17 DECOMMISSIONING

As mentioned in *Chapter 4*, the wind farm would have a minimum life span of up to 25 years. Once the facility has reached the end of its life the turbines may be refurbished and continue operating as a power generating facility, or the facility may be closed and decommissioned. If decommissioned, all the components of the wind farm would be removed and the site would be rehabilitated. The decommissioning and reinstatement of the site would involve many activities that may have environmental and social impacts.

A detailed decommissioning and rehabilitation plan should be developed prior to decommissioning the facility and associated infrastructure in accordance with the relevant environmental authority. This plan should include, but not be limited to, management of socio-economic aspects such as employment creation, removal, re-use and recycling of materials and vegetative rehabilitation to prevent erosion. This impact assessment focussed on potential impacts associated with the construction and operational phase of the proposed Roggeveld Wind Farm. The decommissioning activities would be similar to construction activities and therefore recommendations outlined to manage construction phase impacts should be adhered to during decommissioning. Management actions should focus on the rehabilitation of disturbed areas and the removal of infrastructure.