PALAEONTOLOGICAL DESKTOP ASSESMENT FOR THE PROPOSED MINING PERMIT APPLICATION COMBINED WITH A WASTE LICENSE APPLICATION FOR THE MINING OF DIAMONDS (ALLUVIAL) NEAR SCHWEITZER-RENEKE ON A CERTAIN PORTION OF PORTION 12 (PTN OF PTN 7) OF THE FARM DOORNHOEK 165, REGISTRATION DIVISION: HO, NORTH WEST PROVINCE

(NW30/5/1/3/2/10757MP)

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> Prepared by Banzai Environmental 5 July 2020

# **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.

# **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 Desktop Assessment of the proposed: Mining Permit application combined with a waste licence application for the mining of Diamonds (Alluvial) near Schweitzer-Reneke, Registration Division: HO, North West

# PALAEONTOLOGICAL CONSULTANT:

CONTACT PERSON:



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.

Table	1 -	NEMA	Table
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		Comment
Requirements of Appendix 6 – GN R326 EIA	Relevant section in	where not
Regulations of 7 April 2017	report	applicable.
	Page ii and Section 2	-
	of Report - Contact	
	details and company	
1.(1) (a) (i) Details of the specialist who prepared the report	and Appendix A	
(ii) The expertise of that person to compile a specialist	Section 2 - refer to	-
report including a curriculum vitae	Appendix A	
(b) A declaration that the person is independent in a form as may be specified by the competent authority	Page ii of the report	-
(c) An indication of the scope of, and the purpose for which, the report was prepared	Section 4 – Objective	-
	Section 5 –	-
	Geological and	
(cA) An indication of the quality and age of base data	Palaeontological	
used for the specialist report	history	
(cB) a description of existing impacts on the site,		-
cumulative impacts of the proposed development	Section 9	
and levels of acceptable change;		
(d) The duration, date and season of the site		
investigation and the relevance of the season to the	Desktop Study	
outcome of the assessment		
(e) a description of the methodology adopted in		-
preparing the report or carrying out the specialised	Section 7 Approach	
process inclusive of equipment and modelling used	and Methodology	
(f) details of an assessment of the specific identified		
sensitivity of the site related to the proposed activity		
or activities and its associated structures and		
infrastructure, inclusive of a site plan identifying site		
alternatives;	Section 1 and 10	
		No buffers or
		areas of
(g) An identification of any areas to be avoided, including		sensitivity
buffers	Section 5	identified

		Comment
Requirements of Appendix 6 – GN R326 EIA	Relevant section in	where not
Regulations of 7 April 2017	report	applicable.
(h) A map superimposing the activity including the	Section 5 –	
associated structures and infrastructure on the	Geological and	
environmental sensitivities of the site including areas	Palaeontological	
to be avoided, including buffers;	history	
	Section 7.1 –	-
(i) A description of any assumptions made and any	Assumptions and	
uncertainties or gaps in knowledge;	Limitation	
(j) A description of the findings and potential implications		
of such findings on the impact of the proposed	Section 1 and 10	
activity, including identified alternatives, on the		
environment		
(k) Any mitigation measures for inclusion in the EMPr	Section 11	
(I) Any conditions for inclusion in the environmental		None
authorisation		required
(m) Any monitoring requirements for inclusion in the		
EMPr or environmental authorisation	Section 11	
(n)(i) A reasoned opinion as to whether the proposed	Section 1 and 10	
activity, activities or portions thereof should be		
authorised and		
(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	Section 1 and 10	
measures that should be included in the EMPr,		
and where applicable, the closure plan		
		Not
		applicable. A
		public
		consultation
		process wil
(a) A departation of any consultation are set to t		be conducted
(o) A description of any consultation process that was		as part of the
undertaken during the course of carrying out the		EIA and EMP
study	N/A	process.
(p) A summary and copies if any comments that were		
received during any consultation process	N/A	

		Comment
Requirements of Appendix 6 – GN R326 EIA	Relevant section in	where not
Regulations of 7 April 2017	report	applicable.
(q) Any other information requested by the competent		Not
authority.	N/A	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 (PDA) to assess a certain Portion of Portion 12 (ptn of ptn 7) of the Farm Doornhoek 165, Registration Division: Ho, North West Province. The project entails a Mining Permit Application combined with a Waste License Application for Mining of Diamonds (Alluvial) near Schweitzer-Reneke. The National Heritage Resources Act (No 25 of 1999, section 38) (NHRA), states that a Palaeontological Impact Assessment (PIA) is necessary to discover fossil material within the planned development. This PIA is thus necessary to evaluate the effect of the construction on the palaeontological resources.

