga beds are overlain by *c*. 20 m andesitic or basaltic lavas of the Rosendal Member and finally by the Waterloo Member which consists of c. 20-50 m of amydaloidal and non-amydaloidal basaltic or andesitic lavas and is overlain by 14 m of interbedded pyroclastic sediments and thin lenticular limestones. These sediments form the top of the Vryburg Formation and are followed by the overlying carbonate rich Boomplaas Formation which is present to the south of the mining site. The Boomplaas Formation is known to contain well-preserved stromatolite (microbial dome) assemblages in the Vryburg region.

Microbial stromatolites in the upper Vryburg Formation were described by Smith (1991). The stromatolitic carbonates are interpreted to be intertidal (Altermann and Wotherspoon, 1995). Detailed descriptions of the Vryburg stromatolite occurrences are not present in the literature although South African Archaean stromatolites have been discussed in detail (Altermann, 2001; Buick, 2001; and Schopf, 2006). Columnar stromatolites from the Schmidtsdrif Subgroup of the Northern Cape have been described by Bertrand-Sarfarti and Eriksson (1977).

The Boomplaas beds are characterized by grey dolomites which weathers reddish-brown with subordinate interbeds of limestone (weathering blue-grey), quartzite, flaggy sandstone and shale. Oolitic and stromatolitic dolomite alternating with intervals of carbonaceous possible lagoonal mudrocks containing interbeds of calcareous sandstone and mudclast breccias is present. The Boomplaas beds are overlain by the grey- to khaki-hued mudrocks and interbedded dolomites, flagstones, tuffites and BIF-like cherts of the Clearwater Formation (= Lokamonna Formation), the topmost unit of the Schmidtsdrif Subgroup. Stromatolites and oolites from the Transvaal Supergroup have been described by various authors (Keyser and Du Plessis, 1993; Truswell and Eriksson, 1973; Eriksson and Altermann, 1998).

Palaeontological Desktop Assessment: Mining Permit Application for the Mining of sand (general) on a certain 5ha Area of the Farm Laurencedale 591 in Northwest Province

In the Griqualand West Basin, the Schmidtsdrif Subgroup is the basal subdivision of the Late Archaean to Early Proterozoic Ghaap Group (Transvaal Supergroup), Ghaap Plateau Sub-basin. The Schmidtsdrif Subgroup can be divided into the geological older Boomplaas Formation and younger Clearwater Formation. The Ghaap Group represents 200 Ma of chemical sedimentation of which iron and manganese ores, cherts and carbonates with subordinate silicastic rocks are prominent within the Griqualand West Basin.

The Ventersdorp Supergroup was the third Basin to develop and presents a unique volacanosedimentary supracrustal record. The Ventersdorp Supergroup comprise of the biggest and most wide-spread system of valocanic rocks in the Kaapvaal Craton. The best exposures of the Ventersdorp Supergroup are in the Northern Cape and North West Province as well as Gauteng and southern Botswana. This Supergroup consists of (from oldest to youngest) the Kliprivierberg Group, which is overlain by the Platberg Group, followed by the sedimentary Bothaville Formation and the volcanic Allanridge Formation (uppermost Ventersdorp unit and youngest Formation).

The Platberg Group is subdivided in four formations namely the Kameeldoorns-, Goedgenoeg-, Makwassie-, and Rietgat Formations. These formations consist of heterogenous rock varying from chemical and classic sediments, to felsic and mafic volcanics (Visser et al, 1975-1976, Buck, 1980). The Allanridge Formation comprise mostly of light-greenish grey porphyritic lava, dark-green amygdaloidal lava, and pyroclastic rocks (Keyser, 1992). The lavas are approximately 2700 million years old and comprise of basaltic andesites. The Vryburg Formation overlies the Ventersdorp Supergroup and is interpreted as a fluvial to marginal marine deposit that comprise of basal transgressive conglomerate and quartzites, subordinate stromatolitic carbonates and shales (Eriksson et al., 2006).

