

# SITE VERIFICATION REPORT

May 2023

THE PROPOSED VIRGO SOLAR POWER  
PLANT, NEAR KATHU, NORTHERN CAPE  
PROVINCE



ENVIRONAMICS

## PROJECT DETAIL

<b>DFFE Reference No's.</b>	:	To be confirmed
<b>Project Title</b>	:	The proposed Virgo Solar Power Plant, near Kathu, Northern Cape Province
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<b>Report Status</b>	:	Site Verification Report
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# 1 INTRODUCTION

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This Site Verification Report is compiled in compliance with Government Notice No. 320, dated 20 March 2020, which includes the requirement for an Initial Site Sensitivity Verification Report to be produced for a development footprint. The outcome of the Initial Site Verification must be recorded in the form of a report that-

- a) Confirms or disputes the current use of the land and environmental sensitivity as identified by the national web based environmental screening tool;
- b) Contains a motivation and evidence of either the verified or different use of the land and environmental sensitivity;
- c) Is submitted together with the relevant reports prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations.

## **1.1 Specialist Assessments identified by the Screening Report**

The DFFE Screening Tool Report (Appendix B of the Scoping Report) identified the following specialist assessment to be included in the assessment:

1. Agricultural Impact Assessment
2. Landscape/Visual Impact Assessment
3. Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment
4. Paleontology Impact Assessment
5. Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact Assessment
6. Aquatic Biodiversity Impact Assessment
7. Civil Aviation Assessment
8. Defense Assessment
9. RFI Assessment
10. Geotechnical Assessment
11. Socio-economic Assessment
12. Plant Species Assessment
13. Animal Species Assessment

The table included below provides an indication of the specialist studies identified by the DFFE Screening Tool Report, as well as an indication of whether the studies were undertaken or not and a motivation or confirmation of the studies being included or not.

**Table 1.1: Specialist studies identified by the DFFE Screening tool and specialist studies conducted**

Study identified in the DFFE Screening Tool and sensitivity	Study included?	Appendix
Agricultural Impact Assessment Sensitivity: Medium	Yes	An Agricultural Compliance Statement is included in Appendix E4 of the Scoping Report.
Landscape / Visual Impact Assessment Sensitivity: High	Yes	A Visual Impact Assessment is included in Appendix E3 of the Scoping Report.
Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment Sensitivity: Low	Yes	Phase 1 Cultural Heritage Assessment is included in Appendix E5 of the Scoping Report, as per the requirements of the National Heritage Resources Act.
Palaeontological Impact Assessment Sensitivity: Medium	Yes	A Palaeontological Impact Assessment is included in Appendix E6 of the Scoping Report, as per the requirements of the National Heritage Resources Act.
Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact Assessment Sensitivity: Very High	Yes	A Terrestrial Biodiversity Compliance Statement Report is included in Appendix E1 of the Scoping Report.  This assessment has been undertaken in terms of the Protocols of GNR320 – refer to the content of the report.
Aquatic Biodiversity Impact Assessment Sensitivity: Very High	Yes	A Wetland Baseline & Risk Assessment Report is included in Appendix E1.  This assessment has been undertaken in terms of the

		Protocols of GNR320 – refer to the content of the report.
Avian Impact Assessment  Sensitivity: Low  (not listed as a required specialist study in the DFFE Screening Report but is undertaken due to the very high sensitivity of the site)	Yes	Avifauna Scoping Assessment Report is included as Appendix E2 of the Scoping Report.  This assessment has been undertaken in terms of the Protocols of GNR320 – refer to the content of the report.
Civil Aviation Assessment  Sensitivity: Low	No	The identification of the site as low sensitivity considering civil aviation is agreed to by the EAP. This is based on the current land use of the site being used for agricultural purposes.  The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) has been identified as an I&AP, and has received the Draft Scoping report for review and commenting. No comments from the CAA have been received as part of the public participation process.
Defence Theme  Sensitivity: Low	No	The site verification report confirms the low sensitivity of the site as no military operations are located close to the development.  The project is therefore not expected to have an impact on Defence Installations.
RFI Assessment  Sensitivity: Low	No	The site verification is inconclusive as no desktop information could be sought, however on-site evidence of the low sensitivity was available during the site inspection since no potential RFI could be identified.  The South African Radio Astronomy Observatory (SARAO) have been consulted regarding the

		development of the project and the Scoping Report has been circulated to SARA0 for review and commenting. No comment has been received from SARA0 to date.
Geotechnical Assessment Sensitivity: Not indicated	No	The Geotechnical Assessment will be conducted before construction begins as part of the micro-siting of the facility layout.  The consideration of geotechnical aspects is considered to be of a technical concern rather than an environmental concern.
Socio-Economic Impact Assessment Sensitivity: Not indicated	Yes	A Social Impact Assessment is included in Appendix E7 of the Scoping Report.
Plant species Assessment Sensitivity: Low	Yes	Refer to Appendix E1. The Terrestrial Biodiversity, Plant and Animal Species Impact Assessment Report also includes the relevant Plant Species Assessment.  This assessment has been undertaken in terms of the Protocols of GNR320 – refer to the content of the report.
Animal Species Assessment Sensitivity: Medium	Yes	Refer to Appendix E1. The Terrestrial Biodiversity, Plant and Animal Species Impact Assessment Report also includes the relevant Animal Species Assessment.  This assessment has been undertaken in terms of the Protocols of GNR320 – refer to the content of the report.

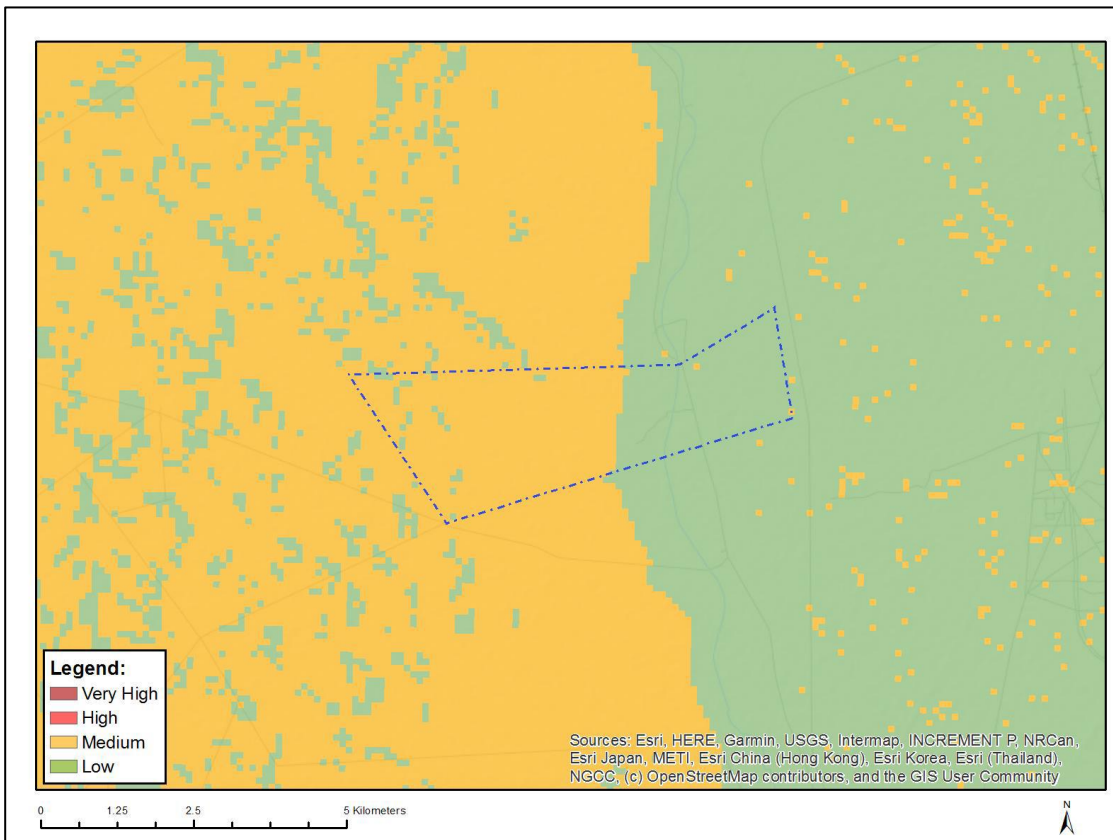


## 1.2 Sensitivities of the studies conducted as part of the Scoping and EIA process

This section provides the sensitivities as identified in the DFFE Screening Tool Report for which specialist studies have been conducted as part of the Scoping and EIA process.