The study area is primary underlain by sediments of the Vryheid Formation (Ecca Group, Karoo Supergroup) and underlying Ventersdorp Supergroup. According to the PalaeoMap of South African Heritage Resources Information System the Palaeontological Sensitivity of the Vryheid Formation (Ecca Group, Karoo Supergroup) is Very High and that of the Venterdorp Supergroup is Moderate (Almond and Pether 2008, SAHRIS website). However, the area has been utilized by agricultural activities for many years and during this time no fossiliferous outcrops have been recovered. In the absence of fossiliferous outcrops, the construction and operation of the development may be authorised as the whole extent as the development footprint is not considered sensitive in terms of palaeontological resources.

However, if fossil remains are discovered during any phase of construction, either on the surface or exposed by excavations, the **Chance Find Protocol** must be implemented by the ECO or site manager in charge of these developments. Fossil discoveries should be protected, and the ECO/site manager 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 suitable mitigation can be implemented.

Before any fossil material can be collected from the development site the specialist involved would need to apply for a collection permit from SAHRA. Fossil material must be housed in an official collection (museum or university collection), while all reports and fieldwork should meet the minimum standards for palaeontological impact studies proposed by SAHRA.

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#### **1** INTRODUCTION

Banzai Environmental was appointed by Milnex CC to conduct the Palaeontological Desktop Assessment (PDA) to assess a certain Portion of Portion 12 (ptn of ptn 7) of the Farm Doornhoek 165, Registration Division: Ho, North West Province. The project entails a Mining Permit Application combined with a Waste License Application for Mining of Diamonds (Alluvial) near Schweitzer-Reneke (Figure 1-3).

# 1.1 BACKGROND

#### (Information provided by Milnex CC)

Mining has played a vital role in the economy of South Africa for over 100 years. In 2015 the mining industry contributed R286 billion towards South African Gross Domestic Product (GDP) representing 7.1% of overall GDP. Mining is a significant contributor to employment in the nation, with 457 698 individuals directly employed by the sector in 2015. This represents just over 3% of all employed nationally. Diamond mining has 17 885 direct employees. Diamonds, arguably the ultimate luxury mineral, comprise an intricate lattice of carbon atoms, a crystalline structure that makes them harder than any other form in nature. This characteristic makes diamonds not only popular in jewellery, but also desirable in high-tech cutting, grinding and polishing tools (Chamber of Mines, South Africa, 12:2016). According to the Chamber of Mines the country's diamond sector is far from reaching the end of its life even though diamond mining has been taking place in South Africa for almost a century and a half. The primary sources of all of South Africa's diamonds are kimberlites in ancient, vertically dipping volcanic pipes most of which were located in the vicinity of the city of Kimberley and which were initially amenable to open-cast.

Economic growth - South Africa's total reserves remain some of the world's most valuable, with an estimated worth of R20.3- trillion. Overall, the country is estimated to have the world's fifth-largest mining sector in terms of GDP value. It has the world's largest reserves of manganese and platinum group metals (PGMs), according to the US Geological Survey, and among the largest reserves of gold, diamonds, chromite ore and vanadium. With South Africa's economy built on gold and diamond mining, the sector is an important foreign exchange earner, with gold accounting for more than one-third of exports. In 2009, the country's diamond industry was the fourth largest in the world. Mining is a cornerstone of the economy, making a significant contribution to economic activity, job creation and foreign exchange earnings. Mining and its related industries are critical to South Africa's socio-economic development.

