

## PALAEONTOLOGICAL DESKTOP ASSESSMENT

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF THE  
ADAMS BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE  
SYSTEM (BESS) AND ASSOCIATED  
INFRASTRUCTURE, NORTHERN CAPE  
PROVINCE

July 2023

COMPILED FOR: NCC Environmental  
Services



## Declaration of Independence

I, Elize Butler, declare that –

General declaration:

- I act as the independent palaeontological specialist in this application
- I will perform the work relating to the application in an objective manner, even if this results in views and findings that are not favorable to the applicant
- I declare that there are no circumstances that may compromise my objectivity in performing such work.
- I have expertise in conducting palaeontological impact assessments, including knowledge of the Act, Regulations and any guidelines that have relevance to the proposed activity.
- I will comply with the Act, Regulations, and all other applicable legislation.
- I will take into account, to the extent possible, the matters listed in section 38 of the NHRA when preparing the application and any report relating to the application.
- I have no, and will not engage in, conflicting interests in the undertaking of the activity.
- I undertake to disclose to the applicant and the competent authority all material information in my possession that reasonably has or may have the potential of influencing - any decision to be taken with respect to the application by the competent authority; and - the objectivity of any report, plan or document to be prepared by myself for submission to the competent authority.
- I will ensure that information containing all relevant facts in respect of the application is distributed or made available to interested and affected parties and the public and that participation by interested and affected parties is facilitated in such a manner that all interested and affected parties will be provided with a reasonable opportunity to participate and to provide comments on documents that are produced to support the application.
- I will provide the competent authority with access to all information at my disposal regarding the application, whether such information is favorable to the applicant or not
- All the particulars furnished by me in this form are true and correct.
- I will perform all other obligations as expected a palaeontological specialist in terms of the Act and the constitutions of my affiliated professional bodies; and
- I realize that a false declaration is an offense in terms of regulation 71 of the Regulations and is punishable in terms of section 24F of the NEMA.



**Disclosure of Vested Interest**

I do not have and will not have any vested interest (either business, financial, personal, or other) in the proposed activity proceeding other than remuneration for work performed in terms of the Regulations.

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**SIGNATURE:**



This Palaeontological Impact Assessment report has been compiled considering the National Environmental Management Act 1998 (NEMA) and Environmental Impact Regulations 2014 as amended, requirements for specialist reports, Appendix 6, as indicated in the table below.

<b>Table 1: NEMA Table</b>	
<b>Requirements of Appendix 6 – GN R326 EIA Regulations of 7 April 2017</b>	<b>Relevant section in report</b>
1.(1) (a) (i) Details of the specialist who prepared the report	Page ii and Section 2 of Report – Contact details and company and Appendix A
(ii) The expertise of that person to compile a specialist report including a curriculum vitae	Section 2 – refer to <b>Appendix A</b>
(b) A declaration that the person is independent in a form as may be specified by the competent authority	Page ii of the report
(c) An indication of the scope of, and the purpose for which, the report was prepared	Section 4 -Methods and TOR
(cA) An indication of the quality and age of base data used for the specialist report	Section 5 – Geological and Palaeontological history
(cB) a description of existing impacts on the site, cumulative impacts of the proposed development and levels of acceptable change;	Section 8
(d) The duration, date and season of the site investigation and the relevance of the season to the outcome of the assessment	Desktop Assessment
(e) a description of the methodology adopted in preparing the report or carrying out the specialised process inclusive of equipment and modelling used	Section 4 -Methods and TOR
(f) details of an assessment of the specific identified sensitivity of the site related to the proposed activity or activities and its associated structures and infrastructure, inclusive of a site plan identifying site alternative;	Section 1 and 9
(g) An identification of any areas to be avoided, including buffers	Section 5 No buffers or areas of sensitivity identified
(h) A map superimposing the activity including the associated structures and infrastructure on the environmental sensitivities of the site including areas to be avoided, including buffers;	Section 5 – Geological and Palaeontological history



<b>Table 1: NEMA Table</b>	
<b>Requirements of Appendix 6 – GN R326 EIA Regulations of 7 April 2017</b>	<b>Relevant section in report</b>
(i) A description of any assumptions made and any uncertainties or gaps in knowledge;	Section 4.1 – Assumptions and Limitation
(j) A description of the findings and potential implications of such findings on the impact of the proposed activity, including identified alternatives, on the environment	Section 1 and 9
(k) Any mitigation measures for inclusion in the EMPr	Section 1 and 9
(l) Any conditions for inclusion in the environmental authorisation	Section 1 and 9
(m) Any monitoring requirements for inclusion in the EMPr or environmental authorisation	Section 1 and 9
(n)(i) A reasoned opinion as to whether the proposed activity, activities or portions thereof should be authorised and	Section 1 and 9
(n)(iA) A reasoned opinion regarding the acceptability of the proposed activity or activities; and	
(n)(ii) If the opinion is that the proposed activity, activities or portions thereof should be authorised, any avoidance, management and mitigation measures that should be included in the EMPr, and where applicable, the closure plan	Section 1 and 9
(o) A description of any consultation process that was undertaken during the course of carrying out the study	N/A
(p) A summary and copies if any comments that were received during any consultation process	N/A
(q) Any other information requested by the competent authority.	N/A
(2) Where a government notice by the Minister provides for any protocol or minimum information requirement to be applied to a specialist report, the requirements as indicated in such notice will apply.	Section 3 compliance with SAHRA guidelines



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Banzai Environmental was appointed by NCC Environmental Services to conduct the Palaeontological Desktop Assessment (PDA) to assess the proposed Adams Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and associated infrastructure on Portion 0 of Farm Adams 328. Under the National Environmental Management Act 107 of 1998 (NEMA) and to comply with the National Heritage Resources Act (No 25 of 1999, section 38) (NHRA), this PDA is necessary to confirm if fossil material could potentially be present in the approved development area and to evaluate the potential impact of the proposed changes to the development on the Palaeontological Heritage.

The proposed Adams BESS is situated on the southern end of the Kalahari Manganese Field and is basically underlain by Kalahari Group deposits underlain at depth by the Griqualand West Basin rocks (Transvaal Supergroup). Updated Geology (Council of Geosciences, Pretoria) indicates that the study area entirely is underlain by the Kalahari Group. The PalaeoMap of the South African Heritage Resources Information System (SAHRIS) indicates that the Palaeontological Sensitivity of the Kalahari Group is Moderate (Almond and Pether, 2009; Almond *et al.*, 2013, Groenewald et al 2014).

The fossil assemblages of the Kalahari are generally very low in diversity and occur over a wide range. These fossils represent terrestrial plants and animals with a close resemblance to living forms. The proposed Adams BESS development is located in the **Griqualand West Basin**, which consists of clastic sediments as well as volcanic rocks, diamictites and banded iron formations. Algal growth structures, also known as Stromatolites, are fossil structures described from the dolomites of the Transvaal Supergroup. The oxygen atmosphere that we depend on was generated by numerous cyanobacteria photosynthesizing during the Archaean and Proterozoic Era.

If fossil remains are discovered during any phase of construction, either on the surface or exposed by excavations the ECO/site manager in charge of these developments must be informed immediately. These discoveries ought to be secured (preferably *in situ*) and the ECO/site manager ought to alert SAHRA so that appropriate mitigation (documentation and collection) can be undertaken by a professional palaeontologist.

