# Appendix 6
# Specialist Studies

# Appendix 6A

# Agricultural and Soils Assessment

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South Africa

# AGRICULTURAL AND SOILS IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR PROPOSED UMSOBOMVU SOLAR PV ENERGY FACILITIES NEAR NOUPOORT AND MIDDELBURG NORTHERN CAPE AND EASTERN CAPE PROVINCES

## EIA REPORT

**Report by**
**Johann Lanz**

**20 November 2019**

# Johann Lanz
# Professional profile

## Education

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|---|---|---|
| • M.Sc. (Environmental Geochemistry) | University of Cape Town | 1996 - June 1997 |
| • B.Sc. Agriculture (Soil Science, Chemistry) | University of Stellenbosch | 1992 - 1995 |
| • BA (English, Environmental & Geographical Science) | University of Cape Town | 1989 - 1991 |
| • Matric Exemption | Wynberg Boy's High School | 1983 |

## Professional work experience

I am registered as a Professional Natural Scientist (Pri.Sci.Nat.) in the field of soil science, registration number 400268/12, and am a member of the Soil Science Society of South Africa.

- **Soil Science Consultant** **Self employed** **2002 - present**
  I run a soil science consulting business, servicing clients in both the environmental and agricultural industries. Typical consulting projects involve:
- Soil specialist study inputs to EIA's, SEA's and EMPR's. These have focused on impact assessments and rehabilitation on agricultural land, rehabilitation and re-vegetation of mining and industrially disturbed and contaminated soils, as well as more general aspects of soil resource management. Recent clients include: CSIR; SRK Consulting; Aurecon; Mainstream Renewable Power; SiVEST; Savannah Environmental; Subsolar; Red Cap Investments; MBB Consulting Engineers; Enviroworks; Sharples Environmental Services; Haw & Inglis; BioTherm Energy; Tiptrans.
- Soil resource evaluations and mapping for agricultural land use planning and management. Recent clients include: Cederberg Wines; Unit for Technical Assistance - Western Cape Department of Agriculture; Wedderwill Estate; Goedgedacht Olives; Zewenwacht Wine Estate, Lourensford Fruit Company; Kaarsten Boerdery; Thelema Mountain Vineyards; Rudera Wines; Flagstone Wines; Solms Delta Wines; Dornier Wines.
- I have conducted several recent research projects focused on conservation farming, soil health and carbon sequestration.
- I have project managed the development of soil nutrition software for Farmsecure Agri Science.

- **Soil Science Consultant** **Agricultural Consultors International (Tinie du Preez)** **1998 - end 2001**
  Responsible for providing all aspects of a soil science technical consulting service directly to clients in the wine, fruit and environmental industries all over South Africa, and in Chile, South America.

- **Contracting Soil Scientist** **De Beers Namaqualand Mines** **July 1997 - Jan 1998**
  Completed a contract to make recommendations on soil rehabilitation and re-vegetation of mined areas.

## Publications

- Lanz, J. 2012. Soil health: sustaining Stellenbosch's roots. In: M Swilling, B Sebitosi & R Loots (eds). *Sustainable Stellenbosch: opening dialogues*. Stellenbosch: SunMedia.
- Lanz, J. 2010. Soil health indicators: physical and chemical. *South African Fruit Journal*, April / May 2010 issue.
- Lanz, J. 2009. Soil health constraints. *South African Fruit Journal*, August / September 2009 issue.
- Lanz, J. 2009. Soil carbon research. *AgriProbe*, Department of Agriculture.
- Lanz, J. 2005. Special Report: Soils and wine quality. *Wineland Magazine.*

I am a reviewing scientist for the *South African Journal of Plant and Soil*.

environmental affairs

Department:
Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DETAILS OF THE SPECIALIST, DECLARATION OF INTEREST AND UNDERTAKING UNDER OATH

| | (For official use only) |
|---|---|
| File Reference Number: | |
| NEAS Reference Number: | DEA/EIA/ |
| Date Received: | |

Application for authorisation in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, Act No. 107 of 1998, as amended and the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations, 2014, as amended (the Regulations)

**PROJECT TITLE**

| |
|---|
| Proposed Construction of the Mooi Plaats, Wonderheuvel and Paarde Valley Solar PV Energy Facilities and Associated Grid Connection Infrastructure, near Noupoort in the Northern and Eastern Cape Provinces. |

**Kindly note the following:**

- This form must always be used for applications that must be subjected to Basic Assessment or Scoping & Environmental Impact Reporting where this Department is the Competent Authority.
- This form is current as of 01 September 2018. It is the responsibility of the Applicant / Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) to ascertain whether subsequent versions of the form have been published or produced by the Competent Authority. The latest available Departmental templates are available at https://www.environment.gov.za/documents/forms.
- A copy of this form containing original signatures must be appended to all Draft and Final Reports submitted to the department for consideration.
- All documentation delivered to the physical address contained in this form must be delivered during the official Departmental Officer Hours which is visible on the Departmental gate.
- All EIA related documents (includes application forms, reports or any EIA related submissions) that are faxed; emailed; delivered to Security or placed in the Departmental Tender Box will not be accepted, only hardcopy submissions are accepted.

**Departmental Details**

| |
|---|
| **Postal address:**<br>Department of Environmental Affairs<br>Attention: Chief Director: Integrated Environmental Authorisations<br>Private Bag X447<br>Pretoria<br>0001 |

**Physical address**:
Department of Environmental Affairs
Attention: Chief Director: Integrated Environmental Authorisations
Environment House
473 Steve Biko Road
Arcadia

Queries must be directed to the Directorate: Coordination, Strategic Planning and Support at:
Email: EIAAdmin@environment.gov.za

## 1. SPECIALIST INFORMATION

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Specialist Company Name: | Johann Lanz – Soil Scientist | | | |
| B-BBEE | Contribution level (indicate 1 to 8 or non-compliant) | 4 | Percentage Procurement recognition | 100% |
| Specialist name: | Johann Lanz | | | |
| Specialist Qualifications: | M.Sc. (Environmental Geochemistry) | | | |
| Professional affiliation/registration: | Registered Professional Natural Scientist<br>Member of the Soil Science Society of South Africa | | | |
| Physical address: | 1a Wolfe Street, Wynberg, Cape Town, 7800 | | | |
| Postal address: | 1a Wolfe Street, Wynberg, Cape Town, 7800 | | | |
| Postal code: | 7800 | Cell: | 082 927 9018 | |
| Telephone: | 082 927 9018 | Fax: | Who still uses a fax? | |
| E-mail: | johann@johannlanz.co.za | | | |

## 2. DECLARATION BY THE SPECIALIST

I, **Johann Lanz**, declare that –

- I act as the independent 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 favourable to the applicant;
- I declare that there are no circumstances that may compromise my objectivity in performing such work;
- I have expertise in conducting the specialist report relevant to this application, 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 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;
- all the particulars furnished by me in this form are true and correct; and
- I realise that a false declaration is an offence in terms of regulation 48 and is punishable in terms of section 24F of the Act.

Signature of the Specialist

Johann Lanz – Soil Scientist (sole proprietor)

Name of Company:

30/10/2019

Date

## 3. UNDERTAKING UNDER OATH/ AFFIRMATION

I, **Johann Lanz**, swear under oath / affirm that all the information submitted or to be submitted for the purposes of this application is true and correct.

Signature of the Specialist

Johann Lanz – Soil Scientist (sole proprietor)

Name of Company

30/10/2019

Date

7285358 CST
R MENDELA

Signature of the Commissioner of Oaths

2019 10 30.

Date

SUID-AFRIKAANSE POLISIEDIENS
STATION COMMANDER
WYNBERG KP
30 OCT 2019
STATION COMMANDER
WYNBERG CP
SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY


The key findings of this study are:

- The proposed project area is dominated by shallow, loamy sands on underlying rock or less commonly clay. Dominant soil forms are Swartland, Hutton, Mispah, and Valsrivier.
- The major limitations to agriculture are the limited climatic moisture availability (low rainfall), the rugged terrain and the shallow, rocky soils.
- As a result of these limitations, the agricultural use of the study area is limited to low intensity grazing only, except for some isolated patches of irrigation land.
- The proposed project area is classified with land capability evaluation values between 1 (very low) and 7 (low to moderate), with 6 being most predominant.
- The significance of all agricultural impacts is kept low by the limited agricultural potential of the land.
- The only parts of the study area that do not have low sensitivity are the small patches of irrigation. These are considered no-go areas for any footprint of development that will exclude cultivation.
- Two potential negative impacts of the development on agricultural resources and productivity were identified. These are:
    - Loss of agricultural land use; and
    - Soil erosion and degradation.
- One potential positive impact of the development on agricultural resources and productivity was identified as:
    - Increased financial security of farming operations through rental income
- Soil erosion and degradation was assessed as having medium significance before and after mitigation. The other two impacts were assessed as having low significance before and after mitigation.
- The recommended mitigation measures are for implementation of an effective system of storm water run-off control; maintenance of vegetation cover; and to strip, stockpile and re-spread topsoil.
- There is no material difference between the significance of impacts of any of the proposed project alternatives. All proposed alternatives have equal impact.
- Due to the low agricultural potential of the site, and the consequent low to medium, negative agricultural impact, there are no restrictions relating to agriculture which preclude authorisation of the proposed development (including all alternatives) and therefore, from an agricultural impact point of view, the development should be authorised.

**Table of Contents**

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Three Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Energy Facilities, with associated grid connection infrastructure, are proposed approximately 36 km north west of Middelburg in the Karoo.

The objectives of this study are to identify and assess all potential impacts of the proposed development on agricultural resources, including soils, and agricultural production potential and to provide recommended mitigation measures, monitoring requirements, and rehabilitation guidelines for all identified impacts.

## 2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

It is proposed that three (3) Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Energy Facilities, with associated grid connection infrastructure, will be developed, these being:

Mooi Plaats Solar PV Facility, on an application site of approximately 5 303ha, comprising the following farm portions:

Portion 1 of Leuwe Kop No 120
Remainder of Mooi Plaats No 121

Wonderheuvel Solar PV Facility, on an application site of approximately 5 652ha, comprising the following farm portions:

Remainder of Mooi Plaats No 121
Portion 3 of Wonder Heuvel No 140
Portion 5 of Holle Fountain No 133

Paarde Valley Solar PV Facility, on an application site of approximately 3 695ha, comprising the following farm portion:

Portion 2 of Paarde Valley No 62: and
Portion 7 of the Farm Leeuw Hoek No. 61.

### SOLAR PV COMPONENTS

#### Mooi Plaats Solar PV Energy Facility:

The proposed Mooi Plaats Solar PV Energy Facility will include the following components:

- Three (3) PV array areas, occupying a combined total area of approximately 777 hectares (ha).
- The proposed solar PV energy facility will have a maximum total generation capacity of approximately 400MW and will comprise approximately 1 142 857 PV modules. The final number of modules as well as their configuration will only be determined in the detailed design phase.
- PV modules will be either fixed tilt mounting or single axis tracking mounting, and the modules will be either crystalline silicon or thin film technology. Each module will be

approximately 2m wide and between 1m and 4m in height, depending on the mounting type.
- Internal roads, between 4m and 10m wide, will provide access to the PV arrays. Existing site roads will be used wherever possible, although new site roads will be constructed where necessary.
- Up to three (3) temporary construction laydown / staging areas of approximately 4ha each.
- Operation and maintenance (O&M) buildings will be provided for each PV array area, occupying a site of approximately 1ha each. Up to a maximum of three (3) O&M buildings will thus be constructed.
- Medium voltage cabling will link the solar PV energy facility to the grid connection infrastructure. These cables will be laid underground wherever technically feasible.

**Wonderheuvel Solar PV Energy Facility:**

The proposed Wonderheuvel Solar PV Energy Facility will include the following components:

- Six (6) PV array areas, occupying a combined total area of approximately 864ha.
- The proposed solar PV energy facility will have a maximum total generation capacity of approximately 480MW and will comprise approximately 1 371 429 PV modules. The final number of modules as well as their configuration will only be determined in the detailed design phase.
- PV modules will be either fixed tilt mounting or single axis tracking mounting, and the modules will be either crystalline silicon or thin film technology. Each module will be approximately 2m wide and between 1m and 4m in height, depending on the mounting type.
- Internal roads, between 4m and 10m wide, will provide access to the PV arrays. Existing site roads will be used wherever possible, although new site roads will be constructed where necessary.
- Up to a maximum of four (4) temporary construction laydown / staging areas of approximately 4ha each.
- Operation and maintenance (O&M) buildings will be provided for each PV array area, occupying a site of approximately 1ha each. However, certain PV array areas will share O&M buildings. Up to a maximum of four (4) O&M buildings will thus be constructed.
- Medium voltage cabling will link the solar PV energy facility to the grid connection infrastructure. These cables will be laid underground wherever technically feasible.

**Paarde Valley Solar PV Energy Facility:**

The proposed Paarde Valley Solar PV Energy Facility will include the following components:

- Five (5) PV array areas, occupying a combined total area of approximately 1 337ha.
- The proposed solar PV energy facility will have a maximum total generation capacity of approximately 700MW and will comprise approximately 2 000 000 PV modules. The final number of modules as well as their configuration will only be determined in the

detailed design phase.

- PV modules will be either fixed tilt mounting or single axis tracking mounting, and the modules will be either crystalline silicon or thin film technology. Each module will be approximately 2m wide and between 1m and 4m in height, depending on the mounting type.
- Internal roads, between 4m and 10m wide, will provide access to the PV arrays. Existing site roads will be used wherever possible, although new site roads will be constructed where necessary.
- Up to five (5) temporary construction laydown / staging areas of approximately 4ha each.
- Operation and maintenance (O&M) buildings will be provided for each PV array area, occupying a site of approximately 1ha each. Up to a maximum of five (5) O&M buildings will thus be constructed.
- Medium voltage cabling will link the solar PV energy facility to the grid connection infrastructure. These cables will be laid underground wherever technically feasible.

**Grid Connection Infrastructure**

The proposed grid connection infrastructure will include the following components:

- New on-site substations and collector substations to serve each solar PV energy facility, each occupying an area of up to approximately 4ha.
- A new 132kV overhead power line connecting the on-site substations and/or collector substations to either the Hydra D Main Transmission Substation (MTS) or the proposed Coleskop Wind Energy Facility (WEF) substation, from where the electricity will be fed into the national grid. The type of power line towers being considered at this stage to include both lattice and monopole towers which will be up to 25m in height.

Grid connection infrastructure alternatives have been provided for each PV project. These alternatives essentially provide for different route alignments with associated substations contained within an assessment corridor between approximately 400m and 900m wide. This is to allow for flexibility to route the power line on either side of the existing high voltage Eskom power lines.

Maps of the three projects are provided in Figures 1 to 3.

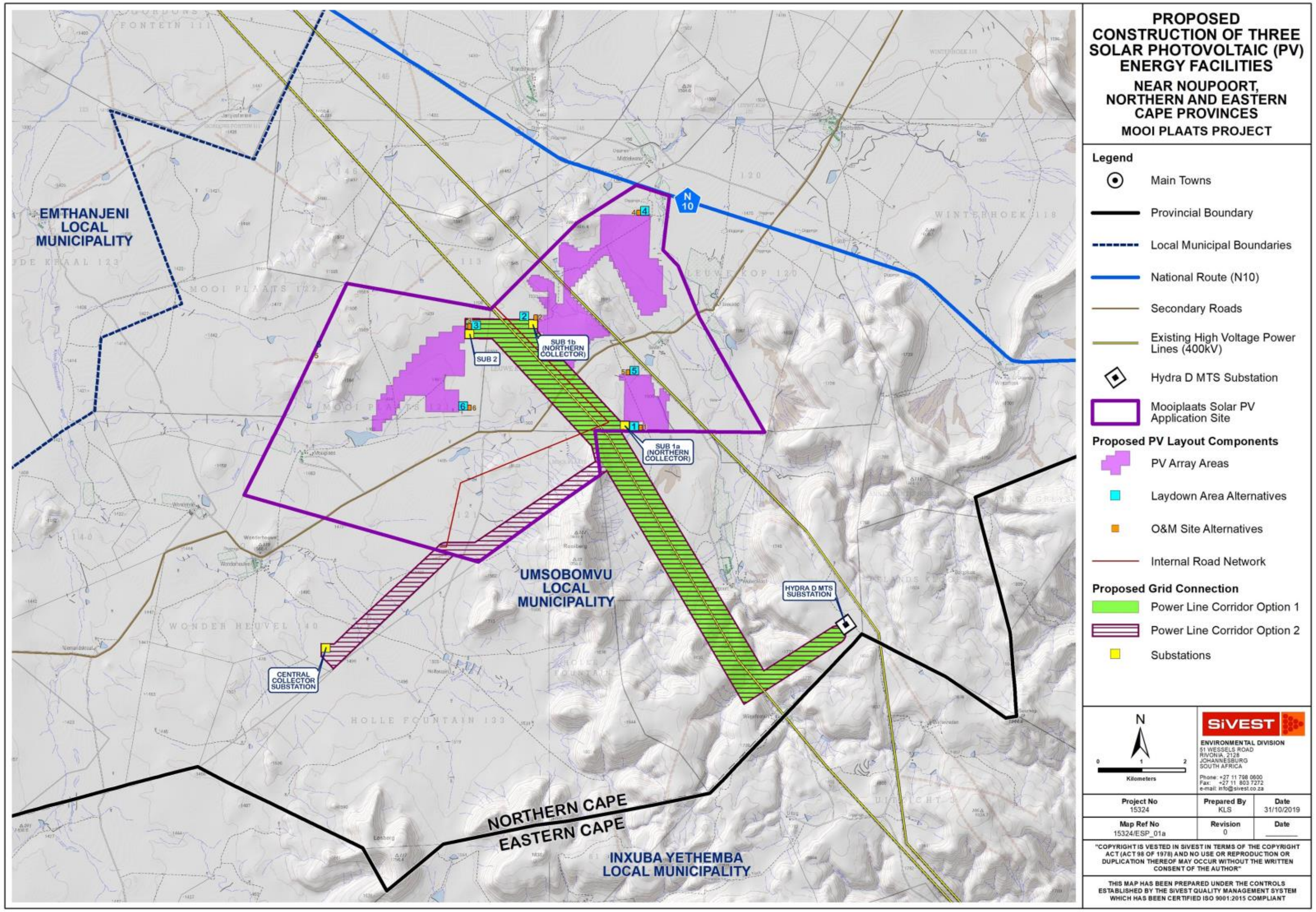


**Figure 1.** Map of Mooi Plaats project.

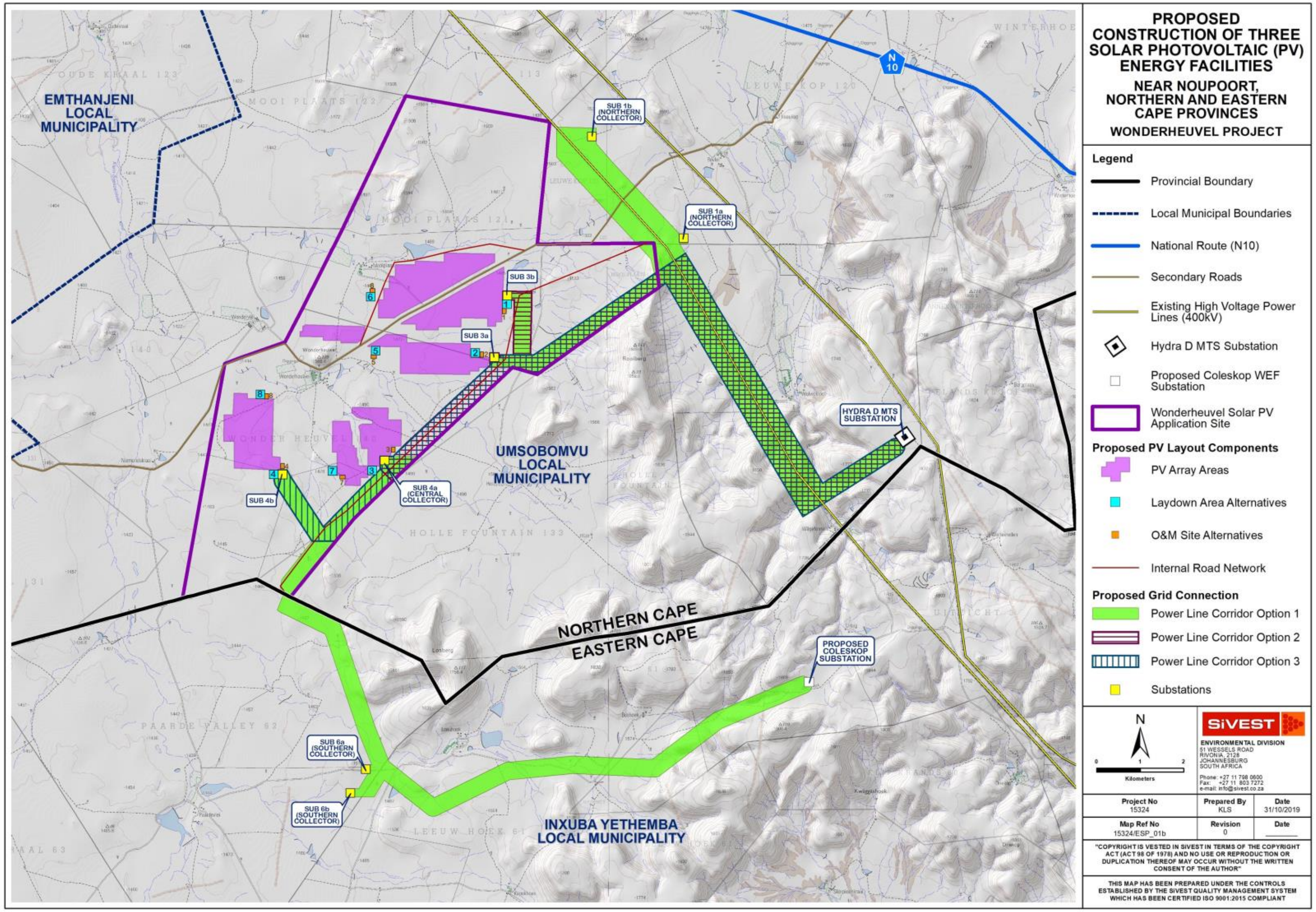


**Figure 2.** Map of Wonderheuvel project.

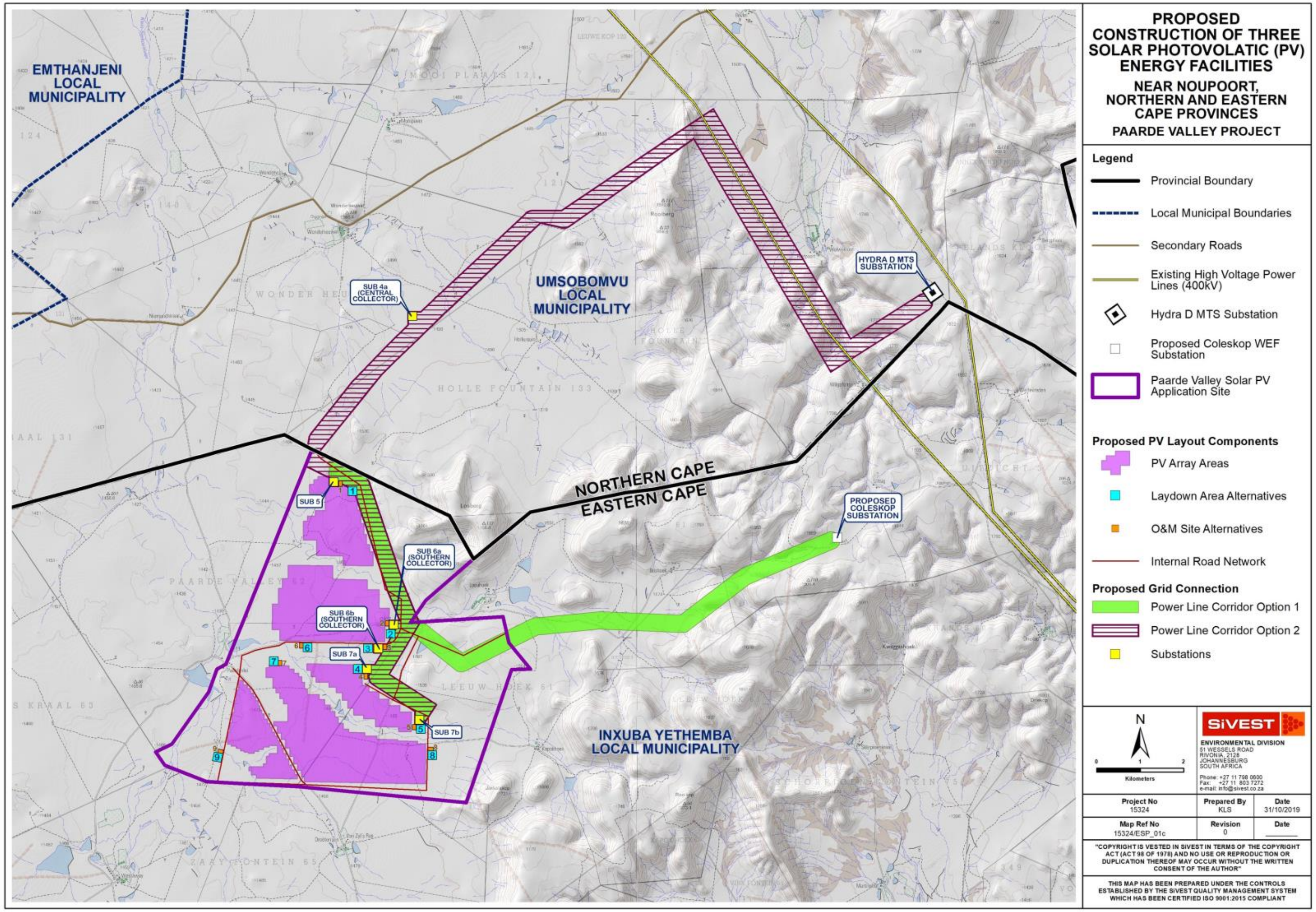


**Figure 3.** Map of Paarde Valley project.

# 3 TERMS OF REFERENCE

The following terms of reference apply to this study:

General requirements:

- Adherence to the content requirements for specialist reports in accordance with Appendix 6 of the EIA Regulations 2014, as amended (see Table 1);
- Adherence to all appropriate best practice guidelines, relevant legislation and authority requirements;
- Provide a thorough overview of all applicable legislation, guidelines
- Cumulative impact identification and assessment as a result of other renewable energy (RE) developments in the area (including; a cumulative environmental impact table(s) and statement, review of the specialist reports undertaken for other Renewable Energy developments and an indication of how the recommendations, mitigation measures and conclusion of the studies have been considered);
- Identification sensitive areas to be avoided (including providing shapefiles/kmls);
- Assessment of the significance of the proposed 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:
    - 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. These impacts are usually associated with the construction, operation or maintenance of an activity and are generally obvious and quantifiable.
    - Indirect impacts of an activity are indirect or induced changes that may occur as a result of the activity. These types of impacts include all the potential impacts that do not manifest immediately when the activity is undertaken, or which occur at a different place as a result of the activity.
    - 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. Cumulative impacts can occur from the collective impacts of individual minor actions over a period of time and can include both direct and indirect impacts.
- Comparative assessment of alternatives;
- Recommend mitigation measures in order to minimise the impact of the proposed development; and
- Implications of specialist findings for the proposed development (e.g. permits, licenses etc.).

Specific requirements:

- Describe the existing environment in terms of soils, geology, land-use and agricultural potential. Significant soils and agricultural features or disturbances should be identified, as well as sensitive features and receptors within the project area. The description must include surrounding agricultural land uses and activities, to convey the local agricultural context.
- Describe and map soil types (soil forms), soil characteristics (soil depth, soil colour, limiting factors, and clay content of the top and sub soil layers), and degradation and erodibility of soils etc. to the extent necessary to inform this assessment.

- Varying sensitivities of the soils and agricultural potential must be mapped and highlighted.
- The assessment is to be based on existing information, and professional experience and field work conducted by the specialist, as considered necessary and in accordance with relevant legislated requirements.
- Identify and assess the potential impacts of the proposed development on soils and agriculture, including impacts of associated infrastructure, such as the buildings, fencing etc. and provide relevant mitigation measures to include in the environmental management plan.
- Identify any protocols, legal and permit requirements relating to soil and agricultural potential impacts that are relevant to this project and the implications thereof.
- Map sensitivity of the site and clearly show no-go areas i.e. existing irrigated fields/ cultivated lands
- The report needs to fulfill the terms of reference for an agricultural study as set out in the National Department of Agriculture's document, Regulations for the evaluation and review of applications pertaining to renewable energy on agricultural land, dated September 2011, with an appropriate level of detail for the agricultural suitability and soil variation on site (which may therefore be less than the standardised level of detail stipulated in the above regulations).

**Table 1:** Compliance with the Appendix 6 of the 2014 EIA Regulations (as Amended)

| **Requirements of Appendix 6 – GN R326 EIA Regulations 7 April 2017** | **Addressed in the Specialist Report** |
|---|---|
| (1) A specialist report prepared in terms of these Regulations must contain-<br>(α) details of-<br>ι. the specialist who prepared the report; and<br>ιι. the expertise of that specialist to compile a specialist report including a curriculum vitae; | page ii |
| (β) a declaration that the specialist is independent in a form as may be specified by the competent authority; | page iv |
| (c) an indication of the scope of, and the purpose for which, the report was prepared; | Sections 1 & 3 |
| (cA)an indication of the quality and age of base data used for the specialist report; | Section 4.1 |
| (cB)a description of existing impacts on the site, cumulative impacts of the proposed development and levels of acceptable change; | Sections 7.5 & 8.3 |
| (δ) the date, duration and season of the site investigation and the relevance of the season to the outcome of the assessment; | Section 4.1 |
| (ε) a description of the methodology adopted in preparing the report or carrying out the specialised process inclusive of equipment and modelling used; | Section 4 |
| (φ) 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; | Section 7.7 & Figure 2 |
| (γ) an identification of any areas to be avoided, including buffers; | Section 7.7 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| (η) | 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; | Figure 2 |
| (ι) | a description of any assumptions made and any uncertainties or gaps in knowledge; | Section 5 |
| (φ) | a description of the findings and potential implications of such findings on the impact of the proposed activity or activities; | Section 8 |
| (κ) | any mitigation measures for inclusion in the EMPr; | Section 8 |
| (λ) | any conditions for inclusion in the environmental authorisation; | Section 9 |
| (μ) | any monitoring requirements for inclusion in the EMPr or environmental authorisation; | Not applicable |
| (ν) | a reasoned opinion- | |
| (ι) | whether the proposed activity, activities or portions thereof should be authorised; | Section 9 |
| | (iA) regarding the acceptability of the proposed activity or activities and | Section 9 |
| | (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 8 |
| (ο) | a description of any consultation process that was undertaken during the course of preparing the specialist report; | Not applicable |
| (π) | a summary and copies of any comments received during any consultation process and where applicable all responses thereto; and | Not applicable |
| (θ) | any other information requested by the competent authority. | Not applicable |
| (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 |

# 4 METHODOLOGY OF STUDY

## 4.1 Methodology for assessing soils and agricultural potential

The soil investigation applied an appropriate level of detail for the agricultural suitability on site and for the level of impact of the proposed development on agricultural land. A detailed soil survey, as per the requirement in the above DAFF document (see Section 2), is only appropriate for a significant footprint of impact on arable land. It has little relevance to an assessment of agricultural potential in this environment, where the agricultural limitations are overwhelmingly climatic, terrain is rugged, soil conditions are generally poor, and cultivation potential is non-existent. In such an environment, even where soils suitable for cultivation may occur, they cannot be cultivated because of the aridity and terrain constraints. Conducting a soil assessment at the stipulated level of detail would be very time consuming and add no value to the assessment. A field investigation was therefore not considered necessary. The assessment was based on a desktop analysis of existing soil and agricultural potential data and other data for the site, which is considered entirely adequate for a thorough assessment of all the agricultural impacts of the proposed development.

The following sources of information were used:

- Soil data was sourced from the land type data set, of the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. This data set originates from the land type survey that was conducted from the 1970's until 2002. It is the most reliable and comprehensive national database of soil information in South Africa and although the data was collected some time ago, it is still entirely relevant as the soil characteristics included in the land type data do not change within time scales of hundreds of years.
- Land capability data was sourced from the 2017 National land capability evaluation raster data layer produced by the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Pretoria.
- Rainfall and temperature data was sourced from The World Bank Climate Change Knowledge Portal, dated 2015.
- Grazing capacity data was sourced from Cape Farm Mapper.
- Satellite imagery of the site and surrounds was sourced from Google Earth.

The potential impacts identified in this specialist study were assessed based on the criteria and methodology common to the whole impact assessment. The ratings of impacts were based on the specialist's knowledge and experience of the field conditions of the environment in which the proposed development is located, and of the impact of disturbances on that agricultural environment.

# 5 ASSUMPTIONS, CONSTRAINTS AND LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

The assessment rating of impacts is not an absolute measure. It is based on the subjective considerations and experience of the specialist, but is done with due regard and as accurately as possible within these constraints.

The study makes the assumption that water for irrigation is very limited across the site. This is based on the assumption that a long history of farming experience in an area will result in the exploitation of viable water sources if they exist, and only very limited irrigation water has been exploited in this area.

Cumulative impacts are assessed by adding expected impacts from this proposed development to existing and proposed developments with similar impacts in a 50 km radius. The existing and proposed developments that were taken into consideration for cumulative impacts are listed in Appendix B. SiVEST undertook every effort to obtain the information (including specialist studies, BA / EIA / Scoping and EMPr Reports) for the surrounding developments. However, many of the documents are not currently publicly available to download, and could therefore not be reviewed during this assessment.

There are no other specific constraints, uncertainties and gaps in knowledge for this study.

## 6 APPLICABLE LEGISLATION AND PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

The Subdivision of Agricultural Land Act (Act 70 of 1970) (SALA), requires that an application for the PV development be approved by the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF). Despite the name of the Act, it does not apply only to subdivision, and its purpose is to ensure productive use of agriculturally zoned land. Therefore, even if land is not being subdivided or leased, SALA approval is required to develop agriculturally zoned land for non-agricultural purposes.

The power lines require the registration of a servitude for each farm portion crossed. In terms of SALA, the registration of a power line servitude requires written consent of the Minister if the following two conditions apply:

1. if the servitude width exceeds 15 metres; and
2. if Eskom is not the applicant for the servitude.

If one or both of these conditions do not apply, then no agricultural consent is required. Eskom is currently exempt from agricultural consent for power line servitudes.

The Act 70 of 1970 consent is separate from the EIA and needs to be applied for and obtained after the EIA.

Rehabilitation after disturbance to agricultural land is managed by the Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act (Act 43 of 1983) (CARA). No application is required in terms of CARA. The EIA process covers the required aspects of this.

## 7 BASELINE ASSESSMENT OF THE SOILS AND AGRICULTURAL CAPABILITY OF THE AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

This section is organised in sub headings based on DEA's requirements for an agricultural study.

### 7.1 Climate and water availability

Rainfall for the site is given as a low 378 mm per annum (The World Bank Climate Change Knowledge Portal, 2015). The average monthly distribution of rainfall is shown in Figure 4. Rainfall and resultant moisture availability are insufficient to support viable, rainfed cultivation of crops and also limit the grazing capacity of the veld.

There are some small farm dams across the project area, and limited groundwater exploitation which support small, isolated patches of cultivation.

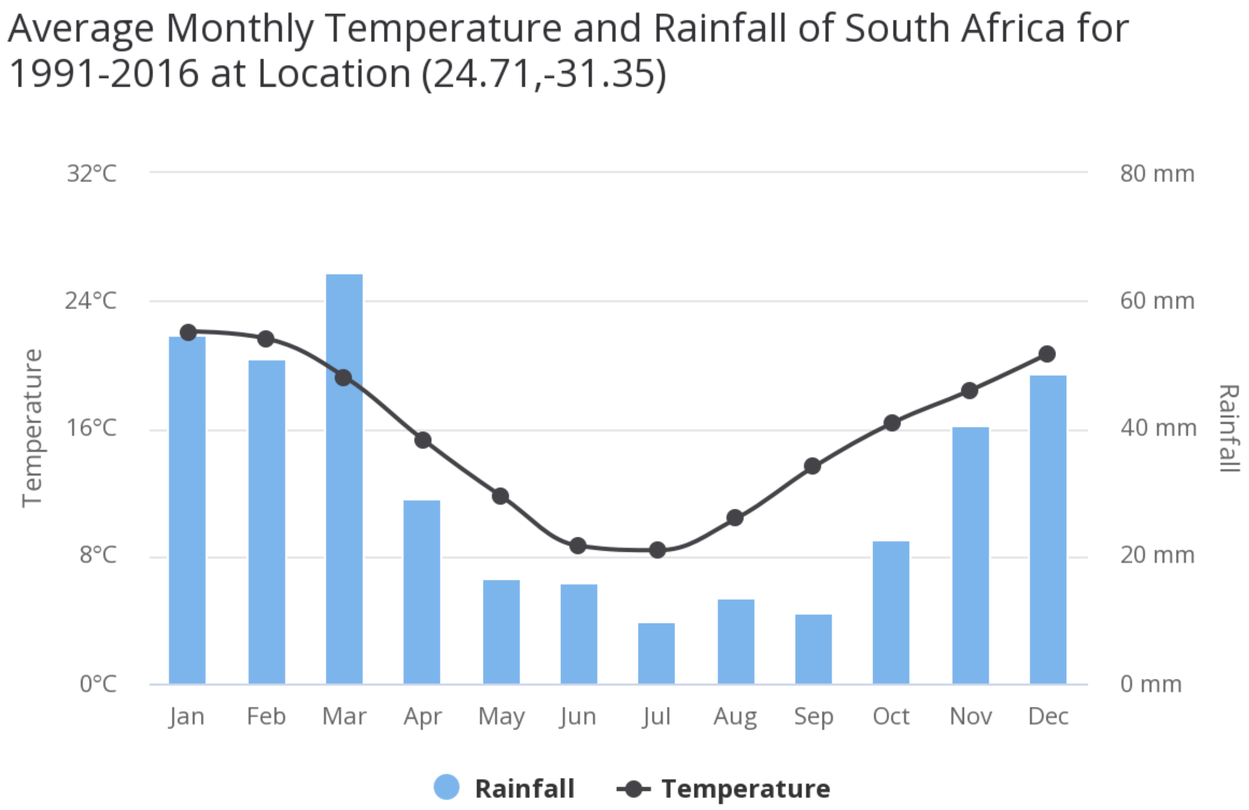


**Figure 4.** *Average monthly temperature and rainfall for a position approximately in the centre of the development (The World Bank Climate Change Knowledge Portal, 2015).*

### 7.2 Terrain, topography and drainage

The proposed development is located on plains and broken terrain with small mountains on the escarpment plateau. Altitude varies between approximately 1,440 and 1,700 metres. There is a wide range of slopes across the broken terrain of the project area. There are several non-perennial water courses, typical of arid areas, that drain the project area.

The underlying geology is shale, mudstone and sandstone of the Beaufort Group of the Karoo Supergroup. Dolerite intrusions are common.

### 7.3 Soils

The land type classification is a nationwide survey that groups areas of similar soil, terrain and climatic conditions into different land types. The proposed development is located on predominantly two similar land types, namely Da6 and Da77. Only a small proportion of the proposed power line routes crosses another two land types, Ib316 and Fb373, in the mountainous terrain. Soils on these land types are fairly similar and are predominantly shallow, loamy sands on underlying rock or less commonly clay. Dominant soil forms are Swartland, Hutton, Mispah, and Valsrivier. The soils would fall into the Duplex and Lithic soil groups according to the classification of Fey (2010). A summary detailing soil data for the land types is provided in Appendix 1, Table A1.

### 7.4 Agricultural capability

Land capability is defined as the combination of soil, climate and terrain suitability factors for supporting rainfed agricultural production. It is an indication of what level and type of agricultural production can sustainably be achieved on any land. The higher land capability classes are suitable as arable land for the production of cultivated crops, while the lower suitability classes are only suitable as non-arable grazing land, or at the lowest extreme, not even suitable for grazing. In 2017 DAFF released updated and refined land capability mapping across the whole of South Africa. This has greatly improved the accuracy of the land capability rating for any particular piece of land anywhere in the country. The new land capability mapping divides land capability into 15 different categories with 1 being the lowest and 15 being the highest. Values of below 8 are generally not suitable for production of cultivated crops. Detail of this land capability scale is shown in Table 2.

The project area is classified with land capability evaluation values that range from 1 to 7, with 6 being the predominant land capability. The land capability is limited by the very low climatic moisture availability, the rugged terrain, and the shallow, rocky soils.

**Table 2: Details of the 2017 Land Capability classification for South Africa.**

| Land capability evaluation value | Description |
|---|---|
| 1 | Very Low |
| 2 | |
| 3 | Very Low to Low |
| 4 | |
| 5 | Low |
| 6 | Low to Moderate |
| 7 | |
| 8 | Moderate |
| 9 | Moderate to High |
| 10 | |

| | |
|---|---|
| 11 | High |
| 12 | High to Very High |
| 13 | |
| 14 | Very High |
| 15 | |

Due to the land capability constraints, agricultural land use is restricted to grazing only. The natural grazing capacity is given on Cape Farm Mapper as reasonable, at 16 to 17 hectares per large stock unit.

### 7.5 Land use and development on and surrounding the site

The area is a sheep farming area. The climate does not support any cultivation, except for small patches of irrigation associated with farm dams. Low intensity natural grazing is the dominant agricultural activity. There are several farmsteads (that is a residential and administrative node of buildings and infrastructure from which a farm is managed) within the study area. There is often agricultural infrastructure, including some irrigation in the proximity of the farmsteads. The only agricultural infrastructure away from the small patches of cultivation, are wind pumps, stock watering points and fencing surrounding grazing camps.

### 7.6 Possible land use options for the site

The low climatic moisture availability means that natural grazing is the only viable agricultural land use for most of the area, except for the small patches of irrigation.