Mining will be restricted to the 5ha applied for. For every 1 Ha there will be no more than 10 trenches at any given time, which will be dug. Each trench will be 40m x 25m. Concurrent backfilling will take place to rehabilitate. The maximum area to be disturbed by mining activities at any given time, is only approximately 0.25ha

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**DESCRIPTION OF PLANNED INVASIVE ACTIVITIES**: (These activities result in land disturbances e.g. sampling, drilling, bulk sampling, etc.) (Information provided by Milnex CC)

The process of alluvial diamond mining involves digging and sifting through mud, sand and gravel. Typically, diamonds come from geologic rock formations called Kimberlites. Kimberlite rock formations that contain diamonds are eroded over time by rivers and streams and can deposit diamonds in the sediments carried by those streams farther downstream from the original source rocks. These deposits are called alluvial diamond deposits. The locations of these alluvial diamond deposits are controlled by the surrounding topography, drainage patterns, and the location of the Kimberlites themselves. Vegetation clearance takes place first from where stripping and stockpiling of topsoil. All topsoil (irrespective of depth) is stripped separately with an excavator and frond-end loader and stockpiled next to the first pit. The topsoil will be stored in such a way that the minimum runoff and erosion will emanate from it. The topsoil will be stored in a pile; around the pile surface runoff trenches will be constructed to divert any runoff around the pile. The topsoil will be used for final rehabilitation when mining has reached its end of life span. Concurrent rehabilitation will also be done. Alluvial mining requires a considerable amount of material (called the 'over-burden') to be removed first to get to the gravel bed underneath, where diamonds are found. Once the topsoil has been removed the overburden is then stripped and placed adjacent the excavation. Once the overburden has been removed the exposed diamondiferous gravel is stripped with an excavator and stockpiled on the side on the excavation and from where frond-end loaders haul it to the mineral processing plant, as needed (different location than excavations). At the plant, the gravel is fed into the primary conveyer by frondend loaders. The gravel is fed by the conveyer into the rotating pans. The total amount of water used for processing is between 10 000 and 18 000 litres an hour, depending on the size of the pan, of which 50% will be re-circulated from the open excavations in which the wet puddle is flowing and 50% is added by means of fresh water. The concentrate out of the pans goes directly into the steels bins that are sorted for final recovery on site. The wet waste tailings coming out of the pans is pumped to open excavations and possibly a slimes dam, from where excess water is re-cycled. For backfilling and rehabilitation, the following procedures will be as follow: Concurrent backfilling will take place in order to rehabilitate.

Topsoil will be removed from trench no.1, where after it will be stored separately on the proposed area. Stored topsoil will be kept separate from overburden. Stored topsoil will be adequately protected from being eroded or blown away. The exposed diamondiferous gravel of trench no.1 and no.2 will then be removed. The diamondiferous gravel will be sorted by means of a screen and all material larger than for example 100mm will be separated from the rest. This material will be used in the backfilling stage. Screened material for example smaller than 100mm will be fed into a wet rotary screen and then directly onto the washing pans. As mining activities progress from trench no.2 towards the following trench no.3, backfilling and rehabilitation of trench no.1 will commence. The coarse gravel sifted at the screen,

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tailings from the pans and fine concrete will be transported back into open trench no.1. During this process of backfilling, variation in the dumping sequence of different sized materials will be followed to ensure better compaction and stability of the reclaimed gravel. This will ensure that voids surrounding the coarse gravel will be filled up with finer sediments. Compaction will be achieved through heavy vehicles during backfilling stage. This sequence will be utilised for the final rehabilitation of the last actively trench. The topsoil stored at the beginning of mining will now be utilised for final rehabilitation.

# 2 QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE OF THE AUTHOR

The author (Elize Butler) has an MSc in Palaeontology from the University of the Free State, Bloemfontein, South Africa. She has been working in Palaeontology for more than twenty-six 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 for 16 years. She has been conducting PIAs since 2014.