The specialist would need a collection permit from SAHRA. Fossil material must be curated in an approved collection (museum or university) and all fieldwork and reports should meet the minimum standards for palaeontological impact studies developed by SAHRA.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>SPECIALIST CREDENTIALS .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>LEGISLATION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
3.1	National Heritage Resources Act (25 of 1999)	1
<b>4</b>	<b>METHODS AND TERMS OF REFERENCE .....</b>	<b>3</b>
4.1	Assumptions and Limitations	4
<b>5</b>	<b>GEOLOGICAL AND PALAEOLOGICAL HISTORY .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF THE SITE .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONSULTED .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>IMPACT ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>8</b>
8.1	Summary of Impact Tables	12
<b>9</b>	<b>FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>14</b>



## LIST OF FIGURES

<b>Figure 1:</b> Location of the proposed Adams BESS and associated infrastructure on Portion 0 of Farm Adams 328, south of Hotazel in the Northern Cape Province.....	2
<b>Figure 2:</b> Close-up view of the location of the BESS development.....	3
<b>Figure 3:</b> Regional topography of the proposed Adams BESS development.....	1
<b>Figure 4:</b> Extract of the 1:250 000 Kuruman 2722 (1979) geological map (Council for Geoscience, Pretoria) indicates that the study area near Hotazel is underlain by Cenozoic Superficial sands.....	1
<b>Figure 5:</b> Updated Geology (Council of Geosciences, Pretoria) of the proposed study area indicates that the development is underlain by the Kalahari Group.....	3
<b>Figure 6:</b> Extract of the SAHRIS PalaeoMap (Council of Geosciences) indicates that the Palaeontological Sensitivity of the study area is Moderate (green).....	4
<b>Figure 7:</b> Example of a well-preserved stromatolite from the Archaean Era.....	5
<b>Figure 8:</b> Palaeontological Sensitivity of the Adams BESS study site by the National Environmental Web-bases Screening Tool.....	7

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: NEMA Table .....	iii
Table 2: Legend of the 2626 West-Rand (1986) Geological Map (Council for Geoscience, Pretoria) Relevant sediments are indicated in red squares.....	2
Table 3: SAHRIS Palaeosensitivity ratings table. The relevant sensitivities are highlighted.....	5
Table 4: Generalised Stratigraphic Column and Associated Geology.....	6
Table 5: The rating system.....	8
Table 6: Summary of Impact Tables .....	13

Appendix A: Curriculum Vitae





## 1 INTRODUCTION

Enel Green Power South Africa (Pty) Ltd proposes the construction and operation of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and associated infrastructure at the authorised in the proximity of the existing Adams Solar Photovoltaic Facility (Environmental Authorisation (EA) Ref No: 12/12/20/2567/1) located in the Joe Morolong Local Municipality in the Northern Cape province (**Figure 1-3**). The project will include the development of the BESS of up to 4ha in extent to be located adjacent to (within 100m of) the existing Photovoltaic Facility (PV) and associated substation.

Associated infrastructure includes:

- i A Substation with a maximum height of - HV busbar up to 10m max and an HV Building up to 4m max.
- ii Access road to the BESS (the existing access road will be utilized) branching off the existing roads, and internal roads (up to 8m wide) within the footprint of the BESS, as needed.
- iii MV Cabling (underground or overhead) between the BESS and the HV/MV BESS substation.
- iv HV Cabling (underground or overhead) between the HV/MV BESS substation and the existing HV substation or for loop in and loop out to the existing HV connection line
- v Fencing around the BESS and the substation for increased security measures.
- vi Temporary laydown area within the 4ha footprint of the BESS.
- vii Possible firebreak around the BESS facility which is to be located within the 4ha BESS footprint.

The general purpose and utilization of a BESS is to save and store excess electrical output as it is generated, allowing for a timed release of electricity to the grid when the capacity is required. BESS systems therefore provide flexibility in the efficient operation of the electricity grid through decoupling of the energy supply and demand.

The preferred location of the BESS facility and all associated infrastructure is proposed to be on Portion 0 of Farm Adams No. 328. An alternative location, to the North of the Adams Solar Park Photovoltaic (PV) Facility, was considered by the project specialists however at the request of the landowner and due to the suitability for the development of a BESS based on the requirement for such to be in close proximity to the approved and currently existing Adams PV Facility and substation to maximize synergies with existing connection infrastructures and to potentially shift the energy injected into the grid from Adams PV Facility and neighbouring generators to hours of higher demand. Only the one site location was considered for this project.

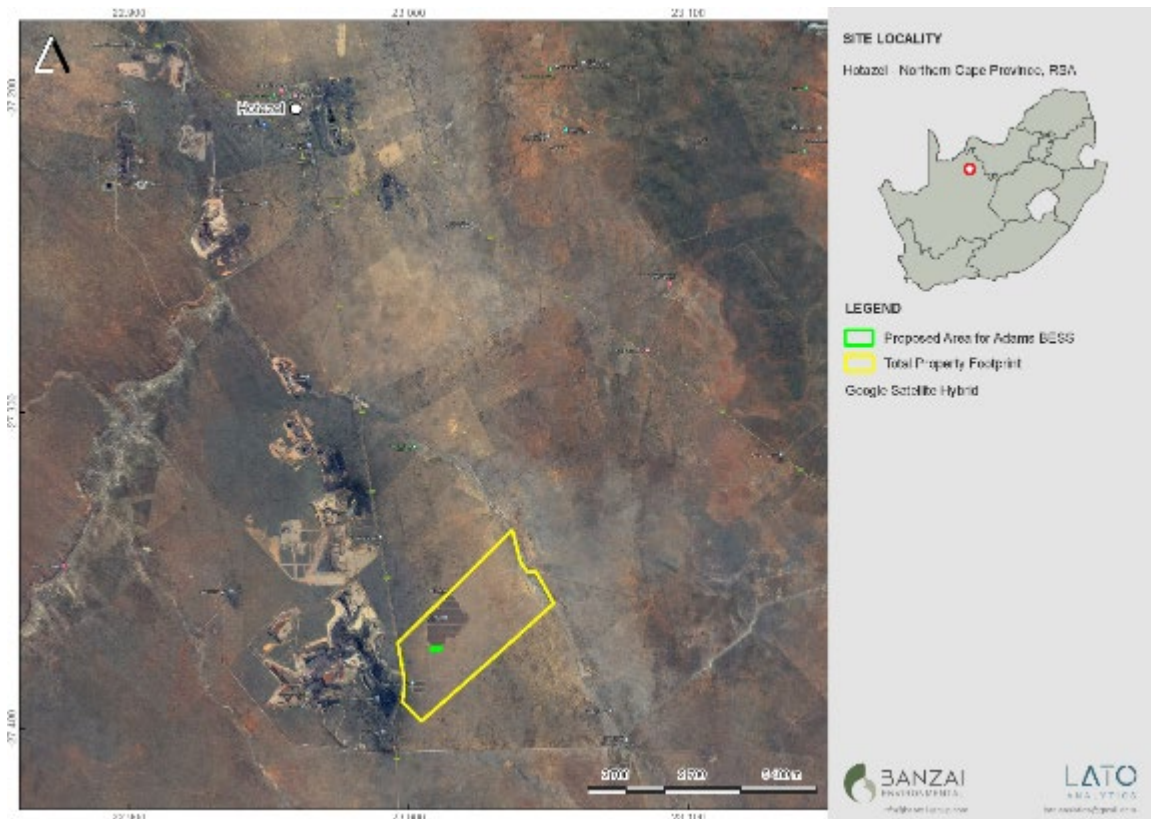


NCC Environmental Services (Pty) Ltd (**NCC**) was appointed to undertake the required EA process for the proposed BESS development in terms of the regulatory EIA frameworks, including the required public participation processes and development of the BAR and EMP. Banzai Environmental was in turn appointed to conduct the Palaeontological Desktop Assessment for the project.