### 1.2.1 Agriculture Theme

The site sensitivity is classified as low to medium, due to the land capability of the site Refer to Figure 1.1.

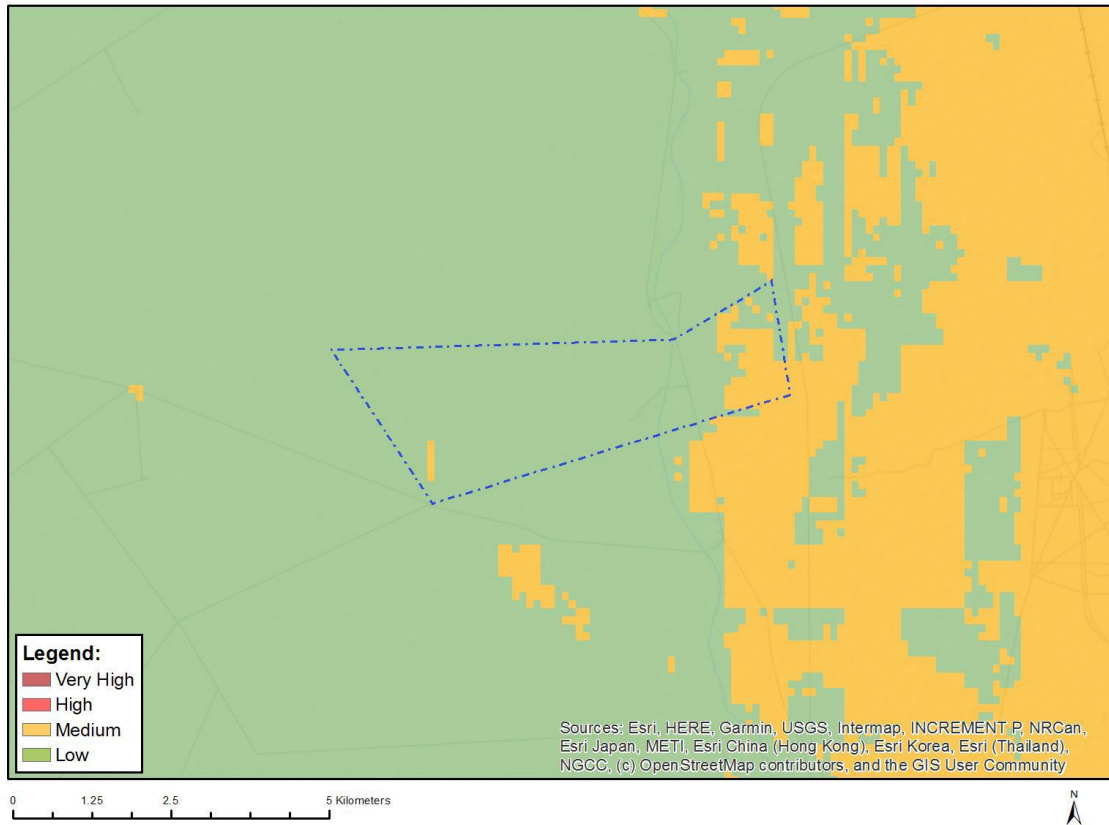


**Figure 1.1:** Agricultural sensitivity as indicated by the DFFE Screening Tool Report

### 1.2.2

### 1.2.3 Animal Species Theme

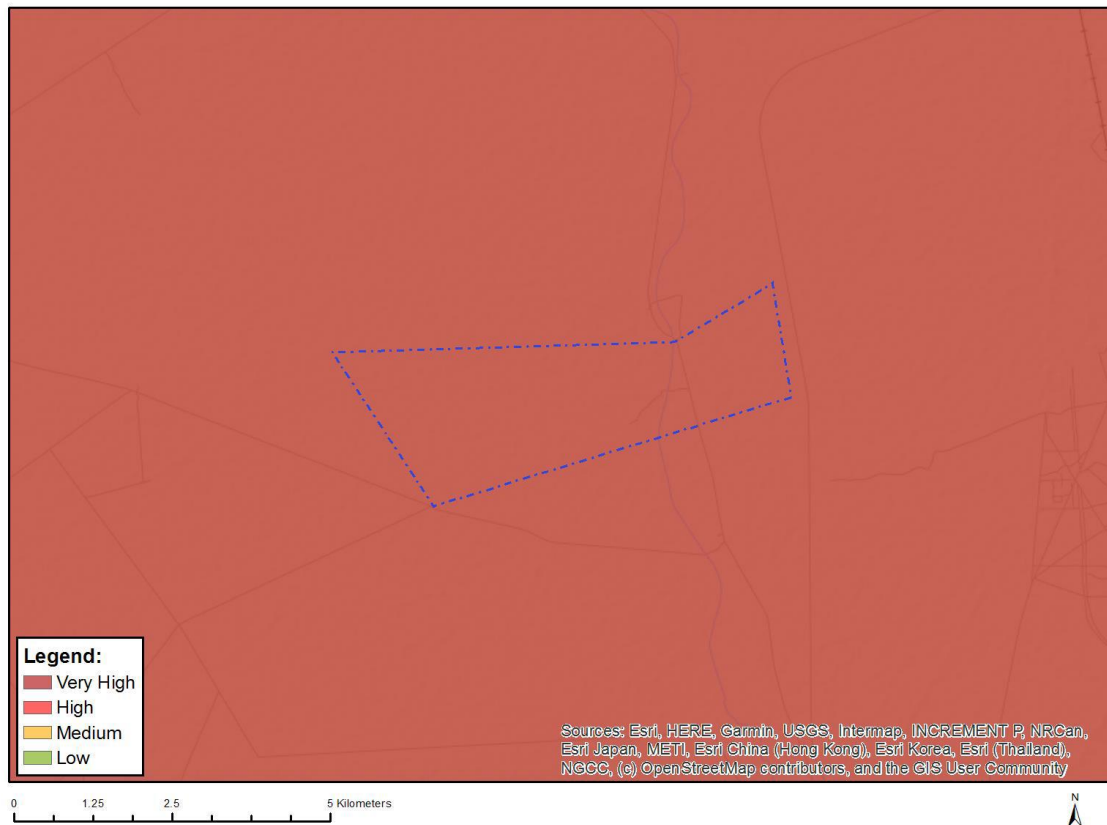
The site sensitivity is classified as low to medium, due to potential occurrence of sensitive animal species, nl. *Aves-Gyps africanus*. Refer to Figure 1.2 below.



