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09 June 2024

The Heritage Officer
Development Applications Unit
South African Heritage Resources Agency
111 Harrington St, District Six, Cape Town, 8001
Tel: 021 202 8660 / 021 462 4502

**RE: REQUEST FOR EXEMPTION FOR A HERITAGE IMPACT FOR THE PROPOSED EXTENSION OF 132KV
ESKOM MAJUBA SUBSTATION AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE, PIXLEY KA SEME LOCAL
MUNICIPALITY, MPUMALANGA**

In my capacity as a professional archaeologist and heritage specialist, I am requesting an exemption from a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) in terms of Section 38 of the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999) and the National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998) which require that the proposed development is preceded by the above-mentioned assessment.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Majuba Power Station is the second largest power station (after Medupi), generating more than 4000 megawatts at full capacity. It is on the rolling grassy plains between the Vaal River and the Drakensberg Mountains, close to Volksrust and Amersfoort. The locality is flat, with a combined wetland zone and watercourse to the west of the power plant. Construction of the power station commenced in September 1983 with a projected time frame of three years to completion. At the time, it was one of several coal power generation projects conceived by the government to meet the growing electricity demand. The station's first unit went into operation in 1996, becoming the first megawatt project to be commissioned after 1994. The sixth unit was completed in 2001. Over the years, the footprint of the power station has expanded. A continuous dry ash deposit facility is one of the major projects in the recent past and is prominent in the landscape on the southern flank of the footprint of the proposed development.

EVALUATION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

From the perspective of heritage significance assessment, the existing power plant itself dates to the recent past, and the surrounding buffer has been used as a temporary stockpile area and for the placement of temporary structures. From an archaeological perspective, no material dating to the Stone Age and Iron can be expected in the original context.

Precolonial Heritage

- No relics dating to the precolonial period could be expected to be found in an original context.

Buildings of Heritage Significance

- There are no buildings in the footprint of the project.

Burial Grounds

- There are no graves or burial grounds in the footprint of the project.

DFFE SITE SENSITIVITY VERIFICATION

The site visit confirmed the low heritage sensitivity of the site.

	Sensitivity Rating				
Theme		Very High	High	Medium	Low
Archaeological and Cultural Heritage	PRESUMED				X
	ACTUAL				X

CONCLUSION

In light of these conditions, I, therefore, request that no Heritage Impact Assessment be required and that the project be approved. A site visit on the 28th of May 2024 confirmed this report's findings and conclusions.