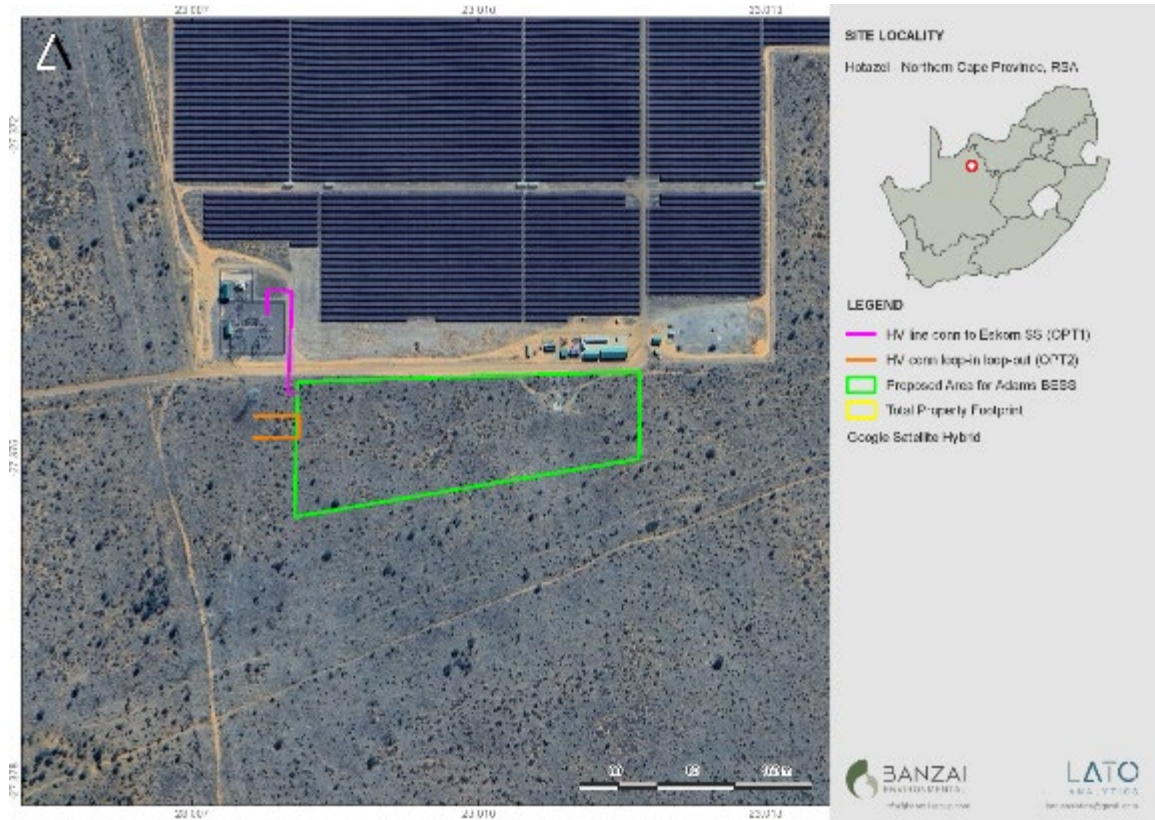
Two (2) site/locations were initially considered, one located to the North of existing PV Facility, and the other located to the South (Preferred). Specialists explored both sites however due to the landowner not agreeing with the Northern site it was considered a no-go and not included as an alternative option.

Only the southern site (Preferred Alternative) was therefore considered.

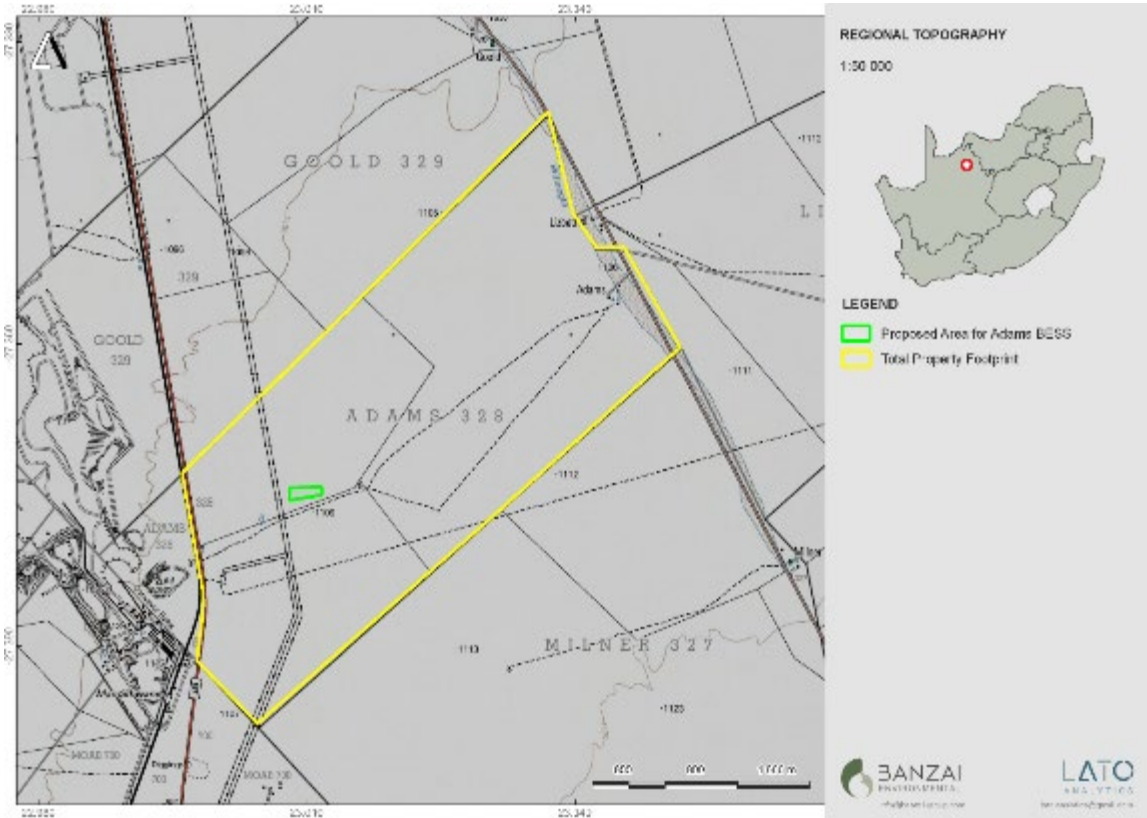
Above mentioned Information was obtained from the Draft BAR prepared by NCC for the project.



**Figure 1:** Location of the proposed Adams BESS and associated infrastructure on Portion 0 of Farm Adams 328, south of Hotazel in the Northern Cape Province.



**Figure 2:** Close-up view of the location of the BESS development.



**Figure 3:** Regional topography of the proposed Adams BESS development.



## 2 SPECIALIST CREDENTIALS

This present study has been conducted by Mrs Elize Butler. She has conducted approximately 500 palaeontological impact assessments for developments in the Free State, KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern, Central, and Northern Cape, Northwest, Gauteng, Limpopo, and Mpumalanga. She has an MSc (*cum laude*) in Zoology (specializing in Palaeontology) from the University of the Free State, South Africa and has been working in Palaeontology for more than twenty-five years. She has experience in locating, collecting, and curating fossils. She has been a member of the Palaeontological Society of South Africa (PSSA) since 2006 and has been conducting PIAs since 2014.

Her *Curriculum Vitae* is included in Appendix 1 of this specialist input report.

## 3 LEGISLATION

### 3.1 National Heritage Resources Act (25 of 1999)

Cultural Heritage in South Africa, includes all heritage resources, is protected by the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999) (NHRA). Heritage resources as defined in Section 3 of the Act include **“all objects recovered from the soil or waters of South Africa, including archaeological and palaeontological objects and material, meteorites and rare geological specimens”**.