**Figure 1.2:** Animal sensitivity as indicated by the DFFE Screening Tool Report

### 1.2.4 Aquatic Biodiversity Theme

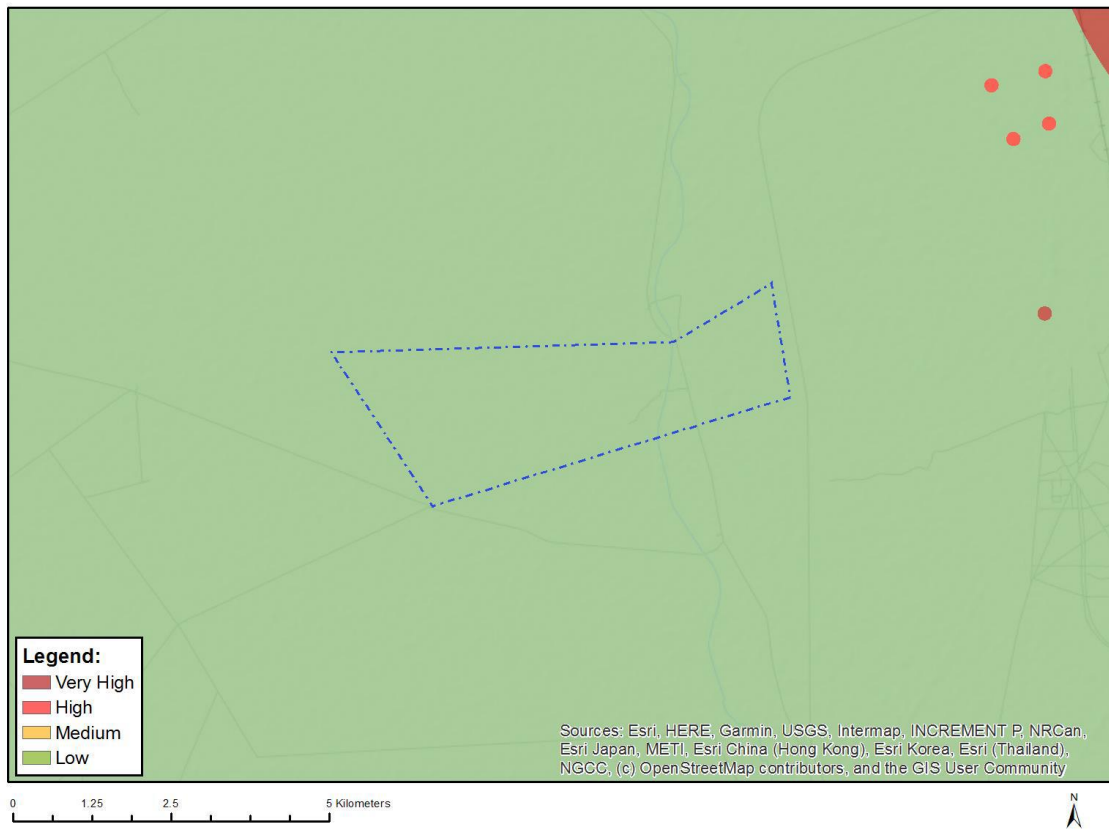
The site sensitivity is classified as Very High, due to the presence of Wetlands and Strategic water source area. Refer to Figure 1.3 below.



**Figure 1.3:** Aquatic Biodiversity sensitivity as indicated by the DFFE Screening Tool Report

### 1.2.5 Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Theme

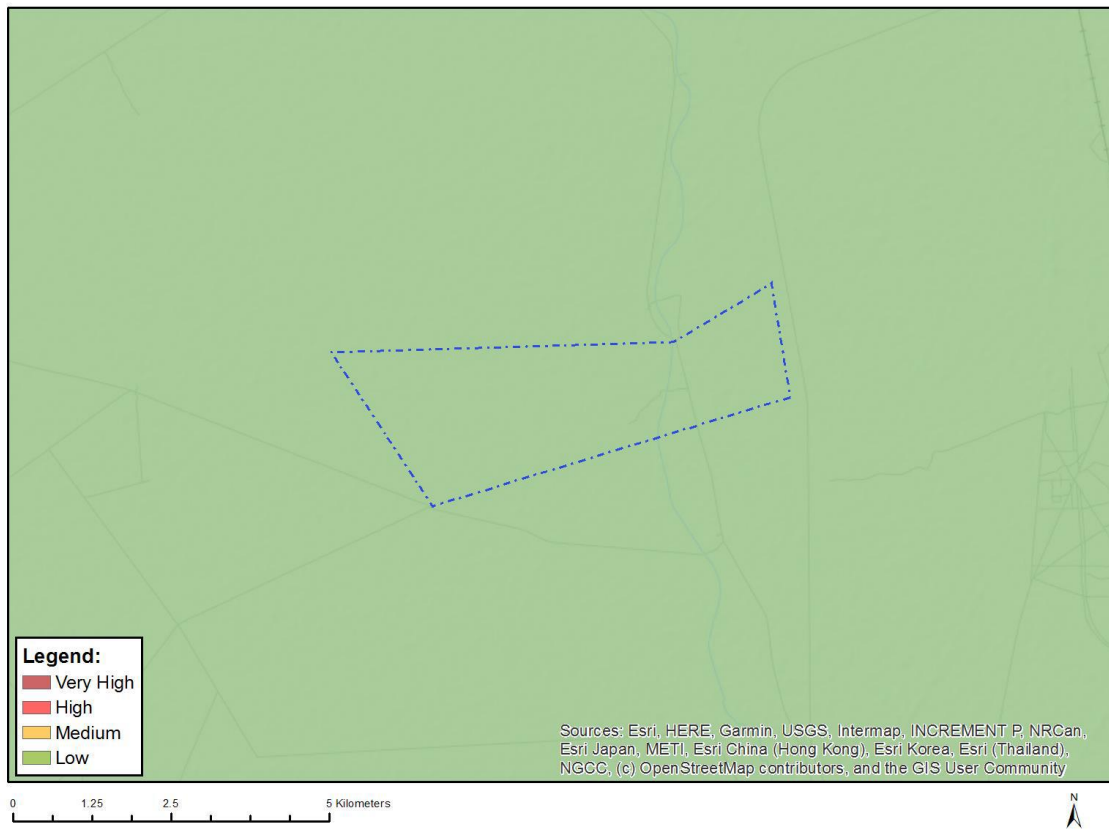
The site sensitivity is classified as low. Refer to Figure 1.4 below.