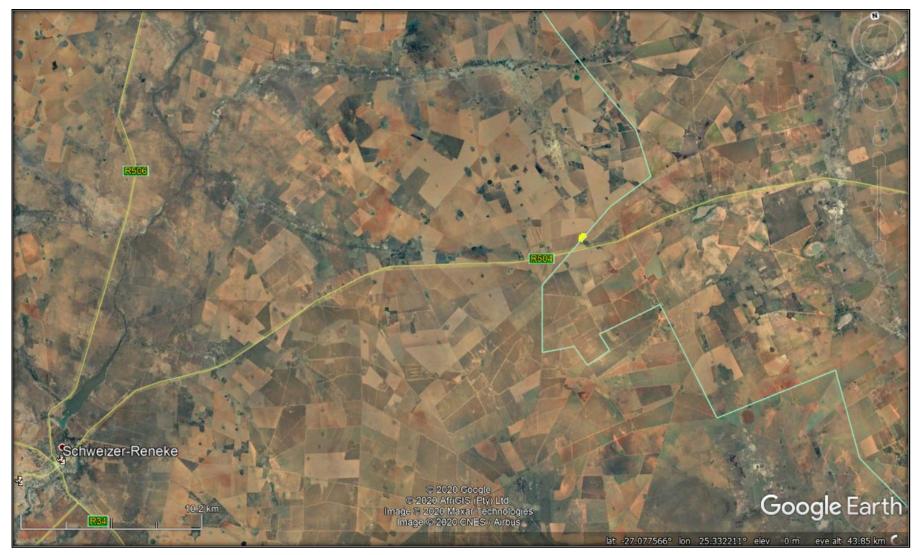


Figure 1: Google Earth (2020) image indicating the locality of the proposed Mining Permit Application combined with a Waste License Application (in yellow) near Schweitzer-Reneke Registration Division: Ho, North West Province.

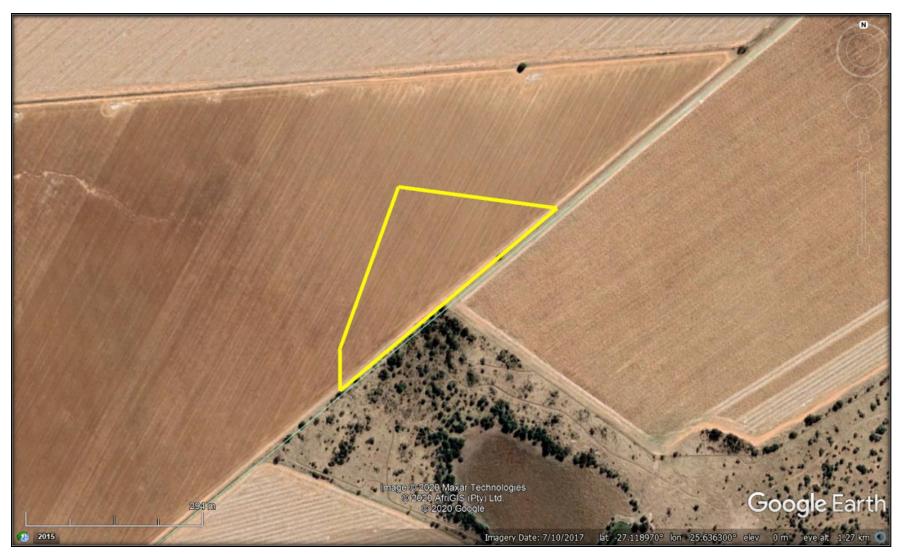


Figure 2: Close up Google Earth Image (2020) indicating the locality of the proposed mining development.

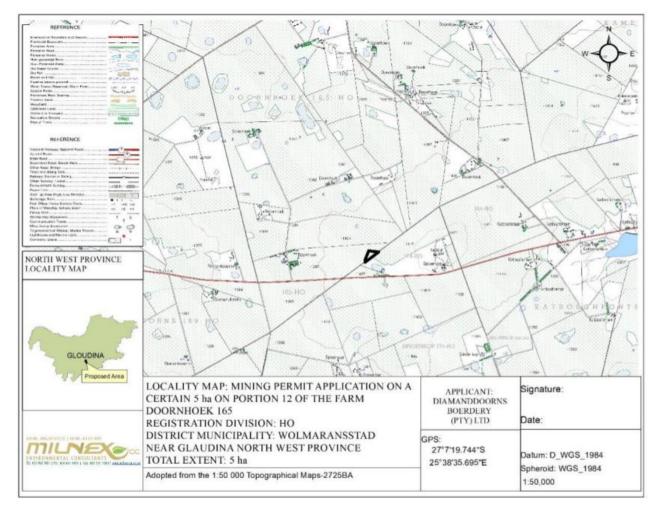


Figure 3: Topographical map indicating the locality of the proposed diamond mining development on Portion of Portion 12 (ptn of ptn 7) of the Farm Doornhoek 165 near Schweitzer-Reneke Registration Division: Ho, North West Province.

