

The Proposed PV Facility and Associated Infrastructure on Portion 134 (A Portion Of Portion 2) of the Farm Middelvlei, near Randfontein, in Gauteng Province



an agency of the
Department of Arts and Culture

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Enquiries: Stephen van der Heever
Tel:
Email: svandenheever@sahra.org.za
Case ID: 22369

Date: Friday, 21 June, 2024

Final Comment

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

Gareth Warner
Middelvlei Two Solar (Pty) Ltd
PO Box 1197
Gallo Manor
Gallo Manor
2052

Savannah Environmental has been appointed by Middelvlei Two Solar (Pty) Ltd to conduct an Environmental Authorisation (EA) Application for the proposed Solar PV facility and associated infrastructure with a 45MW capacity on Portion 134 (A Portion of Portion 2) of the Farm Middelvlei, near Randfontein, in Gauteng Province.

A draft Basic Assessment Report (DBAR) has been submitted in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, no 107 of 1998 (NEMA) and the NEMA Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations. The proposed development will entail the construction of a Solar PV facility comprised of several arrays of 785000 single axis tracking solar PV with a 77ha footprint as well as a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) with a 20MW capacity, onsite 132kV facility substation, including conductors and metering site, with a footprint of 2.5ha. Other infrastructure includes medium voltage cabling between the panels, inverters, transformers, and Operations Building of 200 m2 and both temporary and permanent laydown area.

Prof Marion Bamford and CTS Heritage have been appointed to provide heritage specialist input as part of the EIA process as required by section 24(4)b(iii) of NEMA and section 38(3) and 38(8) of the National Heritage Resources Act, Act 25 of 1999 (NHRA).

Bamford, M. 2023. Palaeontological Impact Assessment for the proposed Middelvlei Solar Two project and two grid options, Rand West City, Gauteng Province.

The proposed development is underlain by the moderately sensitive Black Reef Formation that is unlikely to have any fossils preserved. The southern grid route option lies on the very highly sensitive Malmani Subgroup (Chuniespoort Group, Transvaal Supergroup) that might preserve trace fossils such as stromatolites. A

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walkthrough confirmed that there are no dolomites and no fossils along this route. Nonetheless, a Fossil Chance Find Protocol should be added to the EMP. Based on this information it is recommended that no further palaeontological impact assessment is required unless fossils are found by the contractor, environmental officer or other designated responsible person once excavations or drilling activities have commenced. Since the impact will be low, as far as the palaeontology is concerned, the project should be authorised.

Lavin, J. 2023. The Proposed PV Facility and Associated Grid Infrastructure on Portion 134 (A Portion of Portion 2) of the Farm Middelvlei, Gauteng Province & Bar for The Middelvlei Solar Grid Line, near Randfontein, in Gauteng Province.

No significant heritage resources were identified. There is no objection to the proposed development from a heritage perspective and that the project should be authorised.

The author recommends: There is no objection to the proposed development from a heritage perspective on condition that:

- The recommendations in the VIA are implemented
- The attached Chance Fossil Finds Procedure must be implemented for the duration of construction activities
- Should any buried archaeological resources or human remains or burials be uncovered during the course of development activities, work must cease in the vicinity of these finds. The South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) must be contacted immediately in order to determine an appropriate way forward.

Final Comment

The following comments are made as a requirement in terms of section 38(8) of the NHRA in the format provided in section 38(4) of the NHRA and must be included in the Final BAR and EMP:

- 38(4)a - The SAHRA Development Applications Unit (DAU) has no objections to the proposed development;
- 38(4)b - The recommendations of the specialists are supported and must be adhered to. No further additional specific conditions are provided for the development;
- 38(4)c(i) - If any evidence of archaeological sites or remains (e.g. remnants of stone-made structures,

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indigenous ceramics, bones, stone artefacts, ostrich eggshell fragments, charcoal and ash concentrations), fossils or other categories of heritage resources are found during the proposed development, SAHRA DAU (Stephen van den Heever svandenheever@sahra.org.za, Natasha Higgitt 021 202 8660/ nhiggitt@sahra.org.za) must be alerted as per section 35(3) of the NHRA. Non-compliance with this section of the NHRA is an offense in terms of section 51(1)e of the NHRA and item 5 of the Schedule;

- 38(4)c(ii) - If unmarked human burials are uncovered, the SAHRA DAU (Natasha Higgitt 021 202 8660/ nhiggitt@sahra.org.za) must be alerted immediately as per section 36(6) of the NHRA. Non-compliance with this section of the NHRA is an offense in terms of section 51(1)e of the NHRA and item 5 of the Schedule;
- 38(4)d - See section 51(1) of the NHRA regarding offences;
- 38(4)e - The following conditions apply with regards to the appointment of specialists:
 - If heritage resources are uncovered during the course of the development, a professional archaeologist or palaeontologist, depending on the nature of the finds, must be contracted as soon as possible to inspect the heritage resource. If the newly discovered heritage resources prove to be of archaeological or palaeontological significance, a Phase 2 rescue operation may be required subject to permits issued by SAHRA;
 - The Final EIA must be submitted to the SAHRIS application for record purposes;
 - The decision regarding the EA application must be submitted to the SAHRIS application for record purposes.

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

Yours faithfully

Stephen van der Heever
Heritage Officer

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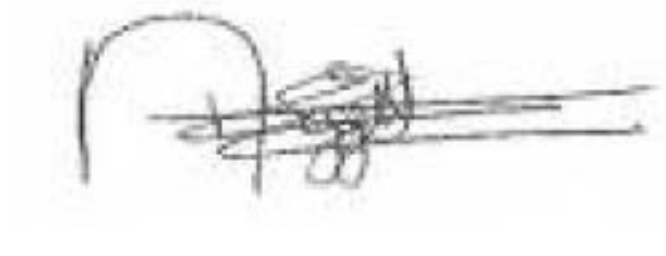
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South African Heritage Resources Agency



Natasha Higgitt
Manager: Development Applications Unit
South African Heritage Resources Agency

Terms & Conditions:

1. This approval does not exonerate the applicant from obtaining local authority approval or any other necessary approval for proposed work.
2. If any heritage resources, including graves or human remains, are encountered they must be reported to SAHRA immediately.
3. SAHRA reserves the right to request additional information as required.

ADMIN:

Direct URL to case: <https://sahris.org.za/node/349011>