



PALAEONTOLOGICAL DESKTOP ASSESSMENT

DIAMOND PROSPECTING
RIGHT APPLICATION
ON PORTION 9 & 10 OF THE
FARM VUURFONTEIN 117,
REGISTRATION DIVISION:
HO, NORTH WEST
PROVINCE

NW30/5/1/1/2/13755PR.

October 2023

COMPILED FOR: MILNEX CC



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 CONSULTANT:

Banzai Environmental (Pty) Ltd

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SIGNATURE:



The heritage 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

Requirements of Appendix 6 – GN R326 EIA Regulations of 7 April 2017	The relevant section in the report	Comment where not applicable.
1.(1) (a) (i) Details of the specialist who prepared the report	Page ii and Section 2 of Report – Contact details and company and Appendix A	-
(ii) The expertise of that person to compile a specialist report including a curriculum vita	Section 2 – refer to 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 – Methods and Terms of Reference	-
(cA) An indication of the quality and age of base data used for the specialist report	Section 5 – Geological and Palaeontologica l history	-
(cB) a description of existing impacts on the site, cumulative impacts of the proposed development and levels of acceptable change;	Section 8	-



Requirements of Appendix 6 – GN R326 EIA Regulations of 7 April 2017	The relevant section in the report	Comment where not applicable.
(d) The duration, date and season of the site investigation and the relevance of the season to the outcome of the assessment	Desktop Assessment	
(e) a description of the methodology adopted in preparing the report or carrying out the specialised process inclusive of equipment and modelling used	Section 4 Approach and Methodology	-
(f) details of an assessment of the specifically 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 9	
(g) An identification of any areas to be avoided, including buffers	Section 1 & 9	
(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 4.1 – 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 9	
(k) Any mitigation measures for inclusion in the EMP	Section 10	
(l) Any conditions for inclusion in the environmental authorisation	Section 10	



Requirements of Appendix 6 – GN R326 EIA Regulations of 7 April 2017	The relevant section in the report	Comment where not applicable.
(m) Any monitoring requirements for inclusion in the EMPr or environmental authorisation	Section 10	
(n)(i) A reasoned opinion as to whether the proposed activity, activities or portions thereof should be authorised and	Section 1 and 11	
(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 9	-
(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 was handled as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Environmental Management Plan (EMP) process.



Requirements of Appendix 6 – GN R326 EIA Regulations of 7 April 2017	The relevant section in the report	Comment where not applicable.
(p) A summary and copies of any comments that were received during any consultation process	N/A	Not applicable. To date, no comments regarding heritage resources that require input from a specialist have been raised.
(q) Any other information requested by the competent authority.	N/A	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 for the proposed Prospecting Right application for Diamonds Alluvial (DA) & Diamonds General (D) & Diamonds (DIA) on Portion 9 & Portion 10 (excluding the 5ha mining permit area) of the Farm Vuurfontein 117, Registration Division: HO, North West Province. In accordance with the National Environmental Management Act No 107 of 1998 (NEMA) and to comply with the National Heritage Resources Act (No 25 of 1999, section 38) (NHRA), this PIA is necessary to confirm if fossil material could potentially be present in the planned development area, to evaluate the potential impact of the proposed development on the Palaeontological Heritage and to mitigate possible damage to fossil resources.

The proposed development is mostly underlain by the Bothaville Formation and the Allanridge Formation (Platberg Group, Ventersdorp Supergroup), as well as a small portion of Quaternary river-terrace gravel that are diamondiferous in places.

According to the South African Heritage Resources Information System, the Palaeontological Sensitivity of the Formation and the Allanridge Formations is Low, while that of the Quaternary river-terrace gravel is moderate. A Low Palaeontological Sensitivity has thus been allocated to the proposed development. It is therefore considered that the proposed mining will not lead to detrimental impacts on the palaeontological heritage of the area.

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 Environmental Control Officer (ECO) in charge of these developments. These discoveries ought to be protected (if possible, *in situ*) 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 correct mitigation (recording and collection) 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 fossils.



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Curriculum Vitae Elize Butler



1 INTRODUCTION

Milnex CC has been employed by **Blaze Mineral Mining (Pty) Ltd** to conduct the Scoping and EIA process for a Prospecting Right of Diamonds (Alluvial) & Diamonds (General) and Diamonds (DIA) including associated infrastructure, and earthwork on Portion 9 and Portion 10 of the Farm Vuurfontein 117 near Schweizer-Reneke in the North West Province. BanZai Environmental has in turn been employed to conduct the Palaeontological Desktop (PDA) assessment for the project.

Farm Name	1) Portion 9 of the farm Vuurfontein 117 Title deed: T35812/1997 Extent: 510.4931 hectares 2) A certain portion of portion 10 (excluding the 5ha mining permit) of the farm Vuurfontein 117 Title Deed: T35812/1997 Extent: 665.6646 hectares (670.6646 hectares – 5ha mining permit)
Application area (Ha)	1176.1577 hectares
Magisterial district:	Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District Municipality Lekwa – Teemane Local Municipality
Registration division:	HO
Distance and direction from nearest town	The property is located approximately 12.7km NE of Schweizer-Reneke on the R504 towards Wolmaransstad in the North West Province
21 digit Surveyor General Code for each farm portion	T0H000000000011700010 T0H000000000011700009
Minerals applied for	Diamonds Alluvial (DA) Diamonds General (D) Diamonds (DIA)



2 QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE OF THE AUTHOR

Mrs Elize Butler performed this study. She has undertaken over 500 palaeontological impact assessments for developments in the Free State, KwaZulu-Natal, the Eastern, and Northern Cape, the Northwest, Gauteng, Limpopo, and Mpumalanga. She holds an MSc (cum laude) in Zoology (with a focus in Palaeontology) from the University of the Free State in South Africa and has worked in Palaeontology for over 30 years. She has prior expertise identifying, collecting, and preserving fossils. She has been conducting PIAs since 2014 and is a member of the Palaeontological Society of South Africa (PSSA).