Palaeontological Desktop Assessment: Mining Permit Application for the Mining of sand (general) on a certain 5ha Area of the Farm Laurencedale 591 in Northwest Province

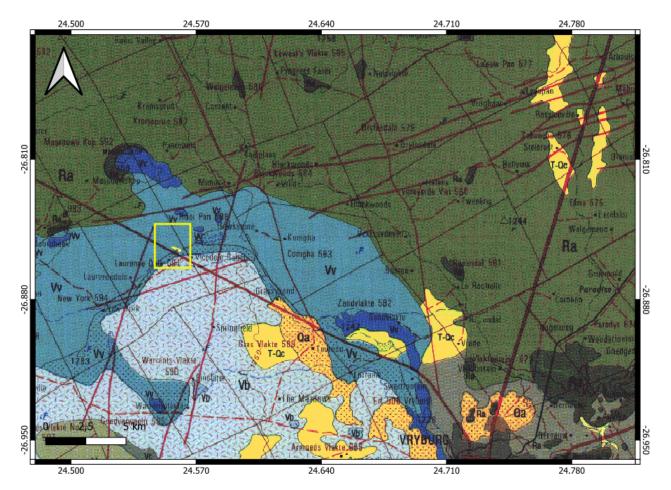
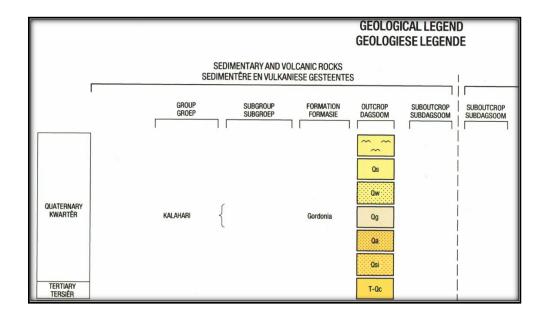
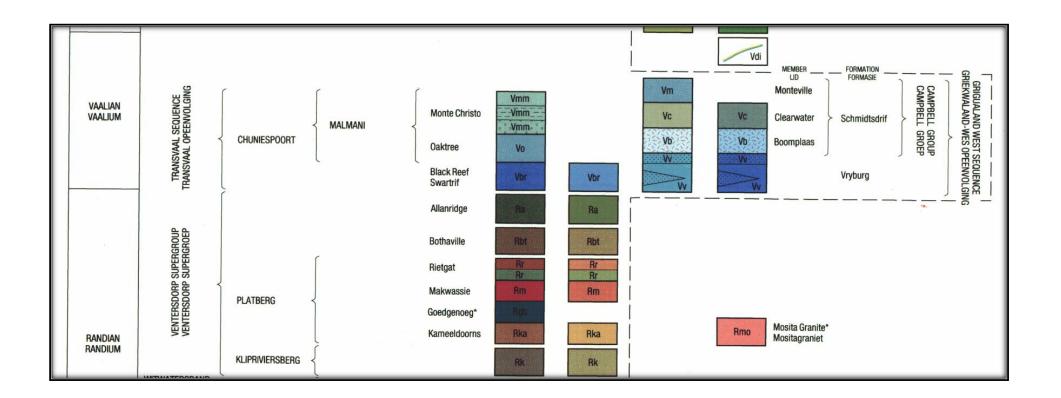


Figure 3: Extract of the 1:250 000 2624 Vryburg Geological Map (Council of Geoscience, Pretoria) indicating the Mining Permit Application on 5ha of the Farm Laurencedale 591, Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District Municipality Naledi Local Municipality, Northwest Province in yellow. Surface geology indicates that the development footprint is primarily underlain by the Vryheid Formation.

Legend of 250 000 2624 Vryburg Geological Map) (Council for Geosciences, Pretoria)

Qa; gravel, diamondiferous in places; T-Qc-Tertiary to Quaternary Calcrete; W; Vryburg Formation; Vb- Boomplaas Member; Schmidsdrift Formation, Campbell Group; Ra – Allanridge Formation, Platberg Group and Ventersdorp Supergroup