The identification, evaluation and assessment of any cultural heritage site, artefact or finds in the South African context is required and governed by the following legislation:

- National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) Act No. 107 of 1998
- National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA) Act No. 25 of 1999
- Minerals and Petroleum Resources Development Act (MPRDA) Act No. 28 of 2002
- Notice 648 of the Government Gazette 45421- general requirements for undertaking an initial site sensitivity verification where no specific assessment protocol has been identified.

The next section in each Act is directly applicable to the identification, assessment, and evaluation of cultural heritage resources.

GNR 982 (Government Gazette 38282, 14 December 2014) promulgated under the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) Act 107 of 1998

- Basic Assessment Report (BAR) – Regulations 19 and 23
- Environmental Impacts Assessment (EIA) – Regulation 23
- Environmental Scoping Report (ESR) – Regulation 21



- Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) – Regulations 19 and 23

National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA) Act No. 25 of 1999

- Protection of Heritage Resources – Sections 34 to 36
- Heritage Resources Management – Section 38

The NEMA (No. 107 of 1998) states that an integrated EMP should (23:2 (b)) “...*identify, predict and evaluate the actual and potential impact on the environment, socio-economic conditions and cultural heritage*”.

In agreement with legislative requirements, EIA rating standards as well as SAHRA policies the following comprehensive and legally compatible PIA report have been compiled.

Palaeontological heritage is exceptional and non-renewable and is protected by the NHRA. Palaeontological resources and may not be unearthed, broken moved, or destroyed by any development without prior assessment and without a permit from the relevant heritage resources authority as per section 35 of the NHRA.

**This Palaeontological Impact assessment forms part of the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) and adhere to the conditions of the Act.** According to **Section 38 (1)**, an HIA is required to assess any potential impacts to palaeontological heritage within the development footprint where:

- the construction of a road, wall, power line, pipeline, canal or other similar form of linear development or barrier exceeding 300 m in length.
- the construction of a bridge or similar structure exceeding 50 m in length.
- any development or other activity which will change the character of a site—
  - Exceeding 5 000 m<sup>2</sup> in extent; or
  - involving three or more existing erven or subdivisions thereof; or
  - involving three or more erven or divisions thereof which have been consolidated within the past five years; or
  - the costs of which will exceed a sum set in terms of regulations by SAHRA or a provincial heritage resources authority
  - the re-zoning of a site exceeding 10 000 m<sup>2</sup> in extent.
  - or any other category of development provided for in regulations by SAHRA or a Provincial heritage resources authority.



#### 4 METHODS AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

This study forms part of the Heritage Impact Assessment Report. According to the “SAHRA APM Guidelines: Minimum Standards for the Archaeological and Palaeontological Components of Impact Assessment Reports” the purpose of the PIA is: 1) to identify the palaeontological importance of the rock formations in the footprint; 2) to evaluate the palaeontological magnitude of the formations; 3) to clarify the **impact** on fossil heritage; and 4) to suggest how the developer might protect and lessen possible damage to fossil heritage.

The palaeontological status of each rock section is calculated as well as the possible impact of the development on fossil heritage by a) the palaeontological importance of the rocks, b) the type of development and c) the quantity of bedrock removed.

All possible information is consulted to compile a scoping report, and this includes the following: Provisional DFFE Screening Tool, SAHRIS Palaeosensitivity map, all Palaeontological Impact Assessment reports in the same area; aerial photos and Google Earth images, topographical and geological maps as well as scientific articles of specimens from the development area and Assemblage Zones.

When the development footprint has a moderate to high palaeontological sensitivity a field-based assessment is necessary. The desktop and the field survey of the exposed rock determine the impact significance of the planned development and recommendations for further studies or mitigation are made. Destructive impacts on palaeontological heritage usually only occur during the construction phase while the excavations will change the current topography and destruct or permanently seal-in fossils at or below the ground surface. Fossil Heritage will then no longer be accessible for scientific research.

During a site investigation the palaeontologist does not only survey the development but also tries to determine the density and diversity of fossils in the development area. This is confirmed by examining representative exposures of fossiliferous rocks (sedimentary rocks contain fossil heritage whereas igneous and metamorphic rocks are mostly unfossiliferous). Rock exposures that are investigated usually contains a large portion of the stratigraphic unit, can be accessed easily and comprise of unweathered (fresh) exposed rock. These exposures may be natural (rocky outcrops in stream or river banks, cliffs, dongas) but could also be artificial (quarries, open building excavations and even railway and road cuttings). It is common practice for palaeontologist to log well-preserved fossils (GPS, and stratigraphic data) during field assessment studies.

Mitigation usually precedes construction or may occur during construction when potentially fossiliferous bedrock is exposed. Mitigation comprises the collection and recording of fossils. Preceding excavation of any fossils, a permit from SAHRA must be obtained and the material will have to be housed in a permitted institution. When mitigation is applied correctly, a positive impact is possible as knowledge of local palaeontological heritage may be increased.

The terms of reference of a PIA are as follows:



## General Requirements:

- Adherence to the content requirements for specialist reports in accordance with Appendix 6 of the EIA Regulations 2014, as amended;
- Adherence to all applicable best practice recommendations, appropriate legislation and authority requirements;
- Submit a comprehensive overview of all appropriate legislation, guidelines;
- Description of the proposed project and provide information regarding the developer and consultant who commissioned the study,
- Description and location of the proposed development and provide geological and topographical maps
- Provide palaeontological and geological history of the affected area.
- Identification of sensitive areas to be avoided (providing shapefiles/kmls) in the proposed development;
- Evaluation of the significance of the planned development during the Pre-construction, Construction, Operation, Decommissioning Phases and Cumulative impacts. Potential impacts should be rated in terms of the direct, indirect and cumulative:
  - a. **Direct impacts** are impacts that are caused directly by the activity and generally occur at the same time and at the place of the activity.
  - b. **Indirect impacts** of an activity are indirect or induced changes that may occur as a result of the activity.
  - c. **Cumulative impacts** are impacts that result from the incremental impact of the proposed activity on a common resource when added to the impacts of other past, present or reasonably foreseeable future activities.
- Fair assessment of alternatives (infrastructure alternatives have been provided):
- Recommend mitigation measures to minimise the impact of the proposed development; and
- Implications of specialist findings for the proposed development (such as permits, licenses etc).

## 4.1 Assumptions and Limitations

The focal point of geological maps is the geology of the area and the sheet explanations of the Geological Maps were not meant to focus on palaeontological heritage. Many inaccessible regions of South Africa have never been reviewed by palaeontologists and data is generally based on aerial photographs alone. Locality and geological information of museums and universities databases have not been kept up to date or data collected in the past have not always been accurately documented.





Comparable Assemblage Zones in other areas is also used to provide information on the existence of fossils in an area which has not documented in the past. When using similar Assemblage Zones and geological formations for Desktop studies it is generally **assumed** that exposed fossil heritage is present within the footprint. A field-assessment will thus improve the accuracy of the desktop assessment.

## 5 GEOLOGICAL AND PALAEOONTOLOGICAL HISTORY

The proposed Adams BESS development is depicted on the 1: 250 000 Kuruman 2722 Geological Map (1995) (Council of Geosciences, Pretoria) (**Figure 4; Table 4**). The Adams BESS study area is mantled by the Kalahari Group (Qg/Qs, beige). Updated Geology (Council of Geosciences, Pretoria) indicates that the study area is entirely underlain by the Kalahari Group (**Figure 5**). The PalaeoMap of the South African Heritage Resources Information System (SAHRIS) (**Figure 6**) indicates that the Palaeontological Sensitivity of the Kalahari Group is Moderate (Almond and Pether, 2009; Almond *et al.*, 2013, Groenewald *et al* 2014).