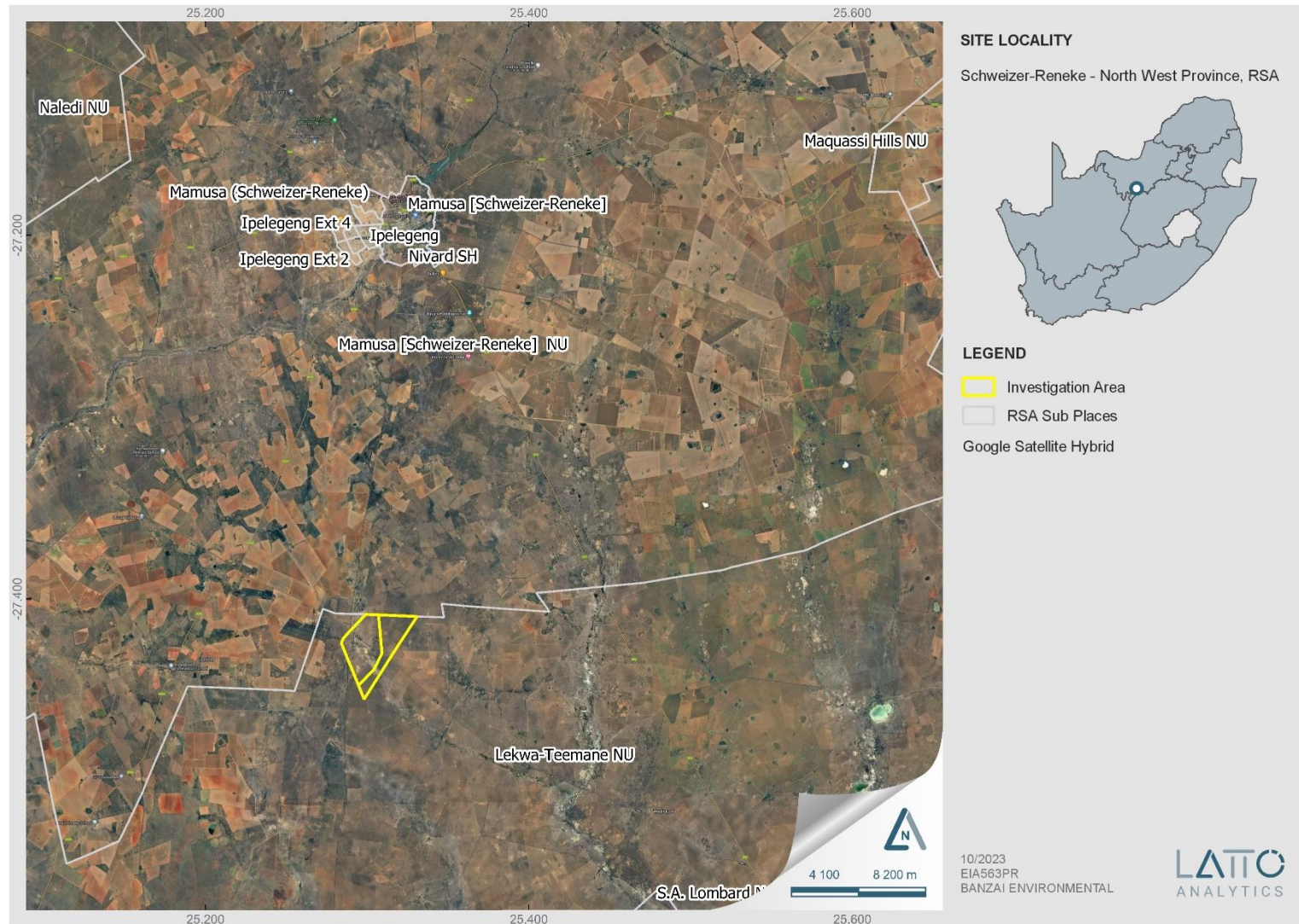


Figure 1: Regional locality of the Prospecting Right Application near Schweizer-Reneke in the North West Province.