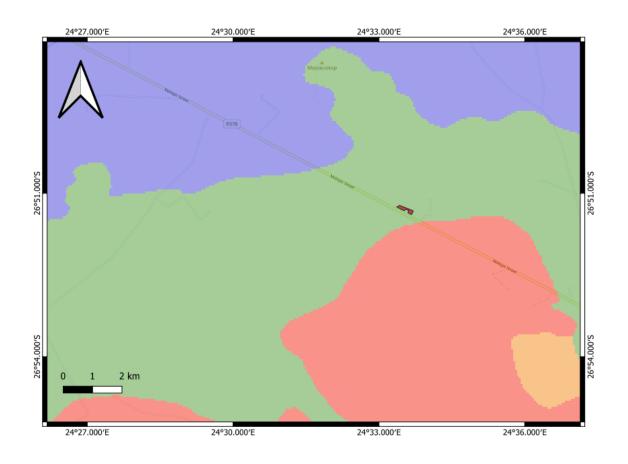


Figure 4: Extract of the 1 in 250 000 SAHRIS PalaeoMap map (Council of Geosciences). Approximate location of the proposed development is indicated in red.

Colour	Sensitivity	Required Action
RED	VERY HIGH	field assessment and protocol for finds is required
ORANGE/YELLOW	HIGH	desktop study is required and based on the outcome of the desktop study; a field assessment is likely
GREEN	MODERATE	desktop study is required
BLUE	LOW	no palaeontological studies are required however a protocol for finds is required
GREY	INSIGNIFICANT/ZERO	no palaeontological studies are required
WHITE/CLEAR	UNKNOWN	these areas will require a minimum of a desktop study. As more information comes to light, SAHRA will continue to populate the map.

Palaeontological Desktop Assessment: Mining Permit Application for the Mining of sand (general) on a certain 5ha Area of the Farm Laurencedale 591 in Northwest Province

According to the SAHRIS Palaeosensitivity map (Figure 4) there is a moderate chance (green) of finding fossils in this area.

6 GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF THE SITE

The proposed Mining of sand on 5ha of the Farm Laurencedale 591, Naledi Local Municipality in Northwest Province is located about 23.7 Km, West of Vryburg on the R378.

Farms	Longitude	Latitude
	-26.853645°	24.556999°
	-26.854128°	24.556067°
	-26.855304°	24.558637°
Laurencedale 591	-26.854766°	24.559080°
	-26.855246°	24.560205°
	-26.855870°	24.559874°
	-26.856458°	24.561128°
	-26.855326°	24.561707°

Table 2: Mining Co-ordinates

7 METHODS

The aim of a desktop study is to evaluate the risk to palaeontological heritage in the proposed development. This includes all trace fossils and fossils. All available information is consulted to compile a desktop study and includes Palaeontological Impact Assessment reports in the same area; aerial photos and Google Earth images, topographical as well as geological maps.

7.1 Assumptions and Limitations

The focal point of geological maps is the geology of the area and the sheet explanations were not meant to focus on palaeontological heritage. Many inaccessible regions of South Africa have never been reviewed by palaeontologists and data is generally based on aerial photographs alone. Locality and geological information of museums and universities databases have not been kept up to date or data collected in the past have not always been accurately documented.

Comparable Assemblage Zones in other areas is sourced to provide information on the existence of fossils in an area which was not documented in the past. When using similar Assemblage Zones and geological formations for Desktop studies it is generally **assumed** that exposed fossil heritage is

Palaeontological Desktop Assessment: Mining Permit Application for the Mining of sand (general) on a certain 5ha Area of the Farm Laurencedale 591 in Northwest Province

present within the footprint. A field-assessment will thus improve the accuracy of the desktop assessment.

8 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONSULTED

In compiling this report the following sources were consulted:

- Geological map 1:100 000, Geology of the Republic of South Africa (Visser 1984);
- 1: 250 000 2624 Vryburg Geological map (1993) (Council of Geoscience);
- A Google Earth map with polygons of the proposed development was obtained from Milnex CC.;
- 1:50 000 Topographical Maps 2624 DC

9 IMPACT ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

9.1 Impact Rating System

Impact assessment must take account of the nature, scale and duration of impacts on the environment whether such impacts are positive or negative. Each impact is also assessed according to the following project phases:

- Construction
- Operation
- Decommissioning

Where necessary, the proposal for mitigation or optimisation of an impact should be detailed. A brief discussion of the impact and the rationale behind the assessment of its significance should also be included. The rating system is applied to the potential impacts on the receiving environment and includes an objective evaluation of the mitigation of the impact. In assessing the significance of each impact the following criteria is used:

Table 3: The rating system

NATUR	NATURE			
Include	Include a brief description of the impact of environmental parameter being assessed in the context of			
the proj	the project. This criterion includes a brief written statement of the environmental aspect being			
impacte	impacted upon by a particular action or activity.			
GEOGRAPHICAL EXTENT				
This is defined as the area over which the impact will be experienced.				
1	Site	The impact will only affect the site.		

