

COMBINED NOTICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT APPLICATIONS: BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT (BID)

THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF ABO RIBBOK SOLAR ENERGY FACILITIES AND WIND ENERGY FACILITIES, INCLUDING ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE, NEAR RICHMOND AND HANOVER, NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE

Eight solar photovoltaic (PV) energy facilities and four wind energy facilities are proposed to be developed on respective project sites. These renewable energy facilities form part of a larger proposed renewable energy cluster development which include the development of both solar energy facilities and wind energy facilities. This Background Information Document (BID) covers the following proposed solar and wind energy facilities that form part of the larger cluster development:

- » ABO Ribbok Solar Energy Facility 5
- » ABO Ribbok Solar Energy Facility 6

- » ABO Ribbok Solar Energy Facility 7
- » ABO Ribbok Solar Energy Facility 8
- » ABO Ribbok Solar Energy Facility 9
- » ABO Ribbok Solar Energy Facility 10
- » ABO Ribbok Solar Energy Facility 11
- » ABO Ribbok Solar Energy Facility 12
- » ABO Ribbok Wind Energy Facility 3
- » ABO Ribbok Wind Energy Facility 4
- » ABO Ribbok Wind Energy Facility 5
- » ABO Ribbok Wind Energy Facility 6





Blue Crane Environmental has been appointed to undertake the Scoping & EIA (S&EIA) processes for the proposed ABO Ribbok Solar Energy Facilities and the ABO Ribbok Wind Energy Facilities.

The remaining solar and wind energy facility developments that form part of the cluster are being considered and assessed by Praxos 373 (Pty) Ltd. Therefore, separate Environmental Impact Assessment processes, including respective Public Participation processes will be undertaken by Praxos 373 (Pty) Ltd.

Each solar energy facility will include the following infrastructure:

- » Solar field/ solar arrays and associated infrastructure.
- » Battery Energy Storage System (BESS).
- » Primary/main access road/s as well as internal road reticulation within the proposed development footprint.
- » Associated infrastructure (to be located within the proposed development footprint), including:
 - o Associated internal reticulation.
 - o On-site substation hub consisting of:
 - On-site substation and associated infrastructure,
 - Additional step-up/ transformation/ collector/switchyard infrastructure,

- Auxiliary buildings (including, but not limited to, Operation and Maintenance (O&M) building/s, admin building/s, workshop/s, gatehouse/s, security building/s, control centre/s, office/s, visitor centre/s, warehouse/s, etc.), and/or
- BESS.
- » Perimeter fencing.
- » Temporary laydown area/s.

Each wind energy facility will include the following infrastructure:

- » Wind turbines (number and details to be confirmed) and associated components.
- » Battery Energy Storage System (BESS).
- » Internal and external/main access roads.
- Associated infrastructure (to be located within the proposed development footprint), including:
 - o Associated internal reticulation (to follow proposed and existing roads as far as possible).
 - o On-site substation hub consisting of:
 - On-site substation and associated infrastructure;
 - Additional step-up/ transformation/ collector/switchyard infrastructure;





- Auxiliary buildings (including, but not limited to, Operation and Maintenance (O&M) building/s, admin building/s, workshop/s, gatehouse/s, security building/s, control centre/s, office/s, visitor centre/s, warehouse/s, etc.); and/or
- BESS.
- » Temporary and permanent laydown area/s.

Tables with the respective project details for the proposed solar and wind energy facilities are included on the overleaf. Furthermore, a Locality Map of the locations of the solar and wind energy facility developments under assessment is included at the back end of the BID.