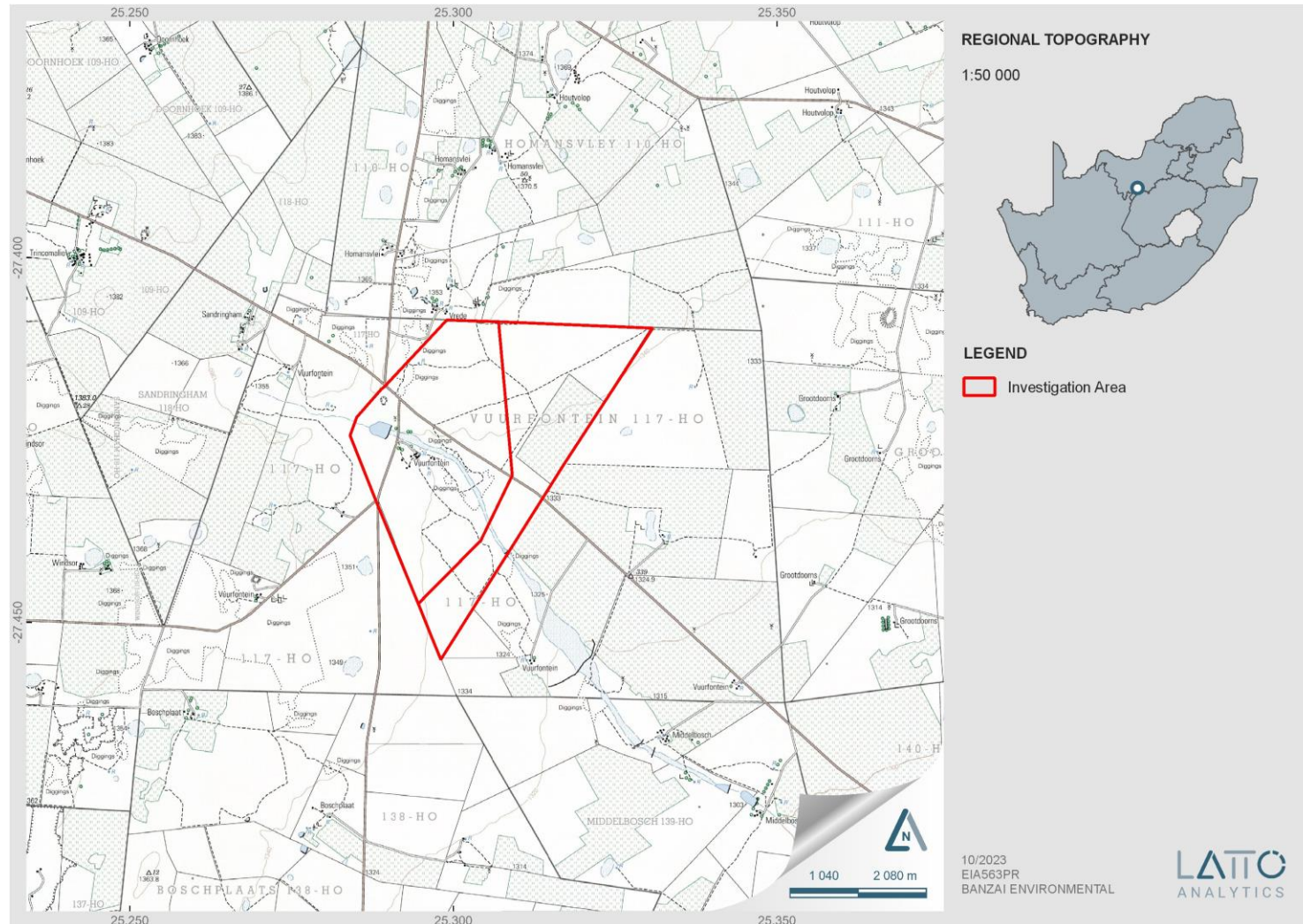


Figure 2: Locality Map of the Prospecting Right Application near Schweizer-Reneke in the North West Province.



3 LEGISLATION

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
- 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:

- 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.

4 METHODS AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

This study forms part of the Heritage Impact Assessment Report. 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.

All possible information is consulted to compile a scoping report, and this includes the following: Provisional DFFE Screening Tool, SAHRIS Palaeosensitivity map, all Palaeontological Impact Assessment reports in the same area; aerial photos and Google Earth images, topographical and geological maps as well as scientific articles of specimens from the development area and Assemblage Zones.

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.

During a site investigation the palaeontologist does not only survey the development but also tries to determine the density and diversity of fossils in the development area. This is confirmed by examining representative exposures of fossiliferous rocks (sedimentary rocks contain fossil heritage whereas igneous and metamorphic rocks are mostly unfossiliferous). Rock exposures that are investigated usually contains a large portion of the stratigraphic unit, can be accessed easily and comprise of unweathered (fresh) exposed rock. These exposures may be natural (rocky outcrops in stream or river banks, cliffs, dongas) but could also be artificial (quarries, open building excavations and even railway and road cuttings). It is common practice for palaeontologist to log well-preserved fossils (GPS, and stratigraphic data) during field assessment studies.

Mitigation usually precedes 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 is possible as 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,
- Description and location of the proposed development and provide geological and topographical maps
- Provide palaeontological and geological history of the affected area.
- Identification of 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).

4.1 Assumptions and Limitations

The focal point of geological maps is the geology of the area and the sheet explanations of the Geological Maps 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 also used to provide information on the existence of fossils in an area which has 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.

5 GEOLOGICAL AND PALAEOLOGICAL HISTORY

The proposed Prospecting Right Application near Schweizer-Reneke in the North West Province is depicted on the 1:250 000 Christiana 2724 Geological map (1996) (Council of Geoscience, Pretoria) (**Figure 3; Table 3**). The proposed development is underlain by Bothaville Formation (Rb, brown) and the Allanridge Formation (Ra-dark green) (Ventersdorp Supergroup) as well as a small portion of Quaternary river-terrace gravel that are diamondiferous in places (yellow). According to the South African Heritage Resources Information System, the Palaeontological Sensitivity of the Quaternary river-terrace gravel is moderate (green), that of the Allanridge and Bothaville Formations (Ventersdorp Supergroup) is Low (**Figure 4, Table 4**). The suggested location is classified as having a Medium Palaeontology Theme Sensitivity in the DFFE Screening Report, as seen in **Figure 5**. Updated geology (**Figure 6**) indicates that the development is underlain by the Bothaville and Allanridge Formations (Ventersdorp Supergroup).