2	Local/district	Will affect the local area or district.
3	Province/region	Will affect the entire province or region.
4	International and National	Will affect the entire country.
PRO	BABILITY	
This	describes the chance of occurrent	ce of an impact.
1	Unlikely	The chance of the impact occurring is extremely low
		(Less than a 25% chance of occurrence).
2	Possible	The impact may occur (Between a 25% to 50% chance
		of occurrence).
3	Probable	The impact will likely occur (Between a 50% to 75%
		chance of occurrence).
4	Definite	Impact will certainly occur (Greater than a 75% chance of
		occurrence).

DURA	DURATION		
This de	This describes the duration of the impacts. Duration indicates the lifetime of the impact as a result		
of the p	proposed activity.		
1	Short term	The impact will either disappear with mitigation or will be	
		mitigated through natural processes in a span shorter	
		than the construction phase $(0 - 1 \text{ years})$, or the impact	
		will last for the period of a relatively short construction	
		period and a limited recovery time after construction,	
		thereafter it will be entirely negated $(0 - 2 \text{ years})$.	
2	Medium term	The impact will continue or last for some time after the	
		construction phase but will be mitigated by direct human	
		action or by natural processes thereafter (2 – 10 years).	
3	Long term	The impact and its effects will continue or last for the	
		entire operational life of the development, but will be	
		mitigated by direct human action or by natural processes	
		thereafter (10 – 30 years).	
4	Permanent	The only class of impact that will be non-transitory.	
		Mitigation either by man or natural process will not occur	
		in such a way or such a time span that the impact can be	
		considered indefinite.	
INTEN	INTENSITY/ MAGNITUDE		
Descri	Describes the severity of an impact.		
1	Low	Impact affects the quality, use and integrity of the	
		system/component in a way that is barely perceptible.	

2	Medium	Impact alters the quality, use and integrity of the system/component but system/component still continues to function in a moderately modified way and maintains general integrity (some impact on integrity).
3	High	Impact affects the continued viability of the system/ component and the quality, use, integrity and functionality of the system or component is severely impaired and may temporarily cease. High costs of rehabilitation and remediation.
4	Very high	Impact affects the continued viability of the system/component and the quality, use, integrity and functionality of the system or component permanently ceases and is irreversibly impaired. Rehabilitation and remediation often impossible. If possible rehabilitation and remediation often unfeasible due to extremely high costs of rehabilitation and remediation.

REVERSIBILITY				
This describes the degree to which an impact can be successfully reversed upon completion of the				
propos	proposed activity.			
1	Completely reversible	The impact is reversible with implementation of minor		
		mitigation measures.		
2	Partly reversible	The impact is partly reversible but more intense mitigation		
		measures are required.		
3	Barely reversible	The impact is unlikely to be reversed even with intense		
		mitigation measures.		
4	Irreversible	The impact is irreversible and no mitigation measures		
		exist.		
IRREPLACEABLE LOSS OF RESOURCES				
This describes the degree to which resources will be irreplaceably lost as a result of a proposed				
activity.				
1	No loss of resource	The impact will not result in the loss of any resources.		
2	Marginal loss of resource	The impact will result in marginal loss of resources.		
3	Significant loss of resources	The impact will result in significant loss of resources.		
4	Complete loss of resources	The impact is result in a complete loss of all resources.		
CUMULATIVE EFFECT				
This describes the cumulative effect of the impacts. A cumulative impact is an effect which in itself				
may not be significant but may become significant if added to other existing or potential impacts				
emanating from other similar or diverse activities as a result of the project activity in question.				

