



an agency of the
Department of Arts and Culture

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CaseID: 12164

Date: Monday July 09, 2018
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Interim Comment

In terms of Section 38(8), 38(4) of the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999)

Attention: Sasol Mining (Pty) Ltd

PO Box 5486
Johannesburg
2000

Environmental Regulatory Process in terms of the Thubelisha, Trichardtsfontein and Vaalkop Mining Right Areas, Mpumalanga Province

Sasol Mining (Pty) Ltd is proposing to consolidate their existing mining operations in terms of the Minerals and Petroleum Resources Development Act, 28 of 2002, as amended. As part of their consolidation, they wish to construct two ventilation shafts for the underground mining activities. The proposed mine right areas are located on various farms, with a total extent of 23 316 ha, in the Govan Mbeki Local Municipality of the Mpumalanga Province.

Digby Wells Environmental (Pty) Ltd have been appointed to undertake the Scoping and Environmental Impact Assessment process in support of an Environmental Authorisation Process, in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 107 of 1998, as amended (NEMA) for listed activities in the NEMA Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations, 2014 as amended. Their inhouse heritage specialists have compiled a Heritage Impact Assessment and a Palaeontological Impact Assessment, which has been submitted to SAHRA, in terms of section 38 (8) of the National Heritage Resources Act, 25 of 1999 (NHRA).

Du Piesanie, J. and Nel, J. August 2017. Environmental Regulatory Process in terms of the Thubelisha, Trichardtsfontein and Vaalkop Mining Right areas: Heritage Impact Assessment.

The author undertook a field assessment of the consolidated mine right areas and identified 17 heritage resources. These are 8 burial grounds, 8 historical buildings of which two are the highveld stone farm houses associated with the Erasmus family, and 2 archaeological stonewalled complexes of which one is typical of the region and the other is poorly preserved. The overall cultural significance of the area is noted as medium, with the graves being of very high significance, the archaeological site being of medium and low significance and four of the farmsteads are listed as being medium significance. The remaining built structures are of low significance.

The mine will not be impacting on any of the identified heritage resources. The indirect threats to the heritage

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resources is subsidence from the underground mining activities.

The underlying geology consists of the fossiliferous Vryheid Formation, which is of very high palaeontological significance. The report recommends the implementation of the fossil finds procedure without the necessity of a field assessment by a professional palaeontologist. The procedure includes a monitoring schedule agreement between the mine and a professional palaeontologist. This agreement must be submitted to SAHRA.

The HIA recommends the development of a CMP for the entire mine right area. The CMP will outline the conservation of all the identified heritage resources and monitoring procedure for those heritage resources, including the Fossil Finds Procedure.

Interim Comment

SAHRA Archaeology, Palaeontology and Meteorites (APM) Unit accepts the HIA report but disagrees with some of the recommendations provided with regards to the palaeontology section. Upon external review, some of the information provided in the palaeontology section of the HIA report were found incorrect and an assessment of the waste rock dumps for exposed fossils should have been undertaken by a palaeontologist. SAHRA still requires a PIA to be undertaken by a qualified palaeontologist.

SAHRA will process this case once the above requested report is submitted to the case. This letter must be forwarded to the competent authority as the commenting period has passed, and the record of decision letter must be uploaded to the case, once it has been received.

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

Yours faithfully

Nokukhanya Khumalo
Heritage Officer
South African Heritage Resources Agency

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Phillip Hine
Acting Manager: Archaeology, Palaeontology and Meteorites Unit
South African Heritage Resources Agency

ADMIN:

Direct URL to case: <http://www.sahra.org.za/node/488131>
(DMR-MP, Ref: MP30/5/1/2/2/138/MR)