**Figure 1.4:** Archaeological and Cultural Heritage sensitivity as indicated by the DFFE Screening Tool Report

### 1.2.6 Avian Theme

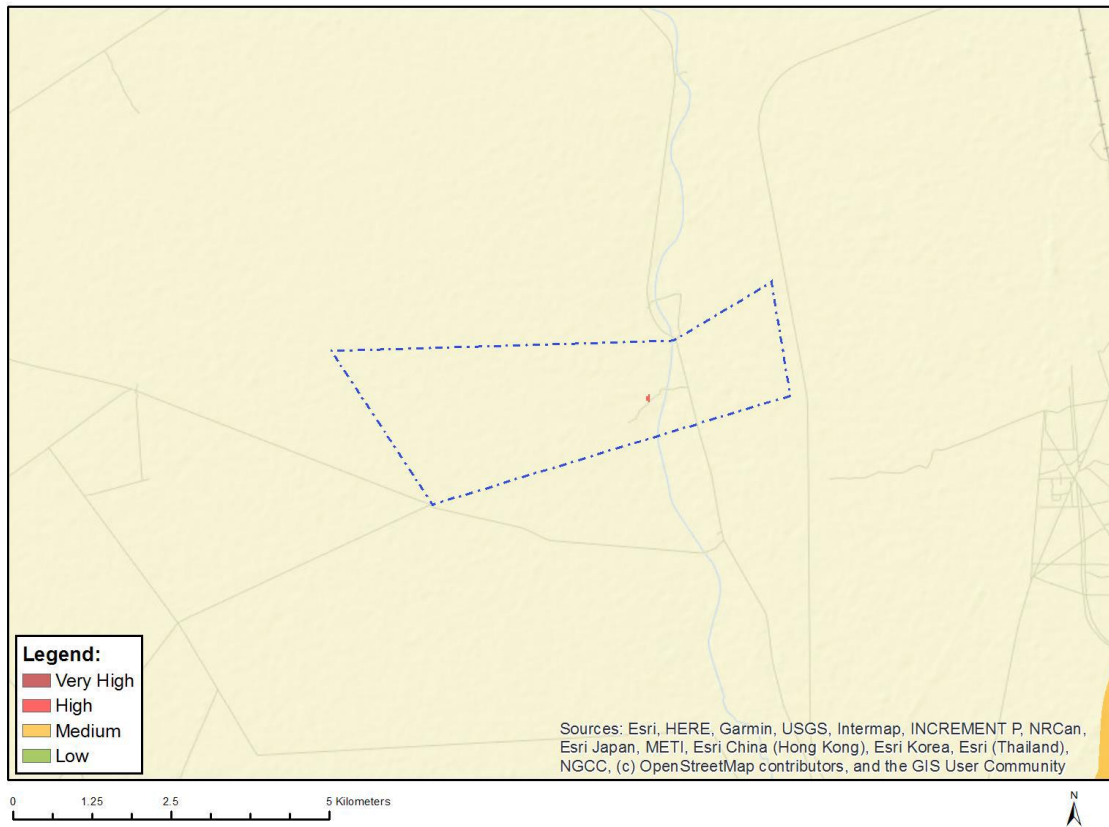
The site sensitivity is classified as low. Refer to Figure 1.5 below.



**Figure 1.5:** Avian sensitivity as indicated by the DFFE Screening Tool Report

### 1.2.7 Landscape (Solar) Theme

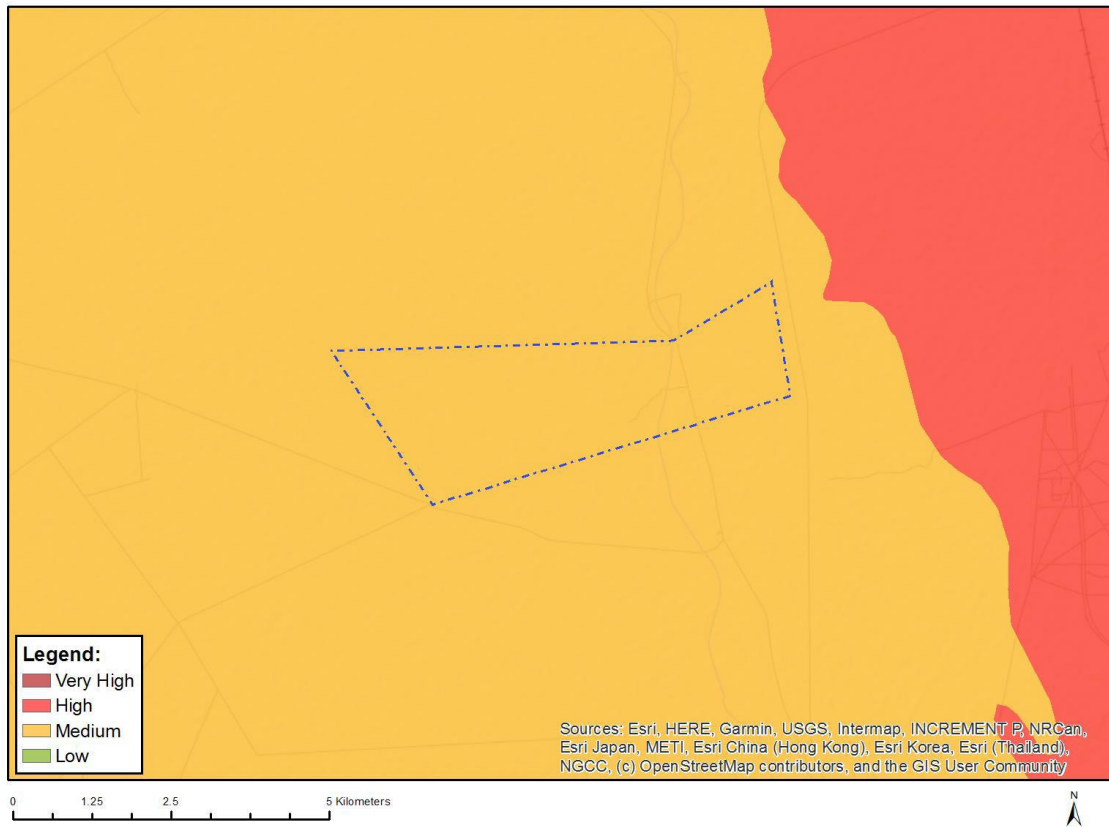
The site sensitivity is classified as Very High, due to the project being located close to a slope of between 1:4 and 1:10. Refer to Figure 1.6 below.



**Figure 1.6:** Landscape (Solar) sensitivity as indicated by the DFFE Screening Tool Report

### 1.2.8 Palaeontology Theme

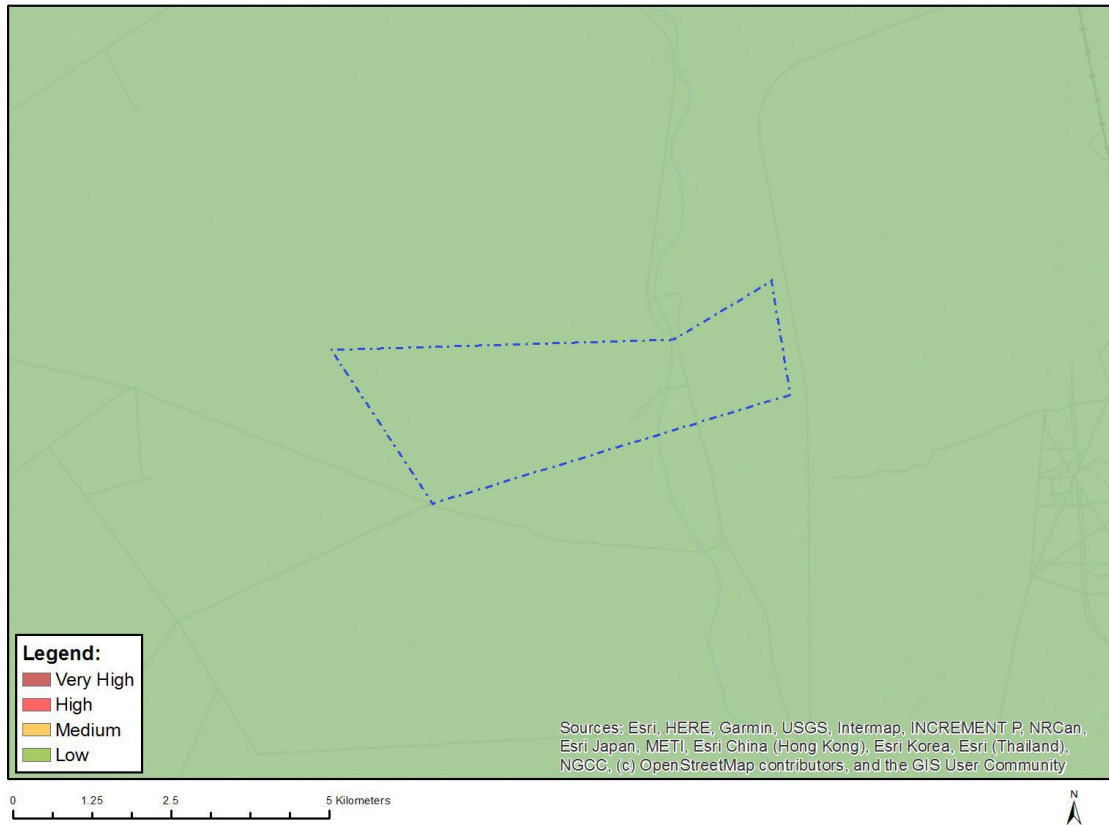
The site sensitivity is classified as medium, due to the potential to have features with medium palaeontological sensitivity. Refer to Figure 1.7 below.