1	Negligible cumulative impact	The impact would result in negligible to no cumulative effects.	
2	Low cumulative impact	The impact would result in insignificant cumulative effects.	
3	Medium cumulative impact	The impact would result in minor cumulative effects.	
4	High cumulative impact	The impact would result in significant cumulative effects	

SIGNIFICANCE

Significance is determined through a synthesis of impact characteristics. Significance is an indication of the importance of the impact in terms of both physical extent and time scale, and therefore indicates the level of mitigation required. The calculation of the significance of an impact uses the following formula:

(Extent + probability + reversibility + irreplaceability + duration + cumulative effect) x magnitude/intensity.

The summation of the different criteria will produce a non-weighted value. By multiplying this value with the magnitude/intensity, the resultant value acquires a weighted characteristic which can be measured and assigned a significance rating.

Points	Impact significance rating	Description
6 to 28	Negative low impact	The anticipated impact will have negligible negative
		effects and will require little to no mitigation.
6 to 28	Positive low impact	The anticipated impact will have minor positive effects.
29 to 50	Negative medium impact	The anticipated impact will have moderate negative
		effects and will require moderate mitigation measures.
29 to 50	Positive medium impact	The anticipated impact will have moderate positive
		effects.
51 to 73	Negative high impact	The anticipated impact will have significant effects and
		will require significant mitigation measures to achieve an
		acceptable level of impact.
51 to 73	Positive high impact	The anticipated impact will have significant positive
		effects.
74 to 96	Negative very high impact	The anticipated impact will have highly significant effects
		and are unlikely to be able to be mitigated adequately.
		These impacts could be considered "fatal flaws".
74 to 96	Positive very high impact	The anticipated impact will have highly significant positive

9.1.1 Summary of Impacts

Only the site will be affected (1). It is probable that the impact will occur (3). The expected duration of the impact is assessed as potentially permanent to long term (4). The impact on fossil heritage will *Palaeontological Desktop Assessment: Mining Permit Application for the Mining of sand (general) on a certain 5ha Area of*

be irreversible and a complete loss of fossil heritage will take place (4). The cumulative effect of the impact will be Low (1). The magnitude of the impact happening will be low (1)

Significance = (Extent (1) + probability (3) + reversibility (4) + irreplaceability (4) + duration (4) + cumulative effect) (2) x magnitude/intensity (1) = 18.

The Impact significance will therefore be a negative low Impact.

10 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The proposed Mining Permit Application on 5ha of the Farm Laurencedale 591, Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District Municipality Naledi Local Municipality, Northwest is primarily underlain by the Vryburg Formation of the Transvaal Supergroup. According to the PalaeoMap of the South African Heritage Resources Information System (SAHRIS) database, the Palaeontological Sensitivity of the Vryburg Formation of the Transvaal Supergroup is moderate (Almond and Pether, 2009; Almond *et al.*, 2013).

A Low significance has been allocated to the development site. It is therefore considered that the proposed development will not lead to detrimental impacts on the palaeontological resources of the area. The construction and operation of the mine may be authorised as the whole extent of the development footprint is not considered sensitive in terms of palaeontological resources. However, if fossil remains or trace fossils are discovered during any phase of construction, either on the surface or exposed by excavations the Environmental Control Officer (ECO) in charge of these developments must be informed. These discoveries ought to be protected and the ECO must report to SAHRA (Contact details: SAHRA, 111 Harrington Street, Cape Town. PO Box 4637, Cape Town 8000, South Africa. Tel: 021 462 4502. Fax: +27 (0)21 462 4509. Web: <u>www.sahra.org.za</u>) so that mitigation can be carry out by a paleontologist.

It is consequently recommended that no further palaeontological heritage studies, ground truthing and/or specialist mitigation are required pending the discovery of newly discovered fossils. Preceding any collection of fossil material, the palaeontologist would need to apply for a collection permit from SAHRA. Fossil material must be curated in an accredited collection (museum or university collection), while all fieldwork and reports should meet the minimum standards for palaeontological impact studies required by SAHRA.

Palaeontological Desktop Assessment: Mining Permit Application for the Mining of sand (general) on a certain 5ha Area of the Farm Laurencedale 591 in Northwest Province

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