### 7.7 Agricultural sensitivity

Agricultural sensitivity is directly related to the capability of the land for agricultural production. This is because a negative impact on land of higher agricultural capability is more detrimental to agriculture than the same impact on land of low agricultural capability. A general assessment of agricultural sensitivity, in terms of loss of agricultural land in South Africa, considers arable land that can support viable production of cultivated crops, to have high sensitivity. This is because there is a scarcity of such land in South Africa, in terms of how much is required for food security. However, there is not a scarcity in the country of land that is only suitable as grazing land and such land is therefore not considered to have high agricultural sensitivity.

Agricultural sensitivity of a particular development is also a function of the severity of the impact which that type of development poses to agriculture. In the case of PV, fairly large areas of land are excluded from agricultural use, so in terms of that aspect, there is sensitivity. In the case of power lines, the impact is negligible because almost all agricultural activities can continue undisturbed beneath power lines.

The majority of the study area has low agricultural potential and therefore low agricultural sensitivity to development and consequent loss of agricultural land use. The only exception are the small patches of irrigation. These have a higher sensitivity, because of their agricultural value, and should be considered no-go areas for any footprint of development that will exclude cultivation. For power lines, the no-go only applies to centre-pivot irrigated lands. This is because there is a danger of shorting between power lines (at standard height) and the centre pivot irrigation structures. Power lines can however cross centre pivot irrigated lands if the height of the power line is raised. No-go areas require no buffers. No-go areas are shown in Figure 5.

Apart from the cultivated no-go areas, agricultural potential and conditions are very uniform across the rest of the study area and the choice of placement of facility infrastructure therefore has minimal influence on the significance of agricultural impacts.

## 8 IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT OF IMPACTS ON AGRICULTURE

The focus and defining question of an agricultural impact assessment is to determine to what extent a proposed development will compromise (negative impacts) or enhance (positive impacts) current and/or future agricultural production. The significance of an impact is therefore a direct function of the degree to which that impact will affect current or future agricultural production. If there will be no impact on production, then there is no agricultural impact. Impacts that degrade the agricultural resource base pose a threat to production and therefore are within the scope of an agricultural impact assessment. Lifestyle impacts on the resident farming community, for example visual impacts, do not necessarily impact agricultural production and, if they do not, are not relevant to and within the scope of an agricultural impact assessment. Such impacts are better addressed within the impact assessments of other disciplines included in the EIA process.

For agricultural impacts, the exact nature of the different infrastructure within the facility has very little bearing on the significance of impacts. What is of most relevance is simply the occupation of the land, and whether it is being occupied by a solar array, a road, a building or a substation makes no difference. What is of most relevance therefore is simply the total footprint of the facility.

The ways in which the project can impact on soils, agricultural resources and productivity are:

- Occupation of the land by the total physical footprint of the proposed project including all PV panels, roads and electrical infrastructure.
- Disturbance and changes to the land surface characteristics and soil profile from constructional activities such as levelling and excavations as well as the establishment of hard surfaces. These may lead to erosion and land degradation.

The significance of all potential agricultural impacts is kept low by the low agricultural potential of the land and the consequent low agricultural sensitivity to the loss of this land for agriculture.

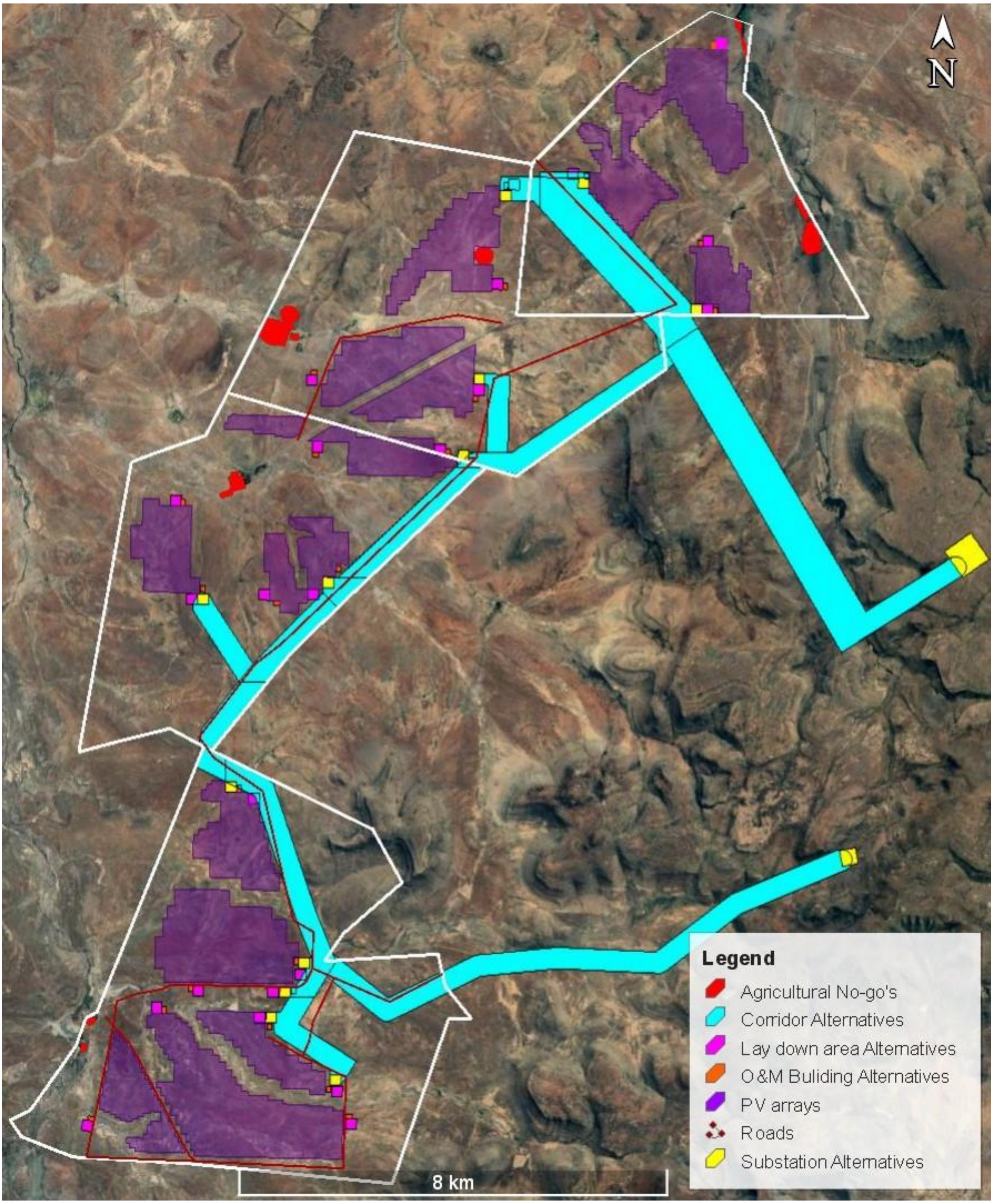

**Figure 5.** Map of the development area including all proposed transmission line alternatives. Agricultural no-go areas are shown with red outlines.

## 8.1 Impacts of the solar PV facilities

Because of the similarity of the agricultural environment across all three of the proposed project areas, the impacts are identical for all three solar PV facilities, and are therefore only presented here once.

Three potential agricultural impacts have been identified. Two of these are direct, negative impacts and apply to all three phases of the development (construction, operational and decommissioning). They are:

- Loss of agricultural land use
  Agricultural grazing land directly occupied by the development infrastructure will become unavailable for agricultural use.
- Soil degradation
  Soil degradation can result from erosion and topsoil loss. Erosion can occur as a result of the alteration of the land surface run-off characteristics, which can be caused by construction related land surface disturbance, vegetation removal, and the establishment of hard surface areas including roads. Loss of topsoil can result from poor topsoil management during construction related soil profile disturbance. Soil degradation will reduce the ability of the soil to support vegetation growth.

The third impact is a positive, indirect impact and only applies to the operational phase:

- Increased financial security for farming operations
  Reliable income will be generated by the farming enterprises through the lease of the land to the energy facility. This is likely to increase their cash flow and financial security and thereby improve farming operations.

An assessment of these impacts is presented in ***Table 3***, below.

## 8.2 Impacts of the grid connection infrastructure

Because of the similarity of the agricultural environment across all three of the proposed project areas, the impacts are identical for all three grid connection infrastructures, and are therefore only presented here once.

Grid connection infrastructure has negligible impact on agriculture because all viable agricultural activities in this environment can continue undisturbed below transmission lines and the remaining footprint of the infrastructure (substations etc) occupies an insignificantly small proportion of the available land. Only one agricultural impact has been identified. It is a direct, negative impact that applies to two of the phases of the development (construction and decommissioning):

- Soil degradation
  Soil degradation can result from erosion and topsoil loss. Erosion can occur as a result of the alteration of the land surface run-off characteristics, which can be caused by

construction related land surface disturbance, vegetation removal, and the establishment of hard surface areas including roads. Loss of topsoil can result from poor topsoil management during construction related soil profile disturbance. Soil degradation will reduce the ability of the soil to support vegetation growth.

An assessment of this impact is presented in **Table 4**, below.

### 8.3 Cumulative impact of the solar PV facilities

The cumulative impact of a development is the impact that development will have when its impact is added to the incremental impacts of other past, present or reasonably foreseeable future activities that will affect the same environment. The most important concept related to a cumulative impact is that of an acceptable level of change to an environment. A cumulative impact only becomes relevant when the impact of the proposed development will lead directly to the sum of impacts of all developments causing an acceptable level of change to be exceeded in the surrounding area. If the impact of the development being assessed does not cause that level to be exceeded, then the cumulative impact associated with that development is not significant.

The potential cumulative agricultural impact of importance is a regional loss or degradation of agricultural land. The defining question for assessing the cumulative agricultural impact is this:

> What level of loss of agricultural land use is acceptable in the area, and will the loss associated with the Umsombovu PV development, cause that level in the area to be exceeded?

DEA requires compliance with a specified methodology for the assessment of cumulative impacts. This is positive in that it ensures engagement with the important issue of cumulative impacts. However, the required compliance has some limitations and can, in my opinion, result in an over-focus on methodological compliance, while missing the more important task of answering the above defining question more broadly.

The first limitation with DEA's required methodology is that it restricts the cumulative impacts to similar developments, so in this case to renewable energy developments. In order to accurately answer the defining question above, all developments, regardless of their type and similarity, should be taken into account, because all will contribute to exceeding the acceptable level of change.

The second problem with the requirement, is that it restricts surrounding developments to those within an absolutely defined distance, in this case 35km. Again this does not allow for accurately answering the defining question. To achieve this, the distance used for cumulative impact assessment should be discipline dependent. A different distance is likely to apply for agricultural impact than for economic impact or botanical impact. And a different distance should be used in different environments, for example in high potential agricultural environments versus very low potential agricultural environments.

Given the above, this assessment focuses less on methodological compliance and more on effectively addressing the defining question above by considering the cumulative impacts more broadly than is required by DEA compliance. This includes considering a wider area than the 35 km radius, and considering the likelihood of pressure from other types of developments as well.

There are 17 renewable energy projects, with their associated transmission lines, within 35km of the proposed site (that need to be considered in terms of the DEA requirements). These are listed and mapped in Appendix 2.

All of these projects have the same agricultural impacts in a very similar agricultural environment, and in all cases the agricultural impact is assessed as low

Of all the mitigation measures proposed for all of these projects the following have not been included in this report for the reasons given. All others have been included.

Keeping disturbed soil covered by straw, mulch, or erosion control mats. This is not considered viable in the arid environment. Straw would blow away, and there is unlikely to be any viable source of mulch. Vegetation establishment, taking into account any recommendations by the vegetation study, would be the most viable form of soil stabilisation.

In quantifying the cumulative impact, the area of land taken out of agricultural grazing as a result of all of the projects above will amount to a total of approximately 1,700 hectares. This is calculated using the industry standards of 2.5 and 0.3 hectares per megawatt for solar and wind energy generation respectively, as per DEA (2015). As a proportion of the area within a 35km radius (approximately 385,000 ha), this amounts to only 0.44% of the surface area. That is well within an acceptable limit in terms of loss of low potential agricultural land, of which there is no scarcity in the country. This is particularly so when considered within the context of the following point:

- In order for South Africa to achieve its renewable energy generation goals, agriculturally zoned land will need to be used for renewable energy generation. It is far more preferable to incur a cumulative loss of agricultural land in a region such as the one being assessed, which has no cultivation potential, and low grazing capacity, than to lose agricultural land that has a higher potential, and that is much scarcer, to renewable energy development elsewhere in the country. The limits of acceptable agricultural land loss are therefore far higher in this region than in regions with higher agricultural potential.

It should also be noted that there are few land uses, other than renewable energy, that are competing for agricultural land use in this area. The cumulative impact from developments, other than renewable energy, is therefore low.

Due to all of the considerations discussed above, the cumulative impact of loss of agricultural land use is assessed as having low significance. In terms of cumulative impact, therefore, the development can be authorised.

### 8.4 Cumulative impact of the grid connection infrastructures

The discussion of cumulative impacts above applies to the grid connection infrastructure as well. However, because the agricultural impacts of grid connection infrastructure are negligible, the cumulative impacts are even lower than those for the solar PV facilities.  This environment could accommodate many more overhead power lines than currently exist or than are proposed, before acceptable levels of land loss and degradation as a result of transmission lines have any likelihood of being exceeded. Acceptable levels of change in terms of other areas of impact, such as visual impact, would be exceeded long before agricultural levels of change came anywhere near to being exceeded.

**Table 3:** Impact assessment summary for all three solar PV facilities. Because of the similarity of the agricultural environment across all three of the proposed project areas, the impacts are identical for all three solar PV facilities, and are therefore only presented here once.

| **3 UMSOMBOVU SOLAR PV FACILITIES** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **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** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Agricultural land | Loss of agricultural land use due to direct occupation | 1 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 24 | - | Medium | None | 1 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 24 | - | Medium |
| Soil | Soil degradation and erosion | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 18 | - | Low | Control run-off; maintain vegetation cover; strip, stockpile and re-spread topsoil | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 16 | - | Low |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Operational Phase** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Agricultural land | Loss of agricultural land use due to direct occupation | 1 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 24 | - | Medium | None | 1 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 24 | - | Medium |
| Soil | Soil degradation and erosion | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 18 | - | Low | Control run-off; maintain vegetation cover; strip, stockpile and re-spread topsoil | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 16 | - | Low |
| Financial security of farming operations | Increased financial security through rental income | 1 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 20 | + | Low | None | 1 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 20 | + | Low |
| **Decommissioning Phase** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Agricultural land | Loss of agricultural land use due to direct occupation | 1 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 24 | - | Medium | None | 1 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 24 | - | Medium |
| Soil | Soil degradation and erosion | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 18 | - | Low | Control run-off; maintain vegetation cover; strip, stockpile and re-spread topsoil | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 16 | - | Low |
| **Cumulative**Agricultural land | Regional loss of agricultural land and productivity | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 20 | - | Low | Control run-off; maintain vegetation cover; strip, stockpile and re-spread topsoil | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 20 | - | Low |

**Table 4:** Impact assessment summary for all three grid connection infrastructures.

| 3 UMSOMBOVU GRID CONNECTON INFRASTRUCTURES | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **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** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Soil | Soil degradation and erosion | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 8 | - | Low | Control run-off; maintain vegetation cover; strip, stockpile and re-spread topsoil | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 8 | - | Low |
| **Operational Phase** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| N/A | N/A | | | | | | | | | N/A | N/A | | | | | | | | | N/A |
| **Decommissioning Phase** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Soil | Soil degradation and erosion | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 8 | - | Low | Control run-off; maintain vegetation cover; strip, stockpile and re-spread topsoil | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 8 | - | Low |
| **Cumulative** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Soil | Soil degradation and | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 9 | - | Low | Control run-off; maintain | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 9 | - | Low |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | erosion | | | | | | | | | | vegetation cover; strip, stockpile and re-spread topsoil | | | | | | | | | |

## 8.5 Assessment of project alternatives

No site location alternatives are considered because these have already been considered in a high-level screening of potential environmental and socio-economic issues, as well as 'fatal flaws' to determine suitable areas for project development.

The following project alternatives have been comparatively assessed (see alternatives table below):

- Laydown Areas and Operation & Maintenance (O&M) Building Site Alternatives. The Applicant wants to construct one (1) Laydown Area and O&M Building per PV array area; and
- Grid Connection Infrastructure Alternatives for each solar PV project.

It should be noted that the locations of the on-site / collector substations will depend on the Grid Connection Infrastructure Alternatives which are chosen as 'preferred' for each project. Grid connection alternatives are described below.

***Mooi Plaats Solar PV Grid Connection:***

The alternatives essentially provide for two (2) different route alignments with associated substations contained within an assessment corridor between approximately 400m and 900m wide. The alternatives are as follows:

**OPTION 1:**

- **Corridor Option 1a** - links Substation 2 and Substation 1a to the Hydra D MTS.
- **Corridor Option 1b** - links Substation 2 and Substation 1b to the Hydra D MTS.

**OPTION 2:**

- **Corridor Option 2a** - links Substation 2 and Substation 1a to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector substation located on the Wonderheuvel PV project application site.
- **Corridor Option 2b** - links Substation 2 and Substation 1b to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector substation located on the Wonderheuvel PV project application site.

***Wonderheuvel Solar PV Grid Connection:***

The alternatives essentially provide for three (3) different route alignments with associated substations contained within an assessment corridor between approximately 400m and 900m wide. The alternatives are as follows:

**OPTION 1:**

- **Corridor Option 1a** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern connection* links the Proposed Substation 3a to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Northern Collector Substation located on the Mooi Plaats PV project application site.
  ii. The *southern connection* links the proposed Substation 4a to the Coleskop WEF Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation located on the Paarde Valley PV Project application site.

- **Corridor Option 1b** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern* connection links the Proposed Substation 3a to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Northern Collector Substation located on the Mooi Plaats PV project application site.
  ii. The *southern connection* links the proposed Substation 4b to the Coleskop WEF Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation located on the Paarde Valley PV Project application site.

- **Corridor Option 1c** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern* connection links the Proposed Substation 3b to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Northern Collector Substation located on the Mooi Plaats PV project application site.
  **ii.** The *southern connection* links the proposed Substation 4a to the Coleskop WEF Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation located on the Paarde Valley PV Project application site.

- **Corridor Option 1d** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern connection* links the Proposed Substation 3b to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Northern Collector Substation located on the Mooi Plaats PV project application site.
  **ii.** The *southern connection* links the proposed Substation 4b to the Coleskop WEF Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation located on the Paarde Valley PV Project application site.

**OPTION 2:**

- **Corridor Option 2a** - links Substation 3a to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation.

- **Corridor Option 2b** - Option 2b links Substation 3b to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation.

**OPTION 3:**

- **Corridor Option 3** links Substation 4b to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central

Collector Substation.

**Paarde Valley Solar PV Grid Connection:**

The alternatives essentially provide for two (2) different route alignments with associated substations contained within an assessment corridor between approximately 400m and 900m wide. The alternatives are as follows:

**OPTION 1:**

- Corridor **Option 1a** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  - i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Sub (Substation 6a will act as Central Collector for this option).
  - ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 7a to the Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation (Substation 6a will act as Southern Collector for this option).

- Corridor **Option 1b** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  - i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Sub (Substation 6b will act as Southern Collector for this option).
  - ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 7a to the Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation (Substation 6b will act as Southern Collector for this option).

- Corridor **Option 1c** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  - i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Sub (Substation 6a will act as Southern Collector for this option).
  - ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 7b to the Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation (Substation 6a will act as Southern Collector for this option).

- Corridor **Option 1d** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  - i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Sub (Substation 6b will act as Southern Collector for this option).
  - **ii.** The *southern connection* links Substation 7b to the Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation (Substation 6b will act as Southern Collector for this option).

**OPTION 2:**

- Corridor **Option 2a** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Sub located on the Wonderveuvel PV Project application site.
  ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 6a and 7a to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.

- Corridor **Option 2b** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Sub located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.
  ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 6b and 7b to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.

- Corridor **Option 2c** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Sub located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.
  ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 6a and 7b to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.

- Corridor **Option 2d** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Sub located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.
  **ii.** The *southern connection* links Substation 6b and 7a to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.

Although it is possible to propose theoretical differences between the significance of the impacts of the above alternatives, there is practically no material difference of any significance between them. Therefore, from an agricultural impact perspective, there are no preferred alternatives, and all the proposed alternatives are acceptable.

**Key**

| | |
|---|---|
| **PREFERRED** | The alternative will result in a low impact / reduce the impact / result in a positive impact |
| **FAVOURABLE** | The impact will be relatively insignificant |
| **LEAST PREFERRED** | The alternative will result in a high impact / increase the impact |
| **NO PREFERENCE** | The alternative will result in equal impacts |

| PV INFRASTRUCTURE ALTERNATIVES (LAYDOWN AREAS AND O&M BUILDINGS) | Preference | Reasons (incl. potential issues) |
|---|---|---|
| **MOOI PLAATS SOLAR PV FACILITY:** | | |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 1 | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 2 | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 3 | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 4 | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 5 | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 6 | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| **WONDERHEUVEL SOLAR PV FACILITY:** | | |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 1 | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 2 | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 3 | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 4 | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 5 | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 6 | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 7 | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 8 | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| **PAARDE VALLEY SOLAR PV FACILITY:** | | |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 1 | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 2 | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 3 | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 4 | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 5 | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the |

| PV INFRASTRUCTURE ALTERNATIVES (LAYDOWN AREAS AND O&M BUILDINGS) | Preference | Reasons (incl. potential issues) |
|---|---|---|
| Option 6 | | agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 7 | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 8 | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 9 | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |

| GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE ALTERNATIVES (POWER LINE CORRIDORS AND ASSOCIATED SUBSTATIONS) | Preference | Reasons (incl. potential issues) |
|---|---|---|
| **MOOI PLAATS SOLAR PV FACILITY:** | | |
| Grid Connection Option 1a | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| Grid Connection Option 1b | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| Grid Connection Option 2a | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| Grid Connection Option 2a | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| **WONDERHEUVEL SOLAR PV FACILITY:** | | |
| Grid Connection Option 1a | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| Grid Connection Option 1b | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| Grid Connection Option 1c | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| Grid Connection Option 1d | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| Grid Connection Option 2a | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| Grid Connection Option 2b | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| Grid Connection Option 3 | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| **PAARDE VALLEY SOLAR PV FACILITY:** | | |
| Grid Connection Option 1a | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| Grid Connection Option 1b | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| Grid Connection Option 1c | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |

| GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE ALTERNATIVES (POWER LINE CORRIDORS AND ASSOCIATED SUBSTATIONS) | Preference | Reasons (incl. potential issues) |
|---|---|---|
| Grid Connection Option 1d | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| Grid Connection Option 2a | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| Grid Connection Option 2b | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| Grid Connection Option 2c | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |
| Grid Connection Option 2d | No Preference | Low agricultural impacts and the agricultural uniformity of the site. |

# 9 CONCLUSIONS

South Africa has very limited arable land and it is therefore critical to ensure that development does not lead to an inappropriate loss of potentially arable land. The assessment has found that the proposed development will only impact agricultural land which is of low agricultural potential and only suitable for low intensity grazing.

Agricultural impacts of the proposed development are assessed as being of low to medium significance. The significance of agricultural impacts is limited by the limited agricultural potential of the proposed development site, which is a function of the climate, terrain and shallow soils. The majority of the study area has low agricultural potential and therefore low agricultural sensitivity to development and consequent loss of agricultural land use. The only exception are small patches of irrigation. These were considered no-go areas for any footprint of development that will exclude cultivation, and have been avoided by the development layout.

This agricultural impact assessment is considered to be comprehensive and no further study is required for agricultural impact.

Due to the low agricultural potential of the site, and the consequent low agricultural impact, there are no restrictions relating to agriculture which preclude authorisation of the proposed development and therefore, from an agricultural impact point of view, the development should be authorised. There is no preference in terms of the proposed power line route alternatives and all alternatives are supported.

There are no conditions resulting from this assessment that need to be included in the Environmental Authorisation, apart from the mitigation measures proposed above.

# 10 REFERENCES


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DEA, 2015. Strategic Environmental Assessment for wind and solar photovoltaic development in South Africa. CSIR Report Number CSIR: CSIR/CAS/EMS/ER/2015/001/B. Stellenbosch.

Fey, M. 2010. Soils of South Africa. Cambridge University Press, Cape Town.

Soil Classification Working Group. 1991. Soil classification: a taxonomic system for South Africa. Soil and Irrigation Research Institute, Department of Agricultural Development, Pretoria.

The World Bank Climate Change Knowledge Portal available at https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/country/south-africa/climate-data-historical

**APPENDIX 1: SOIL DATA**

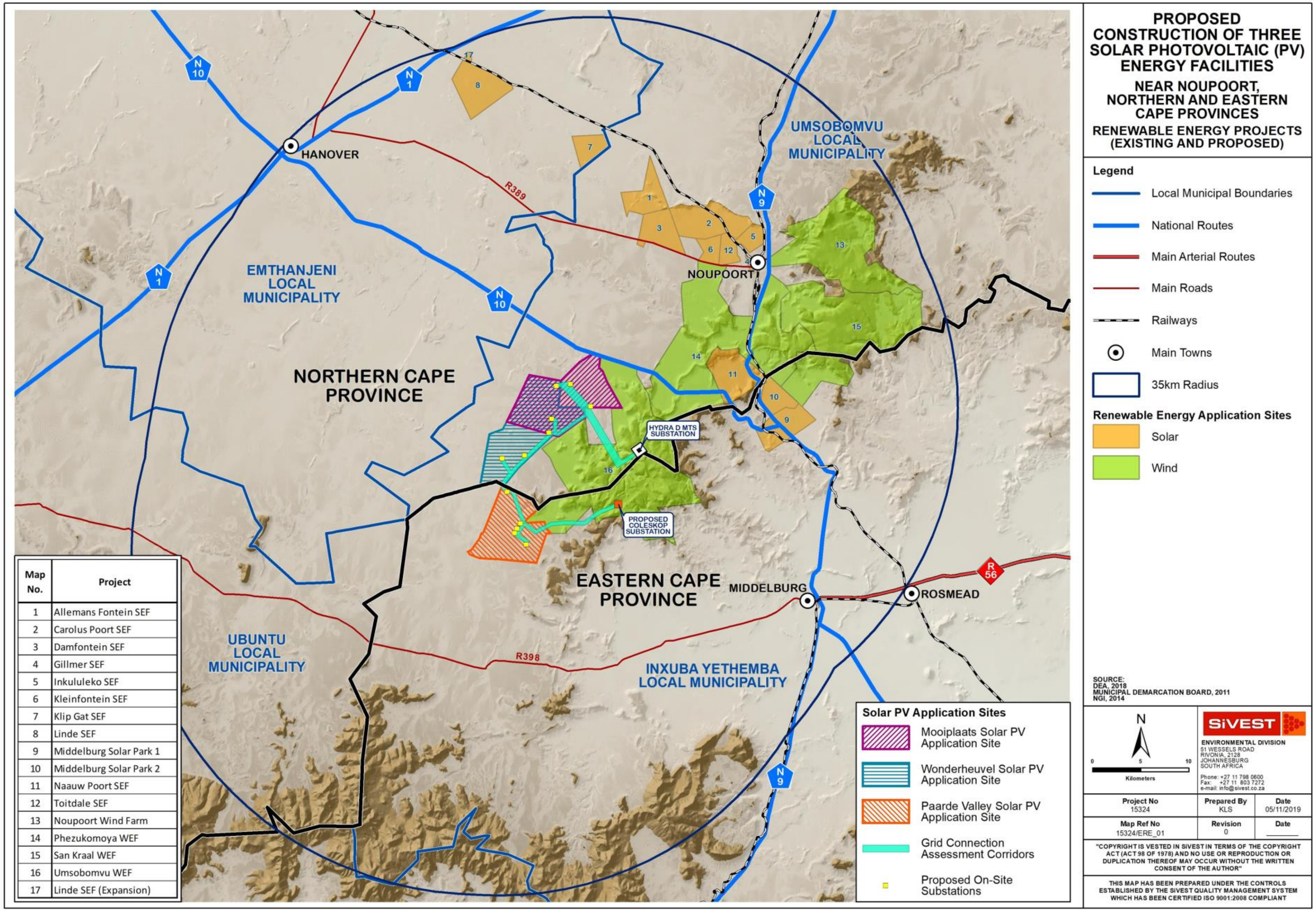
**Table A1.** Land type soil data for the study area.

| Land type | Soil series (forms) | Depth (mm) | Clay % A horizon | Clay % B horizon | Depth limiting layer | % of land type |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Da6 | Swartland | 30 - 300 | 15 - 30 | 30 - 45 | so | 54.2 |
| | Rock outcrop | | | | | 10.8 |
| | Hutton | 100 - 600 | 10 - 25 | 10 - 30 | R | 9.5 |
| | Mispah | 50 - 100 | 10 - 25 | | R | 9.3 |
| | Valsrivier | 60 - 400 | 15 - 30 | 35 - 45 | vr,vp | 6.0 |
| | Glenrosa | 100 - 200 | 10 - 25 | | R | 4.0 |
| | Oakleaf | 600 > 1200 | 15 - 25 | 35 - 40 | ne | 3.0 |
| | Oakleaf | 600 > 1200 | 15 - 25 | 15 - 30 | ne | 3.0 |
| Da77 | Swartland | 200 - 500 | 5 - 25 | 25 - 35 | so | 18.3 |
| | Hutton | 50 - 450 | 6 - 25 | 6 - 25 | R | 17.0 |
| | Swartland | 200 - 300 | 15 - 25 | 35 - 45 | so | 16.3 |
| | Valsrivier | 200 - 400 | 15 - 25 | 35 - 45 | vr,vp | 12.0 |
| | Mispah | 20 - 100 | 10 - 20 | | R | 11.0 |
| | Oakleaf | 400 - 700 | 15 - 25 | 15 - 30 | ne | 5.9 |
| | Rock outcrop | | | | | 5.8 |
| | Oakleaf | 300 - 800 | 15 - 30 | 35 - 45 | ne | 5.3 |
| | Glenrosa | 50 - 150 | 10 - 20 | 10 - 25 | R | 5.0 |
| | Sterkspruit | 100 - 300 | 15 - 30 | 35 - 45 | pr | 2.3 |
| | Dundee | 300 - 800 | 10 - 30 | 10 - 30 | ne | 0.6 |
| | Inhoek | 500 - 1200 | 25 - 35 | 35 - 45 | ne | 0.4 |
| | Estcourt | 300 - 600 | 10 - 25 | 15 - 25 | pr | 0.4 |

Depth limiting layers: R = hard rock; so = partially weathered bedrock; lo = partially weathered bedrock (softer); ca = soft carbonate; ka = hardpan carbonate; db = dorbank hardpan; hp = cemented hardpan plinthite (laterite); sp = soft plinthic horizon; pr = dense, prismatic clay layer; vp = dense, structured clay layer; vr = dense, red, structured clay layer; gc = dense clay horizon that is frequently saturated; pd = podzol horizon; U = alluvium.

**APPENDIX 2: PROJECTS CONSIDERED IN CUMULATIVE ASSESSMENT**

| Project | DEA Reference No | Technology | Capacity | Status of Application / Development |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Allemans Fontein SEF | 14/12/16/3/3/1/730 | Solar | 20MW | Approved |
| Carolus Poort SEF | 14/12/16/3/3/1/729 | Solar | 20MW | Approved |
| Damfontein SEF | 14/12/16/3/3/1/728 | Solar | 20MW | Approved |
| Gillmer SEF | 14/12/16/3/3/1/735 | Solar | 20MW | Approved |
| Inkululeko SEF | 14/12/16/3/3/1/553 | Solar | 20MW | Approved |
| Kleinfontein SEF | 12/12/20/2654 | Solar | 20MW | Approved |
| Klip Gat SEF | 14/12/16/3/3/2/354 | Solar | 75M | Approved |
| Linde SEF | 12/12/20/2258 | Solar | 40MW | In Operation |
| Linde SEF (Expansion) | 14/12/16/3/3/1/1122 | Solar | 75MW | Approved |
| Middelburg Solar Park 1 | 12/12/20/2465/2 | Solar | 75MW | Approved |
| Middelburg Solar Park 2 | 12/12/20/2465/1 | Solar | 75MW | Approved |
| Naauw Poort SEF | 14/12/16/3/3/2/355 | Solar | 75MW | Approved |
| Toitdale SEF | 12/12/20/2653 | Solar | 20MW | Approved |
| Noupoort Wind Farm | 12/12/20/2319 | Wind | 188MW | In Operation |
| Phezukomoya WEF | 14/12/16/3/3/1/1028 | Wind | 315MW | EIA in Process |
| San Kraal WEF | 14/12/16/3/3/1/1069 | Wind | 390MW | EIA in Process |
| Umsobomvu WEF | 14/12/16/3/3/2/730 | Wind | 140MW | Approved |



PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF THREE SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC (PV) ENERGY FACILITIES
NEAR NOUPOORT, NORTHERN AND EASTERN CAPE PROVINCES
RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS (EXISTING AND PROPOSED)
Legend
Local Municipal Boundaries
National Routes
Main Arterial Routes
Main Roads
Railways
Main Towns
35km Radius
Renewable Energy Application Sites
Solar
Wind
Solar PV Application Sites
Mooiplaats Solar PV Application Site
Wonderheuvel Solar PV Application Site
Paarde Valley Solar PV Application Site
Grid Connection Assessment Corridors
Proposed On-Site Substations
SOURCE: DEA, 2018 MUNICIPAL DEMARCATION BOARD, 2011 NGI, 2014
Kilometers
SiVEST
ENVIRONMENTAL DIVISION
51 WESSELS ROAD RIVONIA, 2128 JOHANNESBURG SOUTH AFRICA
Phone: +27 11 798 0600
Fax: +27 11 803 7272
e-mail: info@sivest.co.za
Project No 15324
Prepared By KLS
Date 05/11/2019
Map Ref No 15324/ERE_01
Revision 0
Date
"COPYRIGHT IS VESTED IN SiVEST IN TERMS OF THE COPYRIGHT ACT (ACT 98 OF 1978) AND NO USE OR REPRODUCTION OR DUPLICATION THEREOF MAY OCCUR WITHOUT THE WRITTEN CONSENT OF THE AUTHOR"
THIS MAP HAS BEEN PREPARED UNDER THE CONTROLS ESTABLISHED BY THE SiVEST QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM WHICH HAS BEEN CERTIFIED ISO 9001:2008 COMPLIANT
HANOVER
NOUPOORT
MIDDELBURG
ROSMEAD
EMTHANJENI LOCAL MUNICIPALITY
UMSOBOMVU LOCAL MUNICIPALITY
UBUNTU LOCAL MUNICIPALITY
INXUBA YETHEMBA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY
NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE
EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE
HYDRA D MTS SUBSTATION
PROPOSED COLESKOP SUBSTATION
R389
R398
Map No. | Project
1 Allemans Fontein SEF
2 Carolus Poort SEF
3 Damfontein SEF
4 Gillmer SEF
5 Inkululeko SEF
6 Kleinfontein SEF
7 Klip Gat SEF
8 Linde SEF
9 Middelburg Solar Park 1
10 Middelburg Solar Park 2
11 Naauw Poort SEF
12 Toitdale SEF
13 Noupoort Wind Farm
14 Phezukomoya WEF
15 San Kraal WEF
16 Umsobomvu WEF
17 Linde SEF (Expansion)

# Appendix 6B

# Avifauna

# AVIFAUNAL SPECIALIST STUDY

**PROPOSED UMSOBOMVU SOLAR PV ENERGY FACILITIES AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE NORTHERN AND EASTERN CAPE PROVINCES**

**November 2019**


AFRIMAGE Photography (Pty) Ltd t/a:

Chris van Rooyen Consulting

VAT#: 4580238113

email: vanrooyen.chris@gmail.com

Tel: +27 (0)82 4549570 cell

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SiVEST has been appointed by Mooi Plaats Solar Power (Pty) Ltd, Wonderheuvel Solar Power (Pty) Ltd and Paarde Valley (Pty) Ltd to conduct an Environmental Authorisation Application for the proposed Umsobomvu PV Solar Energy Facility (SEF) and associated grid connection, near Middelburg and Noupoort in the Eastern and Northern Cape. Chris van Rooyen Consulting was in turn appointed by SiVEST to conduct an avifaunal impact study to assess the impact of the proposed SEF on avifauna.

The proposed Umsobomvu PV facilities will have some pre-mitigation impacts on avifauna at a site and local level which will range from **Medium to Low**.

The impact of displacement due to disturbance during the construction phase is rated as **Medium** and will remain at a **Medium** level after mitigation. The impact of displacement of priority species due to habitat transformation associated with the operation of the plant and associated infrastructure is rated as **Medium**. This impact can be partially reversed through mitigation, but it will remain at a **Medium** level, after mitigation. The envisaged impacts in the operational phase, i.e. mortalities due to collisions with the solar panels and entrapment in perimeter fences are both rated as **Low** pre-mitigation and could be further reduced with appropriate mitigation. The impact of displacement due to disturbance during the decommissioning phase is rated as **Medium**, and it will remain at a **Medium** level after mitigation. The cumulative impact of the proposed PV facilities within a 35km radius is rated as **Low**, both per- and post mitigation.

The impact of displacement due to disturbance associated with the construction of the proposed 132kV grid connection and substations, is assessed to be **Medium** and can be mitigated to a **Low** level. The potential for displacement due to habitat destruction associated with the construction of the substations is rated as **Low** and could be further reduced with appropriate mitigation. The impact of bird collisions with the 132kV grid connection is rated as **High** and could be reduced to **Medium** with the application of mitigation measures. The potential impact of electrocutions is assessed to be **Medium**, but it can be reduced to **Low** with appropriate mitigation. The impact of displacement due to disturbance associated with the de-commissioning of the proposed 132kV grid connection and substations, is assessed to be **Medium** and can be mitigated to a **Low** level. The cumulative impact of the proposed grid connections within a 35km radius is rated as **Medium**, but it can be reduced to **Low** with the application of appropriate mitigation.

## IMPACT STATEMENT

From an avifaunal impact perspective, there is no objection to the proposed development of the Umsobomvu PV facilities and associated grid connections, provided the proposed mitigation measures are strictly implemented. No further monitoring will be required during the operational phase.

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**National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998) and Environmental Impact Regulations 2014 (as amended) Requirements for Specialist Reports (Appendix 6)**

| **Section in EIA Regulations 2014 (as amended)** | | **Clause** | **Section in Report** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Appendix 6 | (1) | A specialist report prepared in terms of these Regulations must contain — | |
| | (a) | details of – | |
| | | (i) the specialist who prepared the report; and | Pg. 6 |
| | | (ii) the expertise of that specialist to compile a specialist report including a curriculum vitae. | Pg. 10 - 15 |
| | (b) | A declaration that the person is independent in a form as may be specified by the competent authority; | Pg. 7 - 9 |
| | (c) | An indication of the scope of, and the purpose for which, the report was prepared; | Section 2 |
| | (cA) | An indication of the quality and age of base data used for the specialist report; | Section 3 |
| | (cB) | A description of existing impacts on the site, cumulative impacts of the proposed development and levels of acceptable change; | Sections 6 and 7 |
| | (d) | The duration, date and season of the site investigation and the relevance of the season to the outcome of the assessment; | Section 3 and Appendix 1 |
| | (e) | A description of the methodology adopted in preparing the report or carrying out the specialised process; inclusive of equipment and modelling used; | Appendix 1 |
| | (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; | Section 7 |
| | (g) | An indication of any areas to be avoided, including buffers; | Section 8 |
| | (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 8 |
| | (i) | A description of any assumptions made and any uncertainties or gaps in knowledge; | Section 4 |
| | (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; | Sections 9 and 10 |
| | (k) | Any mitigation measures for inclusion in the EMPr; | Section 7 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | (l) | Any conditions for inclusion in the environmental authorization; | Section 7 |
| | (m) | Any monitoring requirements for inclusion in the EMPr or environmental authorization; | N/A |
| | (n) | A reasoned opinion – | |
| | | (i) as to whether the proposed activity, activities or portions thereof should be authorized; | Section 10 |
| | | (iA) regarding the acceptability of the proposed activity or activities; and | Section 10 |
| | | (ii) if the opinion is that the proposed activity, activities or portions thereof should be authorized, any avoidance, management and mitigation measures that should be included in the EMPr, and where applicable, the closure plan; | Section 7 |
| | (o) | A description of any consultation process that was undertaken during the course of preparing the specialist report; | Section 3 |
| | (p) | A summary and copies of any comments received during any consultation process and where applicable all responses thereto; and | N/A |
| | (q) | Any other information requested by the authority. | N/A |
| | (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. | N/A |

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

# DETAILS OF THE SPECIALIST AND EXPERTISE TO COMPILE A SPECIALIST REPORT

**Chris van Rooyen**

Chris has 21 years' experience in the management of wildlife interactions with electricity infrastructure. He was head of the Eskom-Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT) Strategic Partnership from 1996 to 2007, which has received international acclaim as a model of co-operative management between industry and natural resource conservation. He is an acknowledged global expert in this field and has worked in South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, Lesotho, New Zealand, Texas, New Mexico and Florida. Chris also has extensive project management experience and has received several management awards from Eskom for his work in the Eskom-EWT Strategic Partnership. He is the author of 15 academic papers (some with co-authors), co-author of two book chapters and several research reports. He has been involved as ornithological consultant in numerous power line and wind generation projects. Chris is also co-author of the Best Practice for Avian Monitoring and Impact Mitigation at Wind Development Sites in Southern Africa, which is the industry standard. Chris also works outside the electricity industry and had done a wide range of bird impact assessment studies associated with various residential and industrial developments.