**Figure 1.7:** Palaeontology sensitivity as indicated by the DFFE Screening Tool Report

### 1.2.9 Plant Species Theme

The site sensitivity is classified as low, due to the no sensitive plant species in the project area. Refer to Figure 1.8.

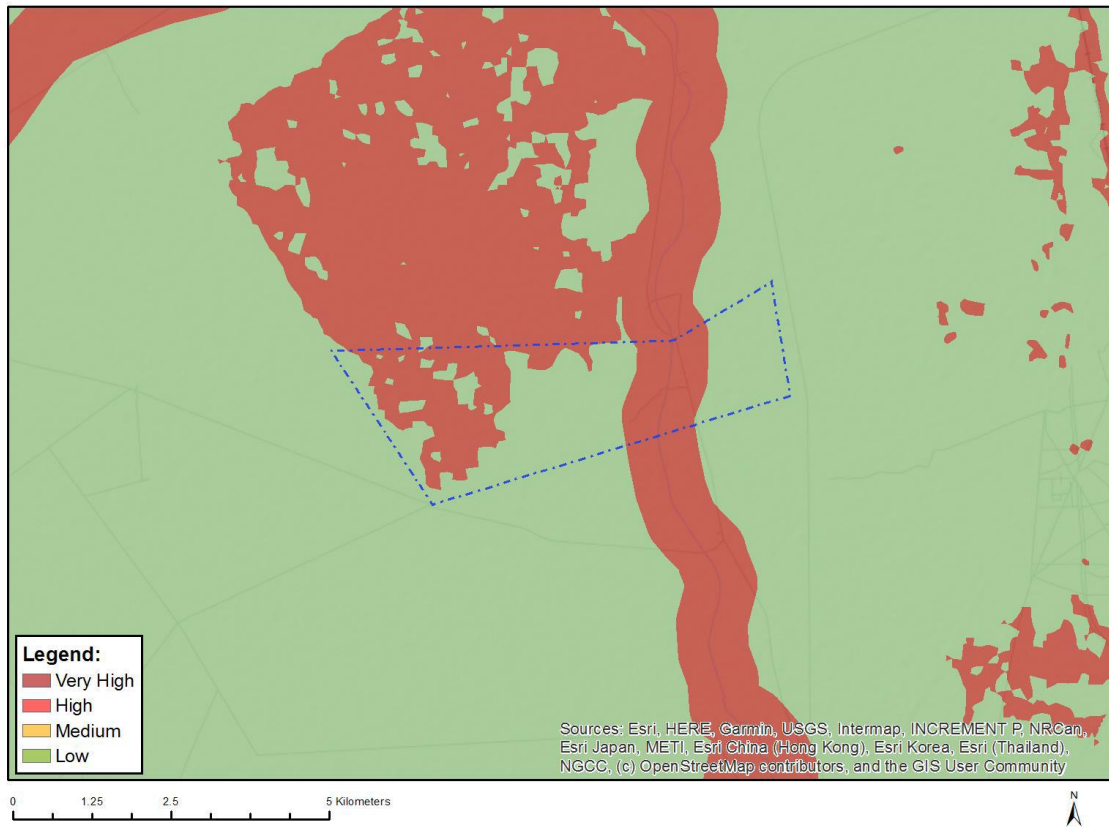


**Figure 1.8:** Plant Species sensitivity as indicated by the DFFE Screening Tool Report



### 1.2.10 Terrestrial Biodiversity Theme

The site sensitivity is classified as high, due to the presence of an Ecological Support Area 1. Refer to Figure 1.9 below.



**Figure 1.9:** Terrestrial Biodiversity sensitivity as indicated by the DFFE Screening Tool Report

### 1.3 Sensitivities of the studies not conducted as part of the Scoping and EIA process.

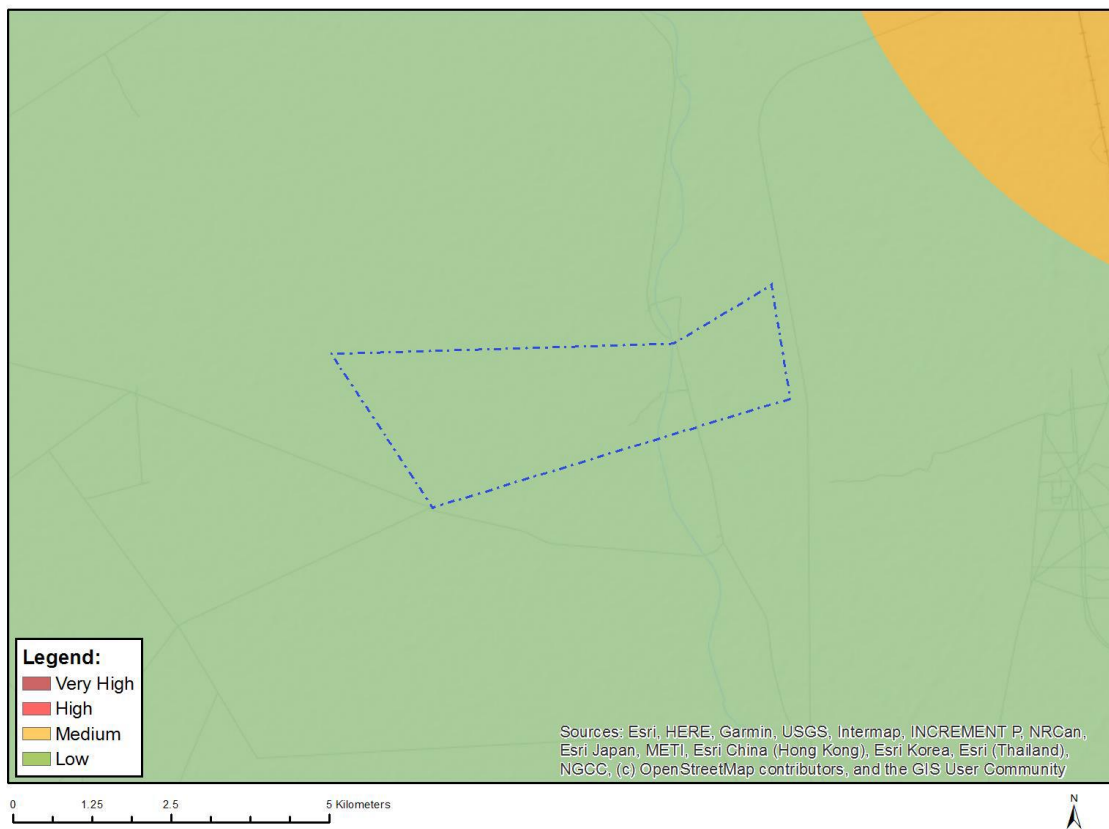
This report has been produced specifically to consider the Civil Aviation, Defence and RFI theme and addresses the content requirements of (a) and (b) above.