Quaternary alluvial gravels also known as high level gravels is mapped along both the Vaal and Orange River. These gravels have been associated with diamond mining (De Wit *et al.*, 2000). The fossil assemblages of the Quaternary Formations are generally low in diversity and occur over a wide range but has a high Paleontologically Sensitivity. These fossils represent terrestrial plants and animals with a close resemblance to living forms. Fossil assemblages include bivalves, diatoms, gastropod shells, ostracods, and trace fossils. Late Cenozoic calcrete may comprise of bones, horn corns as well as mammalian teeth. Tortoise remains have also been uncovered as well as trace fossils which includes termite and insect's burrows and mammalian trackways. Amphibian and crocodile skeletons have been uncovered where the depositional settings in the past were wetter.

Four basins developed on the Kaapvaal Craton about 3000 to 2100 million years ago. The Ventersdorp Supergroup was the third Basin to develop and provides an exceptional volcano-sedimentary supracrustal record. The Ventersdorp Supergroup (**Figure 7**) comprise of the biggest and most wide-spread system of volcanic rocks in the Kaapvaal Craton.

The best exposures of the Ventersdorp Supergroup are in the North West Province, Northern Cape Province as well as Gauteng and southern Botswana. This Supergroup consists of the Klipriviersberg Group (oldest) which is overlain by the Platberg Group, followed by the sedimentary Bothaville Formation (Rb) and the volcanic Allanridge Formation (Ra) (uppermost Ventersdorp unit, youngest Formation). The Allanridge Formation comprise mostly of light-greenish grey porphyritic lava, dark-green amygdaloidal lava, and pyroclastic rocks. The lavas



are approximately 2700 million years old and comprise of basaltic andesites. The Allanridge Formation is not known to be fossiliferous.

The Platberg Group is subdivided in four formations i.e., the Kameeldoorns-, Goedgenoeg-, Makwassie-, and Rietgat Formations (Rr). These formations consist of heterogenous rock varying from chemical and classic sediments, to felsic and mafic volcanics. These rocks were deposited in linear vault troughs during grabed development (Visser et al, 1975-1976, Buck, 1980). These deep intermontane grabens formed in older underlying andesitic terranes and formed areas of debris and scree flows as well as alluvial fan deposits. In these fine-grained chemical and terrigenous sediments, ooids and stromatolites accumulated under lacustrine conditions (Buck, 1980). In time fluvial processes prevailed causing widespread prograding of alluvial fans across basins. The Rietgat Formation consist of alternating sedimentary and volcanic rocks which varies in thickness across the basin.