Project	ABO Ribbok	ABO Ribbok	ABO Ribbok	ABO Ribbok	ABO Ribbok	ABO Ribbok	ABO Ribbok	ABO Ribbok
Title:	Solar Energy	Solar Energy	Solar Energy	Solar Energy	Solar Energy	Solar Energy	Solar Energy	Solar Energy
	Facility 5 and	Facility 6 and	Facility 7 and	Facility 8 and	Facility 9 and	Facility 10	Facility 11 and	Facility 12 and
	Associated	Associated	Associated	Associated	Associated	and	Associated	Associated
	Infrastructure,	Infrastructure,	Infrastructure,	Infrastructure,	Infrastructure,	Associated	Infrastructure,	Infrastructure,
	near Hanover	near Hanover	near Hanover	near Hanover	near Hanover	Infrastructur	near Hanover	near Hanover,
	and	and	and	and Richmond,	and	e, near	and Richmond,	Northern
	Richmond,	Richmond,	Richmond,	Northern Cape	Richmond,	Hanover	Northern Cape	Cape
	Northern	Northern	Northern	Province.	Northern	and	Province.	Province.
	Cape	Cape	Cape		Cape	Richmond,		
	Province.	Province.	Province.		Province.	Northern		
						Cape		
						Province.		
Project Descri	ect Description: Development of a photovoltaic (PV) solar energy facility with a generation capacity of up to 300MWac.							
Infrastructur	PV Panels, on-site facility substation hub, battery energy storage system, laydown areas, internal and external/main access roads, internal							
e:	reticulation network, operation and maintenance buildings.							
Location:	Between ~16 km and ~20 km north of the centre of the town of Between ~25 km and ~33 km northeast of the centre of the town of					e of the town of		
	Richmond and b	Richmond and between ~54 km and ~55 km southwest of the centre			Hanover in the Emthanjeni Local Municipality and the Pixley ka Seme			
	of the town of Hanover in the Ubuntu Local Municipality and the Pixley			District Municipality.				
	ka Seme District Municipality.							





Affected	o Portion 1 of	o Portion 1	o Portion 1	o Portion 3 of	o Remaining	o Remainin	o Remaining	o Remaining
Properties:	the Farm	of the	of the Farm	the Farm	Extent of	g Extent	Extent of the	Extent of
	No. 145	Farm No.	No. 145	Klippfountain	the Farm	of the	Farm Vaal	the Farm
	o Remainder	145	o Remainder	No. 39	Vaal Bank	Farm Vaal	Bank No. 36	Barends
	of the Farm		of the Farm	o Portion 4 of	No. 36	Bank No.	o Farm No. 56	Kuilen No.
	No. 152		No. 152	the Farm		36	o Remainder of	38
				Klippfountain			the Farm	
				No. 39			Blaauwbosch	
				o Portion 5 of			Kuilen	
				the Farm			Outspan No.	
				Klippfountain			37	
				No. 39				
				o Portion 7 of				
				the Farm				
				Klippfountain				
				No. 39				
Activity	Up to 1303 ha	Up to 858 ha	Up to 1241 ha	Up to 3781 ha	Up to 1631 ha	Up to 1295	Up to 954ha	Up to 419 ha
Size:						ha		
Applicant:	ABO Ribbok	ABO Ribbok	ABO Ribbok	ABO Ribbok				
	Solar Energy	Solar Energy	Solar Energy	Solar Energy				
	Facility 5 (Pty)	Facility 6 (Pty)	Facility 7 (Pty)	Facility 8 (Pty)	Facility 9 (Pty)	Facility 10	Facility 11 (Pty)	Facility 12
	Ltd	Ltd	Ltd	Ltd	Ltd	(Pty) Ltd	Ltd	(Pty) Ltd





