



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

THE PROPOSED STELLAR MOCKFORD 1 SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY AND STELLAR MOCKFORD 2 SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE, NEAR POLOKWANE, LIMPOPO PROVINCE

The development of two (2) photovoltaic (PV) solar facilities are proposed within the Polokwane Local Municipality and the Capricorn District Municipality, Limpopo Province. The two individual projects are proposed to be located adjacent to one another and are therefore described in this combined Background Information Document (BID). The developments proposed include:

Stellar Mockford 1 Solar Energy Facility

The proposed development is located on Portion 15 of the Farm Turffontein No. 14, the Remaining Extent of Portion 7 of the Farm Hollandsdrift No. 15 and the Remaining Extent of Portion 18 of the Farm Hollandsdrift No. 15, located approximately 20 km southwest of the town of Polokwane. The solar PV facility will comprise several arrays

of PV panels and associated infrastructure and will have a contracted capacity of up to 100 MW. An area of approximately 250 hectares is under assessment for the development.

Stellar Mockford 2 Solar Energy Facility

The proposed development is located on Portion 3 of the Farm Hollandsdrift No. 15, the Remaining Extent of Portion 7 of the Farm Hollandsdrift No. 15 and the Remaining Extent of Portion 18 of the Farm Hollandsdrift No. 15, located approximately 20 km southwest of the town of Polokwane. The solar PV facility will comprise several arrays of PV panels and associated infrastructure and will have a contracted capacity of up to 70 MW. An area of approximately 150 hectares is under assessment for the development.



Stellar Mockford 1 and Stellar Mockford 2 solar energy facilities will each include the following infrastructure:

- » PV modules and mounting structures
- » Inverters and transformers
- » Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)
- » Site and internal access roads
- » Operation and Maintenance buildings including a gate house and security building, control centre, offices, warehouses and workshops for storage and maintenance.
- » Temporary and permanent laydown areas
- » Facility grid connection infrastructure, including:
 - An on-site facility substation
 - Internal cabling between the project components and the onsite facility substation

Refer to the Locality Map provided at the back end of the BID.

Blue Crane Environmental has been appointed to undertake the Environmental Impact Assessment processes for the Stellar Mockford 1 and Stellar Mockford 2 solar energy facilities.

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 processes and independent specialist studies being undertaken;
- The details of how to get involved in the processes, including to receive information, raise issues and comment and participate in the processes as a whole.

1. 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 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) processes (i.t.o. Listing Notice 1, 2 and 3 – G.N. R327, 325 & 324).



The need for the 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 developments:

- Activity 11(i) (GN.R. 327): “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.”
- Activity 24 (ii) (GN.R. 327): “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”
- Activity 28(ii) (GN.R. 327): “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...”
- Activity 1 (GN.R. 325): “The development of facilities or infrastructure for the generation of electricity from a renewable resource where the electricity output is 20 megawatts or more...”
- Activity 15 (GN.R. 325): “The clearance of an area of 20 hectare or more of indigenous vegetation...”

Activities required for the development of the solar 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 in the EIA Regulations 21-24 and therefore a full Scoping and EIA (S&EIA) process is required for each development.

Further to the above, specific geographic characteristics may be relevant to the affected properties and the surrounding areas (i.e. CBAs, Protected Areas, NPAES etc.) which could trigger listed activities under Listing Notice 3, GN.R 324 of the EIA Regulations.



These activities will only be identified once the independent specialist studies have been completed.

Blue Crane Environmental has been appointed as the independent consultant to undertake the EIA processes on behalf of the Applicant namely Stellar Energy Solutions (Pty) Ltd.

The National Department of Forestry, Fisheries, and the Environment (DFFE), has been identified as the competent authority for the proposed developments and will therefore be the decision-maker on the Applications for Environmental Authorisation.

2. Environmental Impacts and Independent Specialist studies

Potential environmental impacts could occur as part of the development of the proposed solar PV facilities. These impacts need to be assessed fully as part of the EIA processes and appropriate mitigation measures need to be recommended by independent specialists as part of the Environmental Management Programmes (EMPr). The following preliminary impacts are expected to occur:

- 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 survey and assesses the impact on avifaunal habitats and sensitive species.
- 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.
- Visual– which include the visual quality of the area and assesses the impact of the solar PV facilities on the aesthetics of the area.
- Social – consideration of the current social environment and the impact of the developments on the existing social aspects of the area.
- Traffic – which includes the consideration of the increase in traffic on the surrounding road network.

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 process, and we urge you to become involved.



3. Public Participation Process

The sharing of information forms the basis of the Public Participation Process (PPP) and offers you the opportunity to become actively involved in the EIA processes from the outset. The Public Participation Process 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 EIA processes, an I&AP has the responsibility to:

- Submit comment within the specified timeframes communicated;
- Submit comment directly to the Environmental Assessment Practitioner (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.

4. 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 database;
- Contacting Blue Crane Environmental with queries or comments; and
- Reviewing and commenting on the project documentation including the Scoping Reports (SR), Environmental Impact Reports (EIR) and Environmental Management Programmes (EMPr) within the timeframes prescribed by Blue Crane Environmental.