The remaining required specialist studies have been undertaken as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment process as listed in the DFFE Screening Tool Report. The only study not considered as relevant is the Geotechnical Assessment which will only be undertaken before construction begins as part of the micro-siting of the facility layout. The consideration of geotechnical aspects is considered to be of a technical concern rather than an environmental concern.

The sensitivities for the Civil Aviation, Defence and RFI themes associated with Virgo Solar Power Plant are as follows:

#### 1.3.1 Civil Aviation Theme

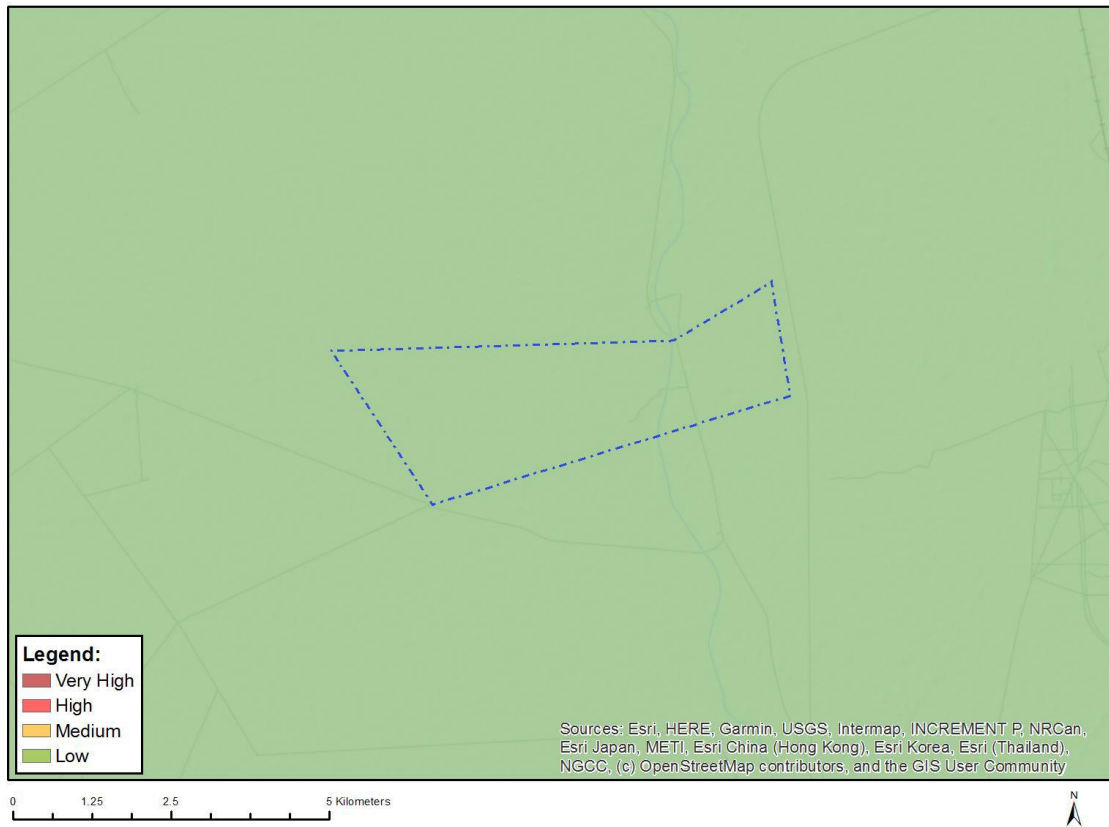
The site sensitivity is classified as low, and no major or other types of civil aviation aerodromes are present. Refer to Figure 1.10.



**Figure 1.10:** Civil aviation sensitivity as indicated by the DFFE Screening Tool Report

### 1.3.2 Defence theme

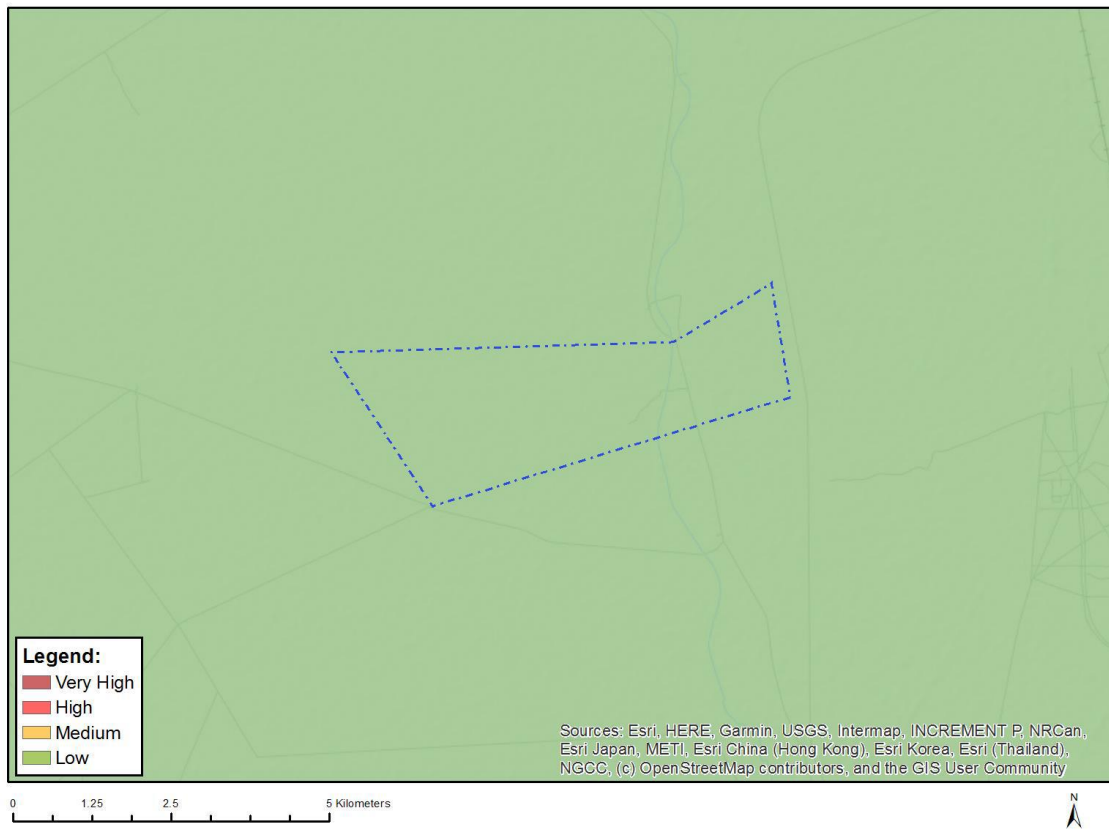
The defence theme is considered to be low sensitivity for the proposed. Refer to Figure 1.11 below.



**Figure 1.11:** Defence theme sensitivity as indicated by the DFFE Screening Tool Report

### 1.3.3 RFI Theme

The sensitivity of the RFI theme for the project is low. Refer to Figure 1.12 below.



**Figure 1.12:** RFI theme sensitivity as indicated by the DFFE Screening Tool Report

#### 1.4 Current/ Verified Land Use

The current land use of the properties is mainly used for agricultural purposes, which includes game grazing. The project is located approximately 14 km west of the town of Kathu.

Most of the surrounding area has a low number of farmsteads that are sparsely populated. The area is located within an agricultural region, and the immediate area is presently used mainly for game farming and Grazing.

Refer to Figures 1.13 – 1.17 for photographs of the site under assessment.



**Figure 1.13:** Aerial view of the centre of the site





**Figure 1.14:** Aerial view of the centre of the site



**Figure 1.15:** General conditions of the site





**Figure 1.16:** General conditions of the site



**Figure 1.17:** General conditions of the site

## 2 SITE VERIFICATION

This section will evaluate and verify the sensitivity ratings provided by the DFFE Screening Tool Report and provide feedback from the EAP.