**Albert Froneman**

Albert has an M. Sc. in Conservation Biology from the University of Cape Town and started his career in the natural sciences as a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) specialist at Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR). In 1998, he joined the Endangered Wildlife Trust where he headed up the Airports Company South Africa – EWT Strategic Partnership, a position he held until he resigned in 2008 to work as a private ornithological consultant. Albert's specialist field is the management of wildlife, especially bird related hazards at airports. His expertise is recognized internationally; in 2005 he was elected as Vice Chairman of the International Bird Strike Committee. Since 2010, Albert has worked closely with Chris van Rooyen in developing a protocol for pre-construction monitoring at wind energy facilities, and he is currently jointly coordinating pre-construction monitoring programmes at several wind farm facilities. Albert also works outside the electricity industry and had done a wide range of bird impact assessment studies associated with various residential and industrial developments.

SPECIALIST DECLARATION

I, Chris van Rooyen as duly authorised representative of Chris van Rooyen Consulting, and working under the supervision of and in association with Albert Froneman (SACNASP Zoological Science Registration number 400177/09) as stipulated by the Natural Scientific Professions Act 27 of 2003, hereby confirm my independence (as well as that of Chris van Rooyen Consulting) as a specialist and declare that neither I nor Chris van Rooyen Consulting have any interest, be it business, financial, personal or other, in any proposed activity, application or appeal in respect of which SiVEST was appointed as environmental assessment practitioner in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998), other than fair remuneration for worked performed, specifically in connection with the Environmental Impact Assessment for the proposed Umsobomvu Solar Project.

Full Name: Chris van Rooyen

Position: Director

environmental affairs

Department:
Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DETAILS OF THE SPECIALIST, DECLARATION OF INTEREST AND UNDERTAKING UNDER OATH

| | (For official use only) |
|---|---|
| File Reference Number: | |
| NEAS Reference Number: | DEA/EIA/ |
| Date Received: | |

Application for authorisation in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, Act No. 107 of 1998, as amended and the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations, 2014, as amended (the Regulations)

**PROJECT TITLE**

Proposed Construction of the Mooi Plaats, Wonderheuvel and Paarde Valley Solar PV Energy Facilities and Associated Grid Connection Infrastructure, near Noupoort in the Northern and Eastern Cape Provinces.

**Kindly note the following:**

1. This form must always be used for applications that must be subjected to Basic Assessment or Scoping & Environmental Impact Reporting where this Department is the Competent Authority.
2. This form is current as of 01 September 2018. It is the responsibility of the Applicant / Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) to ascertain whether subsequent versions of the form have been published or produced by the Competent Authority. The latest available Departmental templates are available at https://www.environment.gov.za/documents/forms.
3. A copy of this form containing original signatures must be appended to all Draft and Final Reports submitted to the department for consideration.
4. All documentation delivered to the physical address contained in this form must be delivered during the official Departmental Officer Hours which is visible on the Departmental gate.
5. All EIA related documents (includes application forms, reports or any EIA related submissions) that are faxed; emailed; delivered to Security or placed in the Departmental Tender Box will not be accepted, only hardcopy submissions are accepted.

**Departmental Details**

**Postal address:**
Department of Environmental Affairs
Attention: Chief Director: Integrated Environmental Authorisations
Private Bag X447
Pretoria
0001

**Physical address:**
Department of Environmental Affairs
Attention: Chief Director: Integrated Environmental Authorisations
Environment House
473 Steve Biko Road
Arcadia

Queries must be directed to the Directorate: Coordination, Strategic Planning and Support at:
Email: EIAAdmin@environment.gov.za

## 1. SPECIALIST INFORMATION

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Specialist Company Name: | Afrimage Photography (Pty) Ltd t/a Chris van Rooyen Consulting | | | |
| B-BBEE | Contribution level (indicate 1 to 8 or non-compliant) | Contribution level (indicate 1 to 8 or non-compliant) | Contribution level (indicate 1 to 8 or non-compliant) | Contribution level (indicate 1 to 8 or non-compliant) |
| Specialist name: | Chris van Rooyen | | | |
| Specialist Qualifications: | BA LLB | | | |
| Professional affiliation/registration: | I work under the supervision of and in association with Albert Froneman (MSc Conservation Biology) (SACNASP Zoological Science Registration number 400177/09) as stipulated by the Natural Scientific Professions Act 27 of 2003. | | | |
| Physical address: | 30 Roosevelt Street, Robindale, Randburg | | | |
| Postal address: | 30 Roosevelt Street, Robindale, Randburg | | | |
| Postal code: | 2194 | | | |
| Telephone: | 0824549570 | | | |
| E-mail: | Vanrooyen.chris@gmail.com | | | |

## 2. DECLARATION BY THE SPECIALIST

I, Chris van Rooyen, declare that –

- I act as the independent 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 favourable to the applicant;
- I declare that there are no circumstances that may compromise my objectivity in performing such work;
- I have expertise in conducting the specialist report relevant to this application, 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 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;
- all the particulars furnished by me in this form are true and correct; and
- I realise that a false declaration is an offence in terms of regulation 48 and is punishable in terms of section 24F of the Act.

Signature of the Specialist

Chris van Rooyen Consulting

Name of Company:

6 May 2019

Date

### 3. UNDERTAKING UNDER OATH/ AFFIRMATION

I, Chris van Rooyen, swear under oath / affirm that all the information submitted or to be submitted for the purposes of this application is true and correct.

Signature of the Specialist

Chris van Rooyen Consulting

Name of Company

6 May 2019

Date

Signature of the Commissioner of Oaths

6 May 2019

Date

SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE
COMMUNITY SERVICE CENTRE
2019 -05- 06
C.S.C
LINDEN
SUID-AFRIKAANSE POLISIEDIENS

30 BURGER ROAD
ROBINDALE
LINDEN
WARRANT OFFICER

## Curriculum vitae: Chris van Rooyen

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Profession/Specialisation | : | Avifaunal Specialist |
| Highest Qualification | : | BA LLB |
| Nationality | : | South African |
| Years of experience | : | 22 years |

### Key Experience

Chris van Rooyen has twenty-two years' experience in the assessment of avifaunal interactions with industrial infrastructure. He was employed by the Endangered Wildlife Trust as head of the Eskom-EWT Strategic Partnership from 1996 to 2007, which has received international acclaim as a model of co-operative management between industry and natural resource conservation. He is an acknowledged global expert in this field and has consulted in South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, Lesotho, New Zealand, Texas, New Mexico and Florida. He also has extensive project management experience and he has received several management awards from Eskom for his work in the Eskom-EWT Strategic Partnership. He is the author and/or co-author of 17 conference papers, co-author of two book chapters, several research reports and the current best practice guidelines for avifaunal monitoring at wind farm sites. He has completed around 130 power line assessments; and has to date been employed as specialist avifaunal consultant on more than 50 renewable energy generation projects. He has also conducted numerous risk assessments on existing power lines infrastructure. He also works outside the electricity industry and he has done a wide range of bird impact assessment studies associated with various residential and industrial developments. He serves on the Birds and Wind Energy Specialist Group which was formed in 2011 to serve as a liaison body between the ornithological community and the wind industry.

### Key Project Experience

**Bird Impact Assessment Studies and avifaunal monitoring for wind-powered generation facilities:**

1. Eskom Klipheuwel Experimental Wind Power Facility, Western Cape
2. Mainstream Wind Facility Jeffreys Bay, Eastern Cape (EIA and monitoring)
3. Biotherm, Swellendam, (Excelsior), Western Cape (EIA and monitoring)
4. Biotherm, Napier, (Matjieskloof), Western Cape (pre-feasibility)
5. Windcurrent SA, Jeffreys Bay, Eastern Cape (2 sites) (EIA and monitoring)
6. Caledon Wind, Caledon, Western Cape (EIA)
7. Innowind (4 sites), Western Cape (EIA)
8. Renewable Energy Systems (RES) Oyster Bay, Eastern Cape (EIA and monitoring)
9. Oelsner Group (Kerriefontein), Western Cape (EIA)
10. Oelsner Group (Langefontein), Western Cape (EIA)
11. InCa Energy, Vredendal Wind Energy Facility Western Cape (EIA)
12. Mainstream Loeriesfontein Wind Energy Facility (EIA and monitoring)
13. Mainstream Noupoort Wind Energy Facility (EIA and monitoring)
14. Biotherm Port Nolloth Wind Energy Facility (Monitoring)
15. Biotherm Laingsburg Wind Energy Facility (EIA and monitoring)
16. Langhoogte Wind Energy Facility (EIA)
17. Vleesbaai Wind Energy Facility (EIA and monitoring)
18. St. Helena Bay Wind Energy Facility (EIA and monitoring)
19. Electrawind, St Helena Bay Wind Energy Facility (EIA and monitoring)
20. Electrawind, Vredendal Wind Energy Facility (EIA)
21. SAGIT, Langhoogte and Wolseley Wind Energy facilities
22. Renosterberg Wind Energy Project – 12-month preconstruction avifaunal monitoring project
23. De Aar – North (Mulilo) Wind Energy Project – 12-month preconstruction avifaunal monitoring project
24. De Aar – South (Mulilo) Wind Energy Project – 12-month bird monitoring
25. Namies – Aggenys Wind Energy Project – 12-month bird monitoring
26. Pofadder - Wind Energy Project – 12-month bird monitoring
27. Dwarsrug Loeriesfontein - Wind Energy Project – 12-month bird monitoring
28. Waaihoek – Utrecht Wind Energy Project – 12-month bird monitoring
29. Amathole – Butterworth Utrecht Wind Energy Project – 12-month bird monitoring & EIA specialist
30. Phezukomoya and San Kraal Wind Energy Projects 12-month bird monitoring & EIA specialist study (Innowind)
31. Beaufort West Wind Energy Facility 12-month bird monitoring & EIA specialist study (Mainstream)
32. Leeuwdraai Wind Energy Facility 12-month bird monitoring & EIA specialist study (Mainstream)
33. Sutherland Wind Energy Facility 12-month bird monitoring (Mainstream)
34. Maralla Wind Energy Facility 12-month bird monitoring & EIA specialist study (Biotherm)
35. Esizayo Wind Energy Facility 12-month bird monitoring & EIA specialist study (Biotherm)
36. Humansdorp Wind Energy Facility 12-month bird monitoring & EIA specialist study (Cennergi)
37. Aletta Wind Energy Facility 12-month bird monitoring & EIA specialist study (Biotherm)
38. Eureka Wind Energy Facility 12-month bird monitoring & EIA specialist study (Biotherm)
39. Makambako Wind Energy Faclity (Tanzania) 12-month bird monitoring & EIA specialist study (Windlab)
40. R355 Wind Energy Facility 12-month bird monitoring (Mainstream)
41. Groenekloof Wind Energy Facility 12-month bird monitoring & EIA specialist study (Mulilo)
42. Tsitsikamma Wind Energy Facility 24-months post-construction monitoring (Cennergi)
43. Noupoort Wind Energy Facility 24-months post-construction monitoring (Mainstream)
44. Kokerboom Wind Energy Facility 12-month bird monitoring & EIA specialist study (Business Venture Investments)
45. Kuruman Wind Energy Facility 12-month bird monitoring & EIA specialist study (Mulilo)
46. Dassieklip Wind Energy Facility 3 years post-construction monitoring (Biotherm)
47. Loeriesfontein 2 Wind Energy Facility 2 years post-construction monitoring (Mainstream)
48. Khobab Wind Energy Facility 2 years post-construction monitoring (Mainstream)
49. Excelsior Wind Energy Facility 18 months construction phase monitoring (Biotherm)
50. Boesmansberg Wind Energy Facility 12-months pre-construction bird monitoring (juwi)
51. Mañhica Wind Energy Facility, Mozambique, 12-months pre-construction monitoring (Windlab)

**Bird Impact Assessment Studies for Solar Energy Plants:**

1. Concentrated Solar Power Plant, Upington, Northern Cape.
2. Globeleq De Aar and Droogfontein Solar PV Pre- and Post-construction avifaunal monitoring
3. JUWI Kronos PV project, Copperton, Northern Cape
4. Sand Draai CSP project, Groblershoop, Northern Cape
5. Biotherm Helena PV Project, Copperton, Northern Cape
6. Biotherm Letsiao CSP Project, Aggeneys, Northern Cape
7. Biotherm Enamandla PV Project, Aggeneys, Northern Cape
8. Biotherm Sendawo PV Project, Vryburg, North-West
9. Biotherm Tlisitseng PV Project, Lichtenburg, North-West
10. JUWI Hotazel Solar Park Project, Hotazel, Northern Cape
11. Veld Solar One Project, Aggeneys, Northern Cape
12. Brypaal Solar Power Project, Kakamas, Northern Cape
13. ABO Vryburg 1,2,3 Solar PV Project, Vryburg, North-West
14. NamPower CSP Facility near Arandis, Namibia

**Bird Impact Assessment Studies for the following overhead line projects:**

1. Chobe 33kV Distribution line
2. Athene - Umfolozi 400kV
3. Beta-Delphi 400kV
4. Cape Strengthening Scheme 765kV
5. Flurian-Louis-Trichardt 132kV
6. Ghanzi 132kV (Botswana)
7. Ikaros 400kV
8. Matimba-Witkop 400kV
9. Naboomspruit 132kV
10. Tabor-Flurian 132kV
11. Windhoek - Walvisbaai 220 kV (Namibia)
12. Witkop-Overyssel 132kV
13. Breyten 88kV
14. Adis-Phoebus 400kV
15. Dhuva-Janus 400kV
16. Perseus-Mercury 400kV
17. Gravelotte 132kV
18. Ikaros 400 kV
19. Khanye 132kV (Botswana)
20. Moropule – Thamaga 220 kV (Botswana)
21. Parys 132kV
22. Simplon –Everest 132kV
23. Tutuka-Alpha 400kV
24. Simplon-Der Brochen 132kV
25. Big Tree 132kV
26. Mercury-Ferrum-Garona 400kV
27. Zeus-Perseus 765kV
28. Matimba B Integration Project
29. Caprivi 350kV DC (Namibia)
30. Gerus-Mururani Gate 350kV DC (Namibia)
31. Mmamabula 220kV (Botswana)
32. Steenberg-Der Brochen 132kV
33. Venetia-Paradise T 132kV
34. Burgersfort 132kV
35. Majuba-Umfolozi 765kV
36. Delta 765kV Substation
37. Braamhoek 22kV
38. Steelpoort Merensky 400kV
39. Mmamabula Delta 400kV
40. Delta Epsilon 765kV
41. Gerus-Zambezi 350kV DC Interconnector: Review of proposed avian mitigation measures for the Okavango and Kwando River crossings
42. Giyani 22kV Distribution line
43. Liqhobong-Kao 132/11kV distribution power line, Lesotho
44. 132kV Leslie – Wildebeest distribution line
45. A proposed new 50 kV Spoornet feeder line between Sishen and Saldanha
46. Cairns 132kv substation extension and associated power lines
47. Pimlico 132kv substation extension and associated power lines
48. Gyani 22kV
49. Matafin 132kV
50. Nkomazi_Fig Tree 132kV
51. Pebble Rock 132kV
52. Reddersburg 132kV
53. Thaba Combine 132kV
54. Nkomati 132kV
55. Louis Trichardt – Musina 132kV

56. Endicot 44kV
57. Apollo Lepini 400kV
58. Tarlton-Spring Farms 132kV
59. Kuschke 132kV substation
60. Bendstore 66kV Substation and associated lines
61. Kuiseb 400kV (Namibia)
62. Gyani-Malamulele 132kV
63. Watershed 132kV
64. Bakone 132kV substation
65. Eerstegoud 132kV LILO lines
66. Kumba Iron Ore: SWEP - Relocation of Infrastructure
67. Kudu Gas Power Station: Associated power lines
68. Steenberg Booysendal 132kV
69. Toulon Pumps 33kV
70. Thabatshipi 132kV
71. Witkop-Silica 132kV
72. Bakubung 132kV
73. Nelsriver 132kV
74. Rethabiseng 132kV
75. Tilburg 132kV
76. GaKgapane 66kV
77. Knobel Gilead 132kV
78. Bochum Knobel 132kV
79. Madibeng 132kV
80. Witbank Railway Line and associated infrastructure
81. Spencer NDP phase 2 (5 lines)
82. Akanani 132kV
83. Hermes-Dominion Reefs 132kV
84. Cape Pensinsula Strengthening Project 400kV
85. Magalakwena 132kV
86. Benficosa 132kV
87. Dithabaneng 132kV
88. Taunus Diepkloof 132kV
89. Taunus Doornkop 132kV
90. Tweedracht 132kV
91. Jane Furse 132kV
92. Majeje Sub 132kV
93. Tabor Louis Trichardt 132kV
94. Riversong 88kV
95. Mamatsekele 132kV
96. Kabokweni 132kV
97. MDPP 400kV Botswana
98. Marble Hall NDP 132kV
99. Bokmakiere 132kV Substation and LILO lines
100. Styldrift 132kV
101. Taunus – Diepkloof 132kV
102. Bighorn NDP 132kV
103. Waterkloof 88kV
104. Camden – Theta 765kV
105. Dhuva – Minerva 400kV Diversion
106. Lesedi –Grootpan 132kV
107. Waterberg NDP
108. Bulgerivier – Dorset 132kV
109. Bulgerivier – Toulon 132kV
110. Nokeng-Fluorspar 132kV
111. Mantsole 132kV
112. Tshilamba 132kV
113. Thabamoopo - Tshebela – Nhlovuko 132kV
114. Arthurseat 132kV
115. Borutho 132kV MTS
116. Volspruit  - Potgietersrus 132kV
117. Neotel Optic Fibre Cable Installation Project: Western Cape
117. Matla-Glockner 400kV
118. Delmas North 44kV
119. Houwhoek 11kV Refurbishment
120. Clau-Clau 132kV
121. Ngwedi-Silwerkrans 134kV
122. Nieuwehoop 400kV walk-through
123. Booysendal 132kV Switching Station
124. Tarlton 132kV
125. Medupi - Witkop 400kV walk-through
126. Germiston Industries Substation
127. Sekgame 132kV
128. Botswana – South Africa 400kV Transfrontier Interconnector
129. Syferkuil – Rampheri 132kV
130. Queens Substation and associated 132kV powerlines
131. Oranjemond 400kV Transmission line

132. Aries – Helios – Juno walk-down
133. Kuruman Phase 1 and 2 Wind Energy facilities 132kV Grid connection
134. Transnet

**Bird Impact Assessment Studies for the following residential and industrial developments:**

1. Lizard Point Golf Estate
2. Lever Creek Estates
3. Leloko Lifestyle Estates
4. Vaaloewers Residential Development
5. Clearwater Estates Grass Owl Impact Study
6. Sommerset Ext. Grass Owl Study
7. Proposed Three Diamonds Trading Mining Project (Portion 9 and 15 of the Farm Blesbokfontein)
8. N17 Section: Springs To Leandra –"Borrow Pit 12 And Access Road On (Section 9, 6 And 28 Of The Farm Winterhoek 314 Ir)
9. South African Police Services Gauteng Radio Communication System: Portion 136 Of The Farm 528 Jq, Lindley.
10. Report for the proposed upgrade and extension of the Zeekoegat Wastewater Treatment Works, Gauteng.
11. Bird Impact Assessment for Portion 265 (a portion of Portion 163) of the farm Rietfontein 189-JR, Gauteng.
12. Bird Impact Assessment Study for Portions 54 and 55 of the Farm Zwartkop 525 JQ, Gauteng.
13. Bird Impact Assessment Study Portions 8 and 36 of the Farm Nooitgedacht 534 JQ, Gauteng.
14. Shumba's Rest Bird Impact Assessment Study
15. Randfontein Golf Estate Bird Impact Assessment Study
16. Zilkaatsnek Wildlife Estate
17. Regenstein Communications Tower (Namibia)
18. Avifaunal Input into Richards Bay Comparative Risk Assessment Study
19. Maquasa West Open Cast Coal Mine
20. Glen Erasmia Residential Development, Kempton Park, Gauteng
21. Bird Impact Assessment Study, Weltevreden Mine, Mpumalanga
22. Bird Impact Assessment Study, Olifantsvlei Cemetery, Johannesburg
23. Camden Ash Disposal Facility, Mpumalanga
24. Lindley Estate, Lanseria, Gauteng
25. Proposed open cast iron ore mine on the farm Lylyveld 545, Northern Cape
26. Avifaunal monitoring for the Sishen Mine in the Northern Cape as part of the EMPr requirements
27. Steelpoort CNC Bird Impact Assessment Study

Professional affiliations

I work under the supervision of and in association with Albert Froneman (MSc Conservation Biology) (SACNASP Zoological Science Registration number 400177/09) as stipulated by the Natural Scientific Professions Act 27 of 2003.

Chris van Rooyen
06 May 2019

## Curriculum vitae: Albert Froneman

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Profession/Specialisation | : | Avifaunal Specialist |
| Highest Qualification | : | MSc (Conservation Biology) |
| Nationality | : | South African |
| Years of experience | : | 18 years |

### Key Qualifications

Albert Froneman **(**Pr.Sci.Nat) has more than 18 years' experience in the management of avifaunal interactions with industrial infrastructure. He holds a M.Sc. degree in Conservation Biology from the University of Cape Town. He managed the Airports Company South Africa (ACSA) – Endangered Wildlife Trust Strategic Partnership from 1999 to 2008 which has been internationally recognized for its achievements in addressing airport wildlife hazards in an environmentally sensitive manner at ACSA's airports across South Africa. Albert is recognized worldwide as an expert in the field of bird hazard management on airports and has worked in South Africa, Swaziland, Botswana, Namibia, Kenya, Israel, and the USA. He has served as the vice chairman of the International Bird Strike Committee and has presented various papers at international conferences and workshops. At present he is consulting to ACSA with wildlife hazard management on all their airports. He also an accomplished specialist ornithological consultant outside the aviation industry and has completed a wide range of bird impact assessment studies. He has co-authored many avifaunal specialist studies and pre-construction monitoring reports for proposed renewable energy developments across South Africa. He also has vast experience in using Geographic Information Systems to analyse and interpret avifaunal data spatially and derive meaningful conclusions. Since 2009 Albert has been a registered Professional Natural Scientist (reg. nr 400177/09) with The South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions, specialising in Zoological Science.

### Key Project Experience

**Renewable Energy Facilities –avifaunal monitoring projects in association with Chris van Rooyen Consulting**

1. Jeffrey's Bay Wind Farm – 12-months preconstruction avifaunal monitoring project
2. Oysterbay Wind Energy Project – 12-months preconstruction avifaunal monitoring project
3. Ubuntu Wind Energy Project near Jeffrey's Bay – 12-months preconstruction avifaunal monitoring project
4. Bana-ba-Pifu Wind Energy Project near Humansdorp – 12-months preconstruction avifaunal monitoring project
5. Excelsior Wind Energy Project near Caledon – 12-months preconstruction avifaunal monitoring project
6. Laingsburg Spitskopvlakte Wind Energy Project – 12-months preconstruction avifaunal monitoring project
7. Loeriesfontein Wind Energy Project Phase 1, 2 & 3 – 12-months preconstruction avifaunal monitoring project
8. Noupoort Wind Energy Project – 12-months preconstruction avifaunal monitoring project
9. Vleesbaai Wind Energy Project – 12-months preconstruction avifaunal monitoring project
10. Port Nolloth Wind Energy Project – 12-months preconstruction avifaunal monitoring project
11. Langhoogte Caledon Wind Energy Project – 12-months preconstruction avifaunal monitoring project
12. Lunsklip – Stilbaai Wind Energy Project – 12-months preconstruction avifaunal monitoring project
13. Indwe Wind Energy Project – 12-months preconstruction avifaunal monitoring project
14. Zeeland St Helena bay Wind Energy Project – 12-months preconstruction avifaunal monitoring project
15. Wolseley Wind Energy Project – 12-months preconstruction avifaunal monitoring project
16. Renosterberg Wind Energy Project – 12-months preconstruction avifaunal monitoring project
17. De Aar – North (Mulilo) Wind Energy Project – 12-months preconstruction avifaunal monitoring project (2014)
18. De Aar – South (Mulilo) Wind Energy Project – 12-months bird monitoring
19. Namies – Aggenys Wind Energy Project – 12-months bird monitoring
20. Pofadder - Wind Energy Project – 12-months bird monitoring
21. Dwarsrug Loeriesfontein - Wind Energy Project – 12-months bird monitoring
22. Waaihoek – Utrecht Wind Energy Project – 12-months bird monitoring
23. Amathole – Butterworth Utrecht Wind Energy Project – 12-months bird monitoring & EIA specialist study
24. De Aar and Droogfontein Solar PV Pre- and Post-construction avifaunal monitoring
25. Makambako Wind Energy Faclity (Tanzania) 12-month bird monitoring & EIA specialist study (Windlab)
26. R355 Wind Energy Facility 12-month bird monitoring (Mainstream)
27. Groenekloof Wind Energy Facility 12-month bird monitoring & EIA specialist study (Mulilo)
28. Tsitsikamma Wind Energy Facility 24-months post-construction monitoring (Cennergi)
29. Noupoort Wind Energy Facility 24-months post-construction monitoring (Mainstream)
30. Kokerboom Wind Energy Facility 12-month bird monitoring & EIA specialist study (Business Venture Investments)
31. Kuruman Wind Energy Facility 12-month bird monitoring & EIA specialist study (Mulilo)
32. Mañhica Wind Energy Facility 12-month bird monitoring & EIA specialist study (Windlab)

**Bird Impact Assessment studies and / or GIS analysis:**

1. Aviation Bird Hazard Assessment Study for the proposed Madiba Bay Leisure Park adjacent to Port Elizabeth Airport.
2. Extension of Runway and Provision of Parallel Taxiway at Sir Seretse Khama Airport, Botswana Bird / Wildlife Hazard Management Specialist Study
3. Maun Airport Improvements Bird / Wildlife Hazard Management Specialist Study
4. Bird Impact Assesment Study - Bird Helicopter Interaction – The Bitou River, Western Cape Province South Africa
5. Proposed La Mercy Airport – Bird Aircraft interaction specialists study using bird detection radar to assess swallow flocking behaviour
6. KwaZulu Natal Power Line Vulture Mitigation Project – GIS analysis
7. Perseus-Zeus Powerline EIA – GIS Analysis
8. Southern Region Pro-active GIS Blue Crane Collision Project.
9. Specialist advisor ~ Implementation of a bird detection radar system and development of an airport wildlife hazard management and operational environmental management plan for the King Shaka International Airport
10. Matsapha International Airport – bird hazard assessment study with management recommendations
11. Evaluation of aviation bird strike risk at candidate solid waste disposal sites in the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality

12. Gateway Airport Authority Limited – Gateway International Airport, Polokwane: Bird hazard assessment; Compile a bird hazard management plan for the airport
13. Bird Specialist Study - Evaluation of aviation bird strike risk at the Mwakirunge Landfill site near Mombasa Kenya
14. Bird Impact Assessment Study - Proposed Weltevreden Open Cast Coal Mine Belfast, Mpumalanga
15. Avian biodiversity assessment for the Mafube Colliery Coal mine near Middelburg Mpumalanga
16. Avifaunal Specialist Study - SRVM Volspruit Mining project – Mokopane Limpopo Province
17. Avifaunal Impact Assessment Study (with specific reference to African Grass Owls and other Red List species) Stone Rivers Arch
18. Airport bird and wildlife hazard management plan and training to Swaziland Civil Aviation Authority (SWACAA) for Matsapha and Sikhupe International Airports
19. Avifaunal Impact Scoping & EIA Study - Renosterberg Wind Farm and Solar PV site
20. Bird Impact Assessment Study - Proposed 60 year Ash Disposal Facility near to the Kusile Power Station
21. Avifaunal pre-feasibility assessment for the proposed Montrose dam, Mpumalanga
22. Bird Impact Assessment Study – Proposed ESKOM Phantom Substation near Knysna, Western Cape
23. Habitat sensitivity map for Denham's Bustard, Blue Crane and White-bellied Korhaan in the Kouga Municipal area of the Eastern Cape Province
24. Swaziland Civil Aviation Authority – Sikhuphe International Airport – Bird hazard management assessment
25. Avifaunal monitoring – extension of Specialist Study - SRVM Volspruit Mining project – Mokopane Limpopo Province
26. Avifaunal Specialist Study – Rooikat Hydro Electric Dam – Hope Town, Northern Cape
27. The Stewards Pan Reclamation Project – Bird Impact Assessment study
28. Airports Company South Africa – Avifaunal Specialist Consultant – Airport Bird and Wildlife Hazard Mitigation

**Geographic Information System analysis & maps**

1. ESKOM Power line Makgalakwena EIA – GIS specialist & map production
2. ESKOM Power line Benficosa EIA – GIS specialist & map production
3. ESKOM Power line Riversong EIA – GIS specialist & map production
4. ESKOM Power line Waterberg NDP EIA – GIS specialist & map production
5. ESKOM Power line Bulge Toulon EIA – GIS specialist & map production
6. ESKOM Power line Bulge DORSET EIA – GIS specialist & map production
7. ESKOM Power lines Marblehall EIA – GIS specialist & map production
8. ESKOM Power line Grootpan Lesedi EIA – GIS specialist & map production
9. ESKOM Power line Tanga EIA – GIS specialist & map production
10. ESKOM Power line Bokmakierie EIA – GIS specialist & map production
11. ESKOM Power line Rietfontein EIA – GIS specialist & map production
12. Power line Anglo Coal EIA – GIS specialist & map production
13. ESKOM Power line Camcoll Jericho EIA – GIS specialist & map production
14. Hartbeespoort Residential Development – GIS specialist & map production
15. ESKOM Power line Mantsole EIA – GIS specialist & map production
16. ESKOM Power line Nokeng Flourspar EIA – GIS specialist & map production
17. ESKOM Power line Greenview EIA – GIS specialist & map production
18. Derdepoort Residential Development – GIS specialist & map production
19. ESKOM Power line Boynton EIA – GIS specialist & map production
20. ESKOM Power line United EIA – GIS specialist & map production
21. ESKOM Power line Gutshwa & Malelane EIA – GIS specialist & map production
22. ESKOM Power line Origstad EIA – GIS specialist & map production
23. Zilkaatsnek Development Public Participation –map production
24. Belfast – Paarde Power line - GIS specialist & map production
25. Solar Park Solar Park Integration Project Bird Impact Assessment Study – avifaunal GIS analysis.
26. Kappa-Omega-Aurora 765kV Bird Impact Assessment Report – Avifaunal GIS analysis.
27. Gamma – Kappa 2nd 765kV – Bird Impact Assessment Report – Avifaunal GIS analysis.
28. ESKOM Power line Kudu-Dorstfontein Amendment EIA – GIS specialist & map production.
29. Proposed Heilbron filling station EIA – GIS specialist & map production
30. ESKOM Lebatlhane EIA – GIS specialist & map production
31. ESKOM Pienaars River CNC EIA – GIS specialist & map production
32. ESKOM Lemara Phiring Ohrigstad EIA – GIS specialist & map production
33. ESKOM Pelly-Warmbad EIA – GIS specialist & map production
34. ESKOM Rosco-Bracken EIA – GIS specialist & map production
35. ESKOM Ermelo-Uitkoms EIA – GIS specialist & map production
36. ESKOM Wisani bridge EIA – GIS specialist & map production
37. City of Tswane – New bulkfeeder pipeline projects x3 Map production
38. ESKOM Lebohang Substation and 132kV Distribution Power Line Project Amendment GIS specialist & map production
39. ESKOM Geluk Rural Powerline GIS & Mapping
40. Eskom Kimberley Strengthening Phase 4 Project GIS & Mapping
41. ESKOM Kwaggafontein - Amandla Amendment Project GIS & Mapping
42. ESKOM Lephalale CNC – GIS Specialist & Mapping
43. ESKOM Marken CNC – GIS Specialist & Mapping
44. ESKOM Lethabong substation and powerlines – GIS Specialist & Mapping
45. ESKOM Magopela- Pitsong 132kV line and new substation – GIS Specialist & Mapping

**Professional affiliations**

South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions (SACNASP) registered Professional Natural Scientist (reg. nr 400177/09) – specialist field: Zoological Science. Registered since 2009.

# 1 BACKGROUND

SiVEST has been appointed by Mooi Plaats Solar Power (Pty) Ltd, Wonderheuvel Solar Power (Pty) Ltd and Paarde Valley (Pty) Ltd to conduct an Environmental Authorisation Application for the proposed Umsobomvu PV Solar Energy Facility (SEF) and associated grid connection, near Middelburg and Noupoort in the Eastern and Northern Cape. Chris van Rooyen Consulting was in turn appointed by SiVEST to conduct an avifaunal impact study to assess the impact of the proposed SEF on avifauna.

It is proposed that three (3) Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Energy Facilities, with associated grid connection infrastructure, will be developed, these being:

- ***Mooi Plaats Solar PV Facility***, on an application site of approximately 5 303ha, comprising the following farm portions:
    - Portion 1 of Leuwe Kop No 120
    - Remainder of Mooi Plaats No 121

- ***Wonderheuvel Solar PV Facility***, on an application site of approximately 5 652ha, comprising the following farm portions:
    - Remainder of Mooi Plaats No 121
    - Portion 3 of Wonder Heuvel No 140
    - Portion 5 of Holle Fountain No 133

- ***Paarde Valley Solar PV Facility***, on an application site of approximately 3 695ha, comprising the following farm portion:
    - Portion 2 of Paarde Valley No 62: and
    - Portion 7 of the Farm Leeuw Hoek No. 61.

## 1.1 SOLAR PV COMPONENTS

**Mooi Plaats Solar PV Energy Facility:**

The proposed Mooi Plaats Solar PV Energy Facility will include the following components:

- Three (3) PV array areas, occupying a combined total area of approximately 777 hectares (ha).
- The proposed solar PV energy facility will have a maximum total generation capacity of approximately **400MW** and will comprise approximately **1 142 857** PV modules. The final number of modules as well as their configuration will only be determined in the detailed design phase.
- PV modules will be either fixed tilt mounting or single axis tracking mounting, and the modules will be either crystalline silicon or thin film technology. Each module will be approximately 2m wide and between 1m and 4m in height, depending on the mounting type.
- Internal roads, between 4m and 10m wide, will provide access to the PV arrays. Existing site roads will be used wherever possible, although new site roads will be constructed where necessary.
- Up to three (3) temporary construction laydown / staging areas of approximately 4ha each.
- Operation and maintenance (O&M) buildings will be provided for each PV array area, occupying a site of approximately 1ha each. Up to a maximum of three (3) O&M buildings will thus be constructed.
- Medium voltage cabling will link the solar PV energy facility to the grid connection infrastructure. These cables will be laid underground wherever technically feasible.

**Wonderheuvel Solar PV Energy Facility:**

The proposed Wonderheuvel Solar PV Energy Facility will include the following components:

- Six (6) PV array areas, occupying a combined total area of approximately 864ha.
- The proposed solar PV energy facility will have a maximum total generation capacity of approximately **480MW** and will comprise approximately **1 371 429** PV modules. The final number of modules as well as their configuration will only be determined in the detailed design phase.
- PV modules will be either fixed tilt mounting or single axis tracking mounting, and the modules will be either crystalline silicon or thin film technology. Each module will be approximately 2m wide and between 1m and 4m in height, depending on the mounting type.
- Internal roads, between 4m and 10m wide, will provide access to the PV arrays. Existing site roads will be used wherever possible, although new site roads will be constructed where necessary.
- Up to a maximum of four (4) temporary construction laydown / staging areas of approximately 4ha each.
- Operation and maintenance (O&M) buildings will be provided for each PV array area, occupying a site of approximately 1ha each. However, certain PV array areas will share O&M buildings. Up to a maximum of four (4) O&M buildings will thus be constructed.
- Medium voltage cabling will link the solar PV energy facility to the grid connection infrastructure. These cables will be laid underground wherever technically feasible.

**Paarde Valley Solar PV Energy Facility:**

The proposed Paarde Valley Solar PV Energy Facility will include the following components:

- Five (5) PV array areas, occupying a combined total area of approximately 1 337ha.
- The proposed solar PV energy facility will have a maximum total generation capacity of approximately **700MW** and will comprise approximately **2 000 000** PV modules. The final number of modules as well as their configuration will only be determined in the detailed design phase.
- PV modules will be either fixed tilt mounting or single axis tracking mounting, and the modules will be either crystalline silicon or thin film technology. Each module will be approximately 2m wide and between 1m and 4m in height, depending on the mounting type.
- Internal roads, between 4m and 10m wide, will provide access to the PV arrays. Existing site roads will be used wherever possible, although new site roads will be constructed where necessary.
- Up to five (5) temporary construction laydown / staging areas of approximately 4ha each.
- Operation and maintenance (O&M) buildings will be provided for each PV array area, occupying a site of approximately 1ha each. Up to a maximum of five (5) O&M buildings will thus be constructed.
- Medium voltage cabling will link the solar PV energy facility to the grid connection infrastructure. These cables will be laid underground wherever technically feasible.

### 1.2 Grid Connection Infrastructure

The proposed grid connection infrastructure will include the following components:

- New on-site substations and collector substations to serve each solar PV energy facility, each occupying an area of up to approximately 4ha.
- A new 132kV overhead power line connecting the on-site substations and/or collector substations to either the Hydra D Main Transmission Substation (MTS) or the proposed

Coleskop Wind Energy Facility (WEF) substation, from where the electricity will be fed into the national grid. The type of power line towers being considered at this stage to include both lattice and monopole towers which will be up to 25m in height.

Grid connection infrastructure alternatives have been provided for each PV project. These alternatives essentially provide for different route alignments with associated substations contained within an assessment corridor between approximately 400m and 900m wide. This is to allow for flexibility to route the power line on either side of the existing high voltage Eskom power lines. The respective alternatives are as follows:

***Mooi Plaats Solar PV Grid Connection:***

The alternatives essentially provide for two (2) different route alignments with associated substations contained within an assessment corridor between approximately 400m and 900m wide. The alternatives are as follows:

**OPTION 1:**

- **Corridor Option 1a** - links Substation 2 and Substation 1a to the Hydra D MTS.
- **Corridor Option 1b** - links Substation 2 and Substation 1b to the Hydra D MTS.

**OPTION 2:**

- **Corridor Option 2a** - links Substation 2 and Substation 1a to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector substation located on the Wonderheuvel PV project application site.
- **Corridor Option 2b** - links Substation 2 and Substation 1b to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector substation located on the Wonderheuvel PV project application site.

***Wonderheuvel Solar PV Grid Connection:***

The alternatives essentially provide for three (3) different route alignments with associated substations contained within an assessment corridor between approximately 400m and 900m wide. The alternatives are as follows:

**OPTION 1:**

- **Corridor Option 1a** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
    a. The *northern connection* links the Proposed Substation 3a to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Northern Collector Substation located on the Mooi Plaats PV project application site.
    b. The *southern connection* links the proposed Substation 4a to the Coleskop WEF Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation located on the Paarde Valley PV Project application site.

- **Corridor Option 1b** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
    a. The *northern* connection links the Proposed Substation 3a to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Northern Collector Substation located on the Mooi Plaats PV project application site.
    b. The *southern connection* links the proposed Substation 4b to the Coleskop WEF Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation located on the Paarde Valley PV Project application site.

- **Corridor Option 1c** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
   a. The *northern* connection links the Proposed Substation 3b to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Northern Collector Substation located on the Mooi Plaats PV project application site.
   b. The *southern connection* links the proposed Substation 4a to the Coleskop WEF Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation located on the Paarde Valley PV Project application site.

- **Corridor Option 1d** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
   a. The *northern connection* links the Proposed Substation 3b to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Northern Collector Substation located on the Mooi Plaats PV project application site.
   b. The *southern connection* links the proposed Substation 4b to the Coleskop WEF Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation located on the Paarde Valley PV Project application site.

**OPTION 2:**

- **Corridor Option 2a -** links Substation 3a to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation.
- **Corridor Option 2b -** Option 2b links Substation 3b to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation.

**OPTION 3:**

- **Corridor Option 3** links Substation 4b to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation.

**Paarde Valley Solar PV Grid Connection:**

The alternatives essentially provide for two (2) different route alignments with associated substations contained within an assessment corridor between approximately 400m and 900m wide. The alternatives are as follows:

**OPTION 1:**

- Corridor **Option 1a** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
   i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Sub (Substation 6a will act as Central Collector for this option).
   ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 7a to the Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation (Substation 6a will act as Southern Collector for this option).

- Corridor **Option 1b** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
   i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Sub (Substation 6b will act as Southern Collector for this option).
   ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 7a to the Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation (Substation 6b will act as Southern Collector for this option).

- Corridor **Option 1c** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
   i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Sub (Substation 6a will act as Southern Collector for this option).

ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 7b to the Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation (Substation 6a will act as Southern Collector for this option).

- Corridor **Option 1d** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Sub (Substation 6b will act as Southern Collector for this option).
  ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 7b to the Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation (Substation 6b will act as Southern Collector for this option).

**OPTION 2:**

- Corridor **Option 2a** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Sub located on the Wonderveuvel PV Project application site.
  ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 6a and 7a to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.

- Corridor **Option 2b** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Sub located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.
  ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 6b and 7b to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.

- Corridor **Option 2c** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Sub located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.
  ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 6a and 7b to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.

- Corridor **Option 2d** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Sub located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.
  ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 6b and 7a to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.