The Cenozoic sands and calcretes of the Kalahari Group range in thickness from a few metres to more than 180m (Partridge *et al.*, 2006). The youngest formation of the Kalahari group is the Gordonia Formation which is generally termed Kalahari sand and comprises of red aeolian sands that covers most of the Kalahari Group sediments. The pan sediments of the area originated from the Gordonia Formation and contains white to brown fine-grained silts, sands and clays. Some of the pans consist of clayey material mixed with evaporates that shows seasonal effects of shallow saline groundwaters. Quaternary alluvium, aolian sands, surface limestone, silcrete, and terrace gravels are also included in the Kalahari Group (Kent 1980). Partridge *et al.*, (2006) describes numerous types of superficial deposits of Late Cenozoic age (Miocene to Pliocene to Recent) throughout the Karoo Basin. Sands and gravel in the development footprint has a possible fluvial origin.

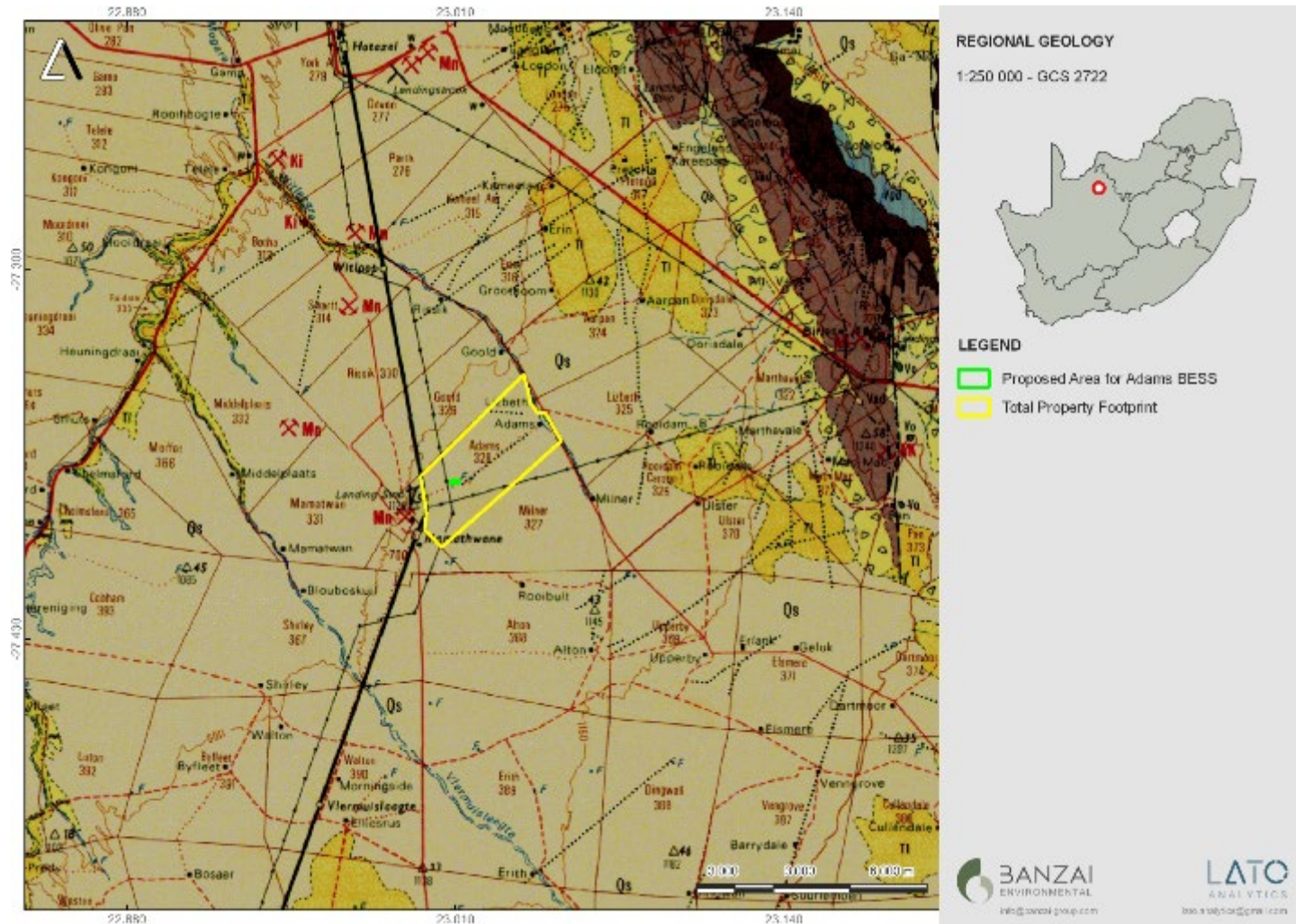
The fossil assemblages of the Kalahari are generally very low in diversity and occur over a wide range and thus the palaeontological diversity of this Group is low. These fossils represent terrestrial plants and animals with a close resemblance to living forms. Fossil assemblages include bivalves, diatoms, gastropod shells, ostracods and trace fossils. The palaeontology of the superficial deposits has been relatively neglected in the past. Late Cenozoic calcrete may comprise of bones, horn cores as well as mammalian teeth. Tortoise remains have also been uncovered as well as trace fossils which includes termite and insect's burrows and mammalian trackways. Amphibian and crocodile remains have been uncovered where the depositional settings in the past were wetter.

Hotazel is located in the **Griqualand West Basin**, Northern Cape Province which consists of clastic sediments as well as volcanic rocks, diamictites and banded iron formations (**Table 6-7**). Manganese deposits is present in the Hotazel Formation, upper Postmasburg Group (approximately 2222 Ma). The Vryburg Formation is the basal unit and overlies unconformably the granite and rocks of the Ventersdorp Supergroup. The Campbell Group overlies the Vryburg Formation and consists of the Schmidtsdrif Formation and the upper Ghaap Plateau Formation. The Griquatown Group is divided into two formations namely the Asbestos Hills and Koegas Formations. The Gamagara Formation follows and is positioned on the Maremane Anticline and is overlain by the Makganyene Formation. The Cox Group comprises of the lower Ongeluk Formation and the upper Voëlwater Formation. The



Ongeluk Formation was deposited under water and reaches a thickness of between 400 and 900 m. This Formation is basal and is mainly volcanic (Visser 1989). Manganese is present in the upper Voëlwater Formation (Snyman 1996). According to Kent (1980) and Snyman (1996) Griqualand West Basin attains a maximum thickness of 4500 m.

Algal growth structures, also known as Stromatolites, are fossil structures described from the dolomites of the Transvaal Supergroup (**Figure 7**). Stromatolites are layered mounds, columns and sheet-like sedimentary rocks. These structures were originally formed by the growth of layer upon layer of cyanobacteria, a single-celled photosynthesizing microbe. Cyanobacteria are prokaryotic cells (simplest form of modern carbon-bases life). Stromatolites are first found in Precambrian rocks and are known as the earliest known fossils. The oxygen atmosphere that we depend on was generated by numerous cyanobacteria photosynthesizing during the Archaean and Proterozoic Era.