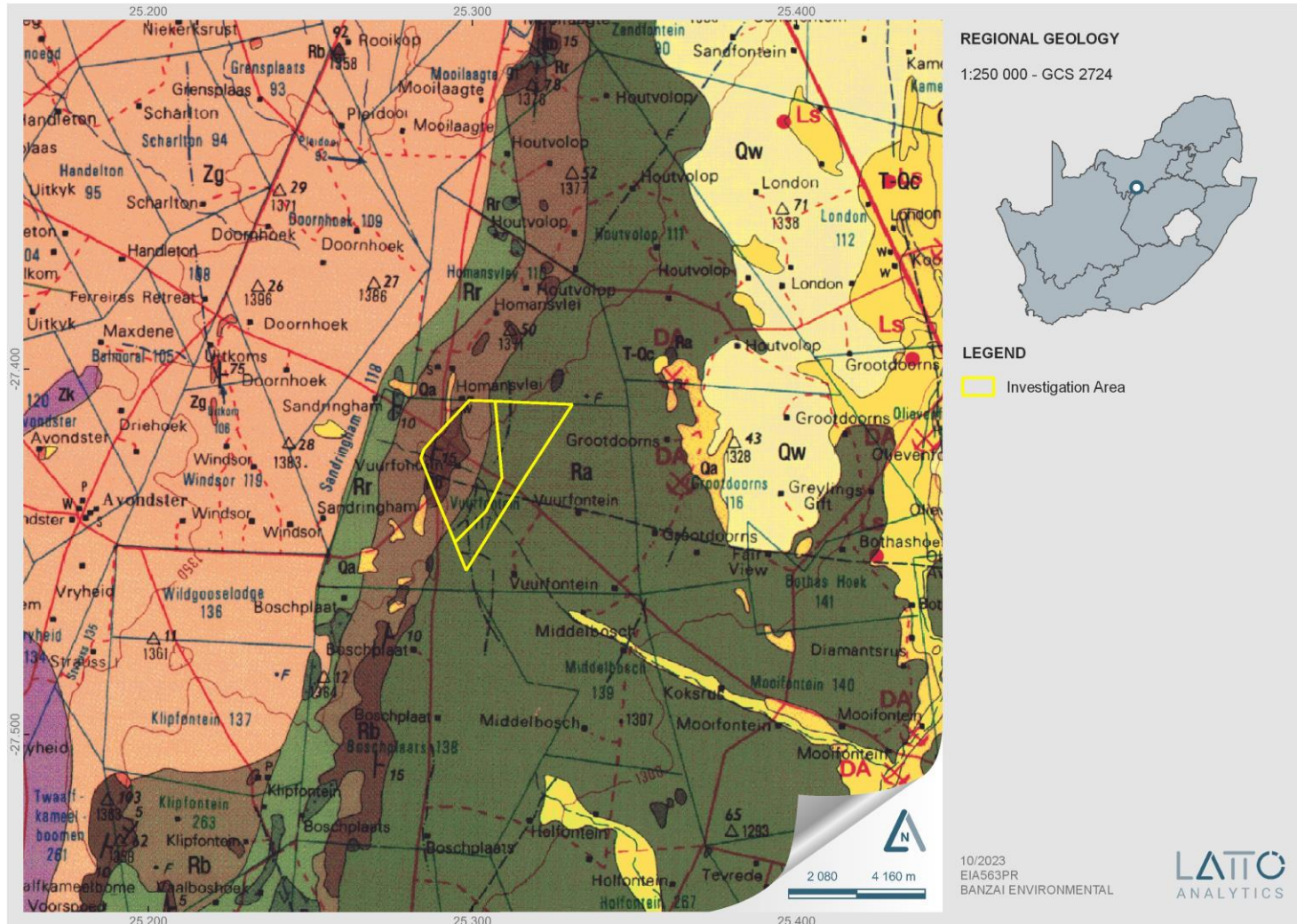


Figure 3. Extract of the 1:250 000 Christiana 2724 Geological map (1996) (Council of Geoscience, Pretoria) indicates that the study area in the North West Province is underlain by the Bothaville (Rb, brown) and the Allanridge Formation (Ra-dark green) (Ventersdorp Supergroup) as well as a small portion of Quaternary river-terrace gravel.



Table 3: Legend to the 1:250 000 Christiana 2724 Geological map (1996) (Council of Geoscience, Pretoria)

DAGSOOM OUTCROP		
		Alluvium Alluvium
	Qw	Qa Rivierterrasgruis; diamanthoudend op plekke River-terrace gravel; diamondiferous in places
	Qg	Qg Rooibruin tot vieskleurige eoliese sand Red-brown to flesh-coloured aeolian sand
	Qa	Qw Eoliese sand Aeolian sand
	T-Qc	T-Qc Kalkreet Calcrete

	Ra	Ra Tholeiitiese en kalk-alkaliese basalt en andesiet; tuf en piroklastiese breksie (▽▽▽▽); tuff and pyroclastic breccia (△△△△)
	Rb	Rb Kwartsiet, grintsteen, konglomeraat; piroklastiese breksie, tufagtige sedimente, plek-plek chertagtig of kalkhoudend Quartzite, grit, conglomerate; pyroclastic breccia, tuffaceous sediments, cherty or calcareous in places
	Rr	Rr Liggroen tholeiitiese en kalk-alkaliese basalt en andesiet (▽▽▽▽); tuf, piroklastiese breksie, karbonaatgesteentes met chertlae, konglomeraat, sandsteen en tufagtige sedimente (▽▽▽▽)
	Rm	Rm Kwartzporfier, veldspaatporfier en rioliet Quartz porphyry, feldspar porphyry and rhyolite
	Rka	Rka Konglomeraat, grouwak, kalksteen, chert, chertagtige skalie en granietrokkonglomeraat Conglomerate, greywacke, limestone, chert, cherty shale and granite-boulder conglomerate
	Rk	Rk Liggroen amandelhoudende en nie-amandelhouende lawa Light-green amygdaloidal and non-amygdaloidal lava