Project Title:	ABO Ribbok Wind Energy Facility	ABO Ribbok Wind Energy Facility	ABO Ribbok Wind Energy Facility	ABO Ribbok Wind Energy Facility	
	3 and Associated Infrastructure,	4 and Associated Infrastructure,	5 and Associated Infrastructure,	6 and Associated Infrastructure,	
	near Richmond and Hanover,	near Richmond and Hanover,	near Richmond and Hanover,	near Richmond and Hanover,	
	Northern Cape Province.	Northern Cape Province.	Northern Cape Province.	Northern Cape Province.	
Project Description: Development of a wind energ		y facility with a generation capacity	of up to 300MWac.		
Project	Wind turbines (number and maxin	num development specifications to	be confirmed), on-site facility subst	tation hub, battery energy storage	
Infrastructure:	system, temporary and permaner maintenance buildings.	nt laydown areas, internal and exte	ernal/main access roads, internal re	ticulation network, operation and	
Location:	~18 km northeast of the centre of	the town of Richmond and ~25 km ~19 km northwest of the centre of the town of Hanover and ~43 k			
southwest of the centre of the to-		wn of Hanover in the Ubuntu Local northeast of the centre of the town of Richmond and in the Emthan			
Municipality and the Pixley ka Sen		ne District Municipality.	and Ubuntu Local Municipalities and the Pixley ka Seme Dist		
			Municipality.		
Affected	o Portion 1 of the Farm Roode	o Remaining Extent of the Farm	o Portion 1 of the Farm Schraal	o Remaining Extent of the Farm	
Properties:	Kop No. 34	Vogel Valley No. 34	and Bitter Vlakte No. 61	Vaal Bank No. 36	
-	o Portion 2 of the Farm Roode	o Remaining Extent of the Farm	o Remaining Extent of the Farm	o Remaining Extent of the Farm	
	Kop No. 34	Waai Kraal No. 101	Nieuwe Fontein No. 62	No. 56	
	o Portion 1 of the Farm	o Portion 1 of the Farm Waai	o Portion 6 of the Farm Nieuwe	o Portion 2 of the Farm No. 56	
	Scheurfountain No. 35	Kraal No. 101	Fontein No. 62	o Portion 3 of the Farm No. 56	





0	Remaining Extent of the Farm
	Kantfontein No. 36

- Remaining Extent of the Farm Geelbeksfontein No. 59
- Portion 4 of the Farm Geelbeksfontein No. 59
- Remaining Extent of the Farm Nooit Verwacht No. 61
- Remaining Extent of the Farm
 Kragga Kamma No. 136
- o Farm No. 62

- Remaining Extent of the Farm
 Amoy No. 105
- Portion 2 of the Farm Grootfontein Landgoed No.33
- Remaining Extent of the Farm Roode Kop No. 34

- Remaining Extent of the Farm Hartebeestfontein No. 66
- Remaining Extent of the Farm Elandsfontein No. 67
- Portion 2 of the Farm Elandsfontein No. 67
- Portion 4 of the Farm Elandsfontein No. 67
- Portion 1 of the Farm
 Zaaifontein No. 68
- o Portion 1 of the Farm Brandnetelsfontein No. 6
- Portion 4 of the Farm
 Brandnetelsfontein No. 6

- Portion 1 of the Farm Dwaalfontein A No. 58
- Remaining Extent of the Farm Jaag Fountain No. 60
- Portion 1 of the Farm Schraal and Bitter Vlakte No. 61
- Portion 3 of the Farm Schraal and Bitter Vlakte No. 61
- Portion 4 of the Farm Schraal and Bitter Vlakte No. 61
- Portion 6 of the Farm Schraal and Bitter Vlakte No. 61
- Remaining Extent of the Farm
 Nieuwe Fontein No. 62
- Portion 2 of the Farm Nieuwe
 Fontein No. 62
- Portion 4 of the Farm Nieuwe
 Fontein No. 62
- Portion 5 of the Farm Nieuwe
 Fontein No. 62
- Portion 3 of the Farm Elandsfontein No. 67





Activity Size:	Up to 8395 ha is under	Up to 8823 ha is under	Up to 11 702 ha is under	Up to 11 577 ha is under
	assessment for the placement of			
	the development footprint.	the development footprint.	the development footprint.	the development footprint.
Applicant:	ABO Ribbok Wind Energy Facility			
3 (Pty) Ltd		4 (Pty) Ltd	5 (Pty) Ltd	6 (Pty) Ltd





1. Purpose of the Background Information Document

You and/or the organisation/institution which you represent has been identified as a potential interested and/or affected party (I&AP) for the proposed developments. This BID therefore aims to provide you with:

- An overview of the proposed developments, including details of the location and infrastructure being proposed;
- An overview of the S&EIA processes and independent specialist studies being undertaken;
- The details of how to get involved in the S&EIA processes, including how to receive information, raise issues and comment and participate in the processes as a whole.