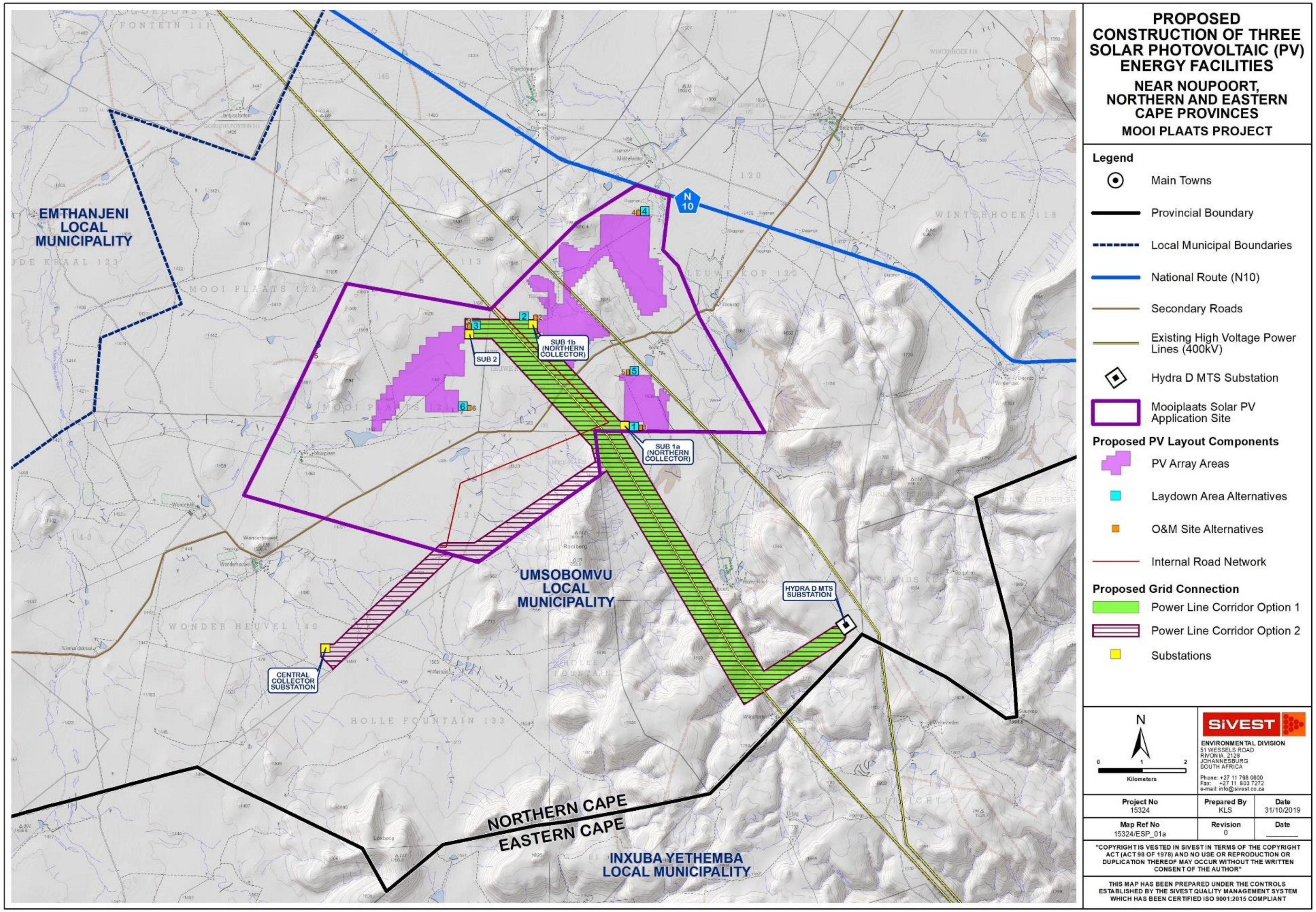


**Figure 1: Mooi Plaats Solar PV Facility**

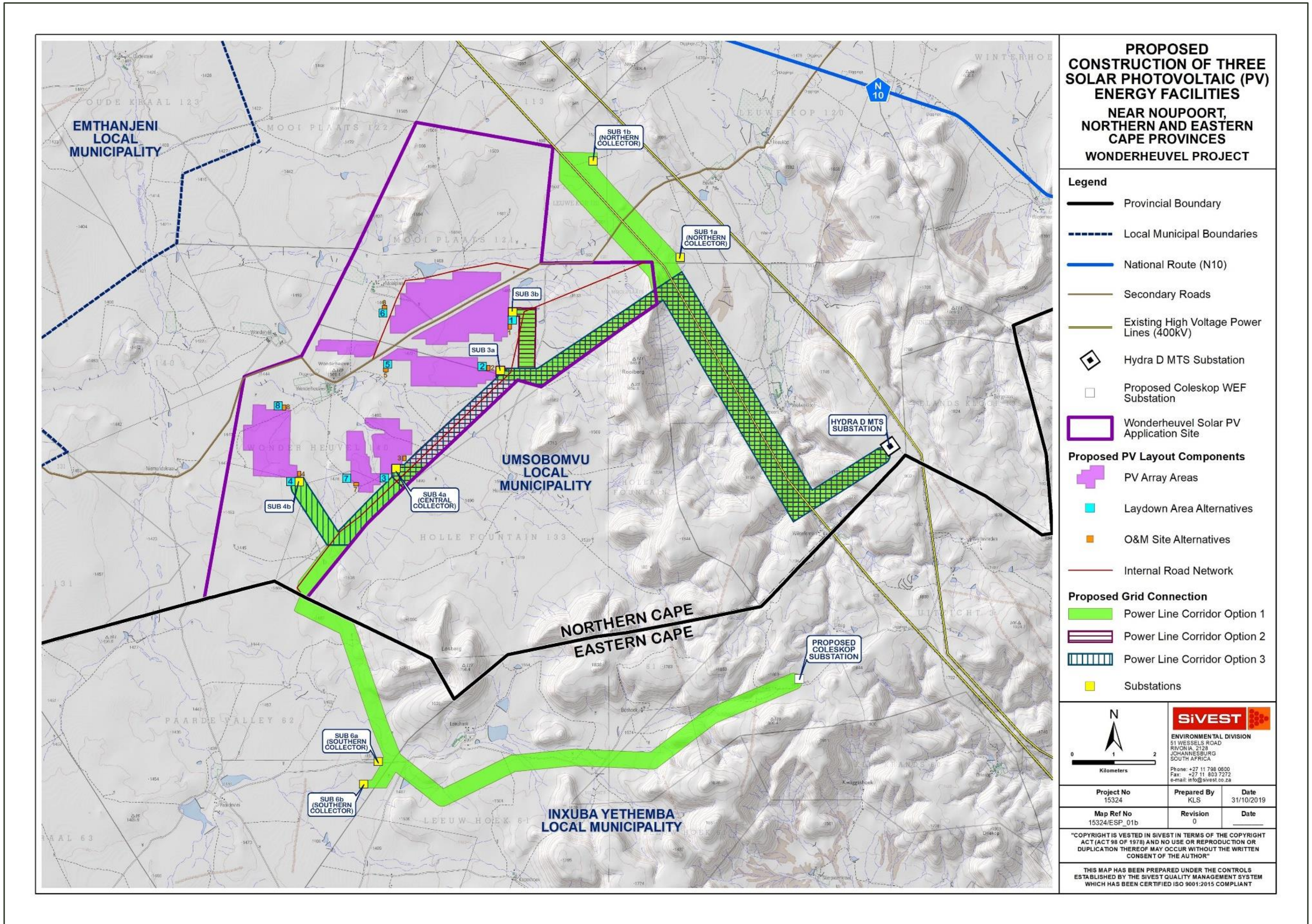


**Figure 2: Wonderheuvel Solar PV Facility**

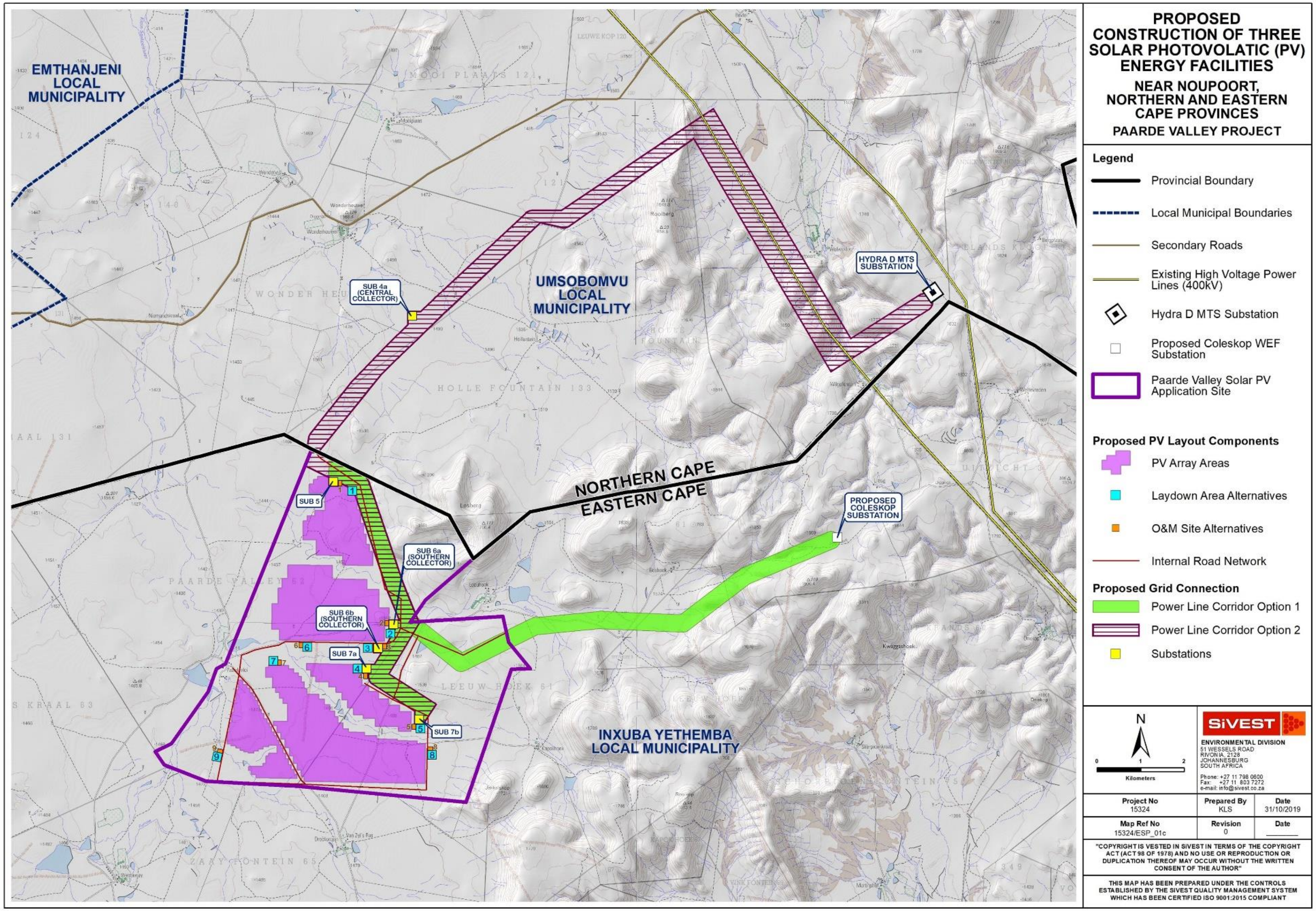


**Figure 3: Paarde Valley Solar PV Energy Facility**

## 2 PROJECT SCOPE

The terms of reference for this assessment report are as follows:

- Describe the affected environment from an avifaunal perspective;
- Discuss gaps in baseline data and other limitations;
- List and describe the expected impacts associated with the solar facilities and associated infrastructure;
- Assess the potential impacts;
- Recommend mitigation measures to reduce the impact of the expected impacts.

## 3 OUTLINE OF METHODOLOGY AND INFORMATION REVIEWED

The following information sources were consulted in order to conduct this study:

- Bird distribution data from the Southern African Bird Atlas Project 2 (SABAP 2) was obtained (http://sabap2.adu.org.za/), in order to ascertain which species occur in the pentads where the proposed development areas are located. A pentad grid cell covers 5 minutes of latitude by 5 minutes of longitude (5'× 5'). Each pentad is approximately 8 × 7.6 km. In order to get a more representative impression of the birdlife, a consolidated data set was obtained for a total of 9 pentads some of which intersect and others that are in the vicinity of the development, henceforth called the broader area. The SABAP2 data covers the period 2007 to 2019. The relevant pentads are 3115_2435, 3115_2440, 3110_2445, 3120_2435, 3120_2440, 3115_2445, 3125_2435, 3125_2440, 3125_2445.
- A classification of the vegetation types in the development area was obtained from the Atlas of Southern African Birds 1 (SABAP1) and the National Vegetation Map compiled by the South African National Biodiversity Institute (Mucina & Rutherford 2006).
- The national threatened status of all priority species was determined with the use of the most recent edition of the Red Data Book of Birds of South Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland (Taylor *et al*. 2015), and the latest authoritative summary of southern African bird biology (Hockey *et al.* 2005).
- The global threatened status of all priority species was determined by consulting the latest (2019.1) IUCN Red List of Threatened Species).
- The Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas of South Africa (Marnewick *et al.* 2015) was consulted for information on potentially relevant Important Bird Areas (IBAs).
- Satellite imagery was used in order to view the broader area on a landscape level and to help identify bird habitat on the ground.
- A desktop investigation was conducted to source information on the impacts of solar facilities on avifauna.
- A visit to the site and general area was conducted on 15 and 16 January 2019, followed up by on-site surveys from 17 - 19 January and 9 - 12 May 2019. Surveys were conducted according to the best practice guidelines for avifaunal impact studies at solar developments, compiled by BirdLife South Africa (BLSA) in 2017 (Jenkins *et al*. 2017). Please see Appendix 1 for the methodology used in the surveys.

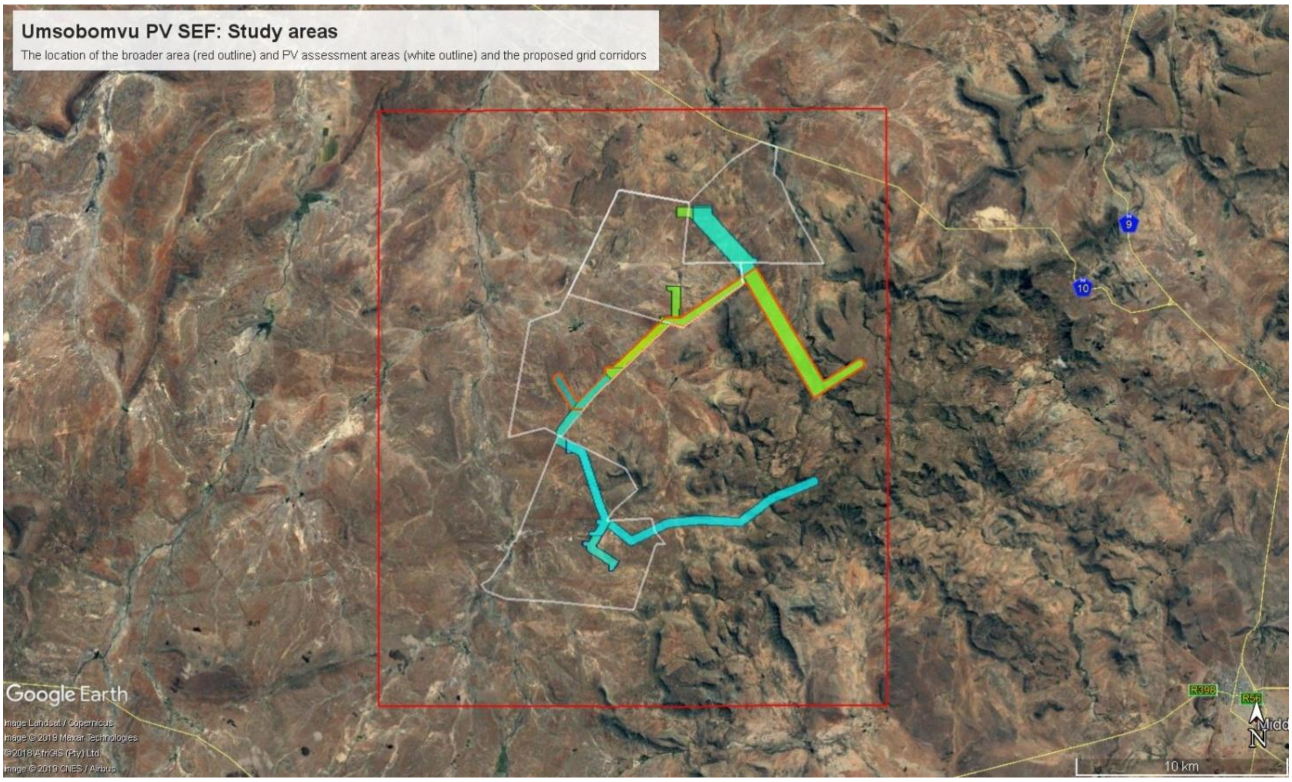


**Figure 4: Area covered by the nine SABAP 2 pentads (red outline), the PV assessment areas (white outline) and the proposed powerline corridors.**

# 4 ASSUMPTIONS AND LIMITATIONS

This study assumed that the sources of information used in this report are reliable. In this respect, the following must be noted:

- A total of 40 SABAP2 full protocol lists had been completed for the broader area where the proposed project is located (i.e. bird listing surveys lasting a minimum of two hours each). In addition,12 ad hoc protocol lists (i.e. bird listing surveys lasting less than two hours but still giving useful data) and 684 incidental sightings were also recorded. The SABAP2 data was therefore regarded as a good indicator of the avifauna which could occur at the proposed development area, and it was further supplemented by data collected during the on-site surveys.
- The focus of the study is primarily on the potential impacts on priority solar and powerline species.
- Priority solar species were defined as follows:
    - South African Red Data species;
    - South African endemics and near-endemics;
    - Raptors
    - Waterbirds
- Priority powerline species were defined as those species which could potentially be impacted by powerline collisions or electrocutions, based on morphology and/or behaviour.
- The impact of solar installations on avifauna is a new field of study, with only one published scientific study on the impact of PV facilities on avifauna in South Africa (Visser *et al*. 2019). Strong reliance was therefore placed on expert opinion and data from existing monitoring programmes at solar facilities in the USA where monitoring has been ongoing since 2013. The pre-cautionary principle was applied throughout as the full extent of impacts on avifauna at solar facilities is not presently known.
- The assessment of impacts is based on the baseline environment as it currently exists at the proposed development area.

- Cumulative impacts include all proposed and existing renewable energy projects within a 35km radius around the proposed development areas[1].
- Conclusions in this study are based on experience of these and similar species in different parts of South Africa. Bird behaviour can never be entirely reduced to formulas that will be valid under all circumstances.
- The **broader area** is defined as the area encompassed by the 9 pentads where the project is located (see Figure 4). The **study area** is defined as the combined area of the Mooi Plaats, Wonderheuvel, and Paarde Valley PV assessment areas, and the powerline corridors (see Figure 4). The **PV development footprint** is defined as the combined area covered by the solar fields, internal roads, lay-down areas and O&M buildings.

# 5 LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

There is no specific legislation pertaining specifically to the impact of solar facilities on avifauna. Guidelines for assessing and monitoring the impact of solar power generating facilities on birds in southern Africa (Jenkins *et al.* 2017), compiled by BirdLife South Africa, was followed in the compilation of this report.

## 5.1 AGREEMENTS AND CONVENTIONS

Table 1 below lists agreements and conventions which South Africa is party to and which is relevant to the conservation of avifauna (BirdLife International 2019).

**Table 1: Agreements and conventions which South Africa is party to and which is relevant to the conservation of avifauna.**

| Convention name | Description | Geographic scope |
|---|---|---|
| African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) | The Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA) is an intergovernmental treaty dedicated to the conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitats across Africa, Europe, the Middle East, Central Asia, Greenland and the Canadian Archipelago.<br><br>Developed under the framework of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and administered by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), AEWA brings together countries and the wider international conservation community in an effort to establish coordinated conservation and management of migratory waterbirds throughout their entire migratory range. | Regional |
| Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Nairobi, 1992 | The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) entered into force on 29 December 1993. It has 3 main objectives:<br><br>The conservation of biological diversity<br><br>The sustainable use of the components of biological diversity<br><br>The fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources. | Global |
| Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, (CMS), Bonn, 1979 | As an environmental treaty under the aegis of the United Nations Environment Programme, CMS provides a global platform for the conservation and sustainable use of migratory animals and their habitats. CMS brings together the States through which migratory animals pass, the Range States, and lays the legal foundation for internationally coordinated conservation measures throughout a migratory range. | Global |
| Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna, (CITES), Washington DC, 1973 | CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) is an international agreement between governments. Its aim is to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival. | Global |

[1] The list of projects was provided by SiVEST.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, Ramsar, 1971 | The Convention on Wetlands, called the Ramsar Convention, is an intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources. | Global |
| Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia | The Signatories will aim to take co-ordinated measures to achieve and maintain the favourable conservation status of birds of prey throughout their range and to reverse their decline when and where appropriate. | Regional |

## 5.2 NATIONAL LEGISLATION

### 5.2.1 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa provides in the Bill of Rights that: Everyone has the right –

(a) to an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being; and

(b) to have the environment protected, for the benefit of present and future generations, through reasonable legislative and other measures that –

- (i) prevent pollution and ecological degradation;
- (ii) promote conservation; and
- (iii) secure ecologically sustainable development and use of natural resources while promoting justifiable economic and social development.

### 5.2.2 The National Environmental Management Act 107 of 1998 (NEMA)

The National Environmental Management Act 107 of 1998 (NEMA) creates the legislative framework for environmental protection in South Africa and is aimed at giving effect to the environmental right in the Constitution. It sets out a number of guiding principles that apply to the actions of all organs of state that may significantly affect the environment. Sustainable development (socially, environmentally and economically) is one of the key principles, and internationally accepted principles of environmental management, such as the precautionary principle and the polluter pays principle, are also incorporated.

NEMA also provides that a wide variety of listed developmental activities, which may significantly affect the environment, may be performed only after an environmental impact assessment has been done and authorization has been obtained from the relevant authority. Many of these listed activities can potentially have negative impacts on bird populations in a variety of ways. The clearance of natural vegetation, for instance, can lead to a loss of habitat and may depress prey populations, while erecting structures needed for generating and distributing energy, communication, and so forth can cause mortalities by collision or electrocution.

### 5.2.3 The National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act 10 of 2004 (NEMBA) and the Threatened or Protected Species Regulations, February 2007 (TOPS Regulations)

The most prominent statute containing provisions directly aimed at the conservation of birds is the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act 10 of 2004 read with the Threatened or Protected Species Regulations, February 2007 (TOPS Regulations). Chapter 1 sets out the objectives of the Act, and they are aligned with the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity, which are the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits of the use of genetic resources. The Act also gives effect to CITES, the Ramsar Convention, and the Bonn Convention on Migratory Species of Wild Animals. The State is endowed with the trusteeship of biodiversity and has the responsibility to manage, conserve and sustain the biodiversity of South Africa.

# 6 BASELINE ASSESSMENT

## 6.1 IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS

The Platberg-Karoo Conservancy Important Bird Area (IBA) SA037 is located approximately 3 - 4km north-west of the PV study area and proposed powerline corridors (see Figure 5). The Platberg–Karoo Conservancy IBA covers the entire districts of De Aar, Philipstown and Hanover, including suburban towns. The landscape consists of extensive flat to gently undulating plains that are broken by dolerite hills and flat-topped inselbergs. The ephemeral Brak River flows in an arc from south-east to north-west, eventually feeding into the Orange River basin. Other ephemeral rivers include the Hondeblaf, Seekoei, Elandsfontein and Ongers rivers with a network of tributaries. Vanderkloof Dam is on the north-eastern boundary (Marnewick *et al.* 2015).

This IBA is in the Nama Karoo and Grassland Biomes. The eastern Nama Karoo has the highest rainfall of all the Nama Karoo vegetation types and is thus ecotonal to grassland, with a complex mix of grass- and shrub-dominated vegetation types. Eight broad vegetation types are present; seven are Least Threatened and the Upper Gariep Alluvial Vegetation type is classified as Vulnerable (Marnewick *et al*. 2015).

The land is used primarily for grazing and agriculture. Commercial livestock farming is mostly extensive wool and mutton production, with some cattle and game farming. Less than 5% of this IBA is cultivated under dry-land or irrigated conditions, and includes lucerne and prickly pear *Opuntia ficus-indica* orchards (Marnewick *et al.* 2015).

This IBA contributes significantly to the conservation of large terrestrial birds and raptors. These include Blue Crane *Anthropoides paradiseus*, Ludwig's Bustard *Neotis ludwigii*, Kori Bustard *Ardeotis kori*, Blue Korhaan *Eupodotis caerulescens*, Black Stork *Ciconia nigra*, Secretarybird *Sagittarius serpentarius*, Martial Eagle *Polemaetus bellicosus*, Verreauxs' Eagle *Aquila verreauxii* and Tawny Eagle *A. rapax* (Marnewick *et al.* 2015).

In summer, close to 10% of the global population of Lesser Kestrels *Falco naumanni* roost in this IBA. Amur Falcons *F. amurensis* are also abundant and forage and roost with Lesser Kestrels. This IBA is seasonally important for White Stork *Ciconia ciconia*, with high numbers of this species recorded during outbreaks of brown locusts *Locustana pardalina* and armoured ground crickets *Acanthoplus discoidalis* (Marnewick *et al.* 2015).

IBA trigger species are the globally threatened Blue Crane, Ludwig's Bustard, Kori Bustard, Secretarybird, Martial Eagle, Blue Korhaan, Black Harrier *Circus maurus* and Denham's Bustard *Neotis denhami*. Regionally threatened species are Black Stork, Lanner Falcon *Falco biarmicus*, Tawny Eagle, Karoo Korhaan and Verreaux's' Eagle (Marnewick *et al*. 2015).

Biome-restricted species include Karoo Lark *Calendulauda albescens*, Karoo Long-billed Lark *Certhilauda subcoronata*, Karoo Chat *Cercomela schlegelii*, Tractrac Chat *C. tractrac*, Sickle-winged Chat *C. sinuata*, Namaqua Warbler *Phragmacia substriata*, Layard's Tit-Babbler *Sylvia layardi*, Pale-winged Starling *Onychognathus nabouroup* and Black-headed Canary *Serinus alario*. Congregatory species include Lesser Kestrel and Amur Falcon.

Due to the proximity of the IBA to the study area, it is possible that the proposed project could impact on some of the trigger species in the IBA. Far ranging birds that move in and out of the IBA could be impacted, namely powerline sensitive species such as Blue Crane, Ludwig's Bustard, Kori Bustard, Black Stork, Secretarybird, Martial Eagle, Verreaux's Eagle and Tawny Eagle, which could be at risk of electrocutions on and/or collisions with the proposed 132kV grid connection.

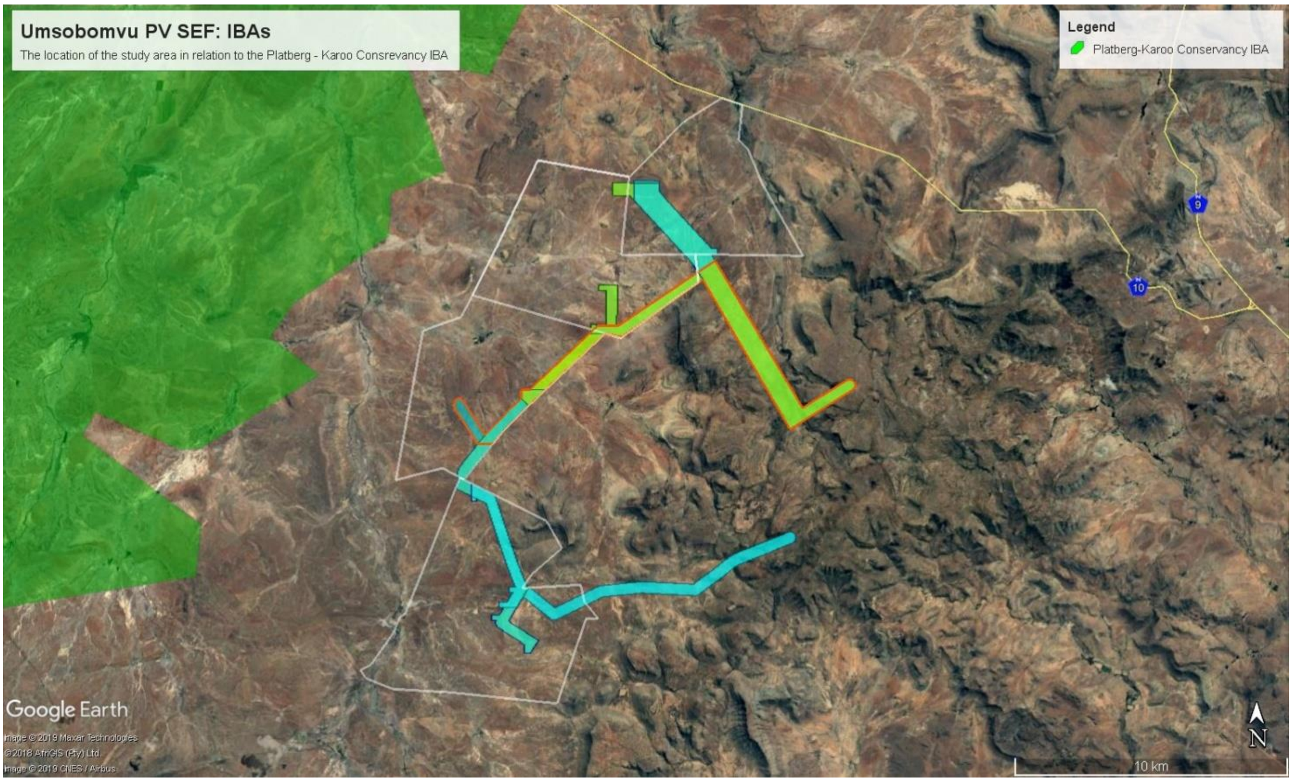


**Figure 5: The location of the Platberg – Karoo Conservancy IBA relative to the study area.**

## 6.2 HABITAT CLASSES

Vegetation structure, rather than the actual plant species, is more significant for bird species distribution and abundance (Harrison *et al.* 1997). The description of the vegetation types occurring in the study area largely follows the classification system presented in the Atlas of southern African birds (SABAP1) (Harrison *et al*. 1997). The criteria used to amalgamate botanically defined vegetation units, or to keep them separate were (1) the existence of clear differences in vegetation structure, likely to be relevant to birds, and (2) the results of published community studies on bird/vegetation associations. It is important to note that no new vegetation unit boundaries were created, with use being made only of previously published data. The description of vegetation presented in this study therefore concentrates on factors relevant to the bird species present and is not an exhaustive list of plant species present.

Whilst the distribution and abundance of the priority bird species in the study area are closely tied to natural features e.g. vegetation structure and topography/relief, it is also necessary to examine external modifications to the environment that might have relevance for priority species. Anthropogenic avifaunal-relevant habitat modifications which could potentially influence the avifaunal community that were recorded in or close to the study area are dams and water reservoirs, high voltage transmission lines, agriculture, fences and alien trees. The habitat classes are discussed in more detail below.

The solar and powerline priority species associated with each habitat class are listed in Tables 2 and 3.

### 6.2.1 Grassy Karoo

The study area lies at the intersection between Nama Karoo and Grassland biomes (Mucina & Rutherford 2006), described by Harrison et al. (1997) as Grassy Karoo. The dominant vegetation type in the study area is Eastern Upper Karoo, which occurs on the plains where all of the PV assessment areas are located, and is dominated by dwarf microphyllous shrubs, with 'white' grasses of the genera Aristida and Eragrostis (these become prominent especially in the early autumn months after good summer rains). Rainfall occurs mainly in autumn and summer, peaking in March. The mean annual precipitation ranges from about 180 mm to 430 mm. Incidence of frost is relatively high. Mean maximum and minimum monthly temperatures in Middelburg (Grootfontein) are 36.1°C and –7.2°C for January and July, respectively (Mucina & Rutherford, 2006). Small sections of some of the proposed powerline corridors are located in Besemkaree Koppies Shrubland, which occurs on slopes of koppies, butts and tafelbergs covered by two-layered karroid shrubland. The lower (closed-canopy) layer is dominated by dwarf small-leaved shrubs and, especially in precipitation-rich years, also by abundant grasses, while the upper (loose canopy) layer is dominated by tall shrubs (Mucina & Rutherford, 2006).

**Figure 6: An example of Eastern Upper Karoo (Grassy Karoo) occurring on the plains where the proposed PV areas are located.**

**Figure 7: An example of Besemkaree Koppies Shrubland which occurs on the slopes.**

### 6.2.2 Surface water

Surface water is of specific importance to avifauna in this semi-arid environment. The study area contains many boreholes with open water troughs that provide drinking water to livestock. Open water troughs are important sources of surface water and could potentially be used extensively by various bird species, including large raptors, to drink and bath. There are also a number of dams and natural waterbodies in the study area, which are located in drainage lines (see Figure 8). The dams and waterbodies were mostly dry when the surveys were conducted, but it could hold water after good rains, when it could be attractive to various bird species, including large raptors, to drink and bath. It could also serve as an attraction to waterbirds when it contains water.

**Figure 8: A dam in the study area**

### 6.2.3 Cliffs

The south-eastern part of the broader area contains several cliffs which is utilised by a number of cliff-nesting raptors for breeding, including Booted Eagle, Verreaux's Eagle (see Figure 9) and possibly Jackal Buzzard. Figure 10 below shows the location of known nests in the study area.

**Figure 9: A Verreaux's Eagle nest on a cliff in the study area**

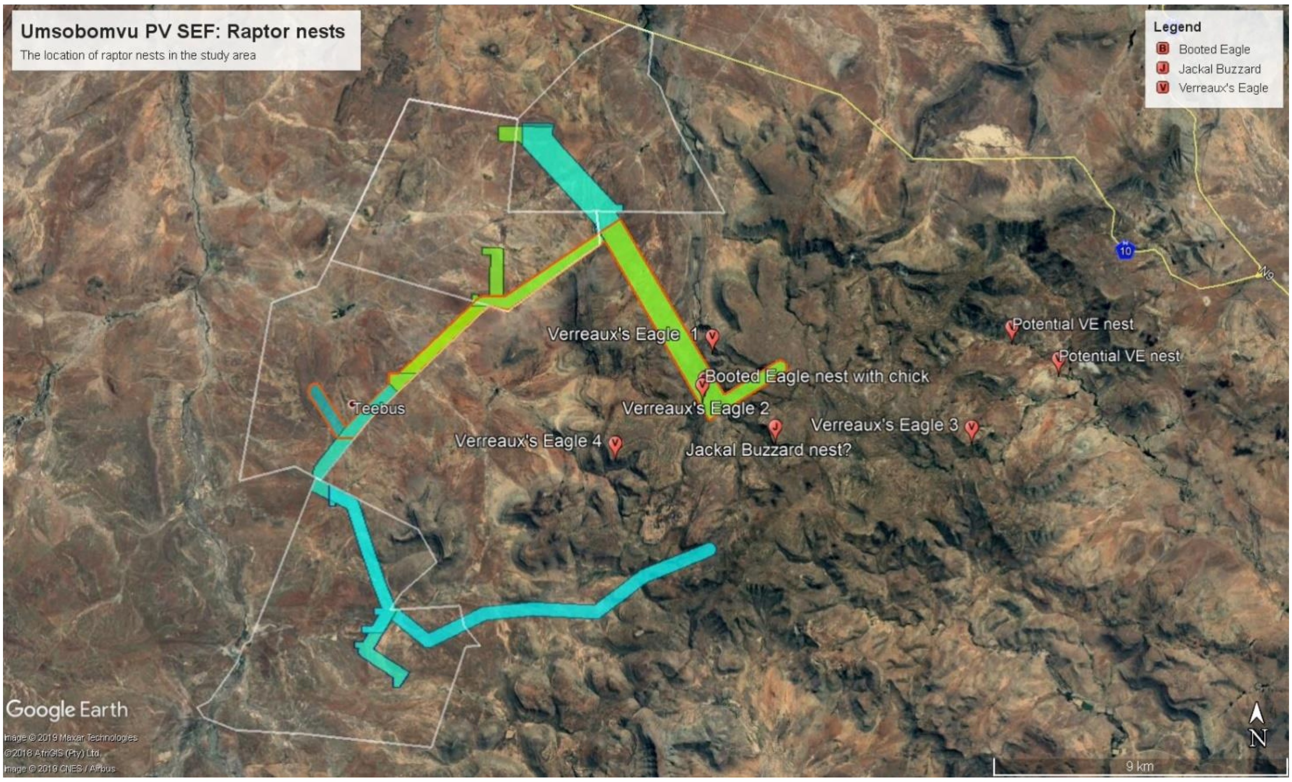


**Figure 10: The location of raptor nests in the study area.**

### 6.2.4 High voltage lines

High voltage lines are an important roosting and breeding substrate for large raptors in the tree-less Karoo habitat (Jenkins *et al.* 2006). There are two 400kV transmission lines running through the study area, namely the Hydra-Poseidon 400kV 1 and 2 (see Figure 11 below). No raptor nests were recorded on the transmission lines.

**Figure 11: The Hydra-Poseidon 400kV 1 high voltage line running through the site.**

### 6.2.5 Fences

The study area is fenced off into grazing camps (see Figure 12). Farm fences provide important perching substrate for a wide range of birds in this treeless environment where natural perches are scarce, as a staging post for territorial displays by small birds and also for perch hunting for raptors such as Greater Kestrel, Rock Kestrel, Black-winged Kite and Southern pale Chanting Goshawk.

**Figure 12: The study area contains many fences.**

### 6.2.6 Agriculture

The study area contains a number of agricultural clearings and irrigated pivots (see Figure 13). These areas may attract several solar and powerline priority species, including Ludwig's Bustard, Blue Crane, Spurwing Goose, Egyptian Goose, Helmeted Guineafowl, White Stork and Blue Korhaan.

**Figure 13: Irrigated fields in the study area.**

### 6.2.7 Alien trees

Large indigenous trees are rare in the Karoo, therefore alien trees of the genus *Pinus*, *Populus* and *Eucalyptus* have been introduced in many areas, often around homesteads, but also at boreholes (see Figure 14). In some places, these alien species have become an invasive threat in drainage lines. Many solar and powerline priority species use alien trees for nesting and roosting.

**Figure 14: Alien trees in the study area**

## 6.3 AVIFAUNA

### 6.3.1 Southern African Bird Atlas 2

The SABAP2 data indicate that a total of 185 bird species could potentially occur in the broader area – Appendix 2 provides a comprehensive list of all the species, including those recorded during the pre-construction monitoring. Of these, 78 species are classified as priority solar species, and 50 as powerline priority species (see Section 4 for the definition of a priority species). The probability of a priority species occurring in the study area is indicated in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2 below lists all the solar priority species and the possible impact on the respective species by the proposed solar energy infrastructure. Table 3 does the same for powerline sensitive species and powerline infrastructure. The following abbreviations and acronyms are used:

- EN = Endangered
- VU = Vulnerable
- NT = Near-threatened

### 6.3.2 Pre-construction surveys

A visit to the study area was conducted on 15 and 16 January 2019, followed up by on-site surveys from 17 - 19 January and 9 – 12 May 2019. Surveys were conducted according to the best practice guidelines for avifaunal impact studies at solar developments, compiled by BirdLife South Africa (BLSA) in 2017 (Jenkins *et al.* 2017). Please see Appendix 1 for the methodology used in the surveys.

#### *6.3.2.1 Priority species abundance*

The abundance of solar priority species (birds/km) recorded during the two seasonal surveys are displayed in Figure 15 below.