# 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".

Palaeontological heritage is unique and non-renewable and is protected by the NHRA. Palaeontological resources 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)**, a HIA is required to assess any potential impacts to palaeontological heritage within the development footprint where:

- the construction of a road, wall, power line, pipeline, canal or other similar form of linear development or barrier exceeding 300m in length;
- the construction of a bridge or similar structure exceeding 50m in length;
- any development or other activity which will change the character of a site
  - a. (exceeding 5 000 m<sup>2</sup> in extent; or
  - b. involving three or more existing erven or subdivisions thereof; or
  - c. involving three or more erven or divisions thereof which have been consolidated within the past five years; or
  - d. the costs of which will exceed a sum set in terms of regulations by SAHRA or a provincial heritage resources authority
  - e. the re-zoning of a site exceeding 10 000m<sup>2</sup> in extent;
- or any other category of development provided for in regulations by SAHRA or a Provincial heritage resources authority.

#### 4 OBJECTIVE

The objective of a Palaeontological Impact Assessment (PIA) is to determine the impact of the development on potential palaeontological material at the site.

According to the "SAHRA APM Guidelines: Minimum Standards for the Archaeological and Palaeontological Components of Impact Assessment Reports" the aims of the PIA are: 1) to

Palaeontological Desktop Assessment of the proposed: Mining Permit application combined with a waste licence application for the mining of Diamonds (Alluvial) near Schweitzer-Reneke, Registration Division: HO, North West

**identify** the palaeontological status of the exposed as well as rock formations just below the surface in the development footprint 2) to estimate the **palaeontological importance** of the formations 3) to determine the **impact** on fossil heritage; and 4) to recommend how the developer ought to protect or mitigate damage to fossil heritage.

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;
- 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/kmls) 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** are impacts that 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).

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### 5 GEOLOGICAL AND PALAEONTOLOGICAL HISTORY

The proposed mining development near Schweitzer-Reneke is depicted on the 1:250 000 2724 Christiana Geological Map (Council of Geoscience) (Figure 4). The development is located on Portion of Portion 12 (ptn of ptn 7) of the Farm Doornhoek 165. The project comprises of the Mining Permit Application combined with a Waste License Application for Mining of Diamonds (Alluvial) near Schweitzer-Reneke Registration Division: Ho, North West Province.

The proposed development is entirely underlain by sediments of the Vryheid Formation (Ecca Group) and underlying Ventersdorp Supergroup. The **Vryheid Formation** comprises mudrock, rhythmite, siltstone and fine- to coarse-grained sandstone (pebbly in places). The Formation contains up to five (mineable) coal seams. The different lithofacies are mainly arranged in upward-coarsening deltaic cycles (up to 80m thick in the southeast). Fining-upward fluvial cycles, of which up to six are present in the east, are typically sheet-like in geometry, although some form valley-fill deposits. They comprise coarse-grained to pebbly, immature sandstones - with an abrupt upward transition into fine-grained sediments and coal seams.

The Vryheid Formation is known to contain a rich assemblage of Glossopteris flora which is the source vegetation for the Vryheid Formation. Gymnospermous glossopterids dominated the peat and non-peat accumulating of Permian wetlands after continental deglaciation took place (Falcon, 1986c, Greb et al., 2006).

Recent paleobotanical studies include that of Adenforff (2005), Bordy and Prefec (2008) and Prefec *et al.* (2008, 2009, 2010) and Prevec, (2011). Bamford (2011) described numerous plant fossils from this formation (e.g. *Azaniodendron fertile*, *Cyclodendron leslii*, *Sphenophyllum hammanskraalensis*, *Annularia sp.*, *Raniganjia sp.*, *Asterotheca spp.*, *Liknopetalon enigmata*, *Hirsutum* sp., *Scutum* sp., *Ottokaria* sp., *Estcourtia* sp., *Arberia* sp., *Lidgetonnia* sp., *Noeggerathiopsis* sp., *Podocarpidites* sp as well as more than 20 Glossopteris species.

In the past palynological studies have focused on the coal bearing successions of the Vryheid Formation and include articles by Aitken (1993, 1994, 1998), while recent studies were conducted by Götz and Ruckwied, 2014).

Bamford (2011) is of the opinion that only a small amount of data have been published on these potentially fossiliferous deposits and that most likely good material are present around coal mines and in other areas the exposures are poor and of little interest. When plant fossils do occur they are usually abundant. According to Bamford it is not feasible to preserve all the sites but in the

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interests of science these sites ought to be well documented, researched and the collected fossils must be housed in an accredited institution.