2. Scoping & Environmental Impact Assessment Processes

Notice is hereby formally given, in terms of the 2014 EIA regulations (as amended in 2017) published in Government Notice No. R326 under Section 24(5) and 44 of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) (Act No. 107 of 1998), of the intent to lodge Applications for Environmental Authorisation (EA) and the undertaking of S&EIA processes (i.t.o. Listing Notice 1, 2 and 3 – G.N. R327, 325 & 324).

The need for the S&EIA processes stem from listed activities triggered in terms of the EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended. Environmental Authorisation is required for certain listed activities that are considered to potentially have a negative impact on the environment. The following listed activities have been identified to be relevant to the proposed development (noting that the final listed activities triggered will be confirmed through the S&EIA process):

- <u>Activity 11(i) (GN.R. 327):</u> "The development of facilities or infrastructure for the transmission and distribution of electricity outside urban areas or industrial complexes with a capacity of more than 33 but less than 275 kilovolts."
- Activity 14 (GN.R. 327): "The development and related operation
 of facilities or infrastructure, for the storage, or for the storage and
 handling, of a dangerous good, where such storage occurs in
 containers with a combined capacity of 80 cubic metres or more
 but not exceeding 500 cubic metres."
- <u>Activity 24 (ii) (GN.R. 327):</u> "The development of a road (ii) with reserve wider than 13,5 meters, or where no reserve exists where the road is wider than 8 meters"
- <u>Activity 28(ii) (GN.R. 327):</u> "Residential, mixed, retail, commercial, industrial or institutional developments where such land was used for agriculture or afforestation on or after 1998 and where such





development (ii) will occur outside an urban area, where the total land to be developed is bigger than 1 hectare."

- Activity 56(ii) (GN.R. 327): "The widening of a road by more than 6 metres, or the lengthening of a road by more than 1 kilometre (ii) where no reserve exists, where the existing road is wider than 8 metres..."
- <u>Activity 1 (GN.R. 325):</u> "The development of facilities or infrastructure for the generation of electricity from a renewable resource where the electricity output is 20 megawatts or more..."
- <u>Activity 15 (GN.R. 325):</u> "The clearance of an area of 20 hectare or more of indigenous vegetation..."

Activities required for the development of the solar and wind energy facilities which are listed under Listing Notice 1 and 2 (GNR 327 and 325) implies that the developments could potentially have an impact on the environment that will require mitigation. Subsequently a 'thorough assessment process' is required as described in Regulations 21-24. Blue Crane Environmental has been appointed as the independent Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP)to undertake the S&EIA processes on behalf of the respective Applicants listed in the tables above.

The National Department of Forestry, Fisheries, and the Environment, has been identified as the competent authority for the proposed

developments and will therefore be the decision-maker on the Applications for Environmental Authorisation.

Further to the above, notification is also provided to the I&APs in terms of the applicability of the National Water Act (Act 36 of 1998) and the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999).

The National Water Act (NWA) will be applicable in terms of obtaining the required water use licensing for the developments. Section 21 c and i will most likely be triggered by the solar and wind energy facilities. This will be confirmed during the S&EIA processes and the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) will be consulted throughout the S&EIA processes.

In terms of the National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA) approval and final comment will need to be obtained from the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA). This is in line with the requirements of Sections 35, 36 and 38 of the NHRA. Furthermore, the Northern Cape Heritage Resources Authority (NCHRA), previously called Ngwao Boswa Jwa Kapa Bokone, is the Provincial Heritage Resources Authority (PHRA) and will also be consulted during the S&EIA processes.