### 2.1 Agriculture Theme

The site sensitivity is classified as low to medium, due to the land capability of the site.

**Table 2.1:** Verification of DFFE Screening Report Sensitivity Ratings for the Agriculture Theme

Identified Sensitivity		Comment
<b>DFFE Screening Report</b>  <b>Low to Medium</b>  Specialist assessment must be conducted in accordance to Procedures for the Assessment and Minimum Criteria for Reporting on identified Environmental Themes in terms of Sections 24(5)(a) and (h) and 44 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998, when applying for Environmental Authorisation, which were promulgated in Government Notice No. 320 of 20 March 2020.	<b>EAP Feedback</b>  <b>Low</b>	<p>The identification of the site as medium sensitivity considering agriculture is disputed to by the EAP. This is based on the current land use of the site being used for grazing purposes.</p> <p>The proposed site is used for grazing as the area cannot support cultivation due to non-arable lands and climate limitations.</p> <p>An Soil and Agricultural Potential Assessment (Appendix E4) have been provided for the site in accordance with the Protocols (G.NR 320).</p>

### 2.2 Animal Species Theme

The site sensitivity is classified as low to medium, due to potential occurrence of sensitive animal species, nl. *Aves-Gyps africanus*

**Table 2.2:** Verification of DFFE Screening Report Sensitivity Ratings for the Animal Species Theme

Identified Sensitivity		Comment
<b>DFFE Screening Report</b>  <b>Low to Medium</b>	<b>EAP Feedback</b>  <b>Low</b>	<p>The identification of the site as medium sensitivity considering animal species is disputed by the EAP. This is based on the</p>



Specialist assessment must be conducted in accordance to Procedures for the Assessment and Minimum Criteria for Reporting on identified Environmental Themes in terms of Sections 24(5)(a) and (h) and 44 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998, when applying for Environmental Authorisation, which were promulgated in Government Notice No. 1150 of 30 October 2020 (i.e. protocols for terrestrial plant and animal species)		<p>current land use of the site being used for cattle grazing purposes.</p> <p>No evidence of the <i>Aves-Gyps africanus</i> could be found on site.</p> <p>A Terrestrial Biodiversity Assessment (Appendix E1) have been provided for the site which includes an animal species assessment site accordance with the Protocols (G.NR 1150).</p>
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### 2.3 Aquatic Biodiversity Theme

The site sensitivity is classified as Very High, due to the presence of Wetlands and Strategic water source area.

**Table 2.3:** Verification of DFFE Screening Report Sensitivity Ratings for the Aquatic Biodiversity Theme

Identified Sensitivity		Comment
<b><u>DFFE Screening Report</u></b>  <b>Very High</b>	<b><u>EAP Feedback</u></b>  <b>High</b>	<p>The identification of the site as High sensitivity considering Aquatic Biodiversity is agreed to by the EAP. This is based on site inspection and desktop assessment.</p> <p>The desktop assessment confirmed that there are some NFEPA wetlands located on or in close proximity to the project site. The proposed facility will have negligible to no influence on the ground water systems associated with the strategic water source area.</p> <p>However, due to the DFFE screening tool identifying the site as Very High Sensitivity a Wetland Baseline and Risk Assessment</p>

Environmental Management Act, 1998, when applying for Environmental Authorisation, which were promulgated in Government Notice No. 320 of 20 March 2020.		(Appendix E1) have been conducted for the project.
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### 2.3.1 Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Theme

The site sensitivity is classified as low.

**Table 2.4:** Verification of DFFE Screening Report Sensitivity Ratings for the Archaeological and Cultural Theme

Identified Sensitivity		Comment
<p><b><u>DFFE Screening Report</u></b></p> <p><b>Low</b></p> <p>As no specific assessment protocol has been prescribed, the required level of assessment must be based on the findings of the Initial Site Sensitivity Verification and must comply with Appendix 6 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations promulgated under sections 24(5) and 44 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998) (The Act), where a specialist assessment is required.</p>	<p><b><u>EAP Feedback</u></b></p> <p><b>Low</b></p>	<p>The identification of the site as low sensitivity considering Archaeological and Cultural Heritage is agreed to by the EAP. This is based desktop assessment and site inspection.</p> <p>No sites or features of cultural or heritage significance were identified on the project site through review of satellite imagery and site inspection.</p> <p>A Phase 1 Cultural and Heritage Impact Assessment (Appendix E5) was conducted to ensure that no Cultural or Heritage features are missed on site. The assessment confirmed the low sensitivity rating as no sites, features or object of cultural significance were identifies.</p>

### 2.3.2 Avian Theme

The site sensitivity is classified as Low.

**Table 2.5:** Verification of DFFE Screening Report Sensitivity Ratings for the Avian Theme

Identified Sensitivity		Comment
<p><b><u>DFFE Screening Report</u></b></p> <p><b>Low</b></p> <p>Specialist assessment must be conducted in accordance with Procedures for the Assessment and Minimum Criteria for Reporting on identified Environmental Themes in terms of Sections 24(5)(a) and (h) and 44 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998, when applying for Environmental Authorisation, which were promulgated in Government Notice No. 320 of 20 March 2020.</p>	<p><b><u>EAP Feedback</u></b></p> <p><b>Low</b></p>	<p>The identification of the site as Low sensitivity considering Avifauna is agreed to by the EAP. This is based desktop assessment and site inspection.</p> <p>The area does not have high diversity of avian species. Limited water resources exist on site which will limit the occurrence of SCC species of Avifauna on site.</p> <p>An Avifaunal Impact Assessment (Appendix E2) has been conducted for the site in order to confirm the sensitivity rating .</p>

### 2.3.3 Landscape (Solar) Theme

The site sensitivity is classified as Very High, due to the project being located close to a slope of between 1:4 and 1:10.

**Table 2.6:** Verification of DFFE Screening Report Sensitivity Ratings for the Landscape (Solar) Theme

Identified Sensitivity		Comment
<p><b><u>DFFE Screening Report</u></b></p> <p><b>Very High</b></p> <p>As no specific assessment protocol has been prescribed, the required level of assessment must be based on the findings of</p>	<p><b><u>EAP Feedback</u></b></p> <p><b>Low</b></p>	<p>The identification of the site as Very High sensitivity considering Landscape is disputed by the EAP. This is based on the overall low visual impact that the solar facility will have on the surrounding landscape and the relatively short power line route.</p> <p>Existing screening exists on site in terms of vegetation cover. The slope referred to in</p>

<p>the Initial Site Sensitivity Verification and must comply with Appendix 6 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations promulgated under sections 24(5) and 44 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998) (The Act), where a specialist assessment is required.</p>		<p>the screening report may be an outlier as no evidence of such a slope have been identified.</p> <p>A Visual Impact Assessment (Appendix E3) have been conducted for the site.</p>
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### 2.3.4 Palaeontology Theme

The site sensitivity is classified as medium to medium, due to the potential to have features with medium palaeontological sensitivity.