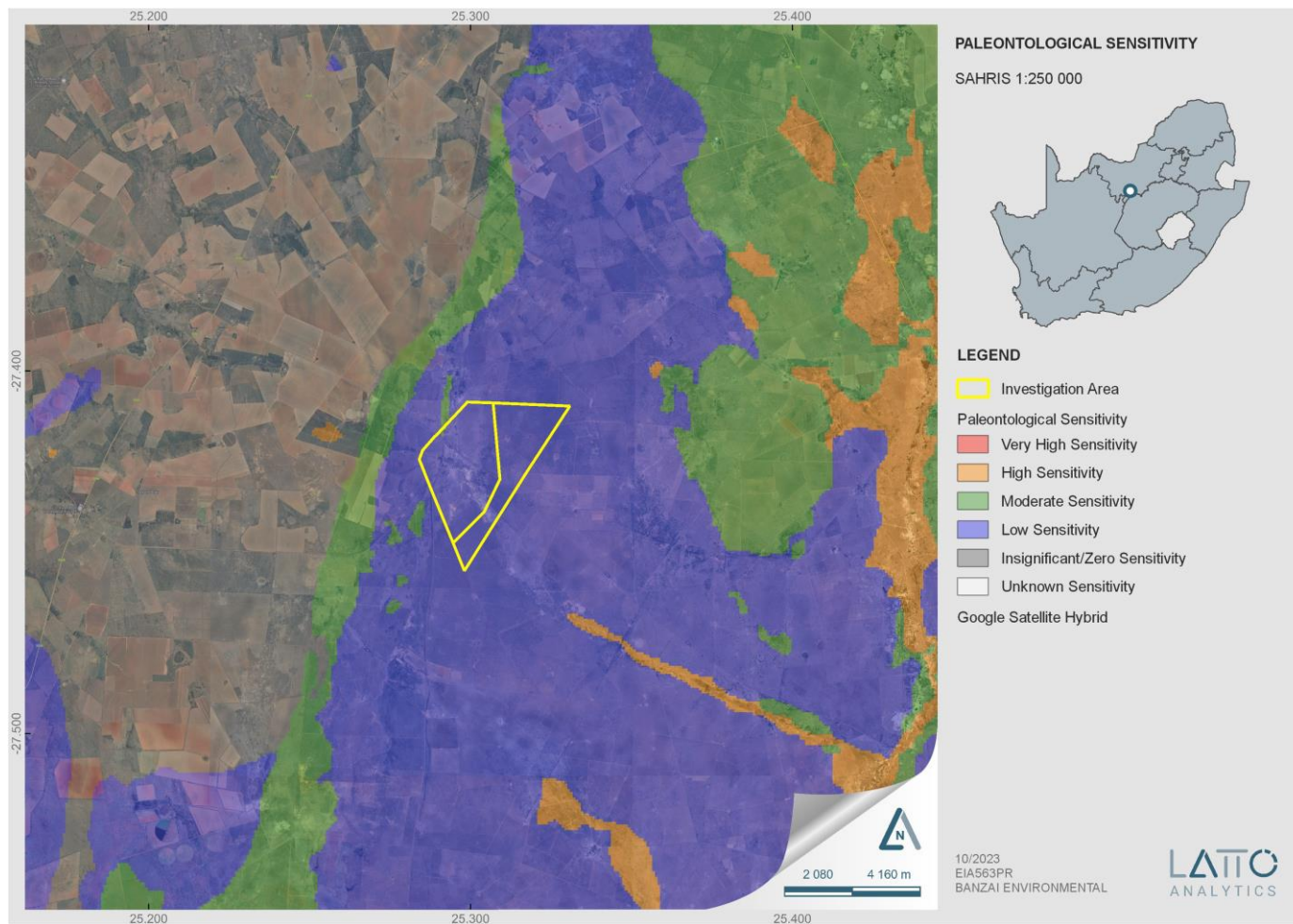


Figure 4: Extract of the SAHRIS PalaeoMap map (Council of Geosciences) indicates that the study area is underlain with sediments with a Low (blue) and Moderate (green) Palaeontological Sensitivity.



Table 4: Palaeontological Sensitivity according to the SAHRIS PalaeoMap (Almond et al, 2013; SAHRIS website)

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.

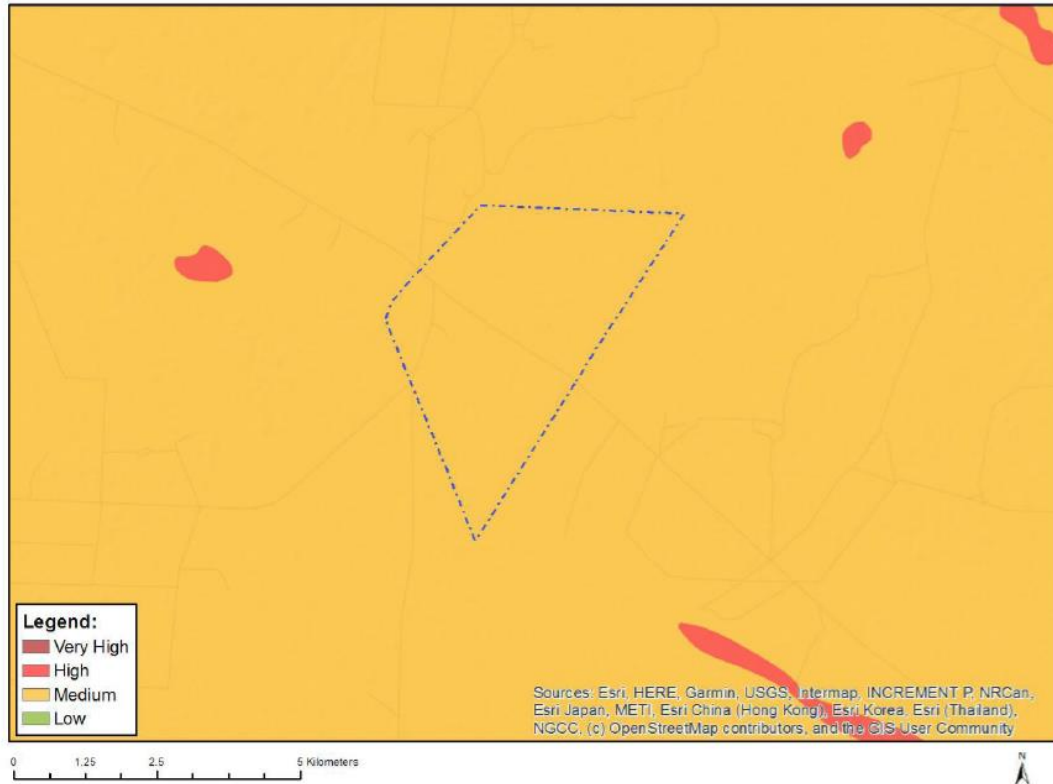


Figure 5: Palaeontological Sensitivity generated by the National Environmental Web-Based Screening indicating the Medium Palaeontological Sensitivity of the proposed development.