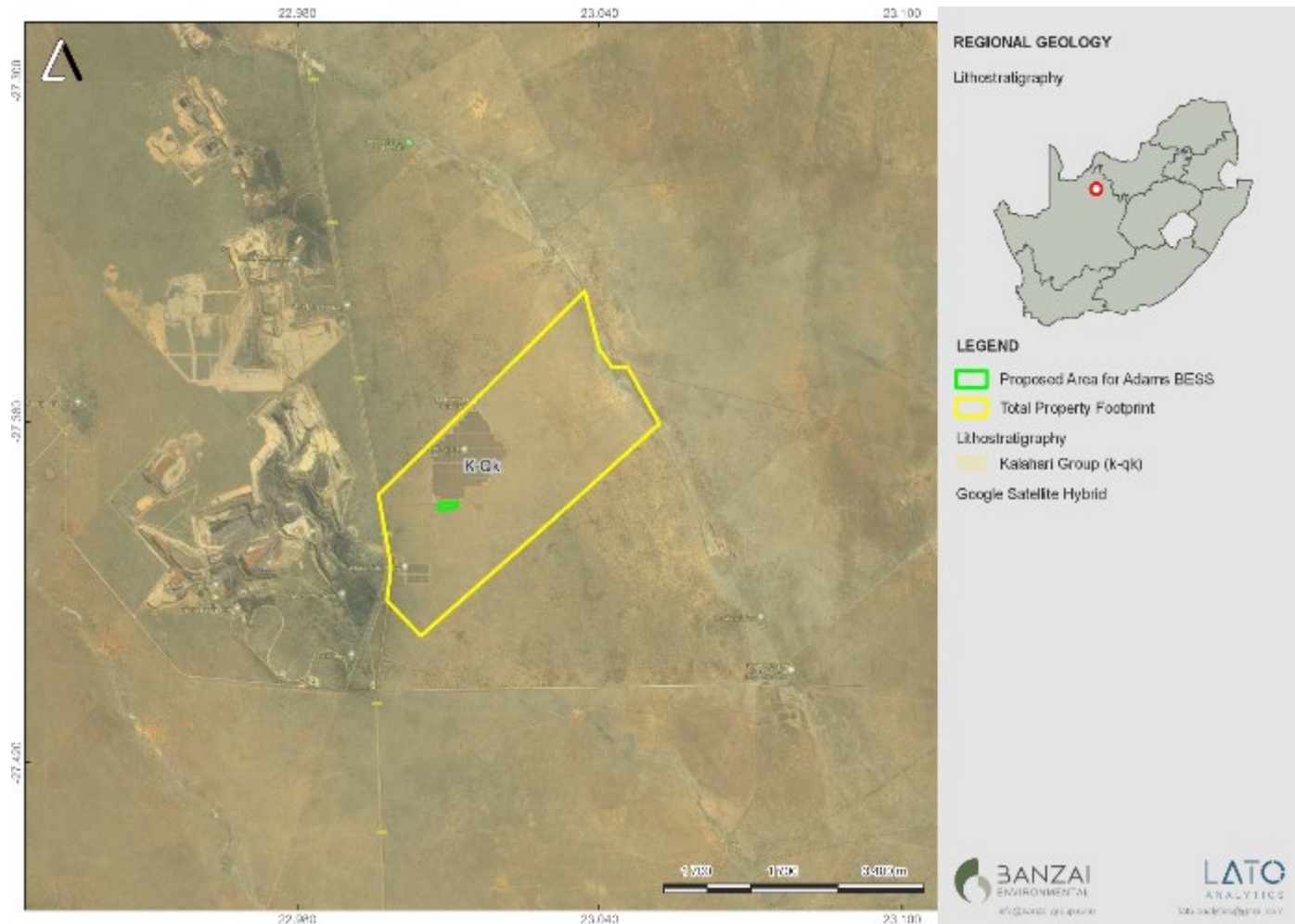


**Figure 4:** Extract of the 1:250 000 Kuruman 2722 (1979) geological map (Council for Geoscience, Pretoria) indicates that the study area near Hotazel is underlain by Cenozoic Superficial sands.

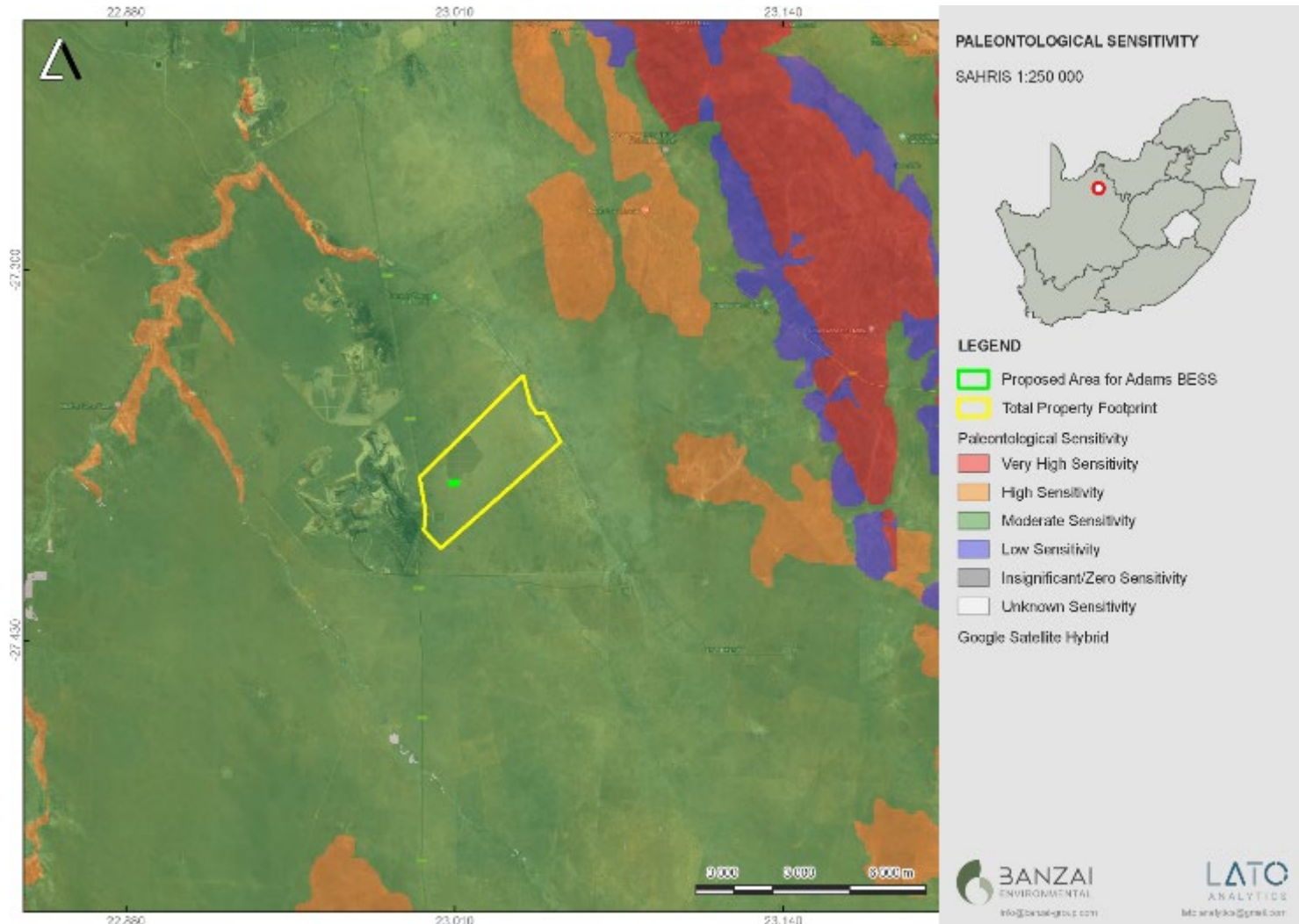


**Table 2:** Legend of the 2626 West-Rand (1986) Geological Map (Council for Geoscience, Pretoria) Relevant sediments are indicated in red squares.

		(INCLUDING VOLCANIC ROCKS; INSLUITENDE VULKANIESE GESTEENTES)	
	FORMATION FORMASIE	MEMBER LID	LITHOLOGY LITOLOGIE
QUATERNARY KWATERNER			Red to flesh-coloured wind-blown sand Rooi tot vleeskleurige waaisand
			Rubble Puin
			River-terrace gravel Rivierterrasgruis
			Surface limestone Oppervlakkalksteen
TERTIARY TERSIER			



**Figure 5:** Updated Geology (Council of Geosciences, Pretoria) of the proposed study area indicates that the development is underlain by the Kalahari Group.