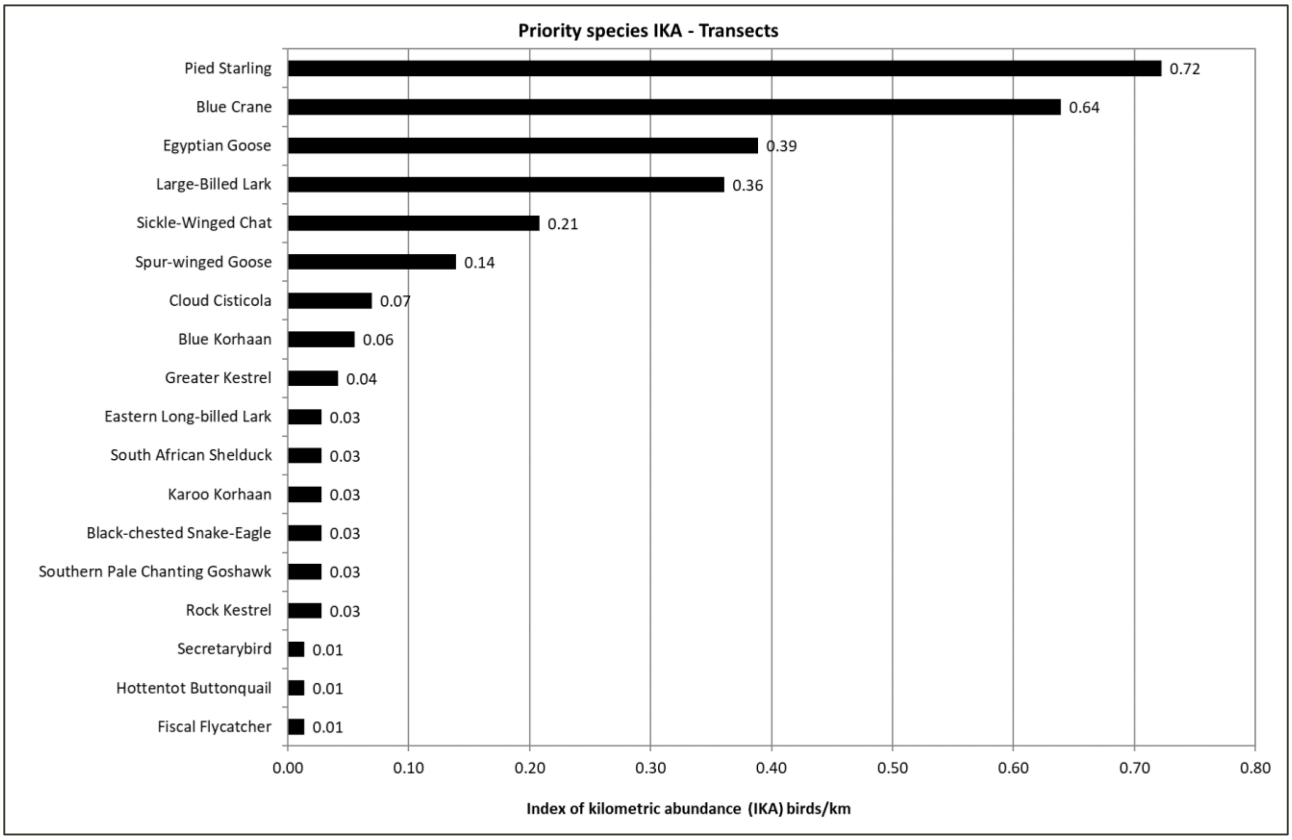


**Figure 15: The abundance of solar priority species recorded during the two rounds of seasonal surveys**

**Table 2**: Solar priority species potentially occurring at the site, conservation status, priority criteria, SABAP reporting rates, probability of occurrence, habitat use and potential impacts.

| Species | Taxonomic name | Solar priority species | SABAP2 Average reporting rate: full protocol | Red Data status: International | Red Data status: Regional | Endemic - South Africa | Endemic - Southern Africa | Possibility of occurrence | Recorded during surveys | Grassy Karoo | Surface water | Alien trees | Cliffs | Powerlines | Agriculture | Fences | PV panel collisions | Displacement - disturbance | Displacement - habitat loss | Entrapment in fences |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Avocet, Pied | *Recurvirostra avosetta* | *x* | 15.48 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Bustard, Ludwig's | *Neotis ludwigii* | *x* | 25.67 | EN | EN | | Near-endemic | High | x | x | | | | | x | | | x | x | x |
| Buzzard, Jackal | *Buteo rufofuscus* | *x* | 22.22 | | | Near endemic | Endemic | High | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | | |
| Canary, Black-headed | *Serinus alario* | *x* | 14.56 | | | Near endemic | Endemic | Low | | x | x | | | | | x | x | x | | |
| Chat, Sickle-winged | *Cercomela sinuata* | *x* | 48.81 | | | Near endemic | Endemic | High | x | x | | | | | | x | x | x | | |
| Cisticola, Cloud | *Cisticola textrix* | *x* | 0.00 | | | Near endemic | Near-endemic | High | x | x | | | | | | | x | x | | |
| Coot, Red-knobbed | *Fulica cristata* | *x* | 14.41 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Cormorant, Reed | *Phalacrocorax africanus* | *x* | 13.49 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Crane, Blue | *Anthropoides paradiseus* | *x* | 73.41 | VU | NT | | Endemic | High | x | x | x | | | | x | | | x | x | x |
| Duck, African Black | *Anas sparsa* | *x* | 8.33 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Duck, Maccoa | *Oxyura maccoa* | *x* | 1.59 | NT | NT | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Duck, White-faced | *Dendrocygna viduata* | *x* | 2.78 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Duck, Yellow-billed | *Anas undulata* | *x* | 50.92 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Eagle, Martial | *Polemaetus bellicosus* | *x* | 7.14 | VU | EN | | | Medium | | x | x | x | | x | x | | | x | x | |
| Eagle, Verreaux's | *Aquila verreauxii* | *x* | 18.26 | LC | VU | | | High | x | x | | x | x | x | | | | | | |
| Eagle-owl, Spotted | *Bubo africanus* | *x* | 12.43 | | | | | High | | x | | x | x | | x | x | x | x | | |
| Egret, Cattle | *Bubulcus ibis* | *x* | 4.63 | | | | | Low | | x | | x | | | x | | | x | | |
| Egret, Great | *Egretta alba* | *x* | 0.00 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Falcon, Lanner | *Falco biarmicus* | *x* | 2.78 | LC | VU | | | Medium | | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | | |
| Falcon, Peregrine | *Falco peregrinus* | *x* | 1.59 | | | | | Low | | | x | x | x | x | | | x | | | |
| Fish-eagle, African | *Haliaeetus vocifer* | *x* | 3.18 | | | | | Low | | | x | x | | | | | x | | | |

| Species | Taxonomic name | Solar priority species | SABAP2 Average reporting rate: full protocol | Red Data status: International | Red Data status: Regional | Endemic - South Africa | Endemic - Southern Africa | Possibility of occurrence | Recorded during surveys | Grassy Karoo | Surface water | Alien trees | Cliffs | Powerlines | Agriculture | Fences | PV panel collisions | Displacement - disturbance | Displacement - habitat loss | Entrapment in fences |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Flamingo, Greater | *Phoenicopterus ruber* | x | 3.18 | LC | NT | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Flycatcher, Fiscal | *Sigelus silens* | x | 34.40 | | | Near endemic | Endemic | High | x | x | | x | | | | x | x | x | | |
| Goose, Spur-winged | *Plectropterus gambensis* | x | 34.79 | | | | | High | x | | x | | | x | x | | x | | | |
| Goshawk, Southern Pale Chanting | *Melierax canorus* | x | 34.66 | | | | Near-endemic | High | x | x | x | x | | x | | x | x | x | | |
| Grebe, Black-necked | *Podiceps nigricollis* | x | 0.00 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Grebe, Great Crested | *Podiceps cristatus* | x | 1.59 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Grebe, Little | *Tachybaptus ruficollis* | x | 9.12 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Greenshank, Common | *Tringa nebularia* | x | 12.70 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Hamerkop | *Scopus umbretta* | x | 1.86 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Harrier, Black | *Circus maurus* | x | 2.78 | VU | EN | Near endemic | Endemic | Low | | x | x | | | | | x | x | | | |
| Harrier-Hawk, African | *Polyboroides typus* | x | 1.59 | | | | | Low | | x | x | x | x | | | | | | | |
| Heron, Black-headed | *Ardea melanocephala* | x | 17.33 | | | | | Medium | | x | x | x | | x | x | | | x | | |
| Heron, Grey | *Ardea cinerea* | x | 23.93 | | | | | Low | | | x | x | | | | | x | | | |
| Ibis, African Sacred | *Threskiornis aethiopicus* | x | 20.23 | | | | | Low | | | x | x | | | x | | x | | | |
| Kestrel, Greater | *Falco rupicoloides* | x | 21.30 | | | | | High | x | x | | x | | x | | x | | x | | |
| Kestrel, Lesser | *Falco naumanni* | x | 20.37 | | | | | Medium | | x | | | | x | x | | | x | | |
| Kestrel, Rock | *Falco rupicolus* | x | 27.41 | | | | | High | x | x | | x | x | x | x | x | | x | | |
| Kingfisher, Malachite | *Alcedo cristata* | x | 2.78 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Kingfisher, Pied | *Ceryle rudis* | x | 2.78 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Kite, Black-shouldered | *Elanus caeruleus* | x | 15.44 | | | | | High | x | x | | x | | x | x | | | | | |
| Korhaan, Blue | *Eupodotis caerulescens* | x | 56.34 | NT | LC | Endemic (SA, Lesotho, Swaziland) | Endemic | High | x | x | | | | | x | | | x | | x |
| Korhaan, Karoo | *Eupodotis vigorsii* | x | 13.10 | LC | NT | | Endemic | High | x | x | | | | | | | | x | | x |

| Species | Taxonomic name | Solar priority species | SABAP2 Average reporting rate: full protocol | Red Data status: International | Red Data status: Regional | Endemic - South Africa | Endemic - Southern Africa | Possibility of occurrence | Recorded during surveys | Grassy Karoo | Surface water | Alien trees | Cliffs | Powerlines | Agriculture | Fences | PV panel c ollisions | Displacement - disturbance | Displacement - habitat loss | Entrapment in fences |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Lapwing, Blacksmith | *Vanellus armatus* | *x* | 49.33 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | x | | x | x | | |
| Lark, Large-billed | *Galerida magnirostris* | *x* | 75.27 | | | Near endemic | Endemic | High | x | x | | | | | | x | | x | | |
| Moorhen, Common | *Gallinula chloropus* | *x* | 17.07 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Night-Heron, Black-crowned | *Nycticorax nycticorax* | *x* | 0.00 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Owl, Barn | *Tyto alba* | *x* | 7.41 | | | | | Medium | | x | | x | | | x | x | x | x | | |
| Pipit, African Rock | *Anthus crenatus* | *x* | 11.11 | LC | NT | Endemic (SA, Lesotho, Swaziland) | Endemic | Low | | | | | x | | | | | | | |
| Plover, Kittlitz's | *Charadrius pecuarius* | *x* | 28.70 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Plover, Three-banded | *Charadrius tricollaris* | *x* | 57.68 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Pochard, Southern | *Netta erythrophthalma* | *x* | 1.59 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Prinia, Karoo | *Prinia maculosa* | *x* | 76.19 | | | Near endemic | Endemic | Medium | | x | | | | | | | x | x | | |
| Ruff | *Philomachus pugnax* | *x* | 3.18 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Sandpiper, Wood | *Tringa glareola* | *x* | 3.18 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Secretarybird | *Sagittarius serpentarius* | *x* | 19.44 | VU | VU | | | High | x | x | | | | | | | | x | x | x |
| Shelduck, South African | *Tadorna cana* | *x* | 51.86 | | | | Endemic | Medium | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Shoveler, Cape | *Anas smithii* | *x* | 7.14 | | | | Near-endemic | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Snake-eagle, Black-chested | *Circaetus pectoralis* | *x* | 1.86 | | | | | High | x | x | x | x | | x | x | | | x | x | |
| Snipe, African | *Gallinago nigripennis* | *x* | 1.59 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Sparrowhawk, Black | *Accipiter melanoleucus* | *x* | 0.00 | | | | | Low | | | x | x | | | | | | | | |
| Sparrowhawk, Rufous-chested | *Accipiter rufiventris* | *x* | 2.78 | | | | | Low | | | x | x | | | | | | | | |
| Sparrowlark, Black-eared | *Eremopterix australis* | *x* | 2.78 | | | Near endemic | Endemic | Low | | x | x | | | | | | x | x | x | |
| Spoonbill, African | *Platalea alba* | *x* | 5.96 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |

| Species | Taxonomic name | Solar priority species | SABAP2 Average reporting rate: full protocol | Red Data status: International | Red Data status: Regional | Endemic - South Africa | Endemic - Southern Africa | Possibility of occurrence | Recorded during surveys | Grassy Karoo | Surface water | Alien trees | Cliffs | Powerlines | Agriculture | Fences | PV panel c ollisions | Displacement - disturbance | Displacement - habitat loss | Entrapment in fences |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Starling, Pied | *Spreo bicolor* | *x* | 94.44 | 94.44 | | Endemic (SA, Lesotho, Swaziland) | Endemic | High | x | x | x | x | | | x | x | x | x | | |
| Stilt, Black-winged | *Himantopus himantopus* | *x* | 23.01 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Stint, Little | *Calidris minuta* | *x* | 9.12 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Stork, Black | *Ciconia nigra* | *x* | 0.00 | LC | VU | | | Low | | | x | | x | | | | | | | |
| Stork, White | *Ciconia ciconia* | *x* | 0.00 | | | | | Medium | | x | x | | | | x | | | x | x | |
| Sunbird, Southern Double-collared | *Cinnyris chalybeus* | *x* | 5.56 | | | Near endemic | Endemic | Low | | x | | | | | | | x | x | | |
| Teal, Cape | *Anas capensis* | *x* | 8.73 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Teal, Red-billed | *Anas erythrorhyncha* | *x* | 13.37 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Thrush, Karoo | *Turdus smithi* | *x* | 34.12 | | | Near endemic | Endemic | Low | | | | x | | | | | | | | |
| Tit, Grey | *Parus afer* | *x* | 10.19 | | | Near endemic | Endemic | Low | | x | | | | | | | x | x | x | |
| Vulture, Cape | *Gyps coprotheres* | *x* | 2.78 | EN | EN | | Near-endemic | Low | | x | | | | x | | | | | | |
| Weaver, Cape | *Ploceus capensis* | *x* | 7.14 | | | Near endemic | Endemic | Low | | | | x | | | | | | | | |
| White-eye, Cape | *Zosterops virens* | *x* | 25.40 | | | Near endemic | Endemic | Low | | | | x | | | | | | | | |
| Woodpecker, Ground | *Geocolaptes olivaceus* | *x* | 1.86 | | | Endemic (SA, Lesotho, Swaziland) | Endemic | Low | | | | | x | | | | | | | |

**Table 3: Powerline priority species potentially occurring at the site, conservation status, priority criteria, SABAP reporting rates, probability of occurrence, habitat use and potential impacts.**

| Species | Taxonomic name | SABAP2 Average reporting rate: full protocol | Red Data status: International | Red Data status: Regional | Endemic - South Africa | Endemic - Southern Africa | Possibility of occurrence | Recorded during surveys | Grassy Karoo | Surface water | Alien trees | Cliffs | Powerlines | Agriculture | Fences | Collisions | Displacement - disturbance | Displacement - habitat loss | Electrocution (substations) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bustard, Ludwig's | *Neotis ludwigii* | 25.67 | EN | EN | | Near-endemic | High | x | x | | | | | x | | x | x | | |
| Buzzard, Jackal | *Buteo rufofuscus* | 22.22 | | | Near endemic | Endemic | High | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | | |
| Buzzard, Steppe | *Buteo vulpinus* | 10.59 | | | | | Medium | | x | x | x | | x | x | x | x | x | | |
| Coot, Red-knobbed | *Fulica cristata* | 14.41 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Cormorant, Reed | *Phalacrocorax africanus* | 13.49 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Crane, Blue | *Anthropoides paradiseus* | 73.41 | VU | NT | | Endemic | Low | x | x | x | | | | x | | x | x | | |
| Crow, Pied | *Corvus albus* | 88.89 | | | | | High | x | x | | x | | x | x | x | | | | x |
| Duck, African Black | *Anas sparsa* | 8.33 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Duck, Maccoa | *Oxyura maccoa* | 1.59 | NT | NT | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Duck, White-faced | *Dendrocygna viduata* | 2.78 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Duck, Yellow-billed | *Anas undulata* | 50.92 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Eagle, Booted | *Aquila pennatus* | 16.67 | | | | | High | x | x | x | x | x | x | | | x | x | | |
| Eagle, Martial | *Polemaetus bellicosus* | 7.14 | VU | EN | | | Medium | | x | x | x | | x | x | | x | x | | |
| Eagle, Verreaux's | *Aquila verreauxii* | 18.26 | LC | VU | | | High | x | | x | x | x | x | | | x | x | | |
| Eagle-owl, Spotted | *Bubo africanus* | 12.43 | | | | | High | x | x | | x | x | | x | x | x | x | | |
| Egret, Great | *Egretta alba* | 0.00 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Falcon, Lanner | *Falco biarmicus* | 2.78 | LC | VU | | | Low | | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | | x |
| Falcon, Peregrine | *Falco peregrinus* | 1.59 | | | | | Low | | | | x | x | x | | | x | | | |
| Fish-eagle, African | *Haliaeetus vocifer* | 3.18 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Flamingo, Greater | *Phoenicopterus ruber* | 3.18 | LC | NT | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Goose, Egyptian | *Alopochen aegyptiacus* | 77.78 | | | | | High | x | | x | | | x | x | | x | | | x |

| Species | Taxonomic name | SABAP2 Average reporting rate: full protocol | Red Data status: International | Red Data status: Regional | Endemic - South Africa | Endemic - Southern Africa | Possibility of occurrence | Recorded during surveys | Grassy Karoo | Surface water | Alien trees | Cliffs | Powerlines | Agriculture | Fences | Collisions | Displacement - disturbance | Displacement - habitat loss | Electrocution (substations) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Goose, Spur-winged | *Plectropterus gambensis* | 34.79 | | | | | High | x | | x | | | | x | | x | | | |
| Goshawk, Southern Pale Chanting | *Melierax canorus* | 34.66 | | | | Near-endemic | High | x | x | x | x | | x | x | x | x | x | | x |
| Grebe, Black-necked | *Podiceps nigricollis* | 0.00 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Grebe, Great Crested | *Podiceps cristatus* | 1.59 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Guineafowl, Helmeted | *Numida meleagris* | 63.22 | | | | | Low | x | x | | x | | x | x | x | x | | | x |
| Hamerkop | *Scopus umbretta* | 1.86 | | | | | Low | | | x | x | x | | | | x | | | |
| Harrier, Black | *Circus maurus* | 2.78 | VU | EN | Near endemic | Endemic | Low | | x | x | | | | | x | x | | | |
| Harrier-Hawk, African | *Polyboroides typus* | 1.59 | | | | | Low | | x | x | x | x | | | x | x | | | x |
| Heron, Black-headed | *Ardea melanocephala* | 17.33 | | | | | Medium | | x | x | x | | x | x | | x | | | |
| Heron, Grey | *Ardea cinerea* | 23.93 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Ibis, African Sacred | *Threskiornis aethiopicus* | 20.23 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Ibis, Hadeda | *Bostrychia hagedash* | 51.46 | | | | | Medium | | | | x | | | x | | x | | | x |
| Korhaan, Blue | *Eupodotis caerulescens* | 56.34 | NT | LC | Endemic (SA, Lesotho, Swaziland) | Endemic | High | x | x | | | | | | | x | | | |
| Korhaan, Karoo | *Eupodotis vigorsii* | 13.10 | LC | NT | | Endemic | High | x | x | | | | | | | x | | | |
| Korhaan, Northern Black | *Afrotis afraoides* | 74.21 | | | | Endemic | High | x | x | | | | | | | x | | | |
| Night-Heron, Black-crowned | *Nycticorax nycticorax* | 0.00 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | | | | |
| Pochard, Southern | *Netta erythrophthalma* | 1.59 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Raven, White-necked | *Corvus albicollis* | 19.18 | | | | | Medium | | | | | x | | | | x | | | x |
| Sandgrouse, Namaqua | *Pterocles namaqua* | 34.52 | | | | Near-endemic | High | x | x | x | | | | x | | x | | | |
| Secretarybird | *Sagittarius serpentarius* | 19.44 | VU | VU | | | High | x | x | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Shelduck, South African | *Tadorna cana* | 51.86 | | | | Endemic | Medium | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |

| Species | Taxonomic name | SABAP2 Average reporting rate: full protocol | Red Data status: International | Red Data status: Regional | Endemic - South Africa | Endemic - Southern Africa | Possibility of occurrence | Recorded during surveys | Grassy Karoo | Surface water | Alien trees | Cliffs | Powerlines | Agriculture | Fences | Collisions | Displacement - disturbance | Displacement - habitat loss | Electrocution (substations) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Shoveler, Cape | *Anas smithii* | 7.14 | | | | Near-endemic | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Snake-eagle, Black-chested | *Circaetus pectoralis* | 1.86 | | | | | High | x | x | | | | x | x | | x | | | |
| Spoonbill, African | *Platalea alba* | 5.96 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Stork, Black | *Ciconia nigra* | 0.00 | LC | VU | | | Low | | | x | | x | | | | x | | | |
| Stork, White | *Ciconia ciconia* | 0.00 | | | | | Medium | | x | x | | | | x | | x | | | |
| Teal, Cape | *Anas capensis* | 8.73 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Teal, Red-billed | *Anas erythrorhyncha* | 13.37 | | | | | Low | | | x | | | | | | x | | | |
| Vulture, Cape | *Gyps coprotheres* | 2.78 | EN | EN | | Near-endemic | Low | | x | | | | | | | x | | | x (powerline) |

#### 6.3.2.2 Discussion

The overall abundance of solar priority species at the site was moderate, with an average of 2.83 birds/km being recorded during the two surveys. For all birds combined, the IKA was 15.85 birds/km, which is quite high. This indicates that the impact of human activities on the natural habitat has been limited.

## 6.4 IMPACTS OF SOLAR PV FACILITIES AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE ON AVIFAUNA

Increasingly, human-induced climate change is recognized as a fundamental driver of biological processes and patterns. Historic climate change is known to have caused shifts in the geographic ranges of many plants and animals, and future climate change is expected to result in even greater redistributions of species (National Audubon Society 2015). In 2006 WWF Australia produced a report on the envisaged impact of climate change on birds worldwide (Wormworth, J. & Mallon, K. 2006). The report found that:

- Climate change now affects bird species' behaviour, ranges and population dynamics;
- Some bird species are already experiencing strong negative impacts from climate change;
- In future, subject to greenhouse gas emissions levels and climatic response, climate change will put large numbers bird species at risk of extinction, with estimates of extinction rates varying from 2 to 72%, depending on the region, climate scenario and potential for birds to shift to new habitat.

Using statistical models based on the North American Breeding Bird Survey and Audubon Christmas Bird Count datasets, the National Audubon Society assessed geographic range shifts through the end of the century for 588 North American bird species during both the summer and winter seasons under a range of future climate change scenarios (National Audubon Society 2015). Their analysis showed the following:

- 314 of 588 species modelled (53%) lose more than half of their current geographic range in all three modelled scenarios.
- For 126 species, loss occurs without accompanying range expansion.
- For 188 species, loss is coupled with the potential to colonize new areas.

Climate sensitivity is an important piece of information to incorporate into conservation planning and adaptive management strategies. The persistence of many birds will depend on their ability to colonize climatically suitable areas outside of current ranges and management actions that target climate change adaptation.

South Africa is among the world's top 10 developing countries required to significantly reduce their carbon emissions (Seymore *et al.* 2014), and the introduction of low-carbon technologies into the country's compliment of power generation will greatly assist with achieving this important objective (Walwyn & Brent 2015). Given that South Africa receives among the highest levels of solar radiation on earth (Fluri 2009; Munzhedi *et al*. 2009), it is clear that solar power generation should feature prominently in future efforts to convert to a more sustainable energy mix in order to combat climate change, also from an avifaunal impact perspective. However, while the expansion of solar power generation is undoubtedly a positive development for avifauna in the longer term in that it will help reduce the effect of climate change and thus habitat transformation, it must also be acknowledged that renewable energy facilities, including solar PV facilities, in themselves have some potential for negative impacts on avifauna.

A literature review reveals a scarcity of published, scientifically examined information regarding large-scale PV plants and birds. The reason for this is mainly that large-scale PV plants are a relatively recent phenomenon. The main source of information for these types of impacts are from compliance reports and a few government-sponsored studies relating to recently constructed solar plants in the south-west United States. In South Africa, only one published scientific study has been completed on the impacts of PV plants in a South African context (Visser *et al.* 2019).

In summary, the potential impacts of PV plants on avifauna which have emerged so far include the following:

- Displacement due to disturbance and habitat transformation associated with the construction of the solar PV plant and associated infrastructure;
- Collisions with the solar panels;
- Entrapment in perimeter fences;
- Collisions with the associated power lines; and
- Electrocutions on the associated power lines.

### 6.4.1 Impacts associated with PV plants

#### *6.4.1.1 Impact trauma (collisions)*

This impact refers to collision-related fatality i.e. fatality resulting from the direct contact of the bird with a project structure(s). This type of fatality has been occasionally documented at solar projects of all technology types (McCrary *et al.* 1986; Hernandez *et al*. 2014; Kagan *et al*. 2014). In some instances, the bird is not killed outright by the collision impact, but succumbs to predation later, as it cannot avoid predators due to its injured state.

Sheet glass used in commercial and residential buildings has been well established as a hazard for birds. When the sky is reflected in the sheet glass, birds fail to see the building as an obstacle and attempt to fly through the glass, mistaking it for empty space (Loss *et al*. 2014). Although very few cases have been reported it is possible that the reflective surfaces of solar panels could constitute a similar risk to avifauna.

An extremely rare but potentially related problem is the so-called "lake effect" i.e. it seems possible that reflections from solar facilities' infrastructure, particularly large sheets of dark blue photovoltaic panels, may attract birds in flight across the open desert, who mistake the broad reflective surfaces for water (Kagan *et al.* 2014)[2]. The unusually high percentage of waterbird mortalities at the Desert Sunlight PV facility (44%) may support the "lake effect" hypothesis (West 2014). Although in the case of Desert Sunlight, the proximity of evaporation ponds may act as an additional risk increasing factor, in that birds are both attracted to the water feature and habituated to the presence of an accessible aquatic environment in the area. This may translate into the misinterpretation of diffusely reflected sky or horizontal polarised light source as a body of water. However, due to limited data it would be premature to make any general conclusions about the influence of the lake effect or other factors that contribute to fatality of water-dependent birds. The activity and abundance of water-dependent species near solar facilities may depend on other site-specific or regional factors, such as the surrounding landscape (Walston *et al*. 2015). However, until such time that enough scientific evidence has been collected to discount the "lake effect" hypothesis, it must be considered as a potential source of impacts.

Weekly mortality searches at 20% coverage were conducted at the 250MW, 1300ha California Valley Solar Ranch PV site (Harvey & Associates 2014a and 2014b). According to the information that could be sourced from the internet (two quarterly reports), 152 avian mortalities were reported for the period 16 November 2013 – 15 February 2014, and 54 for the period 16 February 2014 – 15 May 2014, of which approximately 90% were based on feathers spots which precluded a finding on the cause of death. These figures give an estimated unadjusted 1 030 mortalities per year, which is obviously an underestimate as it does not include adjustments for carcasses removed by scavengers and missed by searchers. The authors stated clearly that these quarterly reports do not include the results of searcher efficiency trials, carcass removal trials, or data analyses, nor does it include detailed discussions.

In a report by the National Fish and Wildlife Forensic Laboratory (Kagan *et al.* 2014), the cause of avian mortalities was estimated based on opportunistic avian carcass collections at several solar facilities, including

[2] This could either result in birds colliding directly with the solar panels or getting stranded and unable to take off again because many aquatic bird species find it very difficult and sometimes impossible to take off from dry land e.g. grebes and cormorants. This exposes them to predation, even if they do not get injured through direct collisions with the panels.

the 550MW, 1 600ha Desert Sunlight PV plant. Impact trauma emerged as the highest identifiable cause of avian mortality, but most mortality could not be traced to an identifiable cause.

Walston *et al*. (2015) conducted a comprehensive review of avian fatality data from large scale solar facilities (all technology types) in the USA. Collision as cause of death (19 birds) ranked second at Desert Sunlight PV plant and California Valley Solar Ranch (CVSR) PV plant, after unknown causes. Cause of death could not be determined for over 50% of the fatality observations and many carcasses included in these analyses consisted only of feather spots (feathers concentrated together in a small area) or partial carcasses, thus making determination of cause of death difficult. It is anticipated that some unknown fatalities were caused by predation or some other factor unrelated to the solar project. However, they found that the lack of systematic data collection and standardization was a major impediment in establishing the actual extent and causes of fatalities across all projects.

The only scientific investigation of potential avifaunal impacts that has been performed at a South African PV facility was completed in 2016 at the 96MW Jasper PV solar facility (28°17′53″S, 23°21′56″E) which is located on the Humansrus Farm, approximately 4 km south-east of Groenwater and 30km east of Postmasburg in the Northern Cape Province (Visser *et al*. 2019). The Jasper PV facility contains 325 360 solar panels over a footprint of 180 hectares with the capacity to deliver 180 000 MWh of renewable electricity annually. The solar panels face north at a fixed 20° angle, reaching a height of approximately 1.86 m relative to ground level with a distance of 3.11 m between successive rows of panels. Mortality surveys were conducted from the 14th of September 2015 until the 6th of December 2015, with a total of seven mortalities recorded among the solar panels which gives an average rate of 0.003 birds per hectare surveyed per month. All fatalities were inferred from feather spots. Extrapolated bird mortality within the solar field at the Jasper PV facility was 435 birds/yr (95% CI 133 - 805). The broad confidence intervals result from the small number of birds detected. The mortality estimate is likely conservative because detection probabilities were based on intact birds, and probably decrease for older carcasses and feather spots. The study concluded inter alia that the short study period, and lack of comparable results from other sources made it difficult to provide a meaningful assessment of avian mortality at PV facilities. It further stated that despite these limitations, the few bird fatalities that were recorded might suggest that there is no significant collision-related mortality at the study site. The conclusion was that to fully understand the risk of solar energy development on birds, further collation and analysis of data from solar energy facilities across spatial and temporal scales, based on scientifically rigorous research designs, is required (Visser *et al*. 2019).

The results of the available literature lack compelling evidence of collisions as a cause of large-scale mortality among birds at PV facilities. However, it is clear from this limited literature survey that the lack of systematic and standardised data collection is a major problem in the assessment of the causes and extent of avian mortality at all types of solar facilities, regardless of the technology employed. Until statistically tested results emerge from existing compliance programmes and more dedicated scientific research, conclusions will inevitably be largely speculative and based on professional opinion.

#### *6.4.1.2 Entrapment in perimeter fences*

Visser *et al* (2019) recorded a fence-line fatality (Orange River Francolin *Scleroptila gutturalis*) resulting from the bird being trapped between the inner and outer perimeter fence of the facility. This was further supported by observations of large-bodied birds unable to escape from between the two fences (e.g. Red-crested Korhaan *Lophotis ruficrista*) (Visser *et al.* 2019). Considering that one would expect the birds to be able to take off in the lengthwise direction (parallel to the fences), it seems likely that the birds panicked when they were approached by observers and thus flew into the fence.

#### *6.4.1.3 Displacement due to disturbance and habitat transformation associated with the construction of the solar PV facility*

Ground-disturbing activities affect a variety of processes in arid areas, including soil density, water infiltration rate, vulnerability to erosion, secondary plant succession, invasion by exotic plant species, and stability of cryptobiotic soil crusts. These processes have the ability – individually and together – to alter habitat quality, often to the detriment of wildlife, including avifauna. Any disturbance and alteration to the desert landscape, including the construction and decommissioning of utility-scale solar energy facilities, has the potential to increase soil erosion. Erosion can physically and physiologically affect plant species and can thus adversely influence primary production and food availability for wildlife (Lovich & Ennen 2011).

Solar energy facilities require substantial site preparation (including the removal of vegetation) that alters topography and, thus, drainage patterns to divert the surface flow associated with rainfall away from facility infrastructure. Channelling runoff away from plant communities can have dramatic negative effects on water availability and habitat quality in arid areas. Areas deprived of runoff from sheet flow support less biomass of perennial and annual plants relative to adjacent areas with uninterrupted water-flow patterns (Lovich & Ennen 2011).

The activities listed below are typically associated with the construction and operation of solar facilities and could have direct impacts on avifauna (County of Merced 2014):

- Preparation of solar panel areas for installation, including vegetation clearing, grading, cut and fill;
- Excavation/trenching for water pipelines, cables, fibre-optic lines, and the septic system;
- Construction of piers and building foundations;
- Construction of new dirt or gravel roads and improvement of existing roads;
- Temporary stockpiling and side-casting of soil, construction materials, or other construction wastes;
- Soil compaction, dust, and water runoff from construction sites;
- Increased vehicle traffic;
- Short-term construction-related noise (from equipment) and visual disturbance;
- Degradation of water quality in drainages and other water bodies resulting from project runoff;
- Maintenance of fire breaks and roads; and
- Weed removal, brush clearing, and similar land management activities related to the ongoing operation of the project.

These activities could have an impact on birds breeding, foraging and roosting in or in close proximity through disturbance and transformation of habitat, which could result in temporary or permanent displacement.

In a study comparing the avifaunal habitat use in PV arrays with adjoining managed grassland at airports in the USA, DeVault *et al.* (2014) found that species diversity in PV arrays was reduced compared to the grasslands (37 vs 46), supporting the view that solar development is generally detrimental to wildlife on a local scale.

In order to identify functional and structural changes in bird communities in and around the development footprint, Visser *et al.* (2019) gathered bird transect data at the 180 hectares, 96MW Jasper PV solar facility in the Northern Cape, representing the solar development, boundary, and untransformed landscape. The study found both bird density and diversity per unit area was higher in the boundary and untransformed landscape, however, the extent therefore was not considered to be statistically significant. This indicates that the PV facility matrix is permeable to most species. However, key environmental features, including available habitat and vegetation quality are most likely the overriding factors influencing species' occurrence and their relative density within the development footprint. Her most significant finding was that the distribution of birds in the landscape changed, from a shrubland to open country and grassland bird community, in response to changes in the distribution and abundance of habitat resources such as food, water and nesting sites. These changes in resource availability patterns were detrimental to some bird species and beneficial to others. Shrubland specialists appeared to be negatively affected by the presence of the PV facility. In contrast, open country/grassland and generalist species, were favoured by its development (Visser *et al.* 2019).

It is highly likely that the same pattern of reduced avifaunal densities and possible changes in densities and composition favouring grassland species will manifest itself at the proposed Umsobomvu SEFs.

### 6.4.2 Impacts associated with powerlines

Negative impacts on birds by electricity infrastructure generally take two principal forms, namely electrocution and collisions (Ledger & Annegarn 1981; Ledger 1983; Ledger 1984; Hobbs and Ledger 1986a; Hobbs & Ledger 1986b; Ledger, Hobbs & Smith, 1992; Verdoorn 1996; Kruger & Van Rooyen 1998; Van Rooyen 1998; Kruger 1999; Van Rooyen 1999; Van Rooyen 2000; Van Rooyen 2004; Jenkins *et al.* 2010). Birds also impact on the infrastructure through nesting and streamers, which can cause interruptions in the electricity supply (Van Rooyen *et al.* 2002). During the construction phase of power lines and substations, displacement of birds can also happen due to disturbance and habitat transformation.

#### *6.4.2.1 Electrocutions*

Electrocution refers to the scenario where a bird is perched or attempts to perch on the electrical structure and causes an electrical short circuit by physically bridging the air gap between live components and/or live and earthed components (van Rooyen 2004). The electrocution risk is largely determined by the design of the electrical hardware.

#### *6.4.2.2 Collisions*

Collision mortality is the biggest threat posed by transmission lines to birds in southern Africa (Van Rooyen 2004). Most heavily impacted upon are bustards, storks, cranes and various species of waterbirds. These species are mostly heavy-bodied birds with limited manoeuvrability, which makes it difficult for them to take the necessary evasive action to avoid colliding with transmission lines (Van Rooyen 2004, Anderson 2001). In her PhD study, Shaw (2013) provides a concise summary of the phenomenon of avian collisions with transmission lines:

*"The collision risk posed by power lines is complex and problems are often localised. While any bird flying near a power line is at risk of collision, this risk varies greatly between different groups of birds, and depends on the interplay of a wide range of factors (APLIC 1994). Bevanger (1994) described these factors in four main groups – biological, topographical, meteorological and technical. Birds at highest risk are those that are both susceptible to collisions and frequently exposed to power lines, with waterbirds, gamebirds, rails, cranes and bustards usually the most numerous reported victims (Bevanger 1998, Rubolini et al. 2005, Jenkins et al. 2010).*

*The proliferation of man-made structures in the landscape is relatively recent, and birds are not evolved to avoid them. Body size and morphology are key predictive factors of collision risk, with large-bodied birds with high wing loadings (the ratio of body weight to wing area) most at risk (Bevanger 1998, Janss 2000). These birds must fly fast to remain airborne, and do not have sufficient manoeuvrability to avoid unexpected obstacles. Vision is another key biological factor, with many collision-prone birds principally using lateral vision to navigate in flight, when it is the lower-resolution, and often restricted, forward vision that is useful to detect obstacles (Martin & Shaw 2010, Martin 2011, Martin et al. 2012). Behaviour is important, with birds flying in flocks, at low levels and in crepuscular or nocturnal conditions at higher risk of collision (Bevanger 1994). Experience affects risk, with migratory and nomadic species that spend much of their time in unfamiliar locations also expected to collide more often (Anderson 1978, Anderson 2002). Juvenile birds have often been reported as being more collision-prone than adults (e.g. Brown et al. 1987, Henderson et al. 1996).*

*Topography and weather conditions affect how birds use the landscape. Power lines in sensitive bird areas (e.g. those that separate feeding and roosting areas, or cross flyways) can be very dangerous (APLIC 1994, Bevanger 1994). Lines crossing the prevailing wind conditions can pose a problem for large birds that use the wind to aid take-off and landing (Bevanger 1994). Inclement weather can disorient birds and reduce their flight altitude, and strong winds can result in birds colliding with power lines that they can see but do not have enough flight control to avoid (Brown et al. 1987, APLIC 2012).*

*The technical aspects of power line design and siting also play a big part in collision risk. Grouping similar power lines on a common servitude, or locating them along other features such as tree lines, are both approaches thought to reduce risk (Bevanger 1994). In general, low lines with short span lengths (i.e. the distance between two adjacent pylons) and flat conductor configurations are thought to be the least dangerous (Bevanger 1994, Jenkins et al. 2010). On many higher voltage lines, there is a thin earth (or ground) wire above the conductors, protecting the system from lightning strikes. Earth wires are widely accepted to cause the majority of collisions on power lines with this configuration because they are difficult to see, and birds flaring to avoid hitting the conductors often put themselves directly in the path of these wires (Brown et al. 1987, Faanes 1987, Alonso et al. 1994a, Bevanger 1994)."*

From incidental record keeping by the Endangered Wildlife Trust, it is possible to give a measure of what species are generally susceptible to power line collisions in South Africa (see **Figure 16** below – EWT unpublished data).

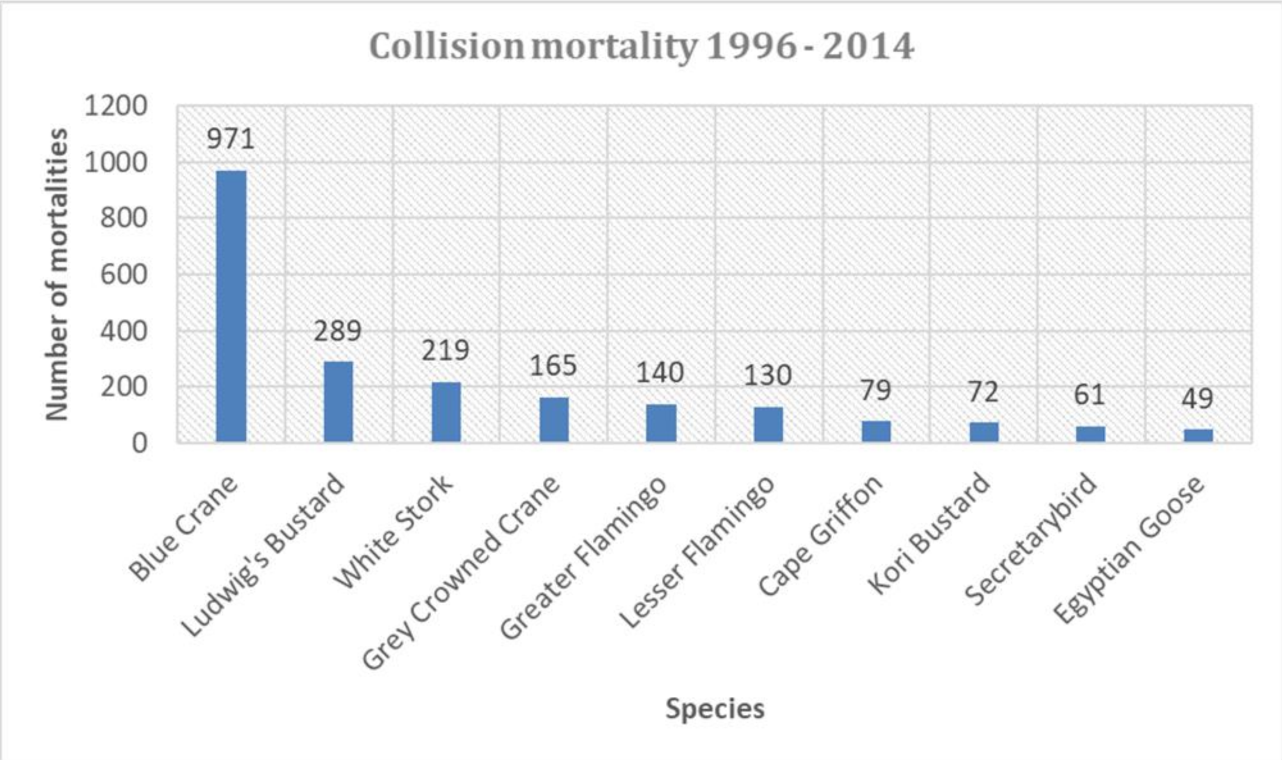


**Figure 16: The top 10 collision prone bird species in South Africa, in terms of reported incidents contained in the Eskom/EWT Strategic Partnership central incident register 1996 - 2014 (EWT unpublished data).**

Power line collisions are generally accepted as a key threat to bustards (Raab *et al.* 2009; Raab *et al.* 2010; Jenkins & Smallie 2009; Barrientos *et al.* 2012, Shaw 2013). In a comprehensive study, carcass surveys were performed under high voltage transmission lines in the Karoo for two years, and low voltage distribution lines for one year (Shaw 2013). Ludwig's Bustard was the most common collision victim (69% of carcasses), with bustards generally comprising 87% of mortalities recovered. Total annual mortality was estimated at 41% of the Ludwig's Bustard population, with Kori Bustards also dying in large numbers (at least 14% of the South African population killed in the Karoo alone). Karoo Korhaan was also recorded, but to a much lesser extent than Ludwig's Bustard. The reasons for the relatively low collision risk of this species probably include their smaller size (and hence greater agility in flight) as well as their more sedentary lifestyles, as local birds are familiar with their territory and are less likely to collide with power lines (Shaw 2013).
Several factors are thought to influence avian collisions, including the manoeuvrability of the bird, topography, weather conditions and power line configuration. An important additional factor that previously has received little attention is the visual capacity of birds; i.e. whether they are able to see obstacles such as power lines, and whether they are looking ahead to see obstacles with enough time to avoid a collision. In addition to helping explain the susceptibility of some species to collision, this factor is key to planning effective mitigation measures. Recent research provides the first evidence that birds can render themselves blind in the direction

of travel during flight through voluntary head movements (Martin & Shaw 2010). Visual fields were determined in three bird species representative of families known to be subject to high levels of mortality associated with power lines i.e. Kori Bustards, Blue Cranes *Anthropoides paradiseus* and White Storks *Ciconia ciconia*. In all species the frontal visual fields showed narrow and vertically long binocular fields typical of birds that take food items directly in the bill under visual guidance. However, these species differed markedly in the vertical extent of their binocular fields and in the extent of the blind areas which project above and below the binocular fields in the forward-facing hemisphere. The importance of these blind areas is that when in flight, head movements in the vertical plane (pitching the head to look downwards) will render the bird blind in the direction of travel. Such movements may frequently occur when birds are scanning below them (for foraging or roost sites, or for conspecifics). In bustards and cranes pitch movements of only 25° and 35°, respectively, are sufficient to render the birds blind in the direction of travel; in storks, head movements of 55° are necessary. That flying birds can render themselves blind in the direction of travel has not been previously recognised and has important implications for the effective mitigation of collisions with human artefacts including wind turbines and power lines. These findings have applicability to species outside of these families especially raptors (Accipitridae) which are known to have small binocular fields and large blind areas similar to those of bustards and cranes, and are also known to be vulnerable to power line collisions.