To date no fossil vertebrates have been collected from the Vryheid formation. The occurrence of fossil insects is rare, while palynomorphs are diverse. Non-marine bivalves and fish scales have also been reported from this formation. Trace fossils are abundantly found but the diversity is low. The mesosaurid reptile, *Mesosaurus* has been found in the southern parts of the basin but may also be present in other areas of the Vryheid formation. Regardless of the rare and irregular occurrence of fossils in this biozone a single fossil may be of scientific importance as many fossil taxa are known from a single fossil.

Van Eeden *et al* (1963) described the geology of the Schweizer-Reneke in detail. They found that the Ventersdorp Subgroup form low ridges and hills in the Schweizer-Reneke area. 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).

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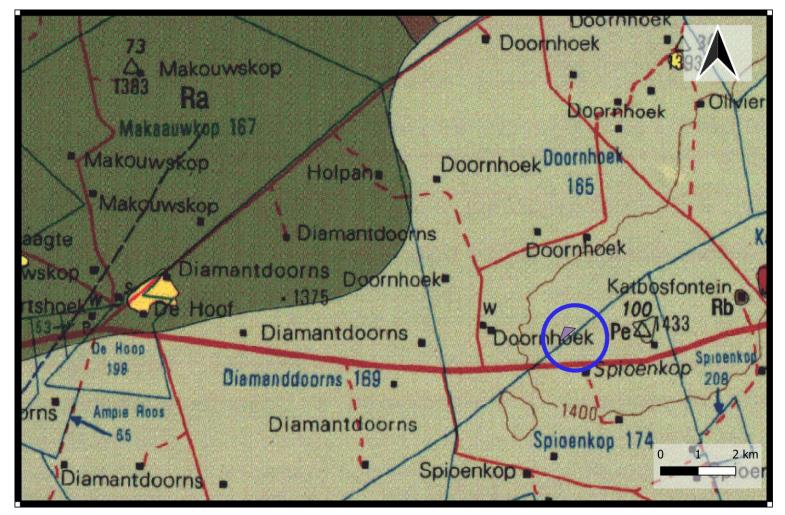
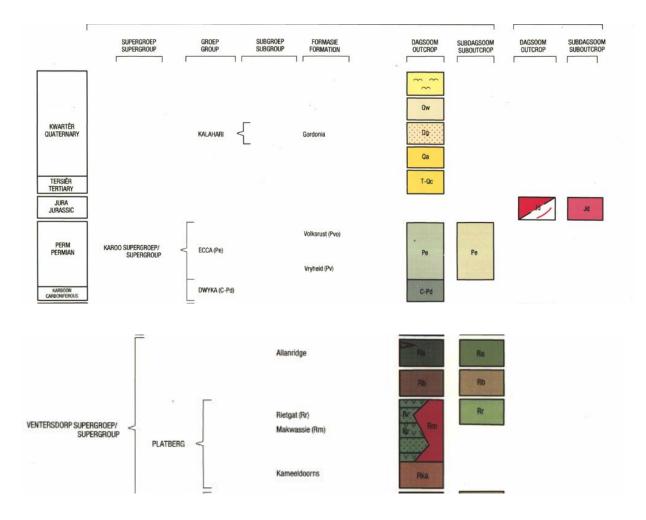


Figure 4: Extract of the 1:250 000 2724 Christiana Geological map (Council of Geoscience) of the proposed development (development footprint indicated in purple). Surface geology indicates that the development footprint is underlain by the Vryheid Formation (Ecca Group) and underlain by the Ventersdorp Supergroup.



# Legend to Map and short explanation.

Pe - Vryheid Formation (Ecca Group, Karoo Supergroup) - Sandstone and shale

Ra – Allanridge Formation (Ventersdorp Supergroup) - Tholelitic and calc-alkaline basalt, andesite:

tuff and pyroclastic breccia Mining activity –(DA)

Diamonds

Jd- Jurassic dolerite

6 GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF THE SITE

The property is situated approximately 30 km East of Schweitzer-Reneke on the R504.

Farm	Latitude	Longitude
Certain portion of Portion 12 (ptn of ptn 7) of the	27° 7' 16.367" S	25° 38' 33.816" E
farm Doornhoek 165	27° 7' 17.516" S	25° 38' 43.420" E
	25° 38' 30.288" E	27° 7' 27.351" S
	25° 38' 30.276" E	27° 7' 25.087" S

# 7 METHODS

The aim of a desktop study is to evaluate the risk to palaeontological heritage in the proposed development. This include 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 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 2724 Christiana Geological (Council of Geoscience);
- A Google Earth map with polygons of the proposed development was obtained from Milnex CC.