3. Environmental Impacts and Independent Specialist studies





Potential environmental impacts could occur as part of the development of the proposed solar PV and wind facilities. These impacts need to be assessed fully as part of the S&EIA processes and appropriate mitigation measures need to be recommended by independent specialists for inclusion in the Environmental Management Programmes (EMPr). The following includes a preliminary list of assessments to be undertaken in order to assess potential impacts are expected to occur (note that in certain instances, these assessments only apply to the proposed wind energy facilities):

- Biodiversity which includes ecology, wetlands, fauna and flora and assesses the potential impact and the associated disturbance of vegetation on the ecology and biodiversity (including critical biodiversity areas and broad-scale processes).
- Avifauna which includes seasonal surveys and monitoring and assesses the impact on avifaunal habitats and sensitive species, as well as mortality of avifauna and collisions and electrocutions of birds with the project infrastructure (particularly wind turbines).
- Bats which includes seasonal surveys and monitoring and assesses the impact on habitats and sensitive species, as well as mortality of bats and barotrauma. This is specific to the development of the proposed wind energy facilities.

- Soils and agricultural potential which assesses the significance of loss of agricultural land and soil degradation and/or erosion.
- Heritage which includes archaeology and palaeontology and assesses the potential of disturbance to or destruction of heritage sites and fossils during the construction phase through excavation activities. The cultural landscape associated with the developments and the potential impacts will also be considered.
- Visual which includes the visual quality of the area and assesses
 the impact of the proposed renewable energy facilities on the
 aesthetics of the area.
- Socio-economic consideration of the current social environment and the impact of the proposed developments on the existing social aspects of the area.
- Noise assessment of the impact of noise, specifically during the operation of wind turbines.
- Traffic and Transportation— which includes the consideration of the increase in traffic on the surrounding road network and transport routes for project components.
- Geotechnical consideration of the geotechnical aspects and characteristics of the site that may impact on the development of the solar PV and wind facilities.





Specialist studies will be informed by existing information, field observations and input from the public participation process. As an I&AP, your input is considered as an important part of the processes, and we urge you to become involved.

4. Public Participation Processes

The sharing of information forms the basis of the Public Participation Process (PPP) and offers you the opportunity to become actively involved in the S&EIA processes from the outset. Separate Applications for Environmental Authorisation will be lodged for the developments. However, as the projects are located in close proximity to one another, certain public participation tasks will be combined and/or undertaken simultaneously. The Public Participation Processes will be undertaken in line with the requirements of Chapter 6 of the EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended.

Comment and input from I&APs are encouraged in order to ensure that all potential impacts are considered within the ambit of the study.

In terms of Section 24J of the NEMA, Act 107 of 1998 and the Department of Environmental Affairs Public Participation Guideline 2017, as part of the S&EIA processes, an I&AP has the responsibility to:

- Submit comment within the specified timeframes communicated (these will be communicated by the EAP at various points throughout the S&EIA process/es);
- Submit comment directly to the EAP, which is Blue Crane Environmental; and
- Disclose any direct business, financial, personal, or other interest which that I&AP may have in the approval or refusal of the Applications for Environmental Authorisation.

5. How to become involved

If you consider yourself an I&AP, we urge you to participate in the processes and provide comment, or raise those issues and concerns which affect and/or interest you, and about which you would like more information. Become involved by:

- Responding (by phone, email, WhatsApp) to our notification and invitation for your involvement;
- Getting in touch with the relevant contact person and registering as an I&AP on the project databases;
- Contacting Blue Crane Environmental with queries or comments;
 and
- Reviewing and commenting on the project documentation including the Scoping Reports (SR) and Environmental Impact





Reports (EIR) within the timeframe prescribed by Blue Crane Environmental.

6. Comments and Queries

Kindly direct all comments, queries and responses to:

Blue Crane Environmental

EAP: Lisa De Lange / Marelie Botha

Cell: 084 920 3111 / 082 493 5166

E-mail: ribbok@bcrane.co.za

All personal information will be handled strictly in accordance with the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA).

Alternatively, please visit our website at www.bcrane.co.za or scan the QR Code in the document header.