Despite doubts about the efficacy of line marking to reduce the collision risk for bustards (Jenkins *et al.* 2010; Martin *et al.* 2010), there are numerous studies which prove that marking a line with PVC spiral type Bird Flight Diverters (BFDs) generally reduce mortality rates (e.g. Bernardino *et al*. 2019; Sporer *et al.* 2013; Barrientos *et al.* 2011; Jenkins *et al.* 2010; Alonso & Alonso 1999; Koops & De Jong 1982), including to some extent for bustards (Barrientos *et al.* 2012; Hoogstad 2018 pers.comm). Beaulaurier (1981) summarised the results of 17 studies that involved the marking of earth wires and found an average reduction in mortality of 45%. Barrientos *et al.* (2011) reviewed the results of 15 wire marking experiments in which transmission or distribution wires were marked to examine the effectiveness of flight diverters in reducing bird mortality. The presence of flight diverters was associated with a decrease of 55–94% in bird mortalities. Koops and De Jong (1982) found that the spacing of the BFDs was critical in reducing the mortality rates - mortality rates are reduced up to 86% with a spacing of 5m, whereas using the same devices at 10m intervals only reduces the mortality by 57%. Barrientos *et al.* (2012) found that larger BFDs were more effective in reducing Great Bustard collisions than smaller ones. Line markers should be as large as possible, and highly contrasting with the background. Colour is probably less important as during the day the background will be brighter than the obstacle with the reverse true at lower light levels (e.g. at twilight, or during overcast conditions). Black and white interspersed patterns are likely to maximise the probability of detection (Martin *et al.* 2010).

The use of BFDs to reduce collision mortality on powerlines in South Africa has also been tested scientifically. Using a controlled experiment spanning a period of nearly eight years (2008 to 2016), the effectiveness of two types of line markers, namely the EBM Bird Flapper and EBM helical BFD in reducing power line collision mortalities of large birds were tested on three 400kV transmission lines near Hydra substation in the Karoo. Marking was highly effective for Blue Cranes, resulting in a 92% reduction in mortality. Large birds in general also benefited from the marking, with a 56% reduction in mortality. Unfortunately, the marking did not prove to be effective for Ludwig's Bustard. The two different marking devices were approximately equally effective (Shaw *et al*. 2017).

#### *6.4.2.3 Displacement due to habitat destruction and disturbance associated with the construction of the powerlines and substation*

During the construction phase and maintenance of power lines and substations, some habitat destruction and transformation inevitably takes place. This happens with the construction of access roads, the clearing of servitudes and the levelling of substation yards. These activities have an impact on birds breeding, foraging and roosting in or in close proximity of the substation and power line servitudes through transformation of habitat, which could result in temporary or permanent displacement.

Apart from direct habitat destruction, the above-mentioned construction and maintenance activities also impact on birds through disturbance; this could lead to breeding failure if the disturbance happens during a critical part of the breeding cycle. Construction activities in close proximity to breeding locations could be a source of disturbance and could lead to temporary breeding failure or even permanent abandonment of nests.

# 7 DISCUSSION OF IMPACTS: UMSOBOMVU PV FACILITIES AND GRID CONNECTIONS

The section below provides an overview of the envisaged impacts of the proposed Umsobomvu PV facilities and grid connections on solar and powerline priority species. Separate impact tables are provided which summarises the impacts and proposed mitigation on an individual basis for each PV facility and grid connection.

## 7.1 PV FACILITIES

### 7.1.1 Displacement due to disturbance associated with the construction and de-commissioning of the PV plants and associated infrastructure (construction and de-commissioning)

The construction (and de-commissioning) of the PV plants and associated infrastructure will result in a significant amount of movement and noise, which will lead to displacement of avifauna from the development footprints. It is highly likely that most priority species potentially occurring on the site will vacate the development footprints for the duration of these activities.

### 7.1.2 Displacement due to habitat transformation associated with the PV plant and associated infrastructure (operation)

The construction of the PV plants and associated infrastructure will result in the radical transformation of the existing natural habitat. The vegetation will be cleared prior to construction commencing. Once operational, less sunlight will reach the vegetation below the solar panels, which is likely to result in stunted vegetation growth and possibly complete eradication of some plant species. The natural vegetation is likely to persist in the rows between the solar panels, but it will be different to what was available before the construction of the plant, in that it will be short grassland with few (if any) shrubs.

Small to medium-sized birds are often capable of surviving in small pockets of suitable habitat and are therefore generally less affected by habitat fragmentation than larger species. It is, therefore, possible that the smaller and medium-sized species (e.g. passerines) recorded at the site will continue to use the habitat available within the solar facility, albeit at reduced densities for some, especially as far as shrubland specialists are concerned e.g. Rufous-eared Warbler *Malcorus pectoralis*.

Larger priority species which require contiguous, un-fragmented tracts of suitable habitat (e.g. large raptors, korhaans and bustards) are likely to occur at vastly reduced densities in the proposed facilities or may even be totally displaced. The only larger priority species, which was regularly encountered during surveys at the site, was the locally Near Threatened Blue Crane. According to Marnewick *et al.* (2015) the Karoo population is estimated to be around 10 800 birds and relatively stable in largely untransformed landscapes. The displacement impact on the regional population, should it occur, should therefore be low. Two other large terrestrial species were recorded in the study area, namely the locally Endangered Ludwig's Bustard and locally Vulnerable Secretarybird. None of these two wide ranging species is likely to be severely impacted on a regional level by the likely displacement resulting from the transformation of 4 800ha of Grassy Karoo habitat.

In the case of some priority raptors (e.g. Southern Pale Chanting Goshawk, Lanner Falcon, Jackal Buzzard, Black-shouldered Kite and Steppe Buzzard) the potential availability of carcasses or injured birds due to collisions with the solar panels, and enhanced prey visibility (e.g. insects, reptiles and rodents) in the short grassland between the solar panels may attract them to the area. Jeal (2017) recorded large numbers of Barn Owls at the Bokpoort parabolic trough CSP facility near Groblershoop in the Northern Cape, roosting in the 'torque tubes' that support the parabolic mirrors – while this influx of owls may have been because of a lack of suitable roosting substrate in the surrounding range land, the enhanced prey visibility due to the sparse vegetation cover in the plant itself may also have played a role in attracting the owls. Greater Kestrel and Rock Kestrel could also be attracted to the solar panels as perches from where to hunt for rodent and insect prey.

Cape Sparrows *Passer melanurus*, Cape Turtle Doves *Streptopelia capicola* and other small birds will very likely attempt to nest underneath the solar panels to take advantage of the shade, but this should not adversely affect the operation of the equipment.

Table 2 lists the solar priority species that could potentially be displaced due to habitat transformation[3].

### 7.1.3 Collisions with the solar panels (operation)

The priority species that may possibly occur in the development area which could potentially be exposed to collision risk are listed in Table 2. In addition, the so-called "lake effect" could act as a potential attraction to waterbirds. It is not possible to tell whether this will happen until post-construction monitoring reveals actual mortality at the site, but the lack of permanent waterbodies with large waterbird populations in close vicinity to the proposed development area decreases the probability of the lake effect being a major source of mortality.

### 7.1.4 Entrapment in perimeter fences

Priority species such as Karoo Korhaan, Northern Black Korhaan, Blue Korhaan and Ludwig's Bustard may be vulnerable to entrapment between double perimeter fences. The possibility of using a single perimeter fence should be investigated. Alternatively, the two fences should be placed far apart enough for birds to able to take off if they somehow end up between the two fences. In addition, staff should be sensitised to not panic birds when they discover them trapped between the fences but to approach them with caution to give them time to escape by taking off in a lengthwise direction.

### 7.1.5 Impact on the solar infrastructure

An impact that could potentially materialise is the pollution of the solar panels by faecal deposits of large birds, particularly Pied Crows and raptors, if they regularly perch on the panels. It is expected that the regular cleaning and maintenance activities should prevent this from becoming a problem.

## 7.2 GRID CONNECTIONS

### 7.2.1 Electrocutions

Clearance between phases on the same side of the DT 7611 132kV mono-pole structure is approximately 2.2m for this type of design, and the clearance on strain structures is 1.8m. This clearance should be sufficient to reduce the risk of phase – phase electrocutions of most birds on the poles to negligible. The length of the stand-off insulators is approximately 1.6m. If a very large species attempts to perch on the stand-off insulators, they are potentially able to touch both the conductor and the earthed pole simultaneously potentially resulting in a phase – earth electrocution. This is particularly likely when more than one bird attempts to sit on the same pole, which is an unlikely occurrence, except occasionally with vultures. Vultures are likely to occur very sporadically within the study core areas, but due to the presence of the two Hydra-Poseidon 400kV perch-friendly transmission lines in the study area, the chances of the birds perching on the

[3] In some instances, the displacement will not be complete, but will result in lower densities.

steel monopoles of the new grid connection line are relatively low. However, it cannot be entirely ruled out, therefore it would be preferable if a 100% vulture friendly structure is used. To eliminate the risk of vulture electrocutions the 7649 steel monopole structure is proposed with suspended insulators and diagonal supporting cross arms, which would make perching impossible while ensuring that birds are clear of the live phases (see Appendix 5).

Electrocutions within the proposed substation yards are possible, but should not affect the majority of the more sensitive Red Data and powerline sensitive bird species as these species are unlikely to use the infrastructure within the substation yards for perching or roosting, except possibly Spotted Eagle-Owl and Barn Owl. Other species which could potentially be exposed to electrocution risks in the proposed substations are corvids, Egyptian Geese, Hadeda Ibis, Helmeted Guineafowl and a few medium-sized raptors (see Table 3).

### 7.2.2 Collisions

See Table 3 for potential candidates for collision mortality in the Nama Karoo habitat on the proposed power line. The species most at risk will be Blue Crane, Ludwig's Bustard, Secretarybird and Karoo Korhaan. The risk will be exacerbated if the line is positioned near a large waterbody, as the larger dams are most likely used by Blue Crane and possibly White Storks for roosting, when water levels are higher. These dams could also attract a variety of collision-prone waterbirds, including Greater Flamingo, when full. Other areas of heightened risk are agricultural clearings, particularly irrigated fields, which attract Blue Crane, Ludwig's Bustard, Egyptian Goose, Spurwing Goose, Hadeda Ibis and Sacred Ibis.

### 7.2.3 Displacement due to the habitat transformation in the proposed substations

In the present instance, the risk of permanent displacement of priority species due to habitat transformation in the footprint of the proposed substations and powerline servitudes is likely to be very limited given the small size of the footprint. The displacement is likely to only affect small, locally common species and should have a negligible impact on local populations.

## 7.3 IMPACT RATING CRITERIA

The impact criteria used to assess the potential impacts are set-out in detail in Appendix 3.

### 7.3.1 Assessment of impacts for the PV facilities

The impacts of the proposed PV facilities are detailed below separately for each facility.

| MOOI PLAATS SOLAR PV FACILITY | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Avifauna | Displacement of priority species due to disturbance associated with the construction of the PV plants and associated infrastructure | 1 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 36 | - | Medium | • Construction activity should be restricted to the immediate footprint of the infrastructure.<br>• Measures to control noise and dust should be applied according to current best practice in the industry.<br>• Maximum use should be made of existing access roads and the construction of new roads should be kept to a minimum as far as practical.<br>• The recommendations of the ecological and botanical specialist studies must be strictly implemented, especially as far as limitation of the construction footprint and rehabilitation of disturbed areas is concerned. | 1 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 30 | - | Medium |

| MOOI PLAATS SOLAR PV FACILITY | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **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** |
| **Operational Phase** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Avifauna | Displacement of priority avifauna due to habitat transformation associated with the PV plant and associated infrastructure | 1 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 42 | - | Medium | The recommendations of the ecological and botanical specialist studies must be strictly implemented, especially as far as limitation of the construction footprint and rehabilitation of transformed areas is concerned. | 1 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 36 | - | Medium |
| Avifauna | Entrapment in perimeter fences resulting in the mortality of priority species. | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 10 | - | Low | A single perimeter fence should be used. Alternatively, the two fences should be at least 4 metres apart to allow medium to large birds enough space to take off. | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 8 | - | Low |
| Avifauna | Collisions of priority avifauna with the solar panels resulting in the mortality of priority species. | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 10 | - | Low | No mitigation is required due to the very low expected magnitude | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 10 | - | Low |

| MOOI PLAATS SOLAR PV FACILITY | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **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** |
| **Decommissioning Phase** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Avifauna | The de-commissioning of the PV plant and associated infrastructure will result in a significant amount of movement and noise, which will lead to displacement of priority avifauna from the site due to disturbance. It is highly likely that most priority species will temporarily vacate the site footprint. | 1 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 36 | - | Medium | • Activity should be restricted to the immediate footprint of the infrastructure.<br>• Measures to control noise and dust should be applied according to current best practice in the industry.<br>• Maximum use should be made of existing access roads and the construction of new roads should be kept to a minimum as far as practical.<br>• The recommendations of the ecological and botanical specialist studies must be strictly implemented, especially as far as limitation of the footprint and rehabilitation of disturbed areas is concerned. | 1 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 30 | - | Medium |

# MOOI PLAATS SOLAR PV FACILITY

| 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 |
| **Cumulative** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Avifauna | • Displacement due to disturbance and habitat transformation associated with the construction of the solar PV plant and associated infrastructure;<br>• Collisions with the solar panels<br>• Entrapment in perimeter fences | 1 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 13 | - | Low | Implement all the mitigation measures as detailed in this bird impact assessment report | 1 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 12 | - | Low |

| WONDERHEUVEL SOLAR PV FACILITY | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Avifauna | Displacement of priority species due to disturbance associated with the construction of the PV plants and associated infrastructure | 1 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 36 | - | Medium | • Construction activity should be restricted to the immediate footprint of the infrastructure.<br>• Measures to control noise and dust should be applied according to current best practice in the industry.<br>• Maximum use should be made of existing access roads and the construction of new roads should be kept to a minimum as far as practical.<br>• The recommendations of the ecological and botanical specialist studies must be strictly implemented, especially as far as limitation of the construction footprint and rehabilitation of disturbed areas is concerned. | 1 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 30 | - | Medium |

| WONDERHEUVEL SOLAR PV FACILITY | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **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** |
| **Operational Phase** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Avifauna | Displacement of priority avifauna due to habitat transformation associated with the PV plant and associated infrastructure | 1 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 42 | - | Medium | The recommendations of the ecological and botanical specialist studies must be strictly implemented, especially as far as limitation of the construction footprint and rehabilitation of transformed areas is concerned. | 1 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 36 | - | Medium |
| Avifauna | Entrapment in perimeter fences resulting in the mortality of priority species. | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 10 | - | Low | A single perimeter fence should be used. Alternatively, the two fences should be at least 4 metres apart to allow medium to large birds enough space to take off. | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 8 | - | Low |
| Avifauna | Collisions of priority avifauna with the solar panels resulting in the mortality of priority species. | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 10 | - | Low | No mitigation is required due to the very low expected magnitude | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 10 | - | Low |

| WONDERHEUVEL SOLAR PV FACILITY | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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 |
| **Decommissioning Phase** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Avifauna | The de-commissioning of the PV plant and associated infrastructure will result in a significant amount of movement and noise, which will lead to displacement of priority avifauna from the site due to disturbance. It is highly likely that most priority species will temporarily vacate the site footprint. | 1 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 36 | - | Medium | • Activity should be restricted to the immediate footprint of the infrastructure.<br>• Measures to control noise and dust should be applied according to current best practice in the industry.<br>• Maximum use should be made of existing access roads and the construction of new roads should be kept to a minimum as far as practical.<br>• The recommendations of the ecological and botanical specialist studies must be strictly implemented, especially as far as limitation of the footprint and rehabilitation of disturbed areas is concerned. | 1 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 30 | - | Medium |

| WONDERHEUVEL SOLAR PV FACILITY | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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 |
| **Cumulative** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Avifauna | • Displacement due to disturbance and habitat transformation associated with the construction of the solar PV plant and associated infrastructure<br>• Collisions with the solar panels<br>• Entrapment in perimeter fences | 1 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 13 | - | Low | Implement all the mitigation measures as detailed in this bird impact assessment report | 1 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 12 | - | Low |

# PAARDE VALLEY SOLAR PV FACILITY

| 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** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Avifauna | Displacement of priority species due to disturbance associated with the construction of the PV plants and associated infrastructure | 1 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 36 | - | Medium | • Construction activity should be restricted to the immediate footprint of the infrastructure.<br>• Measures to control noise and dust should be applied according to current best practice in the industry.<br>• Maximum use should be made of existing access roads and the construction of new roads should be kept to a minimum as far as practical.<br>• The recommendations of the ecological and botanical specialist studies must be strictly implemented, especially as far as limitation of the construction footprint and rehabilitation of disturbed areas is concerned. | 1 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 30 | - | Low |

| PAARDE VALLEY SOLAR PV FACILITY | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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 |
| **Operational Phase** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Avifauna | Displacement of priority avifauna due to habitat transformation associated with the PV plant and associated infrastructure | 1 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 42 | - | Medium | The recommendations of the ecological and botanical specialist studies must be strictly implemented, especially as far as limitation of the construction footprint and rehabilitation of transformed areas is concerned. | 1 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 36 | - | Medium |
| Avifauna | Entrapment in perimeter fences resulting in the mortality of priority species. | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 10 | - | Low | A single perimeter fence should be used. Alternatively, the two fences should be at least 4 metres apart to allow medium to large birds enough space to take off. | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 8 | - | Low |
| Avifauna | Collisions of priority avifauna with the solar panels resulting in the mortality of priority species. | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 10 | - | Low | No mitigation is required due to the very low expected magnitude | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 10 | - | Low |

| PAARDE VALLEY SOLAR PV FACILITY | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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 |
| **Decommissioning Phase** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Avifauna | The de-commissioning of the PV plant and associated infrastructure will result in a significant amount of movement and noise, which will lead to displacement of priority avifauna from the site due to disturbance. It is highly likely that most priority species will temporarily vacate the site footprint. | 1 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 36 | - | Medium | • Activity should be restricted to the immediate footprint of the infrastructure.<br>• Measures to control noise and dust should be applied according to current best practice in the industry.<br>• Maximum use should be made of existing access roads and the construction of new roads should be kept to a minimum as far as practical.<br>• The recommendations of the ecological and botanical specialist studies must be strictly implemented, especially as far as limitation of the footprint and rehabilitation of disturbed areas is concerned. | 1 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 30 | - | Medium |

| PAARDE VALLEY SOLAR PV FACILITY | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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 |
| **Cumulative** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Avifauna | • Displacement due to disturbance and habitat transformation associated with the construction of the solar PV plant and associated infrastructure<br>• Collisions with the solar panels<br>• Entrapment in perimeter fences | 1 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 13 | - | Low | Implement all the mitigation measures as detailed in this bird impact assessment report | 1 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 12 | - | Low |

### 7.3.2 Assessment of impacts for the grid connections

The impacts of the proposed grid connections are detailed below separately for each facility.

| MOOI PLAATS GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Avifauna | Displacement of priority species due to disturbance associated with the construction of the powerline and substations | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 27 | - | Medium | • Activity should be restricted to the immediate footprint of the infrastructure.<br>• Access to the remainder of the site should be strictly controlled to prevent unnecessary disturbance of avifauna. Measures to control noise should be applied according to current best practice in the industry.<br>• Maximum use should be made of existing access roads and the construction of new roads should be kept to a minimum.<br>• The recommendations of the ecological and botanical specialist studies must be strictly implemented.<br>• A walk-through must be conducted by the avifaunal specialist to assess whether there are any Red Data species, and/or large raptors breeding in the vicinity of the powerline, which could be displaced by the construction | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 | - | Low |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | | | | | activities. Should this be the case, appropriate measures must be put in place to prevent the displacement of the breeding birds, through the timing of activities. | | | | | | | | | |
| Avifauna | Displacement of priority species due to habitat destruction associated with the construction of the substations | 1 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 12 | - | Low | • Activity should be restricted to the immediate footprint of the infrastructure.<br>• Access to the remainder of the site should be strictly controlled to prevent unnecessary disturbance of avifauna. Measures to control noise should be applied according to current best practice in the industry.<br>• Maximum use should be made of existing access roads and the construction of new roads should be kept to a minimum.<br>• The recommendations of the ecological and botanical specialist studies must be strictly implemented. | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 10 | - | Low |

| MOOI PLAATS GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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 | | |
| **Operational Phase** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Avifauna | Collisions of priority species with the earthwire of the proposed 132kV grid connection. | 2 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 45 | - | High | • The 132kV grid connection should be marked with Bird Flappers, on the earthwire for the entire length of the line.<br>• A 500m powerline - free zone should be implemented around dams and agricultural areas. | 2 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 26 | - | Medium | | |
| Avifauna | Electrocutions on the proposed 132kV powerline and in the substations | 2 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 36 | - | Medium | • The final pole design must be signed off by the bird specialist to ensure that a bird-friendly design is used.<br>• With regards to the infrastructure within the substation yard, the hardware is too complex to warrant any mitigation for electrocution at this stage. It is rather recommended that if any impacts are recorded once operational, site specific mitigation be applied reactively. | 2 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 11 | - | Low | | |

| MOOI PLAATS GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **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** | |
| **Decommissioning Phase** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Avifauna | Displacement of priority species due to disturbance associated with the dismantling of the powerline and substations | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 27 | - | Medium | • Activity should be restricted to the immediate footprint of the infrastructure.<br>• Access to the remainder of the site should be strictly controlled to prevent unnecessary disturbance of avifauna.<br>• Measures to control noise should be applied according to current best practice in the industry.<br>• Maximum use should be made of existing access roads and the construction of new roads should be kept to a minimum.<br>• The recommendations of the ecological and botanical specialist studies must be strictly implemented. A walk-through must be conducted by the avifaunal specialist to assess whether there are any Red Data species, and/or large raptors breeding in the vicinity of the powerline, which could be displaced by the dismantling activities. Should this be the case, appropriate measures must be put in place to prevent the displacement of the | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 | - | Low | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | | | | | breeding birds, through the timing of activities. | | | | | | | | | |

# WONDER HEUVEL GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE

| 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** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Avifauna | Displacement of priority species due to disturbance associated with the construction of the powerline and substations | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 27 | - | Medium | • Activity should be restricted to the immediate footprint of the infrastructure.<br>• Access to the remainder of the site should be strictly controlled to prevent unnecessary disturbance of avifauna. Measures to control noise should be applied according to current best practice in the industry.<br>• Maximum use should be made of existing access roads and the construction of new roads should be kept to a minimum.<br>• The recommendations of the ecological and botanical specialist studies must be strictly implemented.<br>• A walk-through must be conducted by the avifaunal specialist to assess whether there are any Red Data species, and/or large raptors breeding in the vicinity of the powerline, which could be displaced by the construction activities. Should this be the case, appropriate measures must be put in place to prevent the displacement of the breeding birds, through the timing of activities. | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 | - | Low |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Avifauna | Displacement of priority species due to habitat destruction associated with the construction of the substations | 1 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 12 | - | Low | • Activity should be restricted to the immediate footprint of the infrastructure.<br>• Access to the remainder of the site should be strictly controlled to prevent unnecessary disturbance of avifauna. Measures to control noise should be applied according to current best practice in the industry.<br>• Maximum use should be made of existing access roads and the construction of new roads should be kept to a minimum.<br>• The recommendations of the ecological and botanical specialist studies must be strictly implemented. | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 10 | - | Low |

# WONDERHEUVEL GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE

| 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 |
| **Operational Phase** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Avifauna | Collisions of priority species with the earthwire of the proposed 132kV grid connection. | 2 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 45 | - | High | • The 132kV grid connection should be marked with Bird Flappers, on the earthwire for the entire length of the line.<br>• A 500m powerline - free zone should be implemented around dams and agricultural areas. | 2 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 26 | - | Medium |
| Avifauna | Electrocutions on the proposed 132kV powerline and in the substations | 2 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 36 | - | Medium | • The final pole design must be signed off by the bird specialist to ensure that a bird-friendly design is used.<br>• With regards to the infrastructure within the substation yard, the hardware is too complex to warrant any mitigation for electrocution at this stage. It is rather recommended that if any impacts are recorded once operational, site specific mitigation be applied reactively. | 2 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 11 | - | Low |

| WONDERHEUVEL GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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 |
| **Decommissioning Phase** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Avifauna | Displacement of priority species due to disturbance associated with the dismantling of the powerline and substations | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 27 | - | Medium | • Activity should be restricted to the immediate footprint of the infrastructure.<br>• Access to the remainder of the site should be strictly controlled to prevent unnecessary disturbance of avifauna.<br>• Measures to control noise should be applied according to current best practice in the industry.<br>• Maximum use should be made of existing access roads and the construction of new roads should be kept to a minimum.<br>• The recommendations of the ecological and botanical specialist studies must be strictly implemented.<br>• A walk-through must be conducted by the avifaunal specialist to assess whether there are any Red Data species, and/or large raptors breeding in the vicinity of the powerline, which could be displaced by the dismantling activities. Should this be the case, appropriate measures must be put | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 | - | Low |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | | | | | in place to prevent the displacement of the breeding birds, through the timing of activities. | | | | | | | | | |

| PAARDE VALLEY GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **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** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Avifauna | Displacement of priority species due to disturbance associated with the construction of the powerline and substations | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 27 | - | Medium | • Activity should be restricted to the immediate footprint of the infrastructure.<br>• Access to the remainder of the site should be strictly controlled to prevent unnecessary disturbance of avifauna. Measures to control noise should be applied according to current best practice in the industry.<br>• Maximum use should be made of existing access roads and the construction of new roads should be kept to a minimum.<br>• The recommendations of the ecological and botanical specialist studies must be strictly implemented.<br>• A walk-through must be conducted by the avifaunal specialist to assess whether there are any Red Data species, and/or large raptors breeding in the vicinity of the powerline, which could be displaced by the construction activities. Should this be the case, appropriate measures must be put in place to prevent the displacement of the breeding birds, through the timing of activities. | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 | - | Low | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Avifauna | Displacement of priority species due to habitat destruction associated with the construction of the substations | 1 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 12 | - | Low | • Activity should be restricted to the immediate footprint of the infrastructure.<br>• Access to the remainder of the site should be strictly controlled to prevent unnecessary disturbance of avifauna. Measures to control noise should be applied according to current best practice in the industry.<br>• Maximum use should be made of existing access roads and the construction of new roads should be kept to a minimum.<br>• The recommendations of the ecological and botanical specialist studies must be strictly implemented. | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 10 | - | Low |

# PAARDE VALLEY GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE

| 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 |
| **Operational Phase** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Avifauna | Collisions of priority species with the earthwire of the proposed 132kV grid connection. | 2 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 45 | - | High | • The 132kV grid connection should be marked with Bird Flappers, on the earthwire for the entire length of the line.<br>• A 500m powerline - free zone should be implemented around dams and agricultural areas. | 2 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 26 | - | Medium |
| Avifauna | Electrocutions on the proposed 132kV powerline and in the substations | 2 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 36 | - | Medium | • The final pole design must be signed off by the bird specialist to ensure that a bird-friendly design is used.<br>• With regards to the infrastructure within the substation yard, the hardware is too complex to warrant any mitigation for electrocution at this stage. It is rather recommended that if any impacts are recorded once operational, site specific mitigation be applied reactively. | 2 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 11 | - | Low |

| PAARDE VALLEY GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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 |
| **Decommissioning Phase** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Avifauna | Displacement of priority species due to disturbance associated with the dismantling of the powerline and substations | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 27 | - | Medium | • Activity should be restricted to the immediate footprint of the infrastructure.<br>• Access to the remainder of the site should be strictly controlled to prevent unnecessary disturbance of avifauna.<br>• Measures to control noise should be applied according to current best practice in the industry. Maximum use should be made of existing access roads and the construction of new roads should be kept to a minimum.<br>• The recommendations of the ecological and botanical specialist studies must be strictly implemented. A walk-through must be conducted by the avifaunal specialist to assess whether there are any Red Data species, and/or large raptors breeding in the vicinity of the powerline, which could be displaced by the dismantling activities. Should this be the case, appropriate measures must be put in place to prevent the displacement of the | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 | - | Low |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | | | | | breeding birds, through the timing of activities. | | | | | | | | | |

## 7.4 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Cumulative effects are commonly understood to be impacts from different projects that combine to result in significant change, which could be larger than the sum of all the individual impacts. The assessment of cumulative effects therefore needs to consider all renewable energy developments (wind and solar) within at least a 35km radius of the proposed site. The 17 renewable projects which are planned or authorised are displayed in Figure 17. Appendix 4 lists the projects together with the relevant recommended mitigation measures pertaining to birds.

### 7.4.1 PV sites

In the case of solar projects, the potentially most significant impact from an avifaunal perspective is the transformation of the natural habitat. The total land parcel area taken up by existing and proposed solar energy projects are approximately 13 000ha, and the wind energy projects come to approximately 47 000ha. The three Umsobomvu SEF's will add another approximately 13 500ha of land parcel to these. The total area of the 35km radius around the proposed projects equates to about 400 000ha. The total combined size of the land parcels taken up by SEF's and WEF's, including the three Umsobomvu projects, equates to about 60 500ha, which is just over 15% of the available land in the 35km radius. However, the actual footprint of the solar facilities will be much smaller that the land parcel area, between 20 - 40% of the land parcel area. In the case of the WEF's the situation is much the same. The total area to be taken up by renewable energy developments will therefore comprise less than 10% of the land surface within the 35km radius around the proposed Umsobomvu projects. The cumulative impact of the habitat transformation which will come about as a result of the three proposed Umsobomvu projects should therefore be **low**.

### 7.4.2 Grid connection

In the case of the grid connections, the existing high voltage grid (66 - 400kV) in the 35km radius around the proposed Umsobomvu SEF's comes to about 300km. The existing and proposed renewable energy projects add approximately 60km of sub-transmission lines to this. The three Umsobomvu SEF's will add another approximately 34 – 40km of sub-transmission line, depending which alternative is used. This translates into an 11% increase in the length of existing and proposed high voltage line within the 35km radius around the proposed Umsobomvu projects. The most significant potential impact of high voltage lines within the aforesaid 35km radius is bird collisions with the earth wires of the lines. An 11% increase in line length should represent a **medium** increase in cumulative risk, which could be mitigated to a **low** level with the application of appropriate mitigation measures. This is on the assumption that the proposed mitigation measures as detailed in the EIA reports, namely the marking of lines, will be implemented at all the relevant sites.

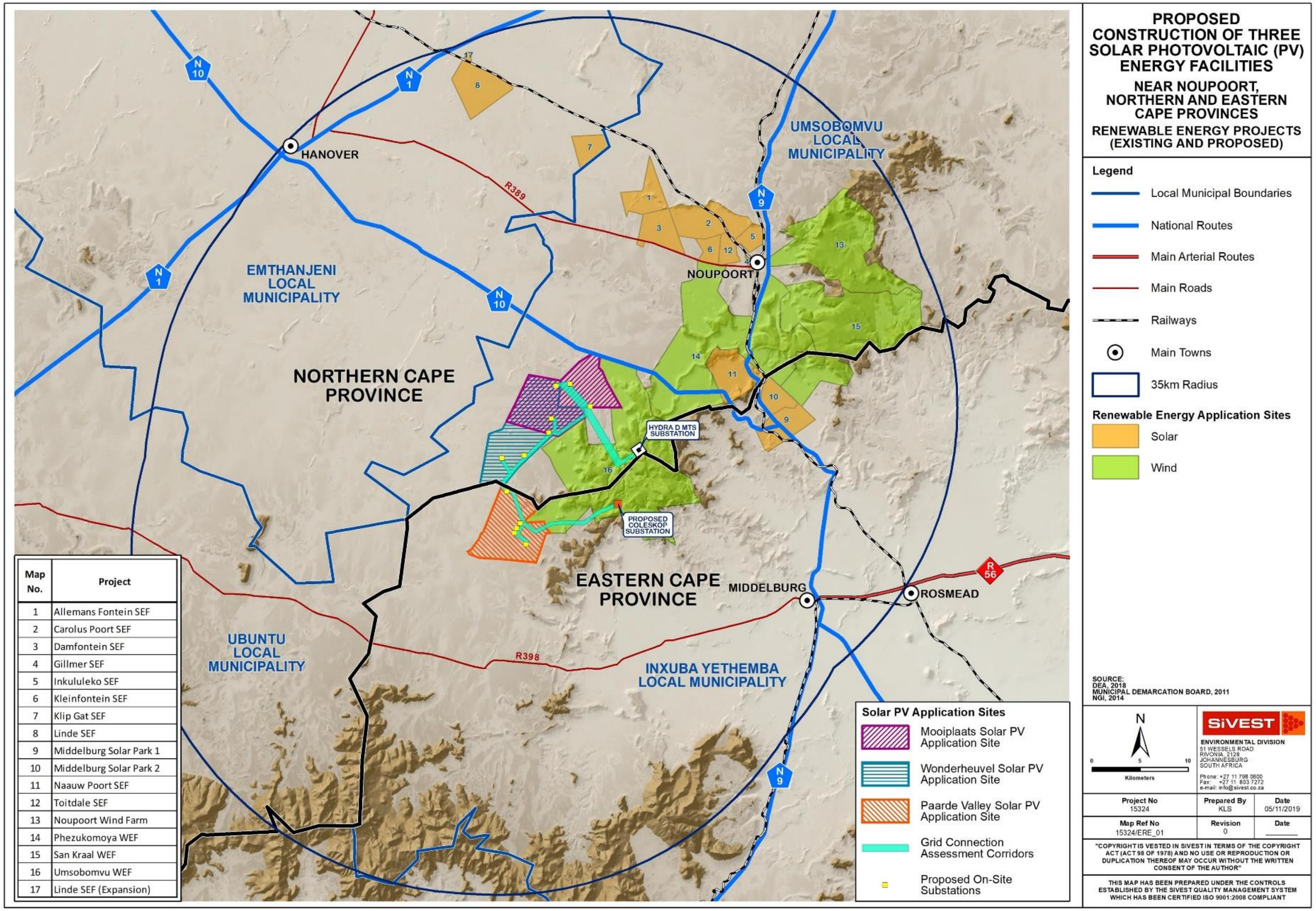


**Figure 17: The locality of existing and proposed renewable energy projects within a 35km radius around the proposed Umsobomvu SEFs**

### 7.5 NO-GO ALTERNATIVE

The no-go alternative will result in the current status quo being maintained as far as the avifauna is concerned. The low human population in the area is definitely advantageous to avifauna. The no-go option would therefore eliminate any additional impact on the ecological integrity of the proposed development area as far as avifauna is concerned.

# 8 NO-GO AREAS

No no-go areas have been identified for the solar fields or road network.

For the grid connection, two types of no-go areas have been identified, both based on the risk of powerline collisions. These areas are dams and agricultural fields. Both these habitat classes serve as focal points for powerline sensitive avifauna, which includes Red Data species such as Blue Cranes, Ludwig's Bustard and Greater Flamingo, large raptors and various non-Red Data waterbirds. It is suggested that a 500m powerline-free buffer is created around all these potential hot-spots, to minimise the risk of collision mortality. See Figure 18 for the location of the proposed powerline-free zones.

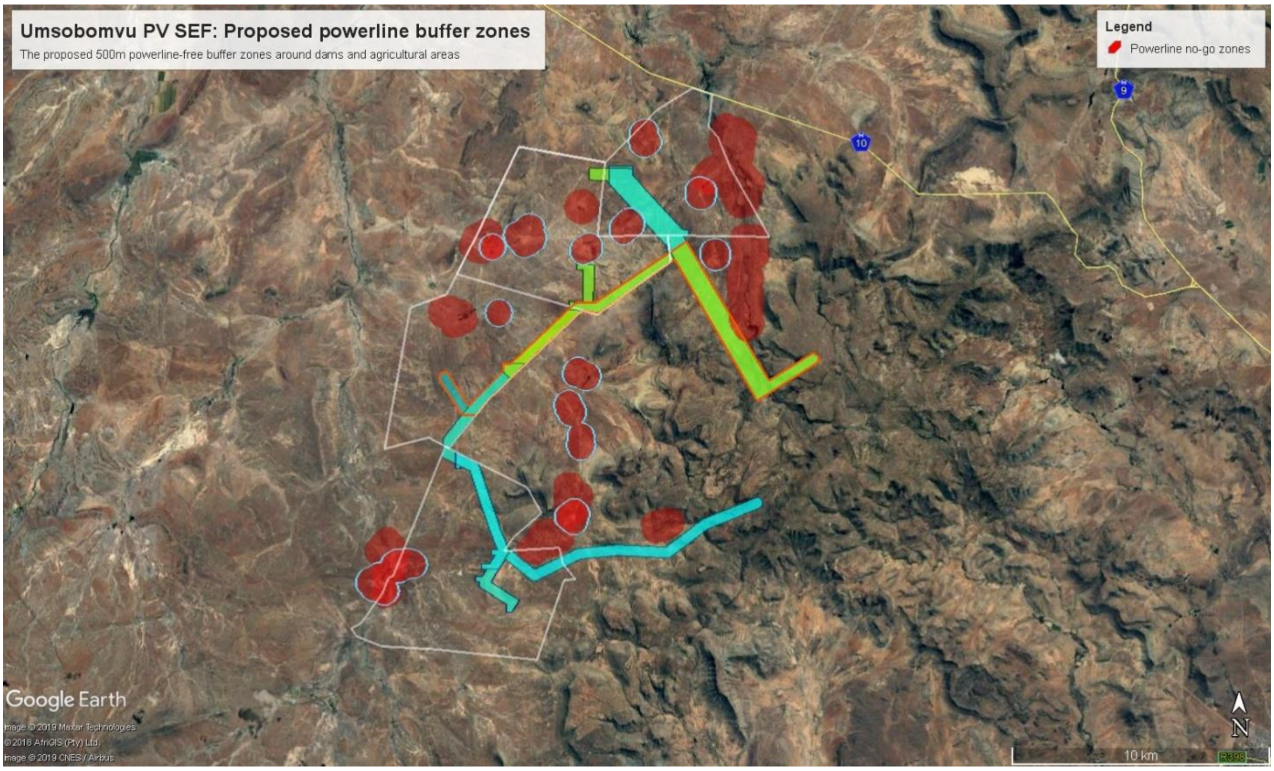


**Figure 18: Location of the proposed powerline-free buffer zones around dams and agricultural areas, relative to the proposed grid connection corridors.**

# 9 ASSESSMENT OF ALTERNATIVES

Several infrastructure alternative options have been put, for each PV facility. These options are evaluated in the assessment tables below.