5. Comments and Queries

Kindly direct all comments, queries and responses to:

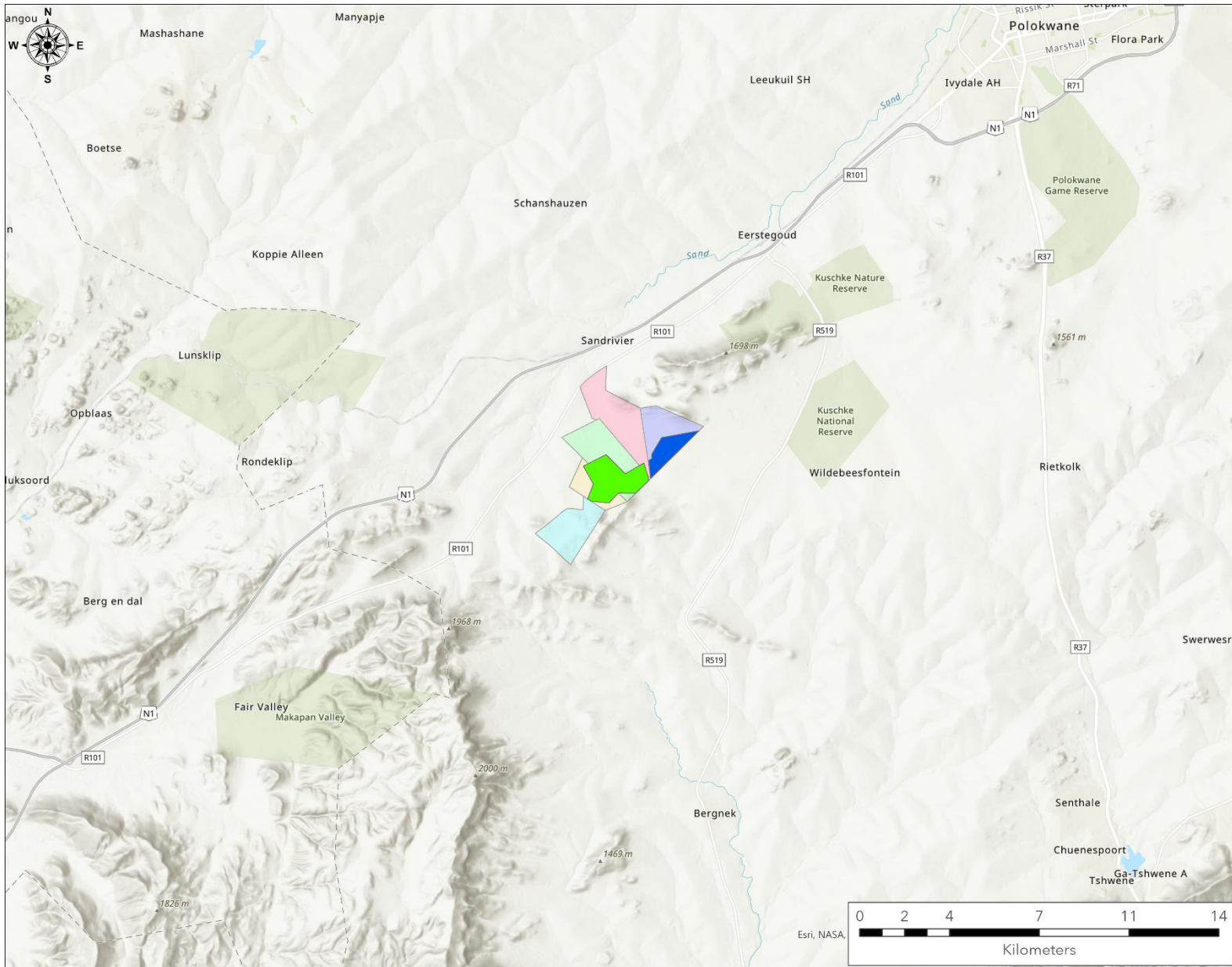
Blue Crane Environmental

EAP: Lisa De Lange / Marelie Botha

Cell: 084 920 3111 / 082 493 5166

E-mail: mockford@bcrane.co.za

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



LEGEND

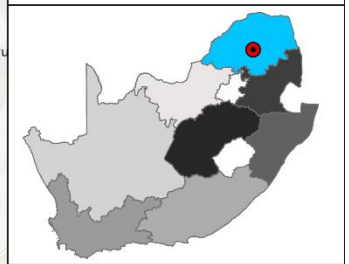
Mockford Solar

- Assessment Area
- Mockford 1 Solar
- Mockford 2 Solar

Farm Portions

- Portion 15 of the Farm Turffontein No. 14
- Portion 40 of the Farm Turffontein No. 14
- Portion 3 of the Farm Hollandsdrift No. 15
- RE of Portion 7 of the Farm Hollandsdrift No. 15
- RE of Portion 18 of the Farm Hollandsdrift No. 15

LIMPOPO PROVINCE LOCALITY MAP



Data Source:

Stellar Energy Solutions

Project No.: 2309
Date Exported: 2023/07/28 09:16

Coordinates (DDM):
 29°17,93592597'E
 24°4,24850264'S

LOCALITY MAP: PROPOSED STELLAR MOCKFORD 1 AND MOCKFORD 2 SOLAR ENERGY FACILITIES NEAR POLOKWANE, LIMPOPO PROVINCE