**Figure 6:** Extract of the SAHRIS PalaeoMap (Council of Geosciences) indicates that the Palaeontological Sensitivity of the study area is Moderate (green).



**Table 3:** SAHRIS Palaeosensitivity ratings table. The relevant sensitivities are highlighted.

Colour	Sensitivity	Required Action
RED	VERY HIGH	Field assessment and protocol for finds is required
ORANGE/YELLOW	HIGH	Desktop study is required and based on the outcome of the desktop study; a field assessment is likely
<b>GREEN</b>	<b>MODERATE</b>	<b>Desktop study is required</b>
BLUE	LOW	No palaeontological studies are required however a protocol for finds is required
GREY	INSIGNIFICANT/ZERO	No palaeontological studies are required
WHITE/CLEAR	UNKNOWN	These areas will require a minimum of a desktop study. As more information comes to light, SAHRA will continue to populate the map.



**Figure 7:** Example of a well-preserved stromatolite from the Archaean Era.

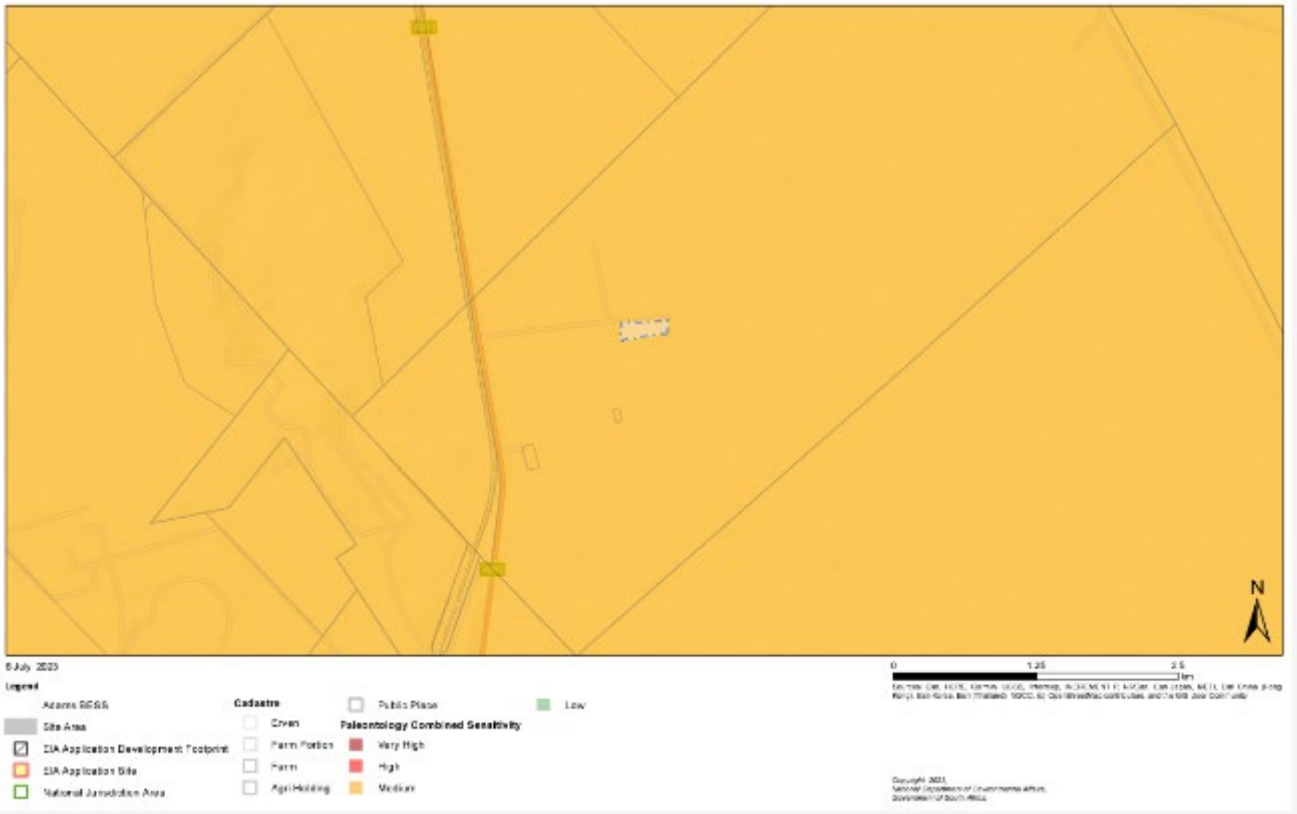


**Table 4: Generalised Stratigraphic Column and Associated Geology.**

Stratigraphy			Lithology	
Kalahari Formation (Qs and Q)			Clay, limestone and sand	
Transvaal Supergroup	Postmasburg Group	Voëlwater Subgroup	Hotazel Formation	Iron Formation
				Upper Mn ore body
				Middle Mn ore body
				Iron Formation
				Lower Mn ore body
				Mn-rich iron formation
		Iron Formation		
		Ongeluk Formation	Basaltic lava	

Several other Palaeontological studies have been undertaken by other Palaeontological specialists and include: Almond 2010, 2012a, 2012b, 2013a, 2013b, 2016; Butler 2017a, 2017b; Butler 2019a, 2019b, 2019c, 2019d, 2019e; Bamford, 2017; Fourie 2018; Groenewald 2013, 2014. These studies have been listed in the references.





**Figure 8:** Palaeontological Sensitivity of the Adams BESS study site by the National Environmental Web-based Screening Tool.

The National Environmental Web-based Screening Tool indicates that the Palaeontological Sensitivity of the Adams BESS study area is Moderate (orange).



## 6 GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF THE SITE

The Adams BESS and associated infrastructure is located to the east of the R380 about 33 km south of Hotazel in the John Taolo Gaetsewe District Municipality and Joe Morolong Local Municipality of the Northern Cape Province.

## 7 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONSULTED

In compiling this report the following sources were consulted:

- Geological map 1:100 000, Geology of the Republic of South Africa (Visser 1984).
- A Google Earth map with polygons of the proposed development was obtained from Milnex cc.
- 1: 250 000 Kuruman 2722 (1979) Geological Map (Council of Geosciences, Pretoria)
- Updated Geology produced by the Council of Geosciences (Pretoria).

## 8 IMPACT ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

Impact assessment must take account of the nature, scale and duration of impacts on the environment whether such impacts are positive or negative. Each impact is also assessed according to the following project phases:

- Construction.
- Operation; and
- Decommissioning.

Where necessary, the proposal for mitigation or optimisation of an impact should be detailed. A brief discussion of the impact and the rationale behind the assessment of its significance should also be included. The rating system is applied to the potential impacts on the receiving environment and includes an objective evaluation of the mitigation of the impact. In assessing the significance of each impact, the following criteria is used:

**Table 5:** The rating system

<b>NATURE</b>		
The Nature of the Impact is the possible destruction of fossil heritage		
<b>GEOGRAPHICAL EXTENT</b>		
This is defined as the area over which the impact will be experienced.		
1	Site	The impact will only affect the site.
2	Local/district	Will affect the local area or district.



3	Province/region	Will affect the entire province or region.
4	International and National	Will affect the entire country.
<b>PROBABILITY</b>		
This describes the chance of occurrence of an impact.		
1	Unlikely	The chance of the impact occurring is extremely low (Less than a 25% chance of occurrence).
2	Possible	The impact may occur (Between a 25% to 50% chance of occurrence).
3	Probable	The impact will likely occur (Between a 50% to 75% chance of occurrence).
4	Definite	Impact will certainly occur (Greater than a 75% chance of occurrence).
<b>DURATION</b>		
This describes the duration of the impacts. Duration indicates the lifetime of the impact as a result of the proposed activity.		
1	Short term	The impact will either disappear with mitigation or will be mitigated through natural processes in a span shorter than the construction phase (0 – 1 years), or the impact will last for the period of a relatively short construction period and a limited recovery time after construction, thereafter it will be entirely negated (0 – 2 years).
2	Medium term	The impact will continue or last for some time after the construction phase but will be mitigated by direct human action or by natural processes thereafter (2 – 10 years).
3	Long term	The impact and its effects will continue or last for the entire operational life of the development, but will be mitigated by direct human action or by natural processes thereafter (10 – 30 years).
4	Permanent	The only class of impact that will be non-transitory. Mitigation either by man or natural process will not occur



		in such a way or such a time span that the impact can be considered indefinite.
<b>INTENSITY/ MAGNITUDE</b>		
Describes the severity of an impact.		
1	Low	Impact affects the quality, use and integrity of the system/component in a way that is barely perceptible.
2	Medium	Impact alters the quality, use and integrity of the system/component but system/component still continues to function in a moderately modified way and maintains general integrity (some impact on integrity).
3	High	Impact affects the continued viability of the system/component and the quality, use, integrity and functionality of the system or component is severely impaired and may temporarily cease. High costs of rehabilitation and remediation.
4	Very high	Impact affects the continued viability of the system/component and the quality, use, integrity and functionality of the system or component permanently ceases and is irreversibly impaired. Rehabilitation and remediation often impossible. If possible rehabilitation and remediation often unfeasible due to extremely high costs of rehabilitation and remediation.
<b>REVERSIBILITY</b>		
This describes the degree to which an impact can be successfully reversed upon completion of the proposed activity.		
1	Completely reversible	The impact is reversible with implementation of minor mitigation measures.
2	Partly reversible	The impact is partly reversible but more intense mitigation measures are required.
3	Barely reversible	The impact is unlikely to be reversed even with intense mitigation measures.



4	Irreversible	The impact is irreversible, and no mitigation measures exist.
<b>IRREPLACEABLE LOSS OF RESOURCES</b>		
This describes the degree to which resources will be irreplaceably lost as a result of a proposed activity.		
1	No loss of resource	The impact will not result in the loss of any resources.
2	Marginal loss of resource	The impact will result in marginal loss of resources.
3	Significant loss of resources	The impact will result in significant loss of resources.
4	Complete loss of resources	The impact is result in a complete loss of all resources.
<b>CUMULATIVE EFFECT</b>		
This describes the cumulative effect of the impacts. A cumulative impact is an effect which in itself may not be significant but may become significant if added to other existing or potential impacts emanating from other similar or diverse activities as a result of the project activity in question.		
1	Negligible cumulative impact	The impact would result in negligible to no cumulative effects.
2	Low cumulative impact	The impact would result in insignificant cumulative effects.
3	Medium cumulative impact	The impact would result in minor cumulative effects.
4	High cumulative impact	The impact would result in significant cumulative effects
<b>SIGNIFICANCE</b>		
Significance is determined through a synthesis of impact characteristics. Significance is an indication of the importance of the impact in terms of both physical extent and time scale, and therefore indicates the level of mitigation required. The calculation of the significance of an impact uses the following formula:  <b>(Extent + probability + reversibility + irreplaceability + duration + cumulative effect) x magnitude/intensity = X.</b>  The summation of the different criteria will produce a non-weighted value. By multiplying this value with the magnitude/intensity, the resultant value acquires a weighted characteristic which can be measured and assigned a significance rating.		



Points	Impact significance rating	Description
6 to 28	Negative low impact	The anticipated impact will have negligible negative effects and will require little to no mitigation.
6 to 28	Positive low impact	The anticipated impact will have minor positive effects.
29 to 50	Negative medium impact	The anticipated impact will have moderate negative effects and will require moderate mitigation measures.
29 to 50	Positive medium impact	The anticipated impact will have moderate positive effects.
51 to 73	Negative high impact	The anticipated impact will have significant effects and will require significant mitigation measures to achieve an acceptable level of impact.
51 to 73	Positive high impact	The anticipated impact will have significant positive effects.
74 to 96	Negative very high impact	The anticipated impact will have highly significant effects and are unlikely to be able to be mitigated adequately. These impacts could be considered "fatal flaws".
74 to 96	Positive very high impact	The anticipated impact will have highly significant positive

### 8.1 Summary of Impact Tables

Loss of fossil heritage will be a negative impact. The expected duration of the impact is assessed as potentially permanent too long term. In the absence of mitigation procedures (should fossil material be present within the affected area) the damage or destruction of any palaeontological materials will be permanent. Impacts on palaeontological heritage during the construction phase could potentially occur but are regarded as having a low probability. The significance of the impact occurring will be low.

**Table 6:** Summary of Impact Tables

Site	Probability	Duration	Magnitude	Reversibility	Irreplicable Loss	Cumulative Effect	Impact Significance
1	2	4	1	4	4	2	17

## 9 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The proposed Adams BESS is situated on the southern end of the Kalahari Manganese Field and is basically underlain by Kalahari Group deposits underlain at depth by the Griqualand West Basin rocks (Transvaal Supergroup). Updated Geology (Council of Geosciences, Pretoria) indicates that the study area entirely is underlain by the Kalahari Group. The PalaeoMap of the South African Heritage Resources Information System (SAHRIS) indicates that the Palaeontological Sensitivity of the Kalahari Group is Moderate (Almond and Pether, 2009; Almond *et al.*, 2013, Groenewald et al 2014).

The fossil assemblages of the Kalahari are generally very low in diversity and occur over a wide range. These fossils represent terrestrial plants and animals with a close resemblance to living forms. The proposed Adams BESS development is located in the **Griqualand West Basin**, which consists of clastic sediments as well as volcanic rocks, diamictites and banded iron formations. Algal growth structures, also known as Stromatolites, are fossil structures described from the dolomites of the Transvaal Supergroup. The oxygen atmosphere that we depend on was generated by numerous cyanobacteria photosynthesizing during the Archaean and Proterozoic Era.

If fossil remains are discovered during any phase of construction, either on the surface or exposed by excavations the ECO/site manager in charge of these developments must be informed immediately. These discoveries ought to be secured (preferably *in situ*) and the ECO/site manager ought to alert SAHRA so that appropriate mitigation (documentation and collection) can be undertaken by a professional palaeontologist.

The specialist would need a collection permit from SAHRA. Fossil material must be curated in an approved collection (museum or university) and all fieldwork and reports should meet the minimum standards for palaeontological impact studies developed by SAHRA.



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## APPENDIX A

## CURRICULUM VITAE

PROFESSION: Palaeontologist

YEARS' EXPERIENCE: 30 years in Palaeontology

EDUCATION: B.Sc Botany and Zoology, 1988  
University of the Orange Free State

B. Sc (Hons) Zoology, 1991  
University of the Orange Free State

Management Course, 1991  
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M. Sc. *Cum laude* (Zoology), 2009  
University of the Free State

Dissertation title: The postcranial skeleton of the Early Triassic non-mammalian Cynodont *Galesaurus planiceps*: implications for biology and lifestyle

### MEMBERSHIP

Palaeontological Society of South Africa (PSSA) 2006-currently

### EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Part time Laboratory assistant Department of Zoology & Entomology University of the Free State Zoology 1989-1992

Part time laboratory assistant Department of Virology University of the Free State Zoology 1992



Research Assistant	National Museum, Bloemfontein 1993 – 1997
Principal Research Assistant and Collection Manager	National Museum, Bloemfontein 1998–2022

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