**Key**

| | |
|---|---|
| **PREFERRED** | The alternative will result in a low impact / reduce the impact |
| **FAVOURABLE** | The impact will be relatively insignificant |
| **LEAST PREFERRED** | The alternative will result in a high impact / increase the impact |
| **NO PREFERENCE** | The alternative will result in equal impacts |

| PV INFRASTRUCTURE ALTERNATIVES (LAYDOWN AREAS AND O&M BUILDINGS) | Preference | Reasons (incl. potential issues) |
|---|---|---|
| **MOOI PLAATS SOLAR PV FACILITY:** | | |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 1 | No preference | All the proposed alternative locations for Mooi Plaats are in similar bird habitat and will therefore result in similar impacts. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 2 | No preference | All the proposed alternative locations for Mooi Plaats are in similar bird habitat and will therefore result in similar impacts. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 3 | No preference | All the proposed alternative locations for Mooi Plaats are in similar bird habitat and will therefore result in similar impacts. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 4 | No preference | All the proposed alternative locations for Mooi Plaats are in similar bird habitat and will therefore result in similar impacts. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 5 | No preference | All the proposed alternative locations for Mooi Plaats are in similar bird habitat and will therefore result in similar impacts. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 6 | No preference | All the proposed alternative locations for Mooi Plaats are in similar bird habitat and will therefore result in similar impacts. |
| **WONDERHEUVEL SOLAR PV FACILITY:** | | |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 1 | No preference | All the proposed alternative locations for Wonderheuvel are in similar bird |

| PV INFRASTRUCTURE ALTERNATIVES (LAYDOWN AREAS AND O&M BUILDINGS) | Preference | Reasons (incl. potential issues) |
|---|---|---|
| | | habitat and will therefore result in similar impacts. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 2 | No preference | All the proposed alternative locations for Wonderheuvel are in similar bird habitat and will therefore result in similar impacts. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 3 | No preference | All the proposed alternative locations for Wonderheuvel are in similar bird habitat and will therefore result in similar impacts. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 4 | No preference | All the proposed alternative locations for Wonderheuvel are in similar bird habitat and will therefore result in similar impacts. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 5 | No preference | All the proposed alternative locations for Wonderheuvel are in similar bird habitat and will therefore result in similar impacts. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 6 | No preference | All the proposed alternative locations for Wonderheuvel are in similar bird habitat and will therefore result in similar impacts. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 7 | No preference | All the proposed alternative locations for Wonderheuvel are in similar bird habitat and will therefore result in similar impacts. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 8 | No preference | All the proposed alternative locations for Wonderheuvel are in similar bird habitat and will therefore result in similar impacts. |
| **PAARDE VALLEY SOLAR PV FACILITY:** | | |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 1 | No preference | All the proposed alternative locations for PaardeValley are in similar bird habitat and will therefore result in similar impacts. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 2 | No preference | All the proposed alternative locations for PaardeValley are in similar bird |

| PV INFRASTRUCTURE ALTERNATIVES (LAYDOWN AREAS AND O&M BUILDINGS) | Preference | Reasons (incl. potential issues) |
|---|---|---|
| | | habitat and will therefore result in similar impacts. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 3 | No preference | All the proposed alternative locations for PaardeValley are in similar bird habitat and will therefore result in similar impacts. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 4 | No preference | All the proposed alternative locations for PaardeValley are in similar bird habitat and will therefore result in similar impacts. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 5 | No preference | All the proposed alternative locations for PaardeValley are in similar bird habitat and will therefore result in similar impacts. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 6 | No preference | All the proposed alternative locations for PaardeValley are in similar bird habitat and will therefore result in similar impacts. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 7 | No preference | All the proposed alternative locations for PaardeValley are in similar bird habitat and will therefore result in similar impacts. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 8 | No preference | All the proposed alternative locations for PaardeValley are in similar bird habitat and will therefore result in similar impacts. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 9 | No preference | All the proposed alternative locations for PaardeValley are in similar bird habitat and will therefore result in similar impacts. |

| GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE ALTERNATIVES (POWER LINE CORRIDORS and ASSOCIATED SUBSTATIONS) | Preference | Reasons (incl. potential issues) |
|---|---|---|
| **MOOI PLAATS SOLAR PV FACILITY:** | | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Grid Connection Option 1a | Preferred | This is the shorter than both alternatives for Option 2 |
| Grid Connection Option 1b | Preferred | This is the shorter than both alternatives for Option 2 |
| Grid Connection Option 2a | Not preferred | This is longer than both alternatives for Option 1 |
| Grid Connection Option 2b | Not preferred | This is longer than both alternatives for Option 1 |
| **WONDERHEUVEL SOLAR PV FACILITY:** | | |
| Grid Connection Option 1a | Not preferred | This is longer than all the alternatives for Options 2 and 3 |
| Grid Connection Option 1b | Not preferred | This is longer than all the alternatives for Options 2 and 3 |
| Grid Connection Option 1c | Not preferred | This is longer than all the alternatives for Options 2 and 3 |
| Grid Connection Option 1d | Not preferred | This is longer than all the alternatives for Options 2 and 3 |
| Grid Connection Option 2a | Preferred | This is shorter than all the alternatives for Option 1 approximately equal to Option 3 |
| Grid Connection Option 2b | Preferred | This is shorter than all the alternatives for Option 1 approximately equal to Option 3 |
| Grid Connection Option 3 | Preferred | This is shorter than all the alternatives for Option 1 approximately equal to Option 2 |
| **PAARDE VALLEY SOLAR PV FACILITY:** | | |
| Grid Connection Option 1a | Not preferred | Option 1 will create a new impact, because for most of the way it does not run parallel to any of the other options. |
| Grid Connection Option 1b | Not preferred | Option 1 will create a new impact, because for most of the way it does not run parallel to any of the other options. |
| Grid Connection Option 1c | Not preferred | Option 1 will create a new impact, because for most of the way it does |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | not run parallel to any of the other options. |
| Grid Connection Option 1d | Not preferred | Option 1 will create a new impact, because for most of the way it does not run parallel to any of the other options. |
| Grid Connection Option 2a | Preferred | The majority of Option 2 run parallel to the proposed Mooiplaats and Wonderheuvel grid connection options, which is preferable to creating a new impact as is the case with Option 1. |
| Grid Connection Option 2a | Preferred | The majority of Option 2 run parallel to the proposed Mooiplaats and Wonderheuvel grid connection options, which is preferable to creating a new impact as is the case with Option 1. |
| Grid Connection Option 2a | Preferred | The majority of Option 2 run parallel to the proposed Mooiplaats and Wonderheuvel grid connection options, which is preferable to creating a new impact as is the case with Option 1. |
| Grid Connection Option 2a | Preferred | The majority of Option 2 run parallel to the proposed Mooiplaats and Wonderheuvel grid connection options, which is preferable to creating a new impact as is the case with Option 1. |

## 10 CONCLUSIONS

The proposed Umsobomvu PV facilities will have some pre-mitigation impacts on avifauna at a site and local level which will range from **Medium to Low**.

The impact of displacement due to disturbance during the construction phase is rated as **Medium** and will remain at a **Medium** level after mitigation. The impact of displacement of priority species due to habitat transformation associated with the operation of the plant and associated infrastructure is rated as **Medium**. This impact can be partially reversed through mitigation, but it will remain at a **Medium** level, after mitigation. The envisaged impacts in the operational phase, i.e. mortalities due to collisions with the solar panels and entrapment in perimeter fences are both rated as **Low** pre-mitigation and could be further reduced with appropriate mitigation. The impact of displacement due to disturbance during the decommissioning phase is rated as **Medium**, and it will remain at a **Medium** level after mitigation. The cumulative impact of the proposed PV facilities within a 35km radius is rated as **Low**, both per- and post mitigation.

The impact of displacement due to disturbance associated with the construction of the proposed 132kV grid connection and substations, is assessed to be **Medium** and can be mitigated to a **Low** level. The potential for displacement due to habitat destruction associated with the construction of the substations is rated as **Low** and could be further reduced with appropriate mitigation. The impact of bird collisions with the 132kV grid connection is rated as **High** and could be reduced to **Medium** with the application of mitigation measures. The potential impact of electrocutions is assessed to be **Medium**, but it can be reduced to **Low** with appropriate mitigation. The impact of displacement due to disturbance associated with the de-commissioning of the proposed 132kV grid connection and substations, is assessed to be **Medium** and can be mitigated to a **Low** level. The cumulative impact of the proposed grid connections within a 35km radius is rated as **Medium**, but it can be reduced to **Low** with the application of appropriate mitigation.

## 11 IMPACT STATEMENT

From an avifaunal impact perspective, there is no objection to the proposed development of the Umsobomvu PV facilities and associated grid connections, provided the proposed mitigation measures are strictly implemented. No further monitoring will be required during the operational phase.

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## APPENDIX 1: FIELD SURVEYS

# 1 Methodology

Monitoring was conducted in the following manner:

- A visit to the site and general area was conducted on 15 and 16 January 2019, followed up by on-site surveys from 17 - 19 January and 9-12 May 2019. Eighteen walk transects were identified totalling 1km each in the proposed PV development area (see Figure 1 below).
- One observer walking slowly recorded all species on both sides of the transect. The observer stopped at regular intervals to scan the environment with binoculars.
- Each transect was counted twice over a period of three days.
- The following variables were recorded:
  - Species;
  - Number of birds;
  - Date;
  - Start time and end time;
  - Estimated distance from transect (m);
  - Wind direction;
  - Wind strength (estimated Beaufort scale 1 - 7);
  - Weather (sunny; cloudy; partly cloudy; rain; mist);
  - Temperature (cold; mild; warm; hot);
  - Behaviour (flushed; flying-display; perched; perched-calling; perched-hunting; flying- foraging; flying-commute; foraging on the ground.
- All incidental sightings of priority species were recorded.
- The sections of the Hydra – Poseidon 1 and 2 400kV transmission lines running through to the study area was inspected for evidence of breeding raptors on the towers.

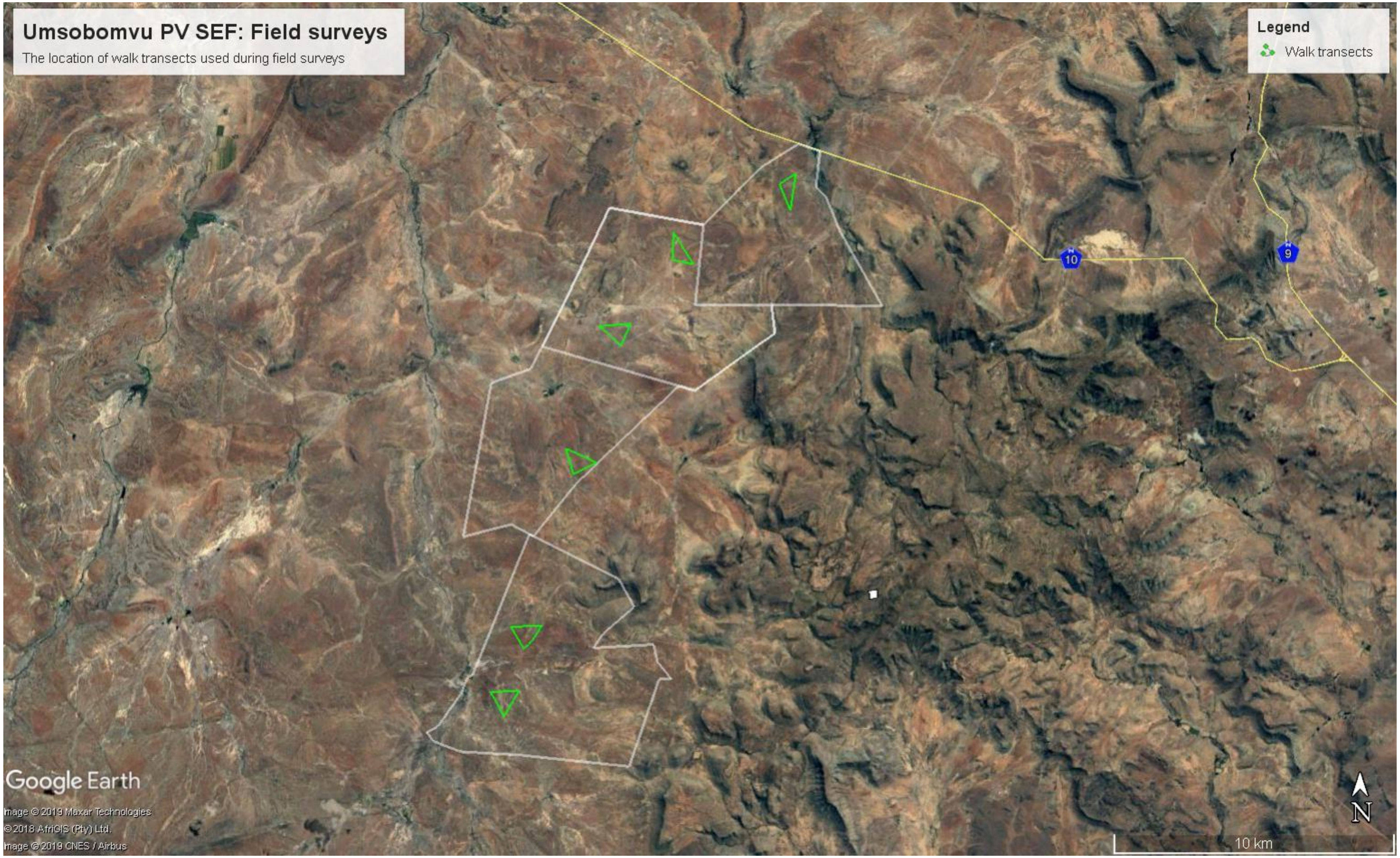



Figure 1: Walk transects used during field surveys.

# APPENDIX 2: AVIFAUNA IN THE BROADER AREA

| Species | Taxonmic name | Solar priority species | Powerline sensitive species | SABAP2 Average reporting rate: full protocol | Red Data status: International | Red Data status: Regional | Endemic - South Africa | Endemic - Southern Africa |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Apalis, Bar-throated | *Apalis thoracica* | | | 1.86 | | | | |
| Avocet, Pied | *Recurvirostra avosetta* | x | | 15.48 | | | | |
| Barbet, Acacia Pied | *Tricholaema leucomelas* | | | 75.00 | | | | Near-endemic |
| Batis, Pririt | *Batis pririt* | | | 1.86 | | | | Near-endemic |
| Bee-eater, European | *Merops apiaster* | | | 21.96 | | | | |
| Bishop, Southern Red | *Euplectes orix* | | | 69.99 | | | | |
| Bishop, Yellow-crowned | *Euplectes afer* | | | 2.78 | | | | |
| Bokmakierie | *Telophorus zeylonus* | | | 88.49 | | | | |
| Bulbul, African Red-eyed | *Pycnonotus nigricans* | | | 81.48 | | | | Near-endemic |
| Bunting, Cape | *Emberiza capensis* | | | 52.78 | | | | Near-endemic |
| Bunting, Cinnamon-breasted | *Emberiza tahapisi* | | | 7.41 | | | | |
| Bunting, Lark-like | *Emberiza impetuani* | | | 63.49 | | | | Near-endemic |
| Bustard, Ludwig's | *Neotis ludwigii* | x | x | 25.67 | EN | EN | | Near-endemic |
| Buzzard, Jackal | *Buteo rufofuscus* | x | x | 22.22 | | | Near endemic | Endemic |
| Buzzard, Steppe | *Buteo vulpinus* | | x | 10.59 | | | | |
| Canary, Black-headed | *Serinus alario* | x | | 14.56 | | | Near endemic | Endemic |
| Canary, Black-throated | *Crithagra atrogularis* | | | 25.00 | | | | |
| Canary, Cape | *Serinus canicollis* | | | 3.44 | | | | Endemic |
| Canary, White-throated | *Crithagra albogularis* | | | 59.26 | | | | Near-endemic |
| Canary, Yellow | *Crithagra flaviventris* | | | 20.51 | | | | Near-endemic |
| Canary, Yellow-fronted | *Crithagra mozambicus* | | | 0.00 | | | | |
| Chat, Anteating | *Myrmecocichla formicivora* | | | 11.57 | | | | Endemic |
| Chat, Familiar | *Cercomela familiaris* | | | 92.59 | | | | |
| Chat, Karoo | *Cercomela schlegelii* | | | 0.00 | | | | Near-endemic |
| Chat, Sickle-winged | *Cercomela sinuata* | x | | 48.81 | | | Near endemic | Endemic |
| Cisticola, Cloud | *Cisticola textrix* | x | | 0.00 | | | Near endemic | Near-endemic |
| Cisticola, Desert | *Cisticola aridulus* | | | 17.33 | | | | |
| Cisticola, Grey-backed | *Cisticola subruficapilla* | | | 45.77 | | | | Near-endemic |
| Cisticola, Levaillant's | *Cisticola tinniens* | | | 30.43 | | | | |
| Cisticola, Zitting | *Cisticola juncidis* | | | 1.86 | | | | |
| Cliff-swallow, South African | *Hirundo spilodera* | | | 6.33 | | | Endemic (SA, Lesotho, Swaziland) Breeding | Breeding-endemic |
| Coot, Red-knobbed | *Fulica cristata* | x | x | 14.41 | | | | |
| Cormorant, Reed | *Phalacrocorax africanus* | x | x | 13.49 | | | | |
| Cormorant, White-breasted | *Phalacrocorax carbo* | | | 4.77 | | | | |
| Courser, Double-banded | *Rhinoptilus africanus* | | | 2.78 | | | | |
| Crane, Blue | *Anthropoides paradiseus* | x | x | 73.41 | VU | NT | | Endemic |
| Crane, Grey Crowned | *Balearica regulorum* | x | x | 0.00 | EN | EN | | |
| Crombec, Long-billed | *Sylvietta rufescens* | | | 14.96 | | | | |
| Crow, Cape | *Corvus capensis* | | | 1.86 | | | | |
| Crow, Pied | *Corvus albus* | | x | 88.89 | | | | |
| Cuckoo, Diderick | *Chrysococcyx caprius* | | | 10.19 | | | | |
| Dove, Laughing | *Streptopelia senegalensis* | | | 42.22 | | | | |
| Dove, Namaqua | *Oena capensis* | | | 27.51 | | | | |
| Dove, Red-eyed | *Streptopelia semitorquata* | | | 60.44 | | | | |
| Drongo, Fork-tailed | *Dicrurus adsimilis* | | | 1.86 | | | | |
| Duck, African Black | *Anas sparsa* | x | x | 8.33 | | | | |

| Species | Taxonmic name | Solar priority species | Powerline sensitive species | SABAP2 Average reporting rate: full protocol | Red Data status: International | Red Data status: Regional | Endemic - South Africa | Endemic - Southern Africa |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Duck, Maccoa | *Oxyura maccoa* | x | x | 1.59 | NT | NT | | |
| Duck, White-faced | *Dendrocygna viduata* | x | x | 2.78 | | | | |
| Duck, Yellow-billed | *Anas undulata* | x | x | 50.92 | | | | |
| Eagle, Booted | *Aquila pennatus* | | x | 16.67 | | | | |
| Eagle, Martial | *Polemaetus bellicosus* | x | x | 7.14 | VU | EN | | |
| Eagle, Verreaux's | *Aquila verreauxii* | x | x | 18.26 | LC | VU | | |
| Eagle-owl, Spotted | *Bubo africanus* | x | x | 12.43 | | | | |
| Egret, Cattle | *Bubulcus ibis* | x | | 4.63 | | | | |
| Egret, Great | *Egretta alba* | x | x | 0.00 | | | | |
| Eremomela, Yellow-bellied | *Eremomela icteropygialis* | | | 20.37 | | | | |
| Falcon, Lanner | *Falco biarmicus* | x | x | 2.78 | LC | VU | | |
| Falcon, Peregrine | *Falco peregrinus* | x | x | 1.59 | | | | |
| Finch, Red-headed | *Amadina erythrocephala* | | | 13.89 | | | | Near-endemic |
| Fiscal, Common (Southern) | *Lanius collaris* | | | 96.82 | | | | |
| Fish-eagle, African | *Haliaeetus vocifer* | x | x | 3.18 | | | | |
| Flamingo, Greater | *Phoenicopterus ruber* | | x | 3.18 | LC | NT | | |
| Flycatcher, Chat | *Bradornis infuscatus* | | | 20.38 | | | | Near-endemic |
| Flycatcher, Fiscal | *Sigelus silens* | x | | 34.40 | | | Near endemic | Endemic |
| Flycatcher, Spotted | *Muscicapa striata* | | | 4.63 | | | | |
| Francolin, Grey-winged | *Scleroptila africanus* | | | 10.84 | | | Endemic (SA, Lesotho, Swaziland) | Endemic |
| Goose, Egyptian | *Alopochen aegyptiacus* | | x | 77.78 | | | | |
| Goose, Spur-winged | *Plectropterus gambensis* | x | x | 34.79 | | | | |
| Goshawk, Southern Pale Chanting | *Melierax canorus* | x | x | 34.66 | | | | Near-endemic |
| Grebe, Black-necked | *Podiceps nigricollis* | x | x | 0.00 | | | | |
| Grebe, Great Crested | *Podiceps cristatus* | x | x | 1.59 | | | | |
| Grebe, Little | *Tachybaptus ruficollis* | x | | 9.12 | | | | |
| Greenshank, Common | *Tringa nebularia* | x | | 12.70 | | | | |
| Guineafowl, Helmeted | *Numida meleagris* | | x | 63.22 | | | | |
| Hamerkop | *Scopus umbretta* | x | x | 1.86 | | | | |
| Harrier, Black | *Circus maurus* | x | x | 2.78 | VU | EN | Near endemic | Endemic |
| Harrier-Hawk, African | *Polyboroides typus* | x | x | 1.59 | | | | |
| Heron, Black-headed | *Ardea melanocephala* | x | x | 17.33 | | | | |
| Heron, Grey | *Ardea cinerea* | x | x | 23.93 | | | | |
| Hoopoe, African | *Upupa africana* | | | 51.86 | | | | |
| Ibis, African Sacred | *Threskiornis aethiopicus* | x | x | 20.23 | | | | |
| Ibis, Hadeda | *Bostrychia hagedash* | | x | 51.46 | | | | |
| Kestrel, Greater | *Falco rupicoloides* | x | | 21.30 | | | | |
| Kestrel, Lesser | *Falco naumanni* | x | | 20.37 | | | | |
| Kestrel, Rock | *Falco rupicolus* | x | | 27.41 | | | | |
| Kingfisher, Malachite | *Alcedo cristata* | x | | 2.78 | | | | |
| Kingfisher, Pied | *Ceryle rudis* | x | | 2.78 | | | | |
| Kite, Black-shouldered | *Elanus caeruleus* | x | | 15.44 | | | | |
| Korhaan, Blue | *Eupodotis caerulescens* | x | x | 56.34 | NT | LC | Endemic (SA, Lesotho, Swaziland) | Endemic |
| Korhaan, Karoo | *Eupodotis vigorsii* | x | x | 13.10 | LC | NT | | Endemic |
| Korhaan, Northern Black | *Afrotis afraoides* | | x | 74.21 | | | | Endemic |
| Lapwing, Blacksmith | *Vanellus armatus* | x | | 49.33 | | | | |
| Lapwing, Crowned | *Vanellus coronatus* | | | 28.44 | | | | |
| Lark, Eastern Clapper | *Mirafra fasciolata* | | | 82.01 | | | | Near-endemic |
| Lark, Large-billed | *Galerida magnirostris* | x | | 75.27 | | | Near endemic | Endemic |
| Lark, Red-capped | *Calandrella cinerea* | | | 28.97 | | | | |
| Lark, Sabota | *Calendulauda sabota* | | | 8.33 | | | | Near-endemic |
| Lark, Spike-heeled | *Chersomanes albofasciata* | | | 70.23 | | | | Near-endemic |

| Species | Taxonmic name | Solar priority species | Powerline sensitive species | SABAP2 Average reporting rate: full protocol | Red Data status: International | Red Data status: Regional | Endemic - South Africa | Endemic - Southern Africa |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Longclaw, Cape | *Macronyx capensis* | | | 17.07 | | | | Endemic |
| Martin, Brown-throated | *Riparia paludicola* | | | 29.89 | | | | |
| Martin, Rock | *Hirundo fuligula* | | | 58.19 | | | | |
| Masked-weaver, Southern | *Ploceus velatus* | | | 80.81 | | | | |
| Moorhen, Common | *Gallinula chloropus* | *x* | | 17.07 | | | | |
| Mousebird, Red-faced | *Urocolius indicus* | | | 17.59 | | | | |
| Mousebird, Speckled | *Colius striatus* | | | 41.93 | | | | |
| Mousebird, White-backed | *Colius colius* | | | 62.30 | | | | Endemic |
| Neddicky | *Cisticola fulvicapilla* | | | 23.54 | | | | |
| Night-Heron, Black-crowned | *Nycticorax nycticorax* | *x* | *x* | 0.00 | | | | |
| Owl, Barn | *Tyto alba* | *x* | | 7.41 | | | | |
| Paradise-flycatcher, African | *Terpsiphone viridis* | | | 2.78 | | | | |
| Penduline-tit, Cape | *Anthoscopus minutus* | | | 36.78 | | | | Near-endemic |
| Pigeon, Speckled | *Columba guinea* | | | 73.41 | | | | |
| Pipit, African | *Anthus cinnamomeus* | | | 70.89 | | | | |
| Pipit, African Rock | *Anthus crenatus* | *x* | | 11.11 | LC | NT | Endemic (SA, Lesotho, Swaziland) | Endemic |
| Pipit, Long-billed | *Anthus similis* | | | 13.89 | | | | |
| Pipit, Plain-backed | *Anthus leucophrys* | | | 5.56 | | | | |
| Plover, Kittlitz's | *Charadrius pecuarius* | *x* | | 28.70 | | | | |
| Plover, Three-banded | *Charadrius tricollaris* | *x* | | 57.68 | | | | |
| Pochard, Southern | *Netta erythrophthalma* | *x* | *x* | 1.59 | | | | |
| Prinia, Karoo | *Prinia maculosa* | *x* | | 76.19 | | | Near endemic | Endemic |
| Quail, Common | *Coturnix coturnix* | | | 12.70 | | | | |
| Quailfinch, African | *Ortygospiza atricollis* | | | 43.66 | | | | |
| Quelea, Red-billed | *Quelea quelea* | | | 18.26 | | | | |
| Raven, White-necked | *Corvus albicollis* | | *x* | 19.18 | | | | |
| Reed-warbler, African | *Acrocephalus baeticatus* | | | 10.84 | | | | |
| Robin-chat, Cape | *Cossypha caffra* | | | 66.00 | | | | |
| Ruff | *Philomachus pugnax* | *x* | | 3.18 | | | | |
| Sandgrouse, Namaqua | *Pterocles namaqua* | | *x* | 34.52 | | | | Near-endemic |
| Sandpiper, Wood | *Tringa glareola* | *x* | | 3.18 | | | | |
| Scrub-robin, Karoo | *Cercotrichas coryphoeus* | | | 84.26 | | | | Endemic |
| Secretarybird | *Sagittarius serpentarius* | *x* | *x* | 19.44 | | | | |
| Shelduck, South African | *Tadorna cana* | *x* | *x* | 51.86 | | | | Endemic |
| Shoveler, Cape | *Anas smithii* | *x* | *x* | 7.14 | | | | Near-endemic |
| Snake-eagle, Black-chested | *Circaetus pectoralis* | *x* | *x* | 1.86 | | | | |
| Snipe, African | *Gallinago nigripennis* | *x* | | 1.59 | | | | |
| Sparrow, Cape | *Passer melanurus* | | | 89.81 | | | | Near-endemic |
| Sparrow, House | *Passer domesticus* | | | 22.62 | | | | |
| Sparrow, Southern Grey-headed | *Passer diffusus* | | | 46.16 | | | | |
| Sparrowhawk, Black | *Accipiter melanoleucus* | *x* | | 0.00 | | | | |
| Sparrowhawk, Rufous-chested | *Accipiter rufiventris* | *x* | | 2.78 | | | | |
| Sparrowlark, Black-eared | *Eremopterix australis* | *x* | | 2.78 | | | Near endemic | Endemic |
| Sparrowlark, Grey-backed | *Eremopterix verticalis* | | | 25.79 | | | | Near-endemic |
| Spoonbill, African | *Platalea alba* | *x* | *x* | 5.96 | | | | |
| Starling, Cape Glossy | *Lamprotornis nitens* | | | 17.59 | | | | |
| Starling, Common | *Sturnus vulgaris* | | | 5.56 | | | | |
| Starling, Pale-winged | *Onychognathus nabouroup* | | | 2.78 | | | | Near-endemic |
| Starling, Pied | *Spreo bicolor* | | | 94.44 | | | Endemic (SA, Lesotho, Swaziland) | Endemic |
| Starling, Red-winged | *Onychognathus morio* | | | 48.01 | | | | |
| Starling, Wattled | *Creatophora cinerea* | | | 4.37 | | | | |

| Species | Taxonmic name | Solar priority species | Powerline sensitive species | SABAP2 Average reporting rate: full protocol | Red Data status: International | Red Data status: Regional | Endemic - South Africa | Endemic - Southern Africa |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Stilt, Black-winged | *Himantopus himantopus* | x | | 23.01 | | | | |
| Stint, Little | *Calidris minuta* | x | | 9.12 | | | | |
| Stonechat, African | *Saxicola torquatus* | | | 26.19 | | | | |
| Stork, Black | *Ciconia nigra* | x | x | 0.00 | LC | VU | | |
| Stork, White | *Ciconia ciconia* | x | x | 0.00 | | | | |
| Sunbird, Malachite | *Nectarinia famosa* | | | 1.86 | | | | |
| Sunbird, Southern Double-collared | *Cinnyris chalybeus* | x | | 5.56 | | | Near endemic | Endemic |
| Swallow, Barn | *Hirundo rustica* | | | 51.71 | | | | |
| Swallow, Greater Striped | *Hirundo cucullata* | | | 69.31 | | | | |
| Swallow, White-throated | *Hirundo albigularis* | | | 31.34 | | | | |
| Swamp-warbler, Lesser | *Acrocephalus gracilirostris* | | | 13.10 | | | | |
| Swift, African Black | *Apus barbatus* | | | 0.00 | | | | |
| Swift, Alpine | *Tachymarptis melba* | | | 4.63 | | | | |
| Swift, Little | *Apus affinis* | | | 28.70 | | | | |
| Swift, White-rumped | *Apus caffer* | | | 27.28 | | | | |
| Teal, Cape | *Anas capensis* | x | x | 8.73 | | | | |
| Teal, Red-billed | *Anas erythrorhyncha* | x | x | 13.37 | | | | |
| Thick-knee, Spotted | *Burhinus capensis* | | | 23.54 | | | | |
| Thrush, Karoo | *Turdus smithi* | x | | 34.12 | | | Near endemic | Endemic |
| Tit, Grey | *Parus afer* | x | | 10.19 | | | Near endemic | Endemic |
| Tit-babbler, Chestnut-vented | *Parisoma subcaeruleum* | | | 38.37 | | | | Near-endemic |
| Tit-babbler, Layard's | *Parisoma layardi* | | | 30.56 | | | Near endemic | Endemic |
| Turtle-dove, Cape | *Streptopelia capicola* | | | 98.14 | | | | |
| Vulture, Cape | *Gyps coprotheres* | x | x | 2.78 | EN | EN | | Near-endemic |
| Wagtail, Cape | *Motacilla capensis* | | | 90.73 | | | | |
| Warbler, Rufous-eared | *Malcorus pectoralis* | | | 92.46 | | | | Endemic |
| Warbler, Willow | *Phylloscopus trochilus* | | | 1.86 | | | | |
| Waxbill, Common | *Estrilda astrild* | | | 24.87 | | | | |
| Weaver, Cape | *Ploceus capensis* | x | | 7.14 | | | Near endemic | Endemic |
| Wheatear, Capped | *Oenanthe pileata* | | | 34.40 | | | | |
| Wheatear, Mountain | *Oenanthe monticola* | | | 71.69 | | | | Near-endemic |
| White-eye, Cape | *Zosterops virens* | x | | 25.40 | | | Near endemic | Endemic |
| Whydah, Pin-tailed | *Vidua macroura* | | | 26.71 | | | | |
| Woodpecker, Cardinal | *Dendropicos fuscescens* | | | 2.78 | | | | |
| Woodpecker, Ground | *Geocolaptes olivaceus* | x | | 1.86 | | | Endemic (SA, Lesotho, Swaziland) | Endemic |

# APPENDIX 3: IMPACT CRITERIA

## 2 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) METHODOLOGY

The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Methodology assists in evaluating the overall effect of a proposed activity on the environment. Determining of the significance of an environmental impact on an environmental parameter is determined through a systematic analysis.

### 2.1 Determination of Significance of Impacts

Significance is determined through a synthesis of impact characteristics which include context and intensity of an impact. Context refers to the geographical scale (i.e. site, local, national or global), whereas intensity is defined by the severity of the impact e.g. the magnitude of deviation from background conditions, the size of the area affected, the duration of the impact and the overall probability of occurrence. Significance is calculated as shown in **Table 1**.

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 total number of points scored for each impact indicates the level of significance of the impact.

### 2.2 Impact Rating System

The impact assessment must take account of the nature, scale and duration of effects on the environment and whether such effects are positive (beneficial) or negative (detrimental). Each issue / impact is also assessed according to the various project stages, as follows:

- Planning;
- 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 has also been included.

***The significance of Cumulative Impacts should also be rated (As per the Excel Spreadsheet Template).***

#### *2.2.1 Rating System Used to Classify Impacts*

The rating system is applied to the potential impact on the receiving environment and includes an objective evaluation of the possible mitigation of the impact. Impacts have been consolidated into one (1) rating. In assessing the significance of each issue the following criteria (including an allocated point system) is used:

**Table 4:** Rating of impacts criteria

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **ENVIRONMENTAL PARAMETER** | | |
| A brief description of the environmental aspect likely to be affected by the proposed activity (e.g. Surface Water). | | |
| **ISSUE / IMPACT / ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECT / NATURE** | | |
| Include a brief description of the impact of environmental parameter being assessed in the context of the project. This criterion includes a brief written statement of the environmental aspect being impacted upon by a particular action or activity (e.g. oil spill in surface water). | | |
| **EXTENT (E)** | | |
| This is defined as the area over which the impact will be expressed. Typically, the severity and significance of an impact have different scales and as such bracketing ranges are often required. This is often useful during the detailed assessment of a project in terms of further defining the determined. | | |
| 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 |
| **PROBABILITY (P)** | | |
| 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). |
| **REVERSIBILITY (R)** | | |
| This describes the degree to which an impact on an environmental parameter 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. |
| **IRREPLACEABLE LOSS OF RESOURCES (L)** | | |
| 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. |
| **DURATION (D)** | | |
| This describes the duration of the impacts on the environmental parameter. Duration indicates the lifetime of the impact as a result of the proposed activity. | | |
| 1 | Short term | The impact and its effects will either disappear with mitigation or will be mitigated through natural process in a span shorter than the construction phase (0 – 1 years), or the impact and its effects 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 and its effects 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 – 50 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 transient (Indefinite). |
| **INTENSITY / MAGNITUDE (I / M)** | | |
| Describes the severity of an impact (i.e. whether the impact has the ability to alter the functionality or quality of a system permanently or temporarily). | | |
| 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 (system collapse). Rehabilitation and remediation often impossible. If possible rehabilitation and remediation often unfeasible due to extremely high costs of rehabilitation and remediation. |

**SIGNIFICANCE (S)**

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. This describes the significance of the impact on the environmental parameter. The calculation of the significance of an impact uses the following formula:

**Significance = (Extent + probability + reversibility + irreplaceability + duration) x magnitude/intensity.**

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 |
|---|---|---|
| | | |
| 5 to 23 | Negative Low impact | The anticipated impact will have negligible negative effects and will require little to no mitigation. |
| 5 to 23 | Positive Low impact | The anticipated impact will have minor positive effects. |
| 24 to 42 | Negative Medium impact | The anticipated impact will have moderate negative effects and will require moderate mitigation measures. |
| 24 to 42 | Positive Medium impact | The anticipated impact will have moderate positive effects. |
| 43 to 61 | Negative High impact | The anticipated impact will have significant effects and will require significant mitigation measures to achieve an acceptable level of impact. |
| 43 to 61 | Positive High impact | The anticipated impact will have significant positive effects. |
| 62 to 80 | 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". |
| 62 to 80 | Positive Very high impact | The anticipated impact will have highly significant positive effects. |

## APPENDIX 4: LIST OF EXISTING AND PROPOSED RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS

| Project | DEA Reference No | Technology | Capacity | Status of Application / Development | Avifaunal specialist study conducted | Recommendations pertaining to avifauna |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Allemans Fontein SEF | 14/12/16/3/3/1/730 | Solar | 20MW | Approved | Yes | Micro-siting of infrastructure to avoid Blue Crane habitat. Strict control of construction activities to limit damage to the vegetation. |
| Carolus Poort SEF | 14/12/16/3/3/1/729 | Solar | 20MW | Approved | Yes | Micro-siting of infrastructure to avoid Blue Crane habitat. Strict control of construction activities to limit damage to the vegetation. |
| Carolus Poort SEF | 14/12/16/3/3/1/730 | Solar | 20MW | Approved | Yes | Micro-siting of infrastructure to avoid Blue Crane habitat. Strict control of construction activities to limit damage to the vegetation. |
| Gillmer SEF | 14/12/16/3/3/1/735 | Solar | 20MW | Approved | No | Mark powerlines with bird flappers. Record electrocutions and collisions. Use bird-friendly tower designs. |
| Inkululeko SEF | 14/12/16/3/3/1/553 | Solar | 20MW | Approved | No | None |
| Kleinfontein SEF | 12/12/20/2654 | Solar | 20MW | Approved | No | None |
| Klip Gat SEF | 14/12/16/3/3/2/354 | Solar | 75M | Approved | No | Mark powerlines with bird flappers. Do nest searches |
| Linde SEF | 12/12/20/2258 | Solar | 40MW | In Operation | No | None |
| Linde SEF (Expansion) | 14/12/16/3/3/1/1122 | Solar | 75MW | Approved | No | None |
| Middelburg Solar Park 1 | 12/12/20/2465/2 | Solar | 75MW | Approved | No | None |
| Middelburg Solar Park 2 | 12/12/20/2465/1 | Solar | 75MW | Approved | No | None |
| Naauw Poort SEF | 14/12/16/3/3/2/355 | Solar | 75MW | Approved | No | Mark powerlines with bird flappers. Do nest searches |
| Toitdale SEF | 12/12/20/2653 | Solar | 20MW | Approved | No | Do nest searches. Pre- and post-construction surveys |

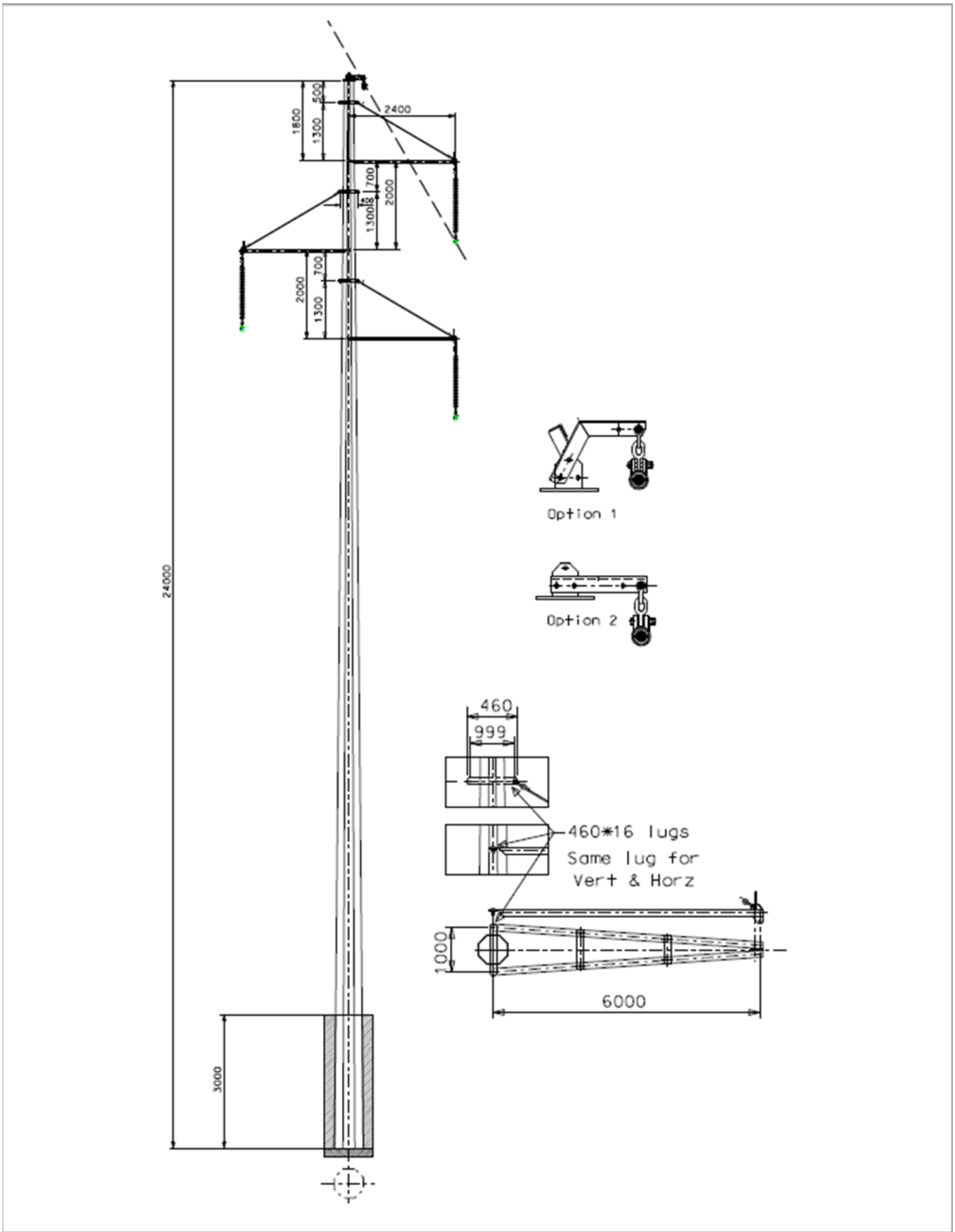
| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Noupoort Wind Farm | 12/12/20/2319 | Wind | 188MW | In Operation | Yes | • Ensuring that key areas of conservation importance and sensitivity are avoided, in this instance slopes and potential funnels of bird flight activity.<br>• Habitat destruction should be limited to what is absolutely necessary for the construction of the infrastructure, including the construction of new roads. In this respect, the recommendations from the Ecological Specialist Study (see Chapter 12 of the EIR) should be applied strictly. Personnel should be adequately briefed on the need to restrict habitat destruction, and must be restricted to the actual construction area.<br>• The proposed power line should be routed as far as possible from high risk areas (e.g. Blue Crane nest, agricultural lands, and dams). In addition, the proposed alignment must be assessed for potential collision risks and those sections must be marked with Bird Flight Diverters.<br>• The proposed pole design must be assessed by the author of this report to ensure that the power line design poses no potential electrocution risk of large raptors, particularly Martial Eagle, which may use the poles as hunting perches.<br>• A 500m exclusion zone should be implemented around the existing Blue Crane breeding pair where no construction activity should take place. Ideally, construction of turbines within a 1km line of sight around the nest should not take place during the sensitive part of the breeding cycle i.e. October to December.<br>• Once the turbines have been constructed, post-construction monitoring should be implemented as part of the continuation of the current monitoring programme, to assess displacement and actual collision rates. If actual collision and displacement levels are deemed too high, the following mitigation measures would need to be considered:<br>- Negotiating appropriate off-set compensation for turbine related displacement and collision mortality;<br>- As a last resort, halting operation of specific turbines during peak flight periods, or reducing rotor speed, to reduce the risk of collision mortality. |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Phezukomoya WEF | 14/12/16/3/3/1/1028 | Wind | 315MW | EIA in Process | | • Restrict the construction activities to the wind farm construction footprint area.<br>• Do not allow any access to the remainder of the property during the construction period. Measures to control noise and dust should be applied according to current best practice in the industry.<br>• Maximum use should be made of existing access roads and the construction of new roads should be kept to a minimum<br>• It is recommended that a 2.5km pre-cautionary no-go buffer is implemented around the Verreaux's Eagle nest at FP1 (31°12'59.66"S 24°57'26.08").<br>• The appointed Environmental Control Officer (ECO) should be trained by an avifaunal specialist to identify the signs that indicate possible breeding by priority species. The ECO must then, during audits/site visits, make a concerted effort to look out for such breeding activities of such species, and such efforts may include the training of construction staff to identify such species, followed by regular questioning of staff as to the regular whereabouts on site of the species. If any priority species are confirmed to be breeding (e.g. if a nest site is found), construction activities within 500m of the breeding site must cease, and the avifaunal specialist will be contacted immediately for further assessment of the situation and instruction on how to proceed.<br>• Restrict the construction activities to the powerline construction footprint area.<br>• Do not allow any access to the remainder of the property during the construction period.<br>• Measures to control noise and dust should be applied according to current best practice in the industry.<br>• Maximum use should be made of existing access roads and the construction of new roads should be kept to a minimum.<br>• Use Alternative A or B for the 400kV turn-in to the proposed Umsobomvu MTS<br>• The final powerline route should be assessed by the avifaunal specialist way of a walk-down to identify any priority species nests which could be impacted by the construction activities. Should a nest be discovered, the avifaunal specialist must have input into the construction schedule to assess how and which of the construction activities can be timed to minimize the disturbance potential to the occupants of the nest.<br>• The final powerline design and associated electrocution mitigation measures (if necessary) must be approved and signed off by the avifaunal specialist.<br>• The recommendations of the specialist ecological study must be strictly adhered to. Maximum used should be made of existing access roads and the construction of new roads should be kept to a minimum.<br>• Following construction, rehabilitation of all areas disturbed (e.g. temporary access tracks and laydown areas) must be undertaken and to this end a habitat restoration plan is to be developed by a rehabilitation specialist.<br>• Once the turbines have been constructed, post-construction monitoring should be implemented to compare actual collision rates with predicted collision rates.<br>• The avifaunal specialist, in consultation with external experts and relevant NGO's such as BLSA, should determine annual mortality thresholds for priority anticipated to be at risk of collision mortality, prior to the wind farm going operational.<br>• If actual collision rates exceed the pre-determined threshold levels, curtailment of turbines should be implemented for high risk situations.<br>• A 150m no-turbine set-back buffer zone (infrastructure is allowed) is required around the escarpment to minimise the risk of collisions for slope soaring species.<br>• It is recommended that a 2.5km pre-cautionary no-go buffer is implemented around the Verreaux's Eagle nest at FP1 (31°12'59.66"S 24°57'26.08").<br>• In addition, it is recommended that turbines 7, 62 and 63 are relocated to the top of the plateau as they pose a high collision risk on the slopes where they are situated.<br>• Care should be taken not to create habitat for prey species that could draw priority raptors into the area and expose them to collision risk. Rock piles must be removed from site or covered with topsoil to prevent them from becoming habitat for Rock Hyrax (Dassie). |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| San Kraal WEF | 14/12/16/3/3/1/1069 | Wind | 390MW | EIA in Process | | • Restrict the construction activities to the wind farm construction footprint area.<br>• Do not allow any access to the remainder of the property during the construction period.<br>• Measures to control noise and dust should be applied according to current best practice in the industry.<br>• Maximum use should be made of existing access roads and the construction of new roads should be kept to a minimum.<br>• Implement a 500m no development buffer zone around each of the two pans at FP3 at31°14'15.02"S 25° 2'44.17"E and FP4 at 31°13'55.42"S 25° 2'50.37"E to protect the pair of Blue Cranes from disturbance.<br>• The appointed Environmental Control Officer (ECO) should be trained by an avifaunal specialist to identify the signs that indicate possible breeding by priority species. The ECO must then, during audits/site visits, make a concerted effort to look out for such breeding activities of such species, and such efforts may include the training of construction staff to identify such species, followed by regular questioning of staff as to the regular whereabouts on site of the species. If any priority species are confirmed to be breeding (e.g. if a nest site is found), construction activities within 500m of the breeding site must cease, and the avifaunal specialist will be contacted immediately for further assessment of the situation and instruction on how to proceed.<br>• The final powerline design and associated electrocution mitigation measures (if necessary) must be approved and signed off by the avifaunal specialist.<br>• Once the turbines have been constructed, post-construction monitoring should be implemented to compare actual collision rates with predicted collision rates.<br>• The avifaunal specialist, in consultation with external experts and relevant NGO's such as BLSA, should determine annual mortality thresholds for priority species anticipated to be at risk of collision mortality, prior to the wind farm going operational.<br>• If actual collision rates exceed the pre-determined threshold levels, curtailment of turbines should be implemented for high risk situations.<br>• A 150m no-turbine set-back buffer zone (infrastructure is allowed) is required around the escarpment to minimise the risk of collisions for slope soaring species.<br>• Care should be taken not to create habitat for prey species that could draw priority raptors into the area and expose them to collision risk. Rock piles must be removed from site or covered with topsoil to prevent them from becoming habitat for Rock Hyrax (Dassie).<br>• The final power line route should be assessed by way of a walk-through and those sections requiring Bird Flight Diverters (BFDs) must be identified.<br>• Use the Preferred Alternative or Alternative 1 for the grid connection in order to avoid the No-Go zone around the Verreaux's Eagle nest at FP1. |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| msobomvu WEF | 14/12/16/3/3/2/730 | Wind | 140MW | Approved | | • No infrastructure should be built in the areas identified as HIGH sensitivity.<br>• There may be a requirement to avoid construction of certain infrastructure during Verreaux's Eagle breeding season (approximately May to September-October). This will be determined by the avifaunal walk through prior to construction and once the infrastructure layout is final. All power line linking the turbines and linking turbine strings to the on-site substation should be placed underground.<br>• The power line linking the site to the Eskom grid will be above ground but must conform to all Eskom standards in terms of bird friendly pole monopole structures with Bird Perches on every pole top (to mitigate for bird electrocution), and anti-bird collision line marking devices (to mitigate for bird collision). It is particularly important that the collision mitigation devices used are durable and remain in place on the line for the full lifespan of the power line. It will be InnoWind/Eskom's responsibility to maintain these devices in effective condition for this period.<br>• Systematic patrols of this power line should be conducted during post construction bird monitoring for the wind energy facility, in order to monitor the impacts, the effectiveness of mitigation, and the durability of the mitigation measures.<br>• An avifaunal walk down will need to be conducted to assess the route of this power line once available.<br>• A final avifaunal walk through should be conducted prior to construction to ensure that all the avifaunal aspects have been adequately managed and to ground truth the final layout of all infrastructure. This will most likely be done as part of the site specific Environmental Management Plan. This will also allow the development of specific management actions for the Environmental Control Officer during construction and training for relevant on site personnel if necessary.<br>• The post-construction bird monitoring programme outlined by this report should be implemented by a suitably qualified avifaunal specialist, in accordance with the latest available best practice guidelines at the time (see Jenkins et al. 2014). As mentioned above this monitoring should include the grid connection power line.<br>• The findings of post-construction monitoring should be used to measure the effects of this facility on birds. If significant impacts are identified the wind farm operator will have to identify and implement suitable mitigation measures. |