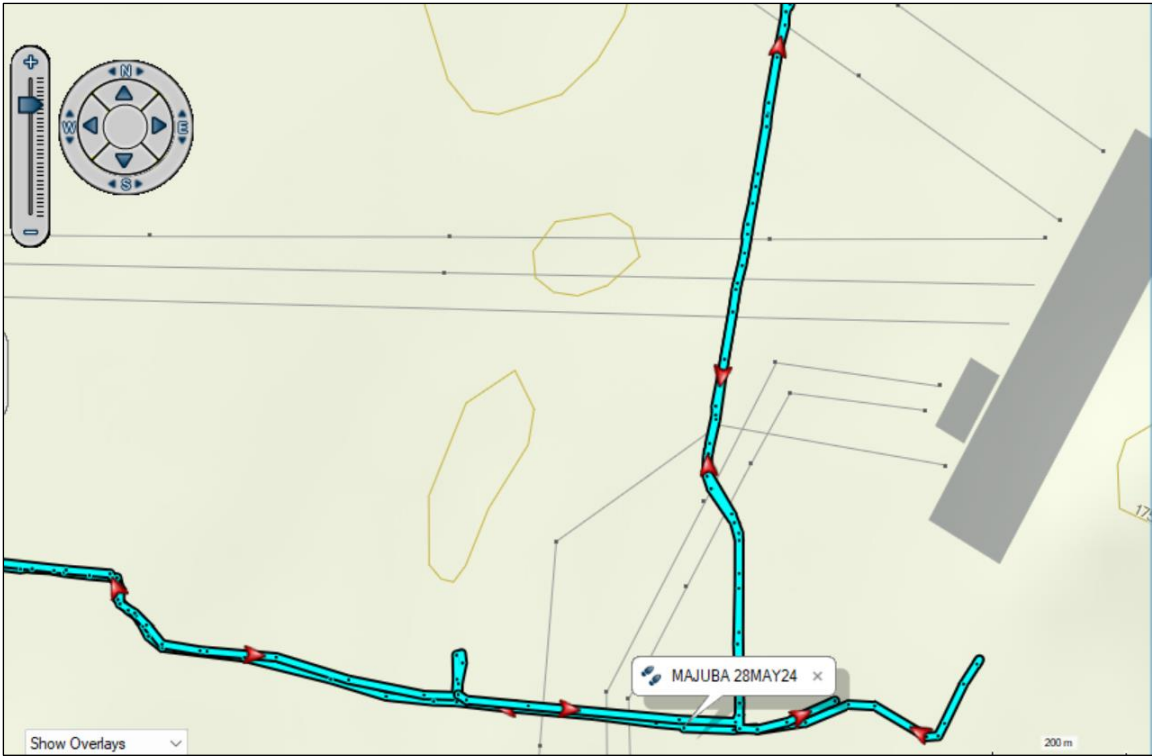
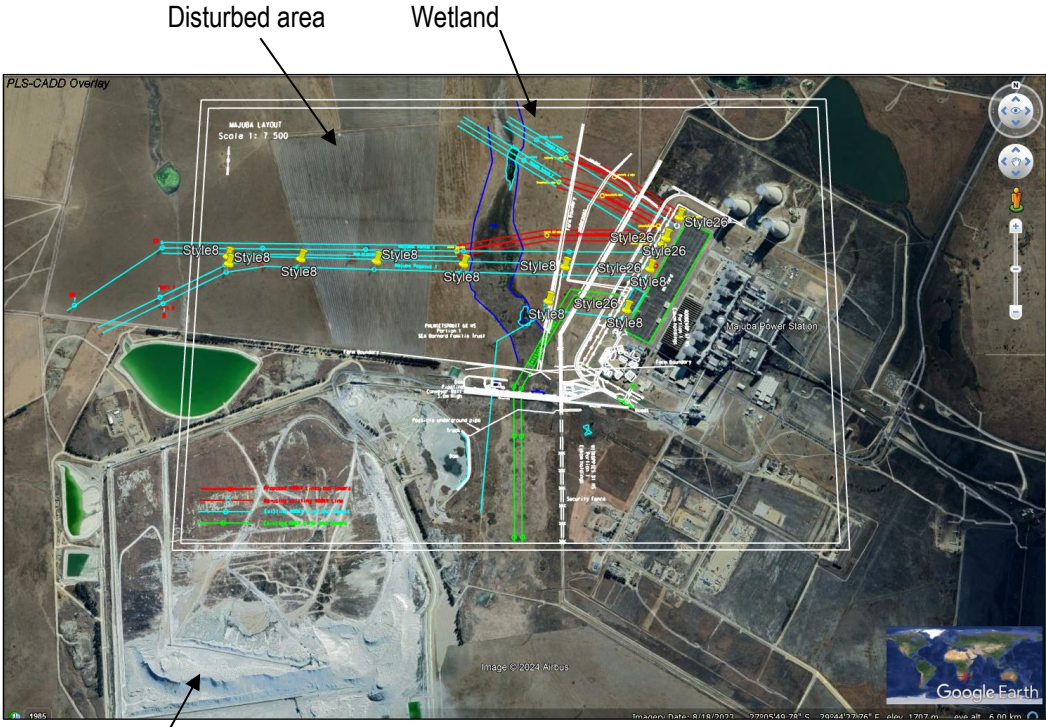


Figure 1: Map of the tracklog from the site visit on 28 May 2024.



Ash deposit facility south of the project site

Figure 2: Google Earth map showing the location of the Power Station and the proposed new installations



Figure 3: Wetland and watercourse west of the power plant.



Figure 4: Maize field in the disturbed area where the substation will be established.



Figure 5: The continuous ash deposit facility (ADF) to the south of the project site

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. Matenga". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Edward Matenga (Ph.D.)

REFERENCES

Lidwala Consulting Engineers. 2012. Majuba Continuous Ashing EIA: Final Scoping Report December 2012, Chapter 1:

Schalkwyk, J. 2022. Development of a General Waste Disposal Site at the Eskom Majuba Power Station, Dr Pixley Ka Seme Local Municipality, Mpumalanga Province.

Majuba Power Station. Global Energy Monitor. Found at: https://www.gem.wiki/Majuba_power_station

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DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

The views expressed in this Report are entirely those of the author and no other interest was involved in the decision-making process for the Report.