# 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

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- 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 2: The rating system

# NATURE

Include a brief description of the impact of environmental parameter being assessed in the context of the project. This criterion includes a brief written statement of the environmental aspect being impacted upon by a particular action or activity.

#### **GEOGRAPHICAL EXTENT**

This is defined as the area	a over which the impact will be experien	ced.

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.

# PROBABILITY

This describes the chance of occurrence 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).

#### **Table 1 Continues**

DURAT	DURATION		
This des	This describes the duration of the impacts. Duration indicates the lifetime of the impact as a result		
of the pr	of the 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.
INTE	NSITY/ MAGNITUDE	
Desci	ibes 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/
0		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.

#### **Table 1 Continues**

# REVERSIBILITY

This describes the degree to which an impact can be successfully reversed upon completion of the 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.
IRREP	LACEABLE LOSS OF RESOURC	ES
This de	scribes the degree to which resou	rces 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.
CUMU	LATIVE EFFECT	
This de	scribes the cumulative effect of th	e impacts. A cumulative impact is an effect which in itself
may no	ot be significant but may become	significant if added to other existing or potential impacts
emana	ting from other similar or diverse a	ctivities 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

#### Table 1 Continues

#### 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.

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Points	Impact significance rating	Description
<mark>6 to 28</mark>	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

#### 9.2 Summary of Impacts

The expected duration of the impact is assessed as potentially permanent to long term. In the absence of mitigation procedures (should fossil material be present within the affected area) the damage or destruction of any palaeontological materials will be permanent. Impacts on palaeontological heritage during the construction phase could potentially occur but are regarded as having a low probability. The significance of the impact occurring will be low.

#### **10 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The study area is primary underlain by sediments of the Vryheid Formation (Ecca Group, Karoo Supergroup) and underlying Ventersdorp Supergroup. According to the PalaeoMap of South African Heritage Resources Information System the Palaeontological Sensitivity of the Vryheid Formation (Ecca Group, Karoo Supergroup) is Very High (Almond and Pether 2008, SAHRIS website) and that of the Ventersdorp Supergroup is moderate. However, the area has been utilized by agricultural activities for many years and during this time no fossiliferous outcrops have been recovered. In the absence of fossiliferous outcrops, the construction and operation of the development may be authorised as the whole extent as the development footprint is not considered sensitive in terms of palaeontological resources.

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However, if fossil remains are discovered during any phase of construction, either on the surface or exposed by excavations, the **Chance Find Protocol** must be implemented by the ECO or site manager in charge of these developments. Fossil discoveries should be protected, and the ECO/site manager 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 suitable mitigation can be implemented.

Before any fossil material can be collected from the development site the specialist involved would need to apply for a collection permit from SAHRA. Fossil material must be housed in an official collection (museum or university collection), while all reports and fieldwork should meet the minimum standards for palaeontological impact studies proposed by SAHRA.

# 11 CHANCE FINDS PROTOCOL

The following procedure will only be followed if fossils are uncovered during excavation activities.

# 11.1 Legislation

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

Palaeontological heritage is unique and non-renewable and is protected by the NHRA and are the property of the State. It is thus the responsibility of the State to manage and conserve fossils on behalf of the citizens of South Africa. Palaeontological resources may not be excavated, 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.

#### 11.2 Background

A "fossil" is the naturally preserved remains (or traces) of plants or animals embedded in rock. These plants and animals lived in the geologic past millions of years ago. Fossils are extremely rare and irreplaceable. By studying fossils, it is possible to determine the environmental conditions that existed in a specific geographical area millions of years ago.

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#### 11.3 Introduction

This informational document is intended for workmen and foremen on construction sites. It describes the actions to be taken when mining or construction activities accidentally uncovers fossil material.

It is the responsibility of the Environmental Control Officer (ECO) of the project to train the workmen and foremen in the procedure to follow when a fossil is accidentally uncovered. In the absence of the ECO, a member of the staff must be appointed to be responsible for the proper implementation of the chance find protocol as not to compromise the conservation of fossil material.

#### **11.4 Chance Find Procedure**

- If a chance find is made the person responsible for the find must immediately **stop working** and all work must cease in the immediate vicinity of the find.
- The person who made the find must immediately report the find to his/her direct supervisor who in turn must report the find to his/her manager and the ECO or site manager. The ECO must report the find to the relevant Heritage Agency (South African Heritage Research Agency, 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). The information to the Heritage Agency must include photographs of the find, from various angles, as well as the GPS (Global Positioning System) co-ordinates.
- A preliminary report must be submitted to the Heritage Agency within 24 hours of the find and must include the following: 1) date of the find; 2) a description of the discovery and a 3) description of the fossil and its context (depth and position of the fossil), GPS coordinates.
- Photographs (as many as possible) of the discovery must be of high quality, in focus, accompanied by a scale. It is also important to have photographs of the vertical section (side) where the fossil was found.

Upon receipt of the preliminary report, the Heritage Agency will inform the ECO (site manager) whether a rescue excavation or rescue collection by a palaeontologist is necessary. In the interim, until a response has been received from SAHRA, the following measures must be implemented by the ECO (site manager):

• The site must be secured to protect it from further damage. **No attempt** should be made to remove material from its environment. The exposed find/s must be stabilized and covered by a plastic sheet or sand bags. The Heritage Agency will also be able to advise on the most suitable method of protection of the find.

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- If the fossil cannot be stabilized in situ, the fossil may be collected with extreme care by the ECO (site manager). Fossils finds must be stored in tissue paper and in an appropriate box while special care must be taken to remove all fossil material from the rescue site.
- Once the Heritage Agency has issued the written authorization, the developer may continue with the development.

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Appendix A – Elize Butler CV

CURRICULUM VITAEELIZE BUTLERPROFESSION:PalaeontologistYEARS' EXPERIENCE:26 years in Palaeontology

**EDUCATION:** 

B.Sc Botany and Zoology, 1988 University of the Orange Free State

B.Sc (Hons) Zoology, 1991 University of the Orange Free State

Management Course, 1991 University of the Orange Free State

M. Sc. *Cum laude* (Zoology), 2009 University of the Free State

**Dissertation title:** The postcranial skeleton of the Early Triassic non-mammalian Cynodont *Galesaurus planiceps*: implications for biology and lifestyle

Registered as a PhD fellow at the Zoology Department of the UFS

2013 to current

**Dissertation title:** A new gorgonopsian from the uppermost D*aptocephalus Assemblage Zone*, in the Karoo Basin of South Africa

<b>MEMBERSHIP</b> Palaeontological Society of South Africa (PSSA)	2006-currently
EMPLOYMENT HISTORY	
Part-time Laboratory assistant	Department of Zoology & Entomology University of the Free State Zoology 1989-1992
Part-time laboratory assistant	Department of Virology University of the Free State Zoology 1992

National Museum, Bloemfontein 1993 – 1997

Principal Research Assistant and Collection Manager National Museum, Bloemfontein 1998–currently

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#### **TECHNICAL REPORTS**

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#### CONFERENCE CONTRIBUTIONS

# NATIONAL

# PRESENTATION

Butler, E., Botha-Brink, J., and F. Abdala. A new gorgonopsian from the uppermost *Dicynodon Assemblage Zone*, Karoo Basin of South Africa.18 the Biennial conference of the PSSA 2014.Wits, Johannesburg, South Africa.

#### INTERNATIONAL

Attended the Society of Vertebrate Palaeontology 73<sup>th</sup> Conference in Los Angeles, America. October 2012.

#### **CONFERENCES: POSTER PRESENTATION**

#### NATIONAL

- Butler, E., and J. Botha-Brink. Cranial skeleton of *Galesaurus planiceps*, implications for biology and lifestyle. University of the Free State Seminar Day, Bloemfontein. South Africa. November 2007.
- Butler, E., and J. Botha-Brink. Postcranial skeleton of *Galesaurus planiceps*, implications for biology and lifestyle.14<sup>th</sup> Conference of the PSSA, Matjesfontein, South Africa. September 2008:
- Butler, E., and J. Botha-Brink. The biology of the South African non-mammaliaform cynodont *Galesaurus planiceps*.15<sup>th</sup> Conference of the PSSA, Howick, South Africa. August 2008.

#### INTERNATIONAL VISITS

Natural History Museum, LondonJuly 2008Paleontological Institute, Russian Academy of Science, MoscowNovember 2014