**Table 2.7:** Verification of DFFE Screening Report Sensitivity Ratings for the Palaeontology Theme

Identified Sensitivity		Comment
<p><b><u>DFFE Screening Report</u></b></p> <p><b>Medium</b></p> <p>As no specific assessment protocol has been prescribed, the required level of assessment must be based on the findings of the Initial Site Sensitivity Verification and must comply with Appendix 6 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations promulgated under sections 24(5) and 44 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998</p>	<p><b><u>EAP Feedback</u></b></p> <p><b>Medium</b></p>	<p>The identification of the site as Medium sensitivity considering Palaeontology is agreed to by the EAP. This is based on the site inspection conducted.</p> <p>The site inspection confirmed that there are no stromatolite outcrops present on the site. The likelihood of well-preserved stromatolite outcrops being found on site does exist.</p> <p>A Palaeontological Impact Assessment (Appendix E6) have been conducted for the project.</p>

(Act No. 107 of 1998) (The Act), where a specialist assessment is required.		
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### 2.3.5 Plant Species Theme

The site sensitivity is classified as low, due to the no sensitive plant species in the project area.

**Table 2.8:** Verification of DFFE Screening Report Sensitivity Ratings for the Plant Species Theme

Identified Sensitivity		Comment
<b><u>DFFE Screening Report</u></b>	<b><u>EAP Feedback</u></b>	
<b>Low</b>	<b>Low</b>	
Specialist assessment must be conducted in accordance to Procedures for the Assessment and Minimum Criteria for Reporting on identified Environmental Themes in terms of Sections 24(5)(a) and (h) and 44 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998, when applying for Environmental Authorisation, which were promulgated in Government Notice No. 1150 of 30 October 2020 (i.e. protocols for terrestrial plant and animal species		<p>The identification of the site as low sensitivity considering plant species is agreed to by the EAP. This is based on the current land use of the site being used for grazing purposes.</p> <p>The site inspection indicated that the area is degraded due to the farming activities taking place on site. Refer to Figure 1.13 – 1.17 for photographs of the general condition of the site.</p> <p>The Terrestrial Biodiversity Assessment (Appendix E1), including a plant species assessment have been conducted for the site.</p>

### 2.3.6 Terrestrial Biodiversity Theme

The site sensitivity is classified as Very high, due to the presence of an Ecological Support Area 1.

**Table 2.9:** Verification of DFFE Screening Report Sensitivity Ratings for the Terrestrial Biodiversity Theme

Identified Sensitivity		Comment
<b><u>DFFE Screening Report</u></b>	<b><u>EAP Feedback</u></b>	
		The identification of the site as Very High sensitivity considering Terrestrial

<p><b>Very High</b></p> <p>Specialist assessment must be conducted in accordance to Procedures for the Assessment and Minimum Criteria for Reporting on identified Environmental Themes in terms of Sections 24(5)(a) and (h) and 44 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998, when applying for Environmental Authorisation, which were promulgated in Government Notice No. 1150 of 30 October 2020 (i.e. protocols for terrestrial plant and animal species</p>	<p><b>Medium</b></p>	<p>Biodiversity is disputed by the EAP. This is based on the current land use of the site being used for cattle farming and site inspection.</p> <p>The site is currently used for cattle farming and the site inspection confirmed that in terms of terrestrial biodiversity the site is degraded and heavily impacted on by Anthropogenic activities.</p> <p>The Terrestrial Biodiversity Assessment (Appendix E1) have been commissioned</p>
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## 2.4 Civil Aviation Theme

The site sensitivity is classified as low with no civil aviation infrastructure located in proximity to the proposed development that will be affected.

**Table 2.10:** Verification of DFFE Screening Report Sensitivity Ratings for the Civil Aviation Theme

Identified Sensitivity		Comment
<p><b><u>DFFE Screening Report</u></b></p> <p><b>Low</b></p> <p>As no specific assessment protocol has been prescribed, the required level of assessment must be based on the findings of the Initial Site Sensitivity Verification and must comply with Appendix 6 of the Environmental Impact</p>	<p><b><u>EAP Feedback</u></b></p> <p><b>Low</b></p>	<p>The identification of the site as low sensitivity considering civil aviation is agreed to by the EAP. This is based on the current land use of the site.</p> <p>The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) has been identified as an I&amp;AP, and has received the Draft Scoping report for review and commenting. No comments from the CAA have been received as part of the public participation process.</p>

Assessment Regulations promulgated under sections 24(5) and 44 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998) (The Act), where a specialist assessment is required.		
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The proposed development will not have an unacceptable negative impact on civil aviation installations based on the findings of the site visit and the lack of civil aviation infrastructure within the general area.

Based on the above, the EAP agrees with the outcome and results for the Civil Aviation Theme for the Virgo Solar Power Plant.

This assessment is considered sufficient for the civil aviation theme. There is no reason for the development not to proceed based on the results of the assessment and no objections are made.

## 2.5 Defence Theme

**Table 2.11:** Verification of DFFE Screening Report Sensitivity Ratings for the Defence Theme

Identified Sensitivity		Comment
<b><u>DFFE Screening Report</u></b>  <b>Low</b>  As no specific assessment protocol has been prescribed, the required level of assessment must be based on the findings of the Initial Site Sensitivity Verification and must comply with Appendix 6 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations promulgated under sections 24(5) and 44 of the National	<b><u>EAP Feedback</u></b>  <b>Low</b>	The site verification report confirms the low sensitivity of the site as no military operations are located close to the development.  The project is therefore not expected to have an impact on Defence Installations.

Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998) (The Act), where a specialist assessment is required.		
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The proposed development will not have an unacceptable negative impact on defence installations. Considering the site under assessment and the surrounding defence aspects the sensitivity is confirmed as low.

This assessment is considered sufficient for the defence theme. There is no reason for the development not to proceed based on the results of the assessment and no objections are made.

## 2.6 Radio Frequency Interference (RFI) Theme

**Table 2.12:** Verification of the DFFE Screening Tool Report Sensitivity Ratings for the Radio Frequency Interference (RFI) Theme

Identified Sensitivity		Comment
<p><b><u>DFFE Screening Report</u></b></p> <p><b>Low</b></p> <p>As no specific assessment protocol has been prescribed, the required level of assessment must be based on the findings of the Initial Site Sensitivity Verification and must comply with Appendix 6 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations promulgated under sections 24(5) and 44 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998) (The Act), where a specialist assessment is required.</p>	<p><b><u>EAP Feedback</u></b></p> <p><b>Low</b></p>	<p>The site verification is inconclusive as no desktop information could be sought, however on-site evidence of the low sensitivity was available during the site inspection since no potential RFI could be identified.</p> <p>The South African Radio Astronomy Observatory (SARAO) have been consulted regarding the development of the project and the Scoping Report has been circulated to SARAO for review and commenting. No comment has been received from SARAO to date.</p>



The EAP was not able to verify the findings of the Screening Tool. A desktop based assessment into telecommunications; Radio Astronomy Advantage Areas and Weather Radar installation areas was undertaken, however no information is readily available. The EAP could not confirm if any features are present in proximity to the proposed development.

However, as the theme is of a low sensitivity, no unacceptable impact is expected to occur. I&APs that may be impacted in this regard will be consulted during the process and all comments will be considered.

### 3 CONCLUSION

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The DFFE Screening Tool Report identified thirteen (13) specialists' studies to be conducted, which includes Agricultural Impact Assessment, Landscape/Visual Impact Assessment, Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment, Palaeontology Impact Assessment, Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact Assessment, Aquatic Biodiversity Impact Assessment, Avian Impact Assessment, Civil Aviation Assessment, RFI Assessment, Geotechnical Assessment, Socio-Economic Impact Assessment, Plant Species Assessment and Animal Species Assessment. All sensitivities for the identified themes have been considered in this report.

The Low sensitivity ratings for the Civil Aviation, Defence and RFI theme is confirmed by the site verification report. Therefore, the project will not have an unacceptable negative impact on any of the above identified themes. No specialist studies were conducted for the Civil Aviation, Defence and RFI themes based on the findings of the site verification report. The relevant stakeholders will be consulted as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment process to obtain comment on the proposed development.