## APPENDIX 5: PROPOSED 7649 POLE DESIGN FOR GRID CONNECTION



SiVEST

# Appendix 6C

# Geotechnical

# UMSOBOMVU PV ENERGY FACILITIES GEOTECHNICAL DESKTOP STUDY

**NOVEMBER 2019**
**REVISION 1 FINAL**

Prepared for:

## MOOI PLAATS SOLAR POWER (PTY) LTD / WONDERHEUVEL SOLAR POWER (PTY) LTD / PAARDE VALLEY (PTY) LTD

and

SiVEST

Prepared by:

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# VERIFICATION PAGE

| VERIFICATION PAGE | Form 4.3.1 |
|---|---|
| | Rev 13 |

**TITLE:**

**UMSOBOMVU PV ENERGY FACILITIES**
**GEOTECHNICAL DESKTOP STUDY**

| JGA REF. NO. | DATE: | REPORT STATUS |
|---|---|---|
| 4817/07–02 | 04/11/2019 | Rev 1 Final |

| CARRIED OUT BY: | COMMISSIONED BY: |
|---|---|
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**SYNOPSIS**

Revision 1: High-level geotechnical desktop study for the proposed Umsobomvu PV Facility.

**KEY WORDS:**

Solar Energy, Geotechnical Study, Umsobomvu, Inxuba Yethemba, Northern Cape, Eastern Cape, South Africa



**QUALITY VERIFICATION**

This report has been prepared under the controls established by a quality management system that meets the requirements of ISO9001: 2015 which has been independently certified by DEKRA Certification

| Verification | Capacity | Name | Signature | Date |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| By Author | Technical Director | C Canahai | | 29/10/2019 |
| Checked by: | Engineering Geologist | K Naidoo Pr. Sci. Nat | | 30/10/2019 |
| Authorised by: | Technical Director | C. Canahai Pr. Sci. Nat | | 04/11/2019 |

| | |
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| Filename: | W:\Earth Sciences\4817 - Various Small Geotech Projects 2018\07 - Umsobomvu PV Farm Desktop Study\Report Final\Revision 1\4817-07- Umsobomvu PV Farm Rev 1_Final.docx |

**National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998) and Environmental Impact Regulations 2014 (as amended) Requirements for Specialist Reports (Appendix 6)**

| **Section in EIA Regulations 2014 (as amended)** | | **Clause** | **Section in Report** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Appendix 6 | (1) | A specialist report prepared in terms of these Regulations must contain — | |
| | (a) | details of – | |
| | | (i) the specialist who prepared the report; and | Verification Page |
| | | (ii) the expertise of that specialist to compile a specialist report including a curriculum vitae. | Annexure B |
| | (b) | A declaration that the person is independent in a form as may be specified by the competent authority; | Declaration of interest form |
| | (c) | An indication of the scope of, and the purpose for which, the report was prepared; | 1 |
| | (cA) | An indication of the quality and age of base data used for the specialist report; | 11 |
| | (cB) | A description of existing impacts on the site, cumulative impacts of the proposed development and levels of acceptable change; | Tables 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 |
| | (d) | The duration, date and season of the site investigation and the relevance of the season to the outcome of the assessment; | Non-Applicable |
| | (e) | A description of the methodology adopted in preparing the report or carrying out the specialised process; inclusive of equipment and modelling used; | 5 |
| | (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; | Figures 6,7, 8 |
| | (g) | An indication of any areas to be avoided, including buffers; | Figures 6, 7, 8 |
| | (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; | Figures 5, 6, 7, 8 |
| | (i) | A description of any assumptions made and any uncertainties or gaps in knowledge; | 1,11 |
| | (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; | Figures 6, 7, 8 |
| | (k) | Any mitigation measures for inclusion in the EMPr; | Tables 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 |
| | (l) | Any conditions for inclusion in the environmental authorization; | Tables 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 |
| | (m) | Any monitoring requirements for inclusion in the EMPr or environmental authorization; | Tables 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 |
| | (n) | A reasoned opinion – | |
| | | (i) as to whether the proposed activity, activities or portions thereof should be authorized; | 49 |
| | | (iA) regarding the acceptability of the proposed activity or activities; and | 49 |
| | | (ii) if the opinion is that the proposed activity, activities or portions thereof should be authorized, any avoidance, management and mitigation measures | Tables 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | that should be included in the EMPr, and where applicable, the closure plan; | |
| | (o) | A description of any consultation process that was undertaken during the course of preparing the specialist report; | Non-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 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. | Non-Applicable |

# UMSOBOMVU PV ENERGY FACILITIES

# GEOTECHNICAL DESKTOP STUDY

## TABLE OF CONTENTS



## FIGURES

## ANNEXURES

# UMSOBOMVU PV ENERGY FACILITIES
# GEOTECHNICAL DESKTOP STUDY

## 1 INTRODUCTION

This report presents the high-level, scoping phase, geotechnical desktop study, undertaken for Mooi Plaats (Pty) Ltd, Wonderheuvel (Pty) Ltd and Paarde Valley (Pty) Ltd, via SiVEST Environmental Division, for the proposed construction of Photovoltaic (PV) Energy Facilities. The proposed development crosses the Northern Cape / Eastern Cape provincial border and comprises of three PV Energy facilities with associated grid infrastructure. Further investigation will be needed at the design stage to aid the engineers in their design.

The information provided in this report is based on published geological maps, published geological and geotechnical information, the interpretation of aerial photography and the review of existing environmental study reports. Site verification was not undertaken. This information is provided for planning purposes only and as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment process.

## 2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

We understand that the geotechnical desktop study will form part of the Environmental Impact Assessment to be undertaken by the SiVEST Environmental Division. From the information provided by SiVEST, there are three proposed PV facilities (with associated grid infrastructure) namely; Mooi Plaats Solar PV Facility, Wonderheuvel Solar PV Facility and Paarde Valley Solar PV Facility. These facilities are to comprise of:

- ***Mooi Plaats Solar PV Facility***, on an application site of approximately 5 303ha, comprising the following farm portions:
  - Portion 1 of Leuwe Kop No 120
  - Remainder of Mooi Plaats No 121

- ***Wonderheuvel Solar PV Facility***, on an application site of approximately 5 652ha, comprising the following farm portions:
  - Remainder of Mooi Plaats No 121
  - Portion 3 of Wonder Heuvel No 140
  - Portion 5 of Holle Fountain No 133

- ***Paarde Valley Solar PV Facility***, on an application site of approximately 3 695ha, comprising the following farm portion:
  - Portion 2 of Paarde Valley No 62: and
  - Portion 7 of the Farm Leeuw Hoek No. 61.

### 2.1 SOLAR PV COMPONENTS

#### 2.1.1 Mooi Plaats Solar PV Energy Facility

The proposed Mooi Plaats Solar PV Energy Facility will include the following components:

- Three (3) PV array areas, occupying a combined total area of approximately 777 hectares (ha).
- The proposed solar PV energy facility will have a maximum total generation capacity of approximately **400MW** and will comprise approximately **1 142 857** PV modules. The final number of modules as well as their configuration will only be determined in the detailed design phase.
- PV modules will be either fixed tilt mounting or single axis tracking mounting, and the modules will be either crystalline silicon or thin film technology. Each module will be approximately 2m wide and between 1m and 4m in height, depending on the mounting type.
- Internal roads, between 4m and 10m wide, will provide access to the PV arrays. Existing site roads will be used wherever possible, although new site roads will be constructed where necessary.
- Up to three (3) temporary construction laydown / staging areas of approximately 4ha each.
- Operation and maintenance (O&M) buildings will be provided for each PV array area, occupying a site of approximately 1ha each. Up to a maximum of three (3) O&M buildings will thus be constructed.
- Medium voltage cabling will link the solar PV energy facility to the grid connection infrastructure. These cables will be laid underground wherever technically feasible.

### 2.1.2 Wonderheuvel Solar PV Energy Facility:

The proposed Wonderheuvel Solar PV Energy Facility will include the following components:

- Six (6) PV array areas, occupying a combined total area of approximately 864ha.
- The proposed solar PV energy facility will have a maximum total generation capacity of approximately **480MW** and will comprise approximately **1 371 429** PV modules. The final number of modules as well as their configuration will only be determined in the detailed design phase.
- PV modules will be either fixed tilt mounting or single axis tracking mounting, and the modules will be either crystalline silicon or thin film technology. Each module will be approximately 2m wide and between 1m and 4m in height, depending on the mounting type.
- Internal roads, between 4m and 10m wide, will provide access to the PV arrays. Existing site roads will be used wherever possible, although new site roads will be constructed where necessary.
- Up to a maximum of four (4) temporary construction laydown / staging areas of approximately 4ha each.
- Operation and maintenance (O&M) buildings will be provided for each PV array area, occupying a site of approximately 1ha each. However, certain PV array areas will share O&M buildings. Up to a maximum of four (4) O&M buildings will thus be constructed.
- Medium voltage cabling will link the solar PV energy facility to the grid connection infrastructure. These cables will be laid underground wherever technically feasible.

### 2.1.3 Paarde Valley Solar PV Energy Facility

The proposed Paarde Valley Solar PV Energy Facility will include the following components:

- Five (5) PV array areas, occupying a combined total area of approximately 1 337ha.

- The proposed solar PV energy facility will have a maximum total generation capacity of approximately **700MW** and will comprise approximately **2 000 000** PV modules. The final number of modules as well as their configuration will only be determined in the detailed design phase.
- PV modules will be either fixed tilt mounting or single axis tracking mounting, and the modules will be either crystalline silicon or thin film technology. Each module will be approximately 2m wide and between 1m and 4m in height, depending on the mounting type.
- Internal roads, between 4m and 10m wide, will provide access to the PV arrays. Existing site roads will be used wherever possible, although new site roads will be constructed where necessary.
- Up to five (5) temporary construction laydown / staging areas of approximately 4ha each.
- Operation and maintenance (O&M) buildings will be provided for each PV array area, occupying a site of approximately 1ha each. Up to a maximum of five (5) O&M buildings will thus be constructed.
- Medium voltage cabling will link the solar PV energy facility to the grid connection infrastructure. These cables will be laid underground wherever technically feasible.

### 2.2 Grid Connection Infrastructure

The proposed grid connection infrastructure will include the following components:

- New on-site substations and collector substations to serve each solar PV energy facility, each occupying an area of up to approximately 4ha.
- A new 132kV overhead power line connecting the on-site substations and/or collector substations to either the Hydra D Main Transmission Substation (MTS) or the proposed Coleskop Wind Energy Facility (WEF) substation, from where the electricity will be fed into the national grid. The type of power line towers being considered at this stage to include both lattice and monopole towers which will be up to 25m in height.

Grid connection infrastructure alternatives have been provided for each PV project. These alternatives essentially provide for different route alignments with associated substations contained within an assessment corridor between approximately 400m and 900m wide. This is to allow for flexibility to route the power line on either side of the existing high voltage Eskom power lines. The respective alternatives are as follows:

#### 2.2.1 Mooi Plaats Solar PV Grid Connection

The alternatives essentially provide for two (2) different route alignments with associated substations contained within an assessment corridor between approximately 400m and 900m wide. The alternatives are as follows:

**OPTION 1:**

- **Corridor Option 1a** - links Substation 2 and Substation 1a to the Hydra D MTS.
- **Corridor Option 1b** - links Substation 2 and Substation 1b to the Hydra D MTS.

**OPTION 2:**

- **Corridor Option 2a** - links Substation 2 and Substation 1a to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector substation located on the Wonderheuvel PV project application site.

- **Corridor Option 2b** - links Substation 2 and Substation 1b to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector substation located on the Wonderheuvel PV project application site.

### 2.2.2 Wonderheuvel Solar PV Grid Connection

The alternatives essentially provide for three (3) different route alignments with associated substations contained within an assessment corridor between approximately 400m and 900m wide. The alternatives are as follows:

**OPTION 1:**

- **Corridor Option 1a** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  - i. The *northern connection* links the Proposed Substation 3a to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Northern Collector Substation located on the Mooi Plaats PV project application site.
  - ii. The *southern connection* links the proposed Substation 4a to the Coleskop WEF Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation located on the Paarde Valley PV Project application site.

- **Corridor Option 1b** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  - i. The *northern* connection links the Proposed Substation 3a to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Northern Collector Substation located on the Mooi Plaats PV project application site.
  - ii. The *southern connection* links the proposed Substation 4b to the Coleskop WEF Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation located on the Paarde Valley PV Project application site.

- **Corridor Option 1c** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  - i. The *northern* connection links the Proposed Substation 3b to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Northern Collector Substation located on the Mooi Plaats PV project application site.
  - ii. The *southern connection* links the proposed Substation 4a to the Coleskop WEF Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation located on the Paarde Valley PV Project application site.

- **Corridor Option 1d** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  - i. The *northern connection* links the Proposed Substation 3b to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Northern Collector Substation located on the Mooi Plaats PV project application site.

ii. The *southern connection* links the proposed Substation 4b to the Coleskop WEF Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation located on the Paarde Valley PV Project application site.

**OPTION 2:**

- **Corridor Option 2a** - links Substation 3a to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation.
- **Corridor Option 2b** - Option 2b links Substation 3b to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation.

**OPTION 3:**

- **Corridor Option 3** links Substation 4b to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation.

### 2.2.3 Paarde Valley Solar PV Grid Connection

The alternatives essentially provide for two (2) different route alignments with associated substations contained within an assessment corridor between approximately 400m and 900m wide. The alternatives are as follows:

**OPTION 1:**

- Corridor **Option 1a** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Sub (Substation 6a will act as Central Collector for this option).
  ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 7a to the Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation (Substation 6a will act as Southern Collector for this option).

- Corridor **Option 1b** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Sub (Substation 6b will act as Southern Collector for this option).
  ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 7a to the Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation (Substation 6b will act as Southern Collector for this option).

- Corridor **Option 1c** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Sub (Substation 6a will act as Southern Collector for this option).
  ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 7b to the Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation (Substation 6a will act as Southern Collector for this option).

- Corridor **Option 1d** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.

i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Sub (Substation 6b will act as Southern Collector for this option).
ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 7b to the Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation (Substation 6b will act as Southern Collector for this option).

**OPTION 2:**

- Corridor **Option 2a** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Sub located on the Wonderveuvel PV Project application site.
  ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 6a and 7a to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.

- Corridor **Option 2b** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Sub located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.
  ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 6b and 7b to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.

- Corridor **Option 2c** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Sub located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.
  ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 6a and 7b to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.

- Corridor **Option 2d** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Sub located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.
  ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 6b and 7a to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.

The EIA phase geotechnical desktop study comprises of an Impact Assessment (from a geotechnical / geological perspective) of each proposed PV facility, a Comparative Assessment of the grid alternatives and a Cumulative Impact Assessment for each proposed PV facility (should other Energy facility / large infrastructure be developed within a 35 km radius) and takes into account other updated / revised issues to include the following:

- a review of the findings in accordance with detailed site layouts, including the PV array areas put forward as a result of the identified sensitive areas;
- a comparative assessment of the layout alternatives provided; and

- addressing any comments or concerns arising from the public participation process.

## 3 APPOINTMENT

JG Afrika submitted a quotation on the 18th September 2018 to SiVEST and were appointed via email, by SiVEST's Andrea Gibb, on the 11th January 2019.

## 4 AVAILABLE INFORMATION

SiVEST provided all maps alternatives of all infrastructure proposed in .kml format. The following sources of information were used during the study:

- 1:250 000 scale Geological Map titled 3124 Middleburg published by the Council for Geoscience.
- Engineering Geology of South Africa Volume 4 (Brink, 1985).
- Aerial photography (Google Earth imagery).

## 5 METHODOLOGY

SiVEST provided the following guidelines / format for assessing the sites and grid infrastructure:

- "Proposed Umsobomvu Solar PV Energy Facilities Comparative Assessment of Alternatives Grid Connection Infrastructure"
- "Updated Environmental Impact Assessment Methodology_Ver1 - 2019 SJ"

Areas with steep slopes and potential talus deposits were identified using available satellite imagery and 20m contour data.

## 6 SITE LOCATION

Three areas have been identified for the proposed PV facilities namely; Mooi Plaats Solar PV Facility, Wonderheuvel Solar PV Facility and Paarde Valley Solar Facility. These areas lie adjacent to each other, in a north east / south west trending line, and are located approximately 35 km north west of Middelburg and 31 km south west of Noupoort. The entire study area crosses over the Northern Cape / Eastern Cape provincial border. The following location information was provided by SiVEST:

- Mooi Plaats Solar PV Facility, on an application site of approximately 5 303ha, comprising the following farm portions:
  - Portion 1 of Leuwe Kop No 120
  - Remainder of Mooi Plaats No 121

- Wonderheuvel Solar PV Facility, on an application site of approximately 5 652ha, comprising the following farm portions:
  - Remainder of Mooi Plaats No 121
  - Portion 3 of Wonder Heuvel No 140
  - Portion 5 of Holle Fountain No 133

* Paarde Valley Solar PV Facility, on an application site of approximately 2 631ha, comprising the following farm portion:
    * Portion 2 of Paarde Valley No 62

Note that the Remainder of Mooi Plaats No 121 forms part of both the Mooi Plaats Solar PV Facility and Wonderheuvel Solar PV Facility i.e., there is overlap between these sites.

A regional locality map is provided in Figure 1 and locality maps showing the locations of the proposed PV facilities with corresponding corridor options are provided in Figures 2 to 4.

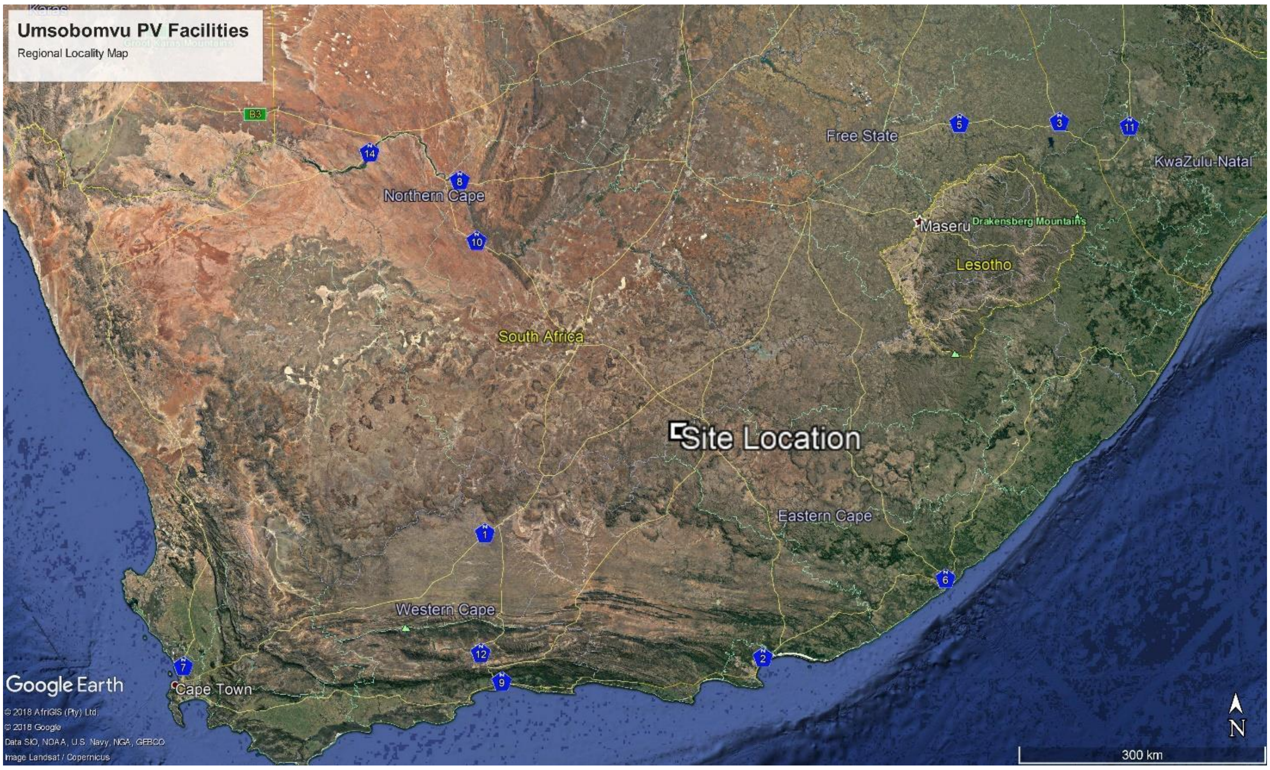


*Figure 1 Regional Location Map (Google Earth)*

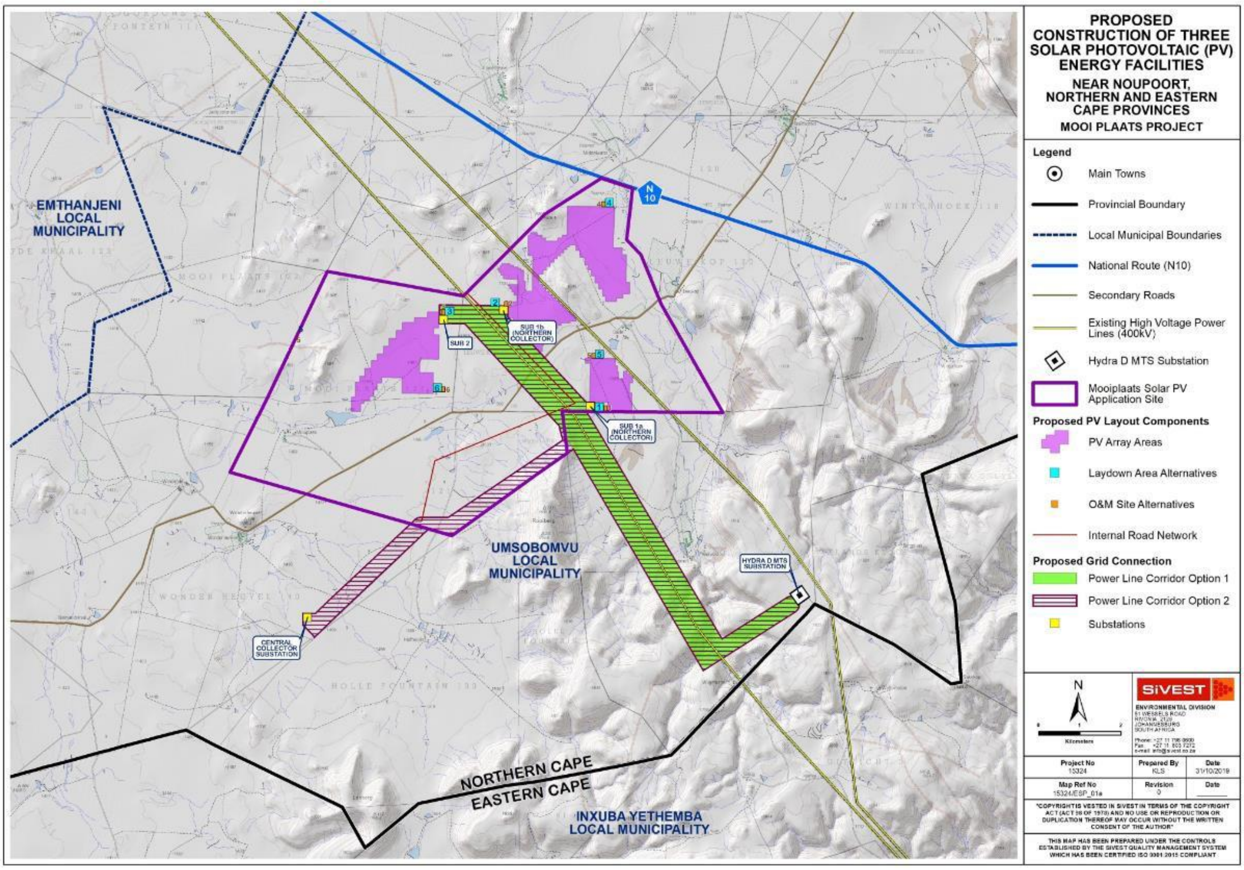


*Figure 2 Mooi Plaats PV Facility Locality Map (as provided by SiVEST)*

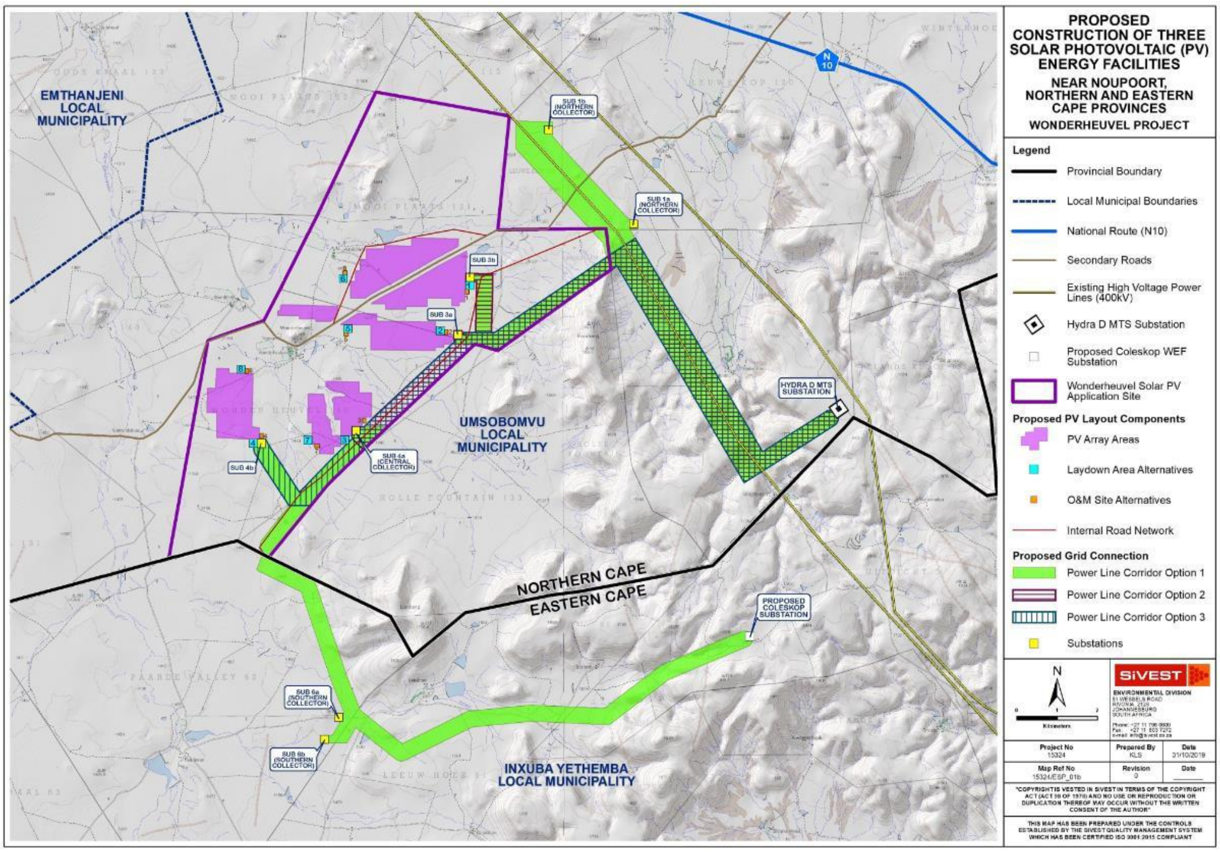


*Figure 3 Wonderheuvel PV Facility Locality Map (as provided by SiVEST)*

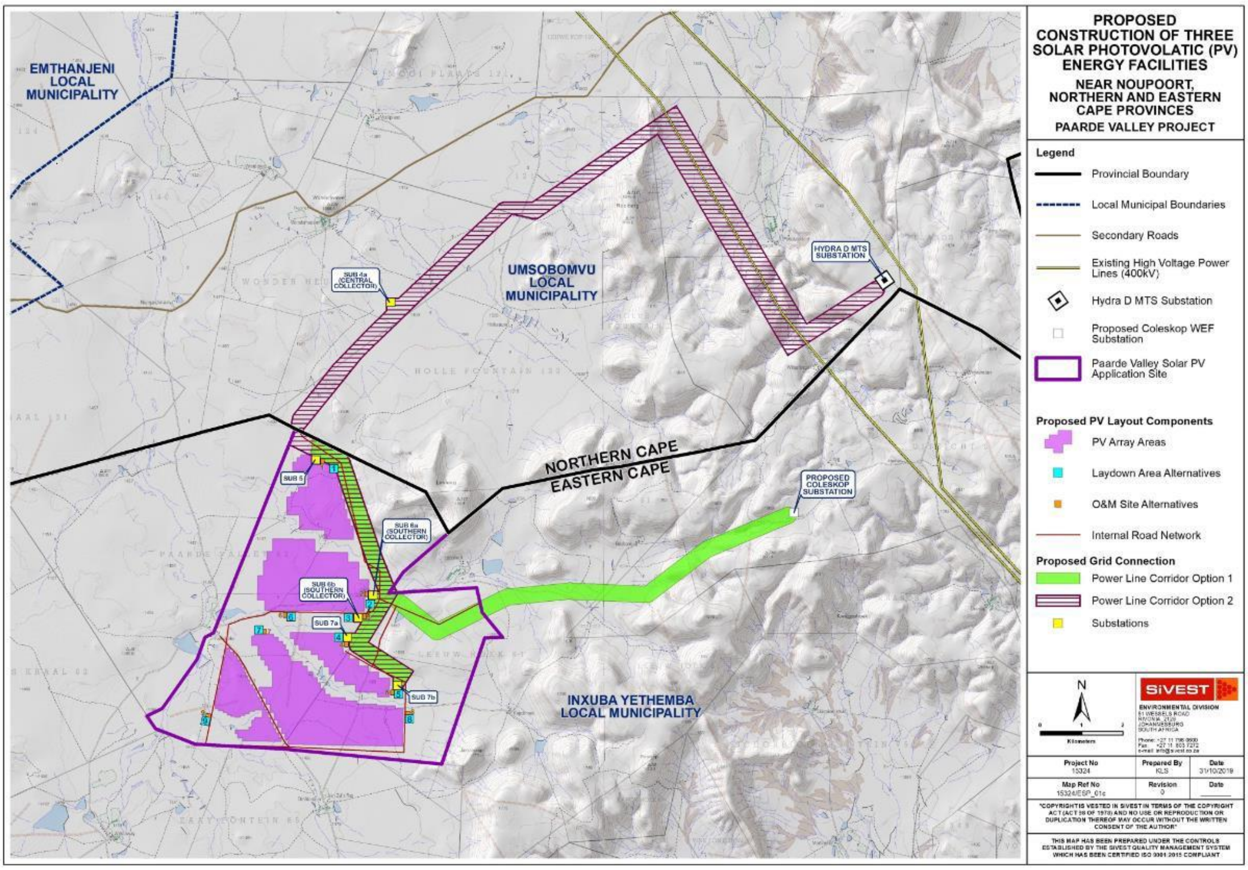


*Figure 4 Paarde Valley PV Facility Locality Map (as provided by SiVEST) Site Conditions*

### 6.1 Geology

According to the 1:250 000 series Geological Map 3124 Middelburg, the entire study area is predominantly underlain by sedimentary rock units of the Adelaide Subgroup and the Katberg Formation (which forms part of the Tarkastad Subgroup). The Adelaide Subgroup is overlain by the Tarkastad Subgroup. Together these Subgroups make up the Beaufort Group, which forms part of the Karoo Supergroup. The sedimentary rocks are often intruded by volcanic rocks - dolerite, of the Jurassic age. In addition to the above rock types, the study area is also underlain by scattered quaternary deposits associated with valley lines and lower lying areas.

The geology and stratigraphy of the site is given in Table 1 below.

*Table 1 Geology and Stratigraphy of the site*

| Stratigraphy | Map Symbol | Lithology |
|---|---|---|
| Quaternary | | Alluvium, Colluvium |
| Quaternary | **Qc** | Calcrete |
| Jurassic | **Jd** | Dolerite |
| Katberg Formation, Tarkastad Subgroup, Beaufort Group, Karoo Supergroup | **Rk** | Sandstone, Mudrock |
| Adelaide Subgroup, Beaufort Group, Karoo Supergroup | **Pa** | Mudrock, subordinate sandstone |

The geological map of the study area is depicted in Figure 5 overleaf.

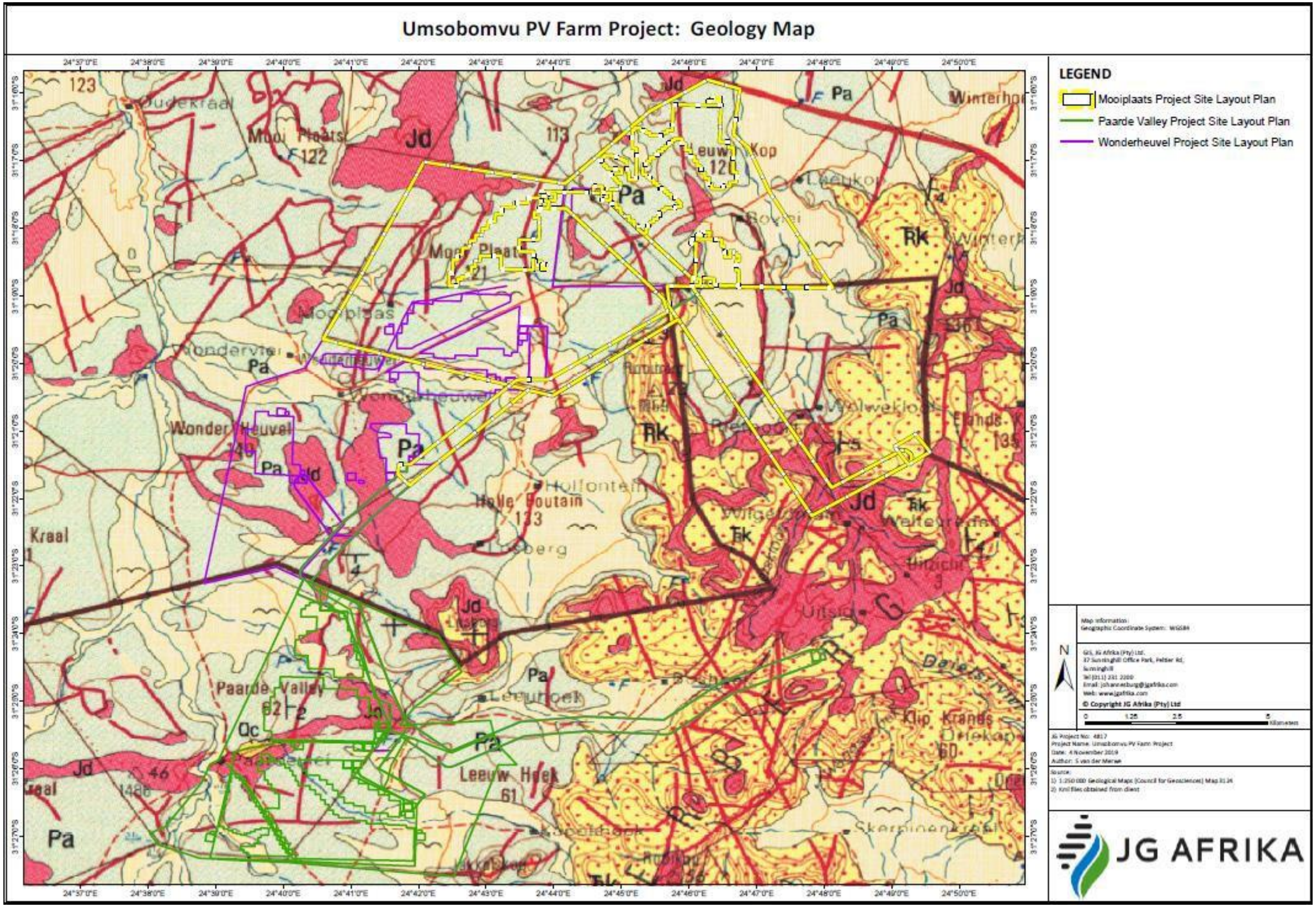


*Figure 5 Geology Map*

## 6.2 Topography and Drainage

From satