Report to SiVEST

Desktop Geotechnical Specialist Study for the:

PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF THE BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM (BESS) AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE AUTHORISED PLATSJAMBOK WEST SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC (PV) ENERGY FACILITY, LOCATED NEAR THE TOWN OF PRIESKA, IN THE SIYATHEMBA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, PIXLEY KA SEME DISTRICT IN THE NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE OF SOUTH AFRICA

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GaGE CONSULTING

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Report by:	Approved by:
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PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF THE BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM (BESS) AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE AUTHORISED PLATSJAMBOK WEST SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC (PV) ENERGY FACILITY, LOCATED NEAR THE TOWN OF PRIESKA, IN THE SIYATHEMBA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, PIXLEY KA SEME DISTRICT IN THE NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE OF SOUTH AFRICA

Executive Summary

This desktop geological and geotechnical specialist study assed the proposed development of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and associated infrastructure for the authorised Platsjambok West Photovoltaic (PV) Energy Facility (12/12/20/2320/5/AM2), located near Prieska in the Siyathemba Local Municipality, Pixley ka Seme District in the Northern Cape Province of South Africa. The assessment area comprises of a 500 m radius around the authorised substation position.

The topography over the assessment area is undulating but generally gently with areas of moderately steep slopes (up to approximately 5 degrees based on Google Earth elevation data). A depression occurs near the central section and several minor ephemeral drainage lines converge in this area before trending towards the south-south east to a pan located south east the assessment area boundary. The study area has an arid climate. The assessment area is underlain by rock units of Dwyka Group of the Karoo Supergroup, comprising of tillite, boulder shale, sandstone, siltstone, shale, varved shale. Some geotechnical constraints have been identified, primarily shallow bedrock which may cause excavation difficulties. The constraints may be mitigated via standard engineering design and construction measures. Shallow spread footings are considered suitable to support the structures.

No rock outcrop, faults, lineaments or other geological features were identified. The potential for preserved fossils to be present at shallow depth is considered to be low.

No fatal flaws have been identified that would render the proposed BESS site unsuitable from a geological and geotechnical perspective. No geologically or geotechnically sensitive areas were identified within or near the assessment area. It is recommended however that areas of steeper slope gradients are avoided when determining the final infrastructure layout.

The proposed BESS is assessed to have a “Negative Low impact - the anticipated impact will have negligible negative effects and will require little to no mitigation” provided that the recommended mitigation measures are implemented. These include avoiding development on the steeper sections of the site. The remaining mitigation measures provided to minimise the impacts relate to the appropriate engineering design of earthworks and site drainage, erosion control and topsoil and spoil material management. These do not exceed civil engineering and construction best practice.

It is recommended that the proposed activity be authorised.

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT ACT, 1998 (ACT NO. 107 OF 1998) AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REGULATIONS, 2014 (AS AMENDED) - REQUIREMENTS FOR SPECIALIST REPORTS (APPENDIX 6

Regulation GNR 326 of 4 December 2014, as amended 7 April 2017, Appendix 6	Section of Report
1. (1) A specialist report prepared in terms of these Regulations must contain- a) details of- i. the specialist who prepared the report; and ii. the expertise of that specialist to compile a specialist report including a curriculum vitae;	 1.3 Appendix B
b) a declaration that the specialist is independent in a form as may be specified by the competent authority;	Appendix A
c) an indication of the scope of, and the purpose for which, the report was prepared;	1.1, 1.2
(cA) an indication of the quality and age of base data used for the specialist report;	1.4, References
(cB) a description of existing impacts on the site, cumulative impacts of the proposed development and levels of acceptable change;	5, 6
d) the date and season of the site investigation and the relevance of the season to the outcome of the assessment;	Not applicable
e) a description of the methodology adopted in preparing the report or carrying out the specialised process inclusive of equipment and modelling used;	1.4, Appendix C
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 alternatives;	3, 6, 7
g) an identification of any areas to be avoided, including buffers;	None 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;	No sensitivities identified
i) a description of any assumptions made and any uncertainties or gaps in knowledge;	2
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) or activities;	5,6,7
k) any mitigation measures for inclusion in the EMPr;	6.1 Table 6-1
l) any conditions for inclusion in the environmental authorisation;	6.1 Table 6-1
m) any monitoring requirements for inclusion in the EMPr or environmental authorisation;	6.1 Table 6-1
n) a reasoned opinion- i. (as to) whether the proposed activity, activities or portions thereof should be authorised; (iA) regarding the acceptability of the proposed activity or activities; and 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;	6.1, 8 6.1 Table 6-1
o) a description of any consultation process that was undertaken during the course of preparing the specialist report;	Not applicable
p) a summary and copies of any comments received during any consultation process and where applicable all responses thereto; and	None
q) any other information requested by the competent authority.	None
2) Where a government notice *gazetted* 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.	Not applicable

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1. Introduction

GaGE Consulting (Pty) Ltd has been appointed by SiVEST (PTY) Ltd, on behalf of South Africa Mainstream Platsjambok West (Pty) Ltd to undertake the assessment of the development of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and associated infrastructure for the authorised Platsjambok West Photovoltaic (PV) Energy Facility (12/12/20/2320/5/AM2) located near the town of Prieska, in the Siyathemba Local Municipality, Pixley ka Seme District in the Northern Cape Province of South Africa.

In terms of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations, which were published on 04 December 2014 and amended on 07 April 2017 [promulgated in Government Gazette 40772 and Government Notice (GN) R326, R327, R325 and R324 on 7 April 2017], various aspects of the proposed development are considered listed activities under GNR 327 and GNR 324 which may have an impact on the environment and therefore require authorisation from the National Competent Authority (CA), namely the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries (DEFF), prior to the commencement of such activities. This desktop geological and geotechnical specialist study has been commissioned to assess and verify the BESS under the applicable specialist protocols.

1.1. Scope and Objectives

Assess the impacts associated with the installation of a BESS on the Platsjambok West Photovoltaic (PV) Energy Facility (12/12/20/2320/5/AM2), including potential fatal flaws, if present.

The following key considerations were taken into account during the desktop study:

- The geological and geotechnical conditions (ground conditions) and the influence thereof on the competency of founding of civil infrastructure and structures
- Site topography and influence thereof on the site stability and suitability
- The presence of geological or geomorphological features such as faults, lineaments and unstable ground
- The presence of problem soils, geotechnical constraints, shallow groundwater conditions
- Geologically significant or sensitive features such as ridges, outcrops and exposures

1.2. Terms of Reference

The terms of reference were provided by SiVEST to allow a consistent approach to the various specialist studies and allow enable comparison of environmental impacts, efficient review, and collation of the specialist studies into their Basic Assessment report. This study is undertaken in accordance with the requirements provided in Regulation GNR 326 of 4 December 2014, as amended 7 April 2017, Appendix 6.

A detained description of the infrastructure required for the BESS including layouts of the proposed development were provided by SiVEST.

1.3. Specialist Credentials

This study has been undertaken by Steven Bok, a Professional Natural Scientist registered by the South African National Council for Natural Scientific Professions (SACNASP) registration number 400279/07 (Geological Science). Mr Bok's CV is attached in Appendix B.

1.4. Assessment Methodology

The assessment involved a review of the following information:

i) 1:250 000 Scale Geological Map 3022 BRITSTOWN (Council for Geoscience,1991)
ii) Aerial photographs (Google Earth imagery, current and historical)

iii) Technical report titled "Prieska Solar PV/WindFarm Project Report on Preliminary Geotechnical Investigation" produced by Mainstream Renewable Power dated February 2012 (Version Number 1)
iv) Technical report titled "Proposed Development of a Wind & Solar Power Generation Plant near Copperton, NC Visual Impact Assessment Report, EIR Phase" produced by Mainstream Renewable Power dated March 2012
v) Technical report titled "Proposed Wind and Photovoltaic Energy Facilities Near Prieska, Northern Cape Final Soil and Agricultural Assessment Report" produced by SiVEST dated May 2012
vi) Screening Report for Environmental Authorisation (national web based environmental screening tool)
vii) General site photographs provided by SiVEST
viii) Literature as referenced within this report

An Environmental Impact Assessment matrix was used to quantify the impacts of the project on the receiving environment (provided by SiVEST and attached as Appendix C).

2. Assumptions and Limitations

The services performed by GaGE Consulting (Pty) Ltd were conducted in a manner consistent with the level of care and skill ordinarily exercised by members of the geotechnical profession practising under similar conditions in the locality of the project. The interpretation of the site conditions is based on available information, experience in the general project area and professional judgement and is considered to provide sufficient confidence to meet the objectives of this specialist study. The nature of geotechnical engineering is such that conditions at variance with those described may be encountered on site. Engineering recommendations provided in this report are preliminary and must be confirmed through further intrusive investigations.

Third party information has been utilised in good faith.

A site visit was not undertaken.

3. Technical Description

3.1. Project Location

The BESS is located on the authorised Platsjambok West Photovoltaic (PV) Energy Facility (12/12/20/2320/5/AM2), located near located the town of Prieska, in the Siyathemba Local Municipality, Pixley ka Seme District in the Northern Cape Province of South Africa.

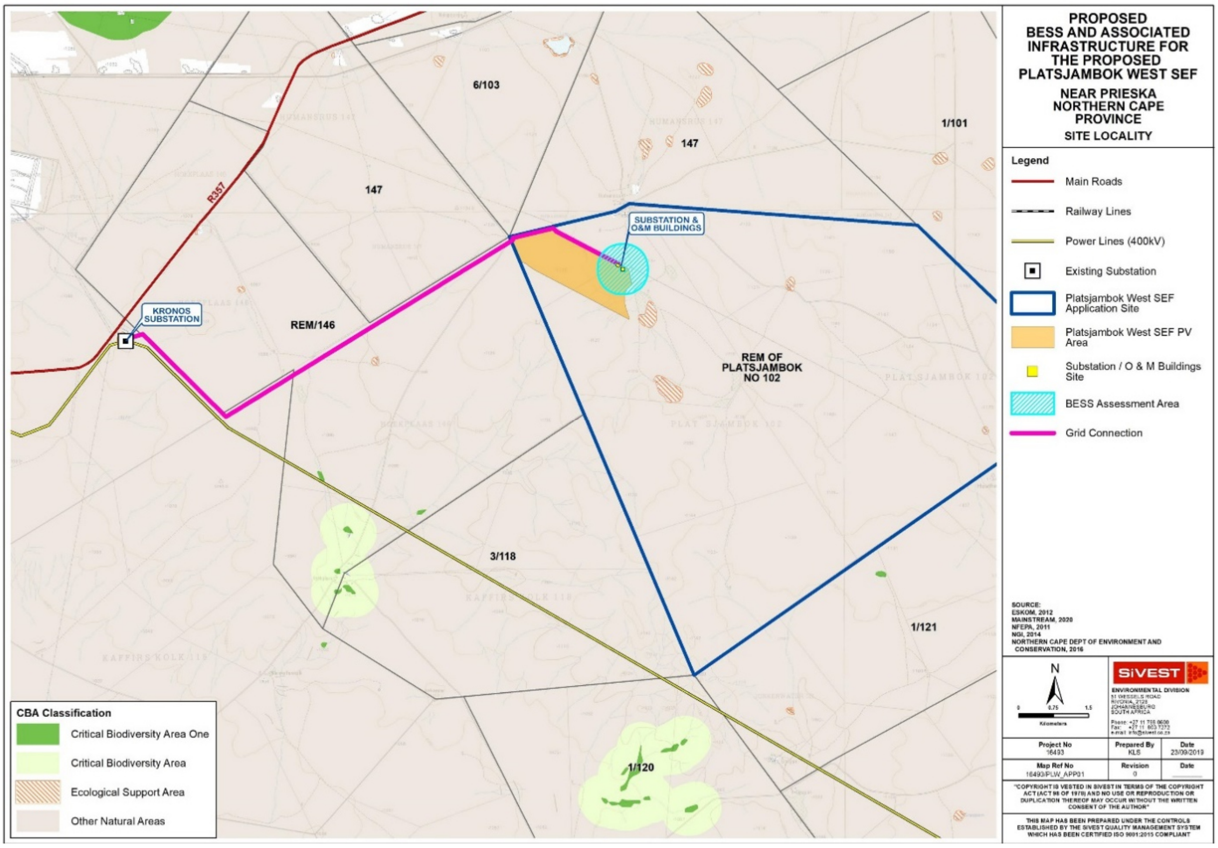

Figure 3-1 BESS is located on the authorised Platsjambok West Photovoltaic (PV) Energy Facility

3.2. Project Description

South Africa Mainstream Renewable Power Platsjambok West (Pty) Ltd is proposing the construction and operation of Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and associated infrastructure for the authorised Platsjambok West PV (12/12/20/2320/5/AM2). The need for a BESS stems from the fact that electricity is only produced by the Renewable Energy Facility while the sun is shining, while the peak demand may not necessarily occur during the day-time. Therefore, the storage of electricity and supply thereof during peak-demand will mean that the facility is more efficient, reliable and electricity supply more constant.

The BESS will:

- Store and Integrate a greater amount of renewable energy from the Renewable Energy Facility into the electricity grid
- This will assist with the objective to generate electricity by means of renewable energy to feed into the National Grid which will be procured under either the Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Procurement Program (REIPPPP), other government run procurement programmes or for sale to private entities if required

The Platsjambok West PV BESS will be located adjacent to the approved Platsjambok West PV substation associated with the approved Platsjambok West PV. To reduce electrical losses the BESS must be in close proximity to the on-site 33/132kV substation. A ~5ha study site has been established around the approved substation (500 m zone) to allow for the micrositing / specialist guidance regarding placement can be made.

3.2.1. Alternatives

No site alternatives for this proposed development were considered as the placement of the proposed BESS is dependent on the location of the Platsjambok West Photovoltaic (PV) Energy Facility (12/12/20/2320/5/AM2).

Technology alternatives are limited to battery types, namely Redox flow batteries and Solid State Batteries. No other activity alternatives are being considered.

The BESS alternatives are:

BESS Specifications	
BESS Footprint	Up to 2Ha
BESS Capacity	200MWh
BESS Technology	Lithium Ion
BESS Type Alternative- Solid State Batteries	Containerised systems assembled within shipping containers and delivered to the project site. Dimensions are approximately 17 m long x 3.5 m wide x 4 m high. Containers will be placed on a raised concrete plinth (30 cm) and may be stacked on top of each other to a maximum height of approximately 15 m. Additional instrumentation, including inverters and temperature control equipment, may be positioned between the battery containers.

The 'no-go' alternative is the option of not constructing and operating a BESS in support of the authorised Renewable Energy (RE) facility. This alternative would result in no additional environmental impact other than that assessed during the EIA for the RE facility.

The 'no-go' option is an option; however, this would prevent the Platsjambok West Photovoltaic (PV) Energy Facility from contributing to the environmental, social and economic benefits associated with the development of the renewables sector.

The above-mentioned alternatives (including 'no-go' alternative) will all be assessed by the appointed specialists as part of the BA process. All the above-mentioned location alternatives will be informed by the identified environmental sensitive and/or 'no-go' areas (i.e. status quo). Micro-site alternatives within the assessment area are being considered and comparatively assessed as part of the BA process for the proposed development.

4. Legal Requirement and Guidelines

The desktop study was undertaken according to the guidelines provided by The South African Institution of Civil Engineering Site Investigation (SAICE) Code of Practice published by The Geotechnical Division of SAICE, 2010.

This report has been prepared to meet the requirements for a specialist report as provided in Regulation GNR 326 of 4 December 2014, as amended 7 April 2017, Appendix 6.

5. Description of the Receiving Environment

The following description of the receiving environment is relevant to assessing the geological and geotechnical impacts.

5.1. Climate

Climate plays a fundamental role in rock weathering and soil development. The effect of climate on the weathering processes (i.e. soil formation) in a particular area can be determined from the climatic N-value, defined by Weinert (1980). A climatic

N-Value of 5 or less implies a water surplus and the dominant mode of weathering is chemical decomposition. These climatic conditions are favourable for the development of a deep residual soil profile. Where the climatic N-value is greater than 5, mechanical disintegration is the predominant mode of rock weathering. In these drier areas residual soils are typically shallow. A climatic N-value of greater that 10 implies an arid climate with no significant chemical decomposition and residual soil profile development.

Weinert's climatic N-value for the site is approximately 22. This implies an arid climate with a non-existent or extremely shallow residual soil profile. Very shallow bedrock can be anticipated (unless the rock is covered with transported soils). This climate is conducive to the formation of pedogenic calcrete.

5.2. Topography and Drainage

The topography in the general area surrounding the site is characterised by flat plains with areas of slightly more undulating relief, including some low ridges. The topography over the assessment area is undulating but generally gently with areas of moderately steep slopes (up to approximately 5 degrees based on Google Earth elevation data) with an elevation difference of approximately 15 m between the lowest and highest sections. A depression occurs near the central section and a number of minor ephemeral drainage lines converge in this area before trending towards the south-south east to a pan located south east the assessment area boundary.

The natural topography and drainage do not appear to have been impacted by any previous activities.

5.3. Bedrock Geology

According to the 1:1250 000 scale geological map 3022 BRITSTOWN, the BESS assessment is underlain by rock units of Dwyka Group of the Karoo Supergroup (designated ***C-Pd*** in Figure 2-1). The Dwyka Group comprises of "tillite, boulder shale, sandstone, siltstone, shale, varved shale" of glacial, sub-glacial and subaqueous origin. The most common lithology is the massive diamictite facies, comprising of generally clast-rich diamictite (Johnson, *et.al.* 2006) also referred to as tillite. The tillite rock comprises of a fine dark grey rock matrix with characteristic rounded to angular frequently striated drop stones of various origin. The stratified diamictite facies comprises of bedded diamictite, mudrock, sandstone and conglomerate. A carbonate-rich facies is also present.

Occasional Kimberlite pipes occur in the general area, but not in close proximity to the site.

Rock outcrop is not evident from the aerial photography and is not expected on the site.

No faults, lineaments or other geological features are illustrated on the geological map or are visible from aerial photography.

Certain sedimentary rock units of the Dwyka Group are fossiliferous, and the environmental sensitivity classified as "High Sensitivity" for the paleontology theme. While the sensitivity for the site was not assessed further, the potential for preserved fossils to be present at shallow depth is considered to be low due to mechanical disintegration and calcification of the upper bedrock profile (described further in Section 5.4).

No mining activities have taken place on or close to the BESS assessment area.

An extract from the 1:250 000 scale geological map 3022 BRITSTOWN is provided below with the assessment area shown in red.

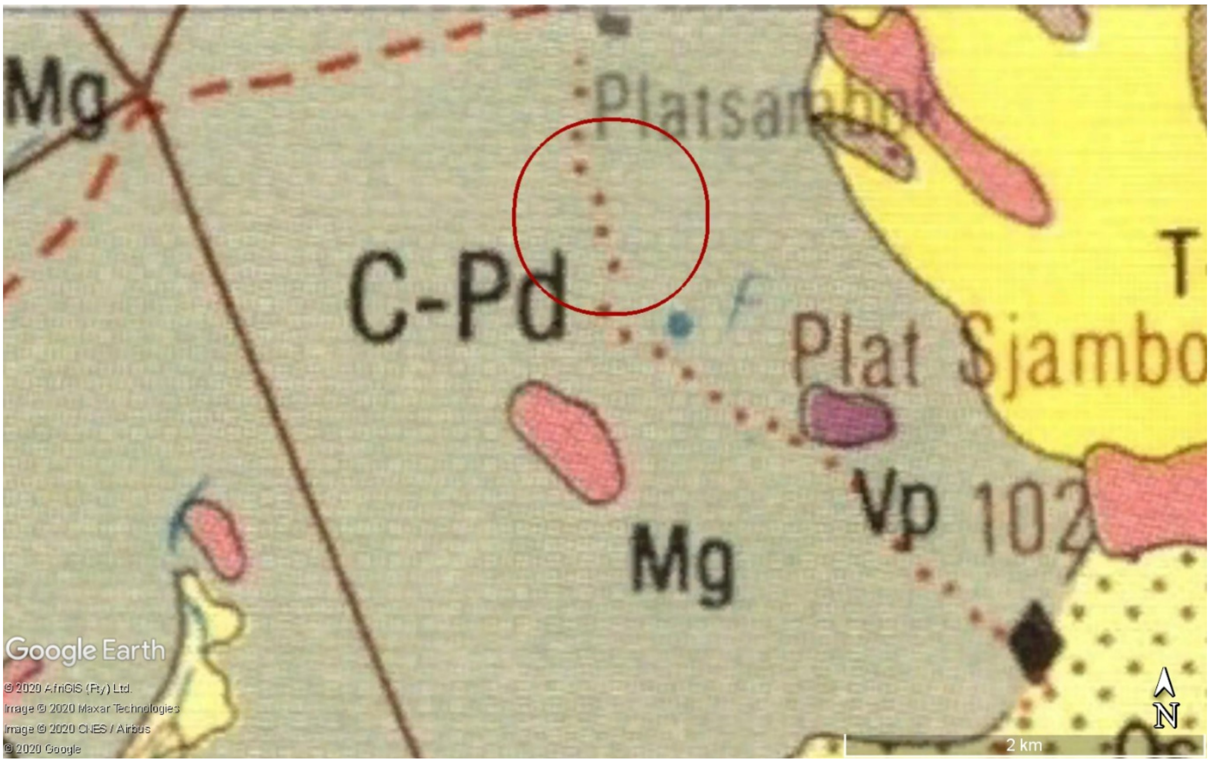

Figure 5-1 Extract of 1:150 000 scale Geological Map 3022 BRITSTOWN

5.4. Engineering Geology

Brink (1983) highlights that variable soils and weathering profiles and subsequently variable geotechnical conditions can develop on tillite bedrock, with the nature of the profile development largely controlled by the climate and geomorphological history. Expansive soils are known to develop in the Vryburg/Kimberley/Hopetown area. However, given the more arid climate these soils are not expected to be prominently developed at the site.