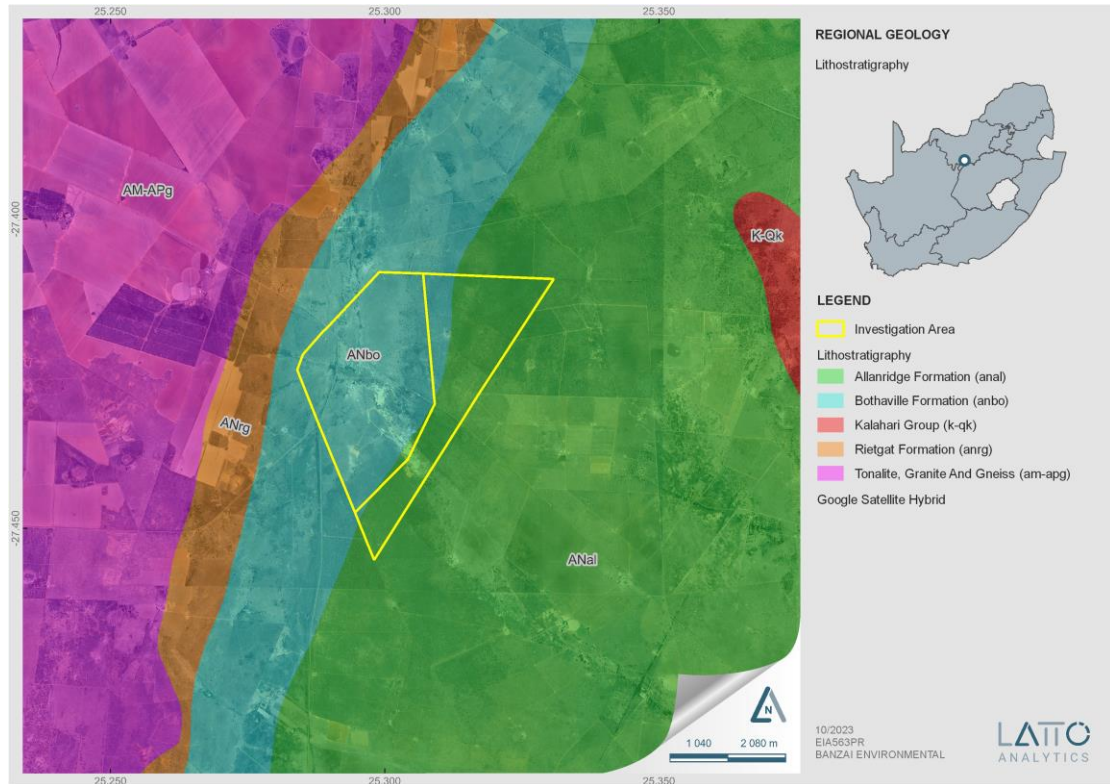


Figure 6: Updated Geology (2014), (Council of Geosciences, Pretoria) indicates that the proposed study area in the North West Province is underlain by the Allanridge (Anal) and Bothaville (Anbo) Formations of the Ventersdorp Supergroup.

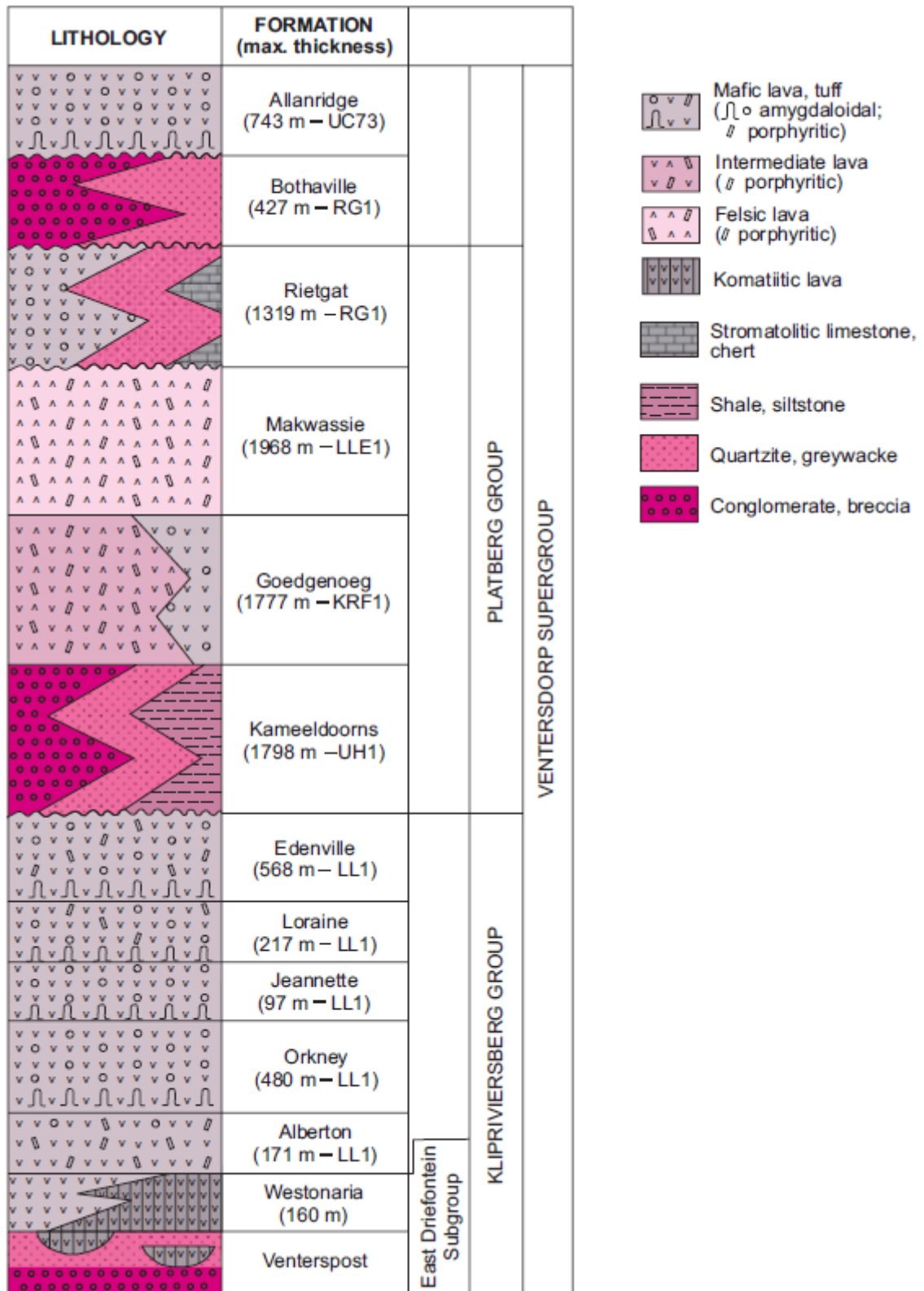


Figure 7: Ventersdorp stratigraphy (Taken from Van Der Westhuizen and Bruijn, 2006 after Winter, 1965, 1976; Linton et al., 1990 Meyers, 1990 and Meintjies, 1978).



6 GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF THE SITE

The property is about 12.7 kilometers northeast of Schweizer-Reneke on the R504 towards Wolmaransstad in the North West Province.

7 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)
- A Google Earth map with polygons of the proposed development was obtained from Milnex CC.
- 1:250 000 Christiana 2724 Geological map (1996) (Council of Geoscience, Pretoria)
- Updated geology (2014, Council of Geosciences, Pretoria).

8 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

8.1 Method of Environmental Assessment

The environmental assessment aims to identify the various possible environmental impacts that could result from the proposed activity. Different impacts need to be evaluated in terms of their significance and in doing so highlight the most critical issues to be addressed.

Significance is determined through a synthesis of impact characteristics which include context and intensity of an impact. Context refers to the geographical scale i.e., site, local, national, or global whereas intensity is defined by the severity of the impact e.g., the magnitude of deviation from background conditions, the size of the area affected, the duration of the impact and the overall probability of occurrence. Significance is calculated as shown in Table 4.1.

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 total number of points scored for each impact indicates the level of significance of the impact.

8.2 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 project phases:

- planning



- 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 5: 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 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.
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).
DURATION		
This describes the duration of the impacts. Duration indicates the lifetime of the impact as a result 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 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 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.
INTENSITY/ MAGNITUDE		
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 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		
<p>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.</p>		
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		
<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>		
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 effects.

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

Table 6: Summary of Impacts

Impacts	Extent	Duration	Magnitude	Reversibility	Irreplaceable loss	Cumulative effect	Impact Significance
Pre-mitigation	1	4	1	4	4	2	15 Low
Post mitigation	1	4	1	4	4	2	15 Low

9 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The proposed development is underlain by the Bothaville Formation and the Allanridge Formation (Platberg Group, Ventersdorp Supergroup), as well as a small portion of Quaternary river-terrace gravel that are diamondiferous in places.

According to the South African Heritage Resources Information System, the Palaeontological Sensitivity of the Formation and the Allanridge Formations is Low, while that of the Quaternary river-terrace gravel is moderate. A Low Palaeontological Sensitivity has thus been allocated to the proposed development. It is therefore considered that the proposed mining will not lead to detrimental impacts on the palaeontological heritage of the area.



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 Environmental Control Officer (ECO) in charge of these developments. These discoveries ought to be protected (if possible, *in situ*) 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 correct mitigation (recording and collection) 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 fossils.

10 CHANCE FINDS PROTOCOL

The following procedure will only be followed if fossils are uncovered during the excavation phase of the development.

10.1 Legislation

Cultural Heritage in South Africa (includes all heritage resources) is protected by the **National Heritage Resources Act (Act No 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.

A fossil is the naturally preserved remains (or traces thereof) of plants or animals embedded in rock. These organisms lived 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.

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 Site Officer (ESO) or site manager 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 ESO, 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.

10.2 Chance Find Procedure

- If a chance find is made the person responsible for the find must immediately **stop working** and all work that could impact that finding 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 which in turn must report the find to his/her manager and the ESO or site manager. The ESO or site manager 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 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 co-ordinates.
- Photographs (the more the better) 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 ESO (or site manager) whether a rescue excavation or rescue collection by a palaeontologist is necessary.
- The site must be secured to protect it from any further damage. **No attempt** should be made to remove material from their environment. The exposed finds 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.
- If the fossil cannot be stabilized the fossil may be collected with extreme care by the ESO. Fossils finds must be stored in tissue paper and in an appropriate box while due 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 on the affected area.



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APPENDIX A

ELIZE BUTLER

PROFESSION: Palaeontologist

YEARS' EXPERIENCE: 30 years in Palaeontology

EDUCATION: B.Sc Botany and Zoology, 1988
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B. Sc (Hons) Zoology, 1991
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MEMBERSHIP

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
Research Assistant	National Museum, Bloemfontein 1993 – 1997
Principal Research Assistant and Collection Manager	National Museum, Bloemfontein 1998–currently

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