Tillite bedrock is often intensely jointed and develops a blocky structure. Hard rock may also disintegrate on exposure to the atmosphere.

The geotechnical investigation report referenced in Section 1.4 provides information that enables a satisfactory preliminary assessment of the geotechnical conditions within the assessment area. As part of this investigation one test pit was excavated within the BESS assessment area (designated TP2 P). The soil profile comprised of a thin upper horizon of loose, sandy silt extending from surface to 0.20 m depth. Material described as “weak, weathered siltstone/calcite” was observed between 0.20 m and the refusal dept of the TLB at 1.00 m. This is interpreted as mechanically weathered and calcified tillite bedrock. Similar shallow ground conditions are anticipated over much of the site, with a shallower depth to hard rock in areas of steeper topography and a thicker upper transported soil horizon in the lower-lying areas.

Although not illustrated on the geological map, calcrete may also be encountered sporadically within the upper soil profile.

5.5. Desktop Geotechnical Appraisal

Based on the desktop study, the proposed BESS assessment area may be assigned a single Ground Unit. Broadly similar conditions are anticipated across the site, although local variation in the bedrock lithology, soil cover, material hardness and degree of calcrete formation are anticipated (as detailed above).

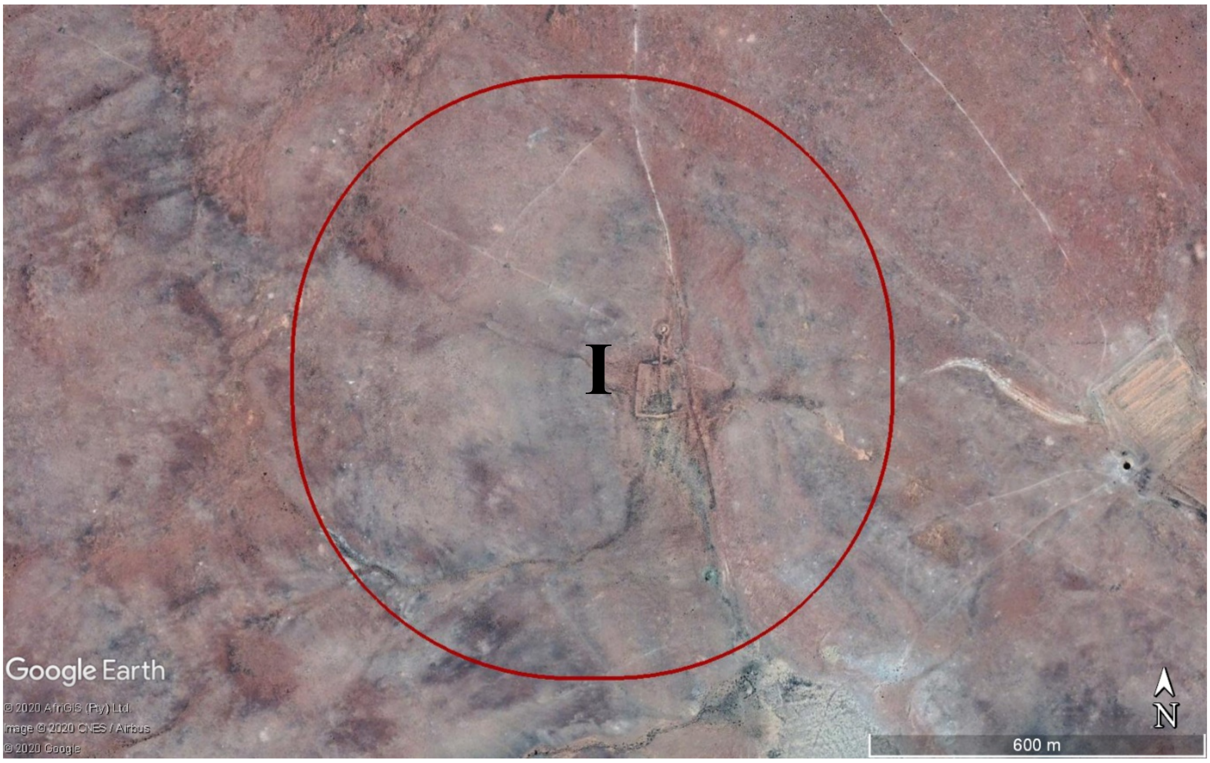

Figure 5-2 Inferred Ground Units

The assessment area is considered suitable for the development of the BESS infrastructure, from a geotechnical viewpoint, provided that standard engineering design and construction measures are implemented to mitigate the identified geotechnical constraints. It is recommended that the steeper section of the site are avoided when determining the layout of the BESS infrastructure.

The anticipated geotechnical constraints and mitigation measures are summarised in Table 2-1.

Table 5-1 Summary of Geotechnical Conditions

Ground Unit	Shallow Geology	Geotechnical Conditions / Constraints	Impacts on Engineering Design and Construction
I	Tillite, shale, sandstone	• Shallow bedrock • Thin soil cover • Hard excavation conditions • Possible calcrete	• Good founding conditions for structures at shallow depths • Conventional shallow foundations suitable • Conventional subgrade preparation for roads • Hard excavation conditions for trenching / earthworks

6. Identification and Assessment of Impacts

No fatal flaws have been identified that would render the proposed BESS site unsuitable from a geological and geotechnical perspective.

The BESS is containerised and the impact of the activity on the geological environment is limited to topsoil stripping, excavations for plinth foundations, trenching, the construction of access roads and associated light infrastructure. Bulk earthworks, where required for the construction of platforms and access roads, may be a significant impact.

6.1. Impact of the Project on the Geological Environment

The main impact of the BESS development from a geological perspective is the displacement and possible removal of soil and rock materials. These activities will predominantly take place during the construction phase. The degree of disturbance is largely dependent on the topography of the project site and the nature of the proposed infrastructure. Steep slopes are unfavourable as these require bulk earthworks to create working platforms and access roads. Earthworks on steep slopes increases the risk of soil movements or slope failure.

The risk of soil erosion is also increased during construction activities, by the removal of vegetation and by possible disturbance to the natural surface drainage environment. These activities may prevent infiltration of rainwater, increase surface runoff and cause concentration of surface water flow. Erosion will increase the disturbance and displacement of soils and the impact may extend beyond the infrastructure footprint/s over time.

The effects of BESS development on the geological environment was evaluated using an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Methodology, provided by SiVEST, which aids in determining the significance of an environmental impact on an environmental parameter through a systematic analysis. The EIA methodology is attached as Appendix C.

Based on the impact significance ratings presented in Table 6-1, the development of the proposed BESS on the Platsjambok West Photovoltaic (PV) Energy Facility, from a geological and geotechnical perspective, will be “Negative Low impact”, provided that the recommended mitigation measures are implemented. These include avoiding development on the steeper sections of the site.

The topography of the major portion of the site is gentle and significant earthworks are not anticipated in these areas. However, moderately steep slopes occur, particularly in the western section of the assessment area, and it is recommended the steepest slopes are avoided when determining the final infrastructure layout.

The soils do not render the site particularly susceptible to soil erosion, although mitigation measures need to be implemented, particularly within the lower-lying sections of the site where concentrated surface flow is anticipated after heavy rainfall events.

No ridges or rock outcrops which may be of geological importance were identified.

Table 6-1 Impact Assessment Methodology Matrix

ENVIRONMENTAL PARAMETER	ISSUE / IMPACT / ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECT/ NATURE	ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE BEFORE MITIGATION									RECOMMENDED MITIGATION MEASURES	ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION								
		E	P	R	L	D	I / M	TOTAL	STATUS (+ OR -)	S		E	P	R	L	D	I / M	TOTAL	STATUS (+ OR -)	S
Construction Phase																				
Disturbance/ displacement/ removal of soil and rock	Ground disturbance during platform earthworks, road subgrade preparation, trenching	1	4	2	2	3	3	24	-	Med	1) Design facility layout to minimise earthworks and levelling based on high resolution ground contour information 2) Avoid steeper slopes when determining the final infrastructure layout 3) Correct topsoil and spoil management	1	4	2	1	3	1	11	-	Low
Soil Erosion	Increased erosion due to vegetation clearing, alteration of natural drainage	1	3	2	2	2	1	10	-	Low	1) Temporary berms and drainage channels to divert surface runoff where needed 2) Landscape and rehabilitate disturbed areas timeously (e.g. regrassing) 3) Correct engineering design of road and site drainage	1	2	1	1	2	1	7	-	Low

ENVIRONMENTAL PARAMETER	ISSUE / IMPACT / ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECT/ NATURE	ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE BEFORE MITIGATION									RECOMMENDED MITIGATION MEASURES	ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION								
		E	P	R	L	D	I / M	TOTAL	STATUS (+ OR -)	S		E	P	R	L	D	I / M	TOTAL	STATUS (+ OR -)	S
											4) Use designated access and laydown areas only to minimise disturbance to surrounding areas									
Operational Phase																				
Soil Erosion	Increased erosion due to alteration of natural drainage	1	2	1	1	2	1	7	-	Low	1) Maintain drainage channels 2) Monitor for erosion and remediate and rehabilitate timeously	1	1	1	1	2	1	6	-	Low
Decommissioning Phase																				
Disturbance/ displacement/ removal of soil and rock	Ground disturbance during platform earthworks, road rehabilitation, removal of subsurface infrastructure	1	4	2	2	2	1	11	-	Low	1) Restore natural site topography 2) Landscape and rehabilitate disturbed areas timeously (e.g. regrassing)	1	4	2	1	2	1	10	-	Low

ENVIRONMENTAL PARAMETER	ISSUE / IMPACT / ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECT/ NATURE	ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE BEFORE MITIGATION									RECOMMENDED MITIGATION MEASURES	ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION								
		E	P	R	L	D	I / M	TOTAL	STATUS (+ OR -)	S		E	P	R	L	D	I / M	TOTAL	STATUS (+ OR -)	S
Soil Erosion	Increased erosion due to ground disturbance during rehabilitation activities	1	2	2	2	2	1	9	-	Low	1) Temporary berms and drainage channels to divert surface runoff where needed 2) Restore natural site topography 3) Use designated access and laydown areas only to minimise disturbance to surrounding areas	1	1	1	1	2	1	6	-	Low
Cumulative																				
Disturbance/ displacement/ removal of soil and rock Soil Erosion	No cumulative effect																			

7. Comparative Assessment of Alternatives

Layout alternatives which subsequently informed the area for the potential construction of the proposed substation and subsequent BESS assessment area were identified and comparatively assessed as part of the BA process undertaken in 2016.

Alternative layouts of the BESS infrastructure within the identified assessment area will be considered. It is recommended that areas of steeper slope gradients are avoided when determining the final infrastructure layout.

8. Conclusion and Summary

8.1. Summary of Findings

This desktop geotechnical specialist study was undertaken for the development of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and associated infrastructure for the authorised Platsjambok West Photovoltaic (PV) Energy Facility (12/12/20/2320/5/AM2). The assessment area is underlain by rock units of Dwyka Group of the Karoo Supergroup. The Dwyka Group comprises of tillite, boulder shale, sandstone, siltstone, shale, varved shale. Some geotechnical constraints have been identified, primarily shallow bedrock which may cause excavation difficulties. These constraints may be mitigated via standard engineering design and construction measures. Shallow spread footings are considered suitable to support the structures.

No fatal flaws have been identified that would render the proposed BESS site unsuitable from a geological and geotechnical perspective.

The proposed BESS is assessed to have a "Negative Low impact - the anticipated impact will have negligible negative effects and will require little to no mitigation" provided that the recommended mitigation measures are implemented. These include avoiding development on the steeper sections of the site. The remaining mitigation measures provided to minimise the impacts relate to the appropriate engineering design of earthworks and site drainage, erosion control and topsoil and spoil material management. These do not exceed civil engineering and construction best practice.

Further intrusive geotechnical investigations should be undertaken to confirm the engineering recommendations provided in this report.

8.2. Impact Statement and Conclusion

From a geotechnical and geological perspective, no fatal flaws or sensitivities have been identified within or close to the BESS assessment area. It is therefore recommended that the proposed activity be authorised.

References

Brink, A.B.A. Engineering Geology of Southern Africa, The Karoo Sequence, Volume 3. Building Publications, 1983

Brink, A.B.A. Engineering Geology of Southern Africa, Post-Gondwana Deposits, Volume 4. Building Publications, 1985.

Johnson, M.R. Anhaeusser, C.R. Thomas, R.J. The Geology of South Africa. Council for Geoscience, 2006.

Appendix A. Specialist Declaration of Interest and Undertaking Under Oath

Appendix B. Specialist CV

Appendix C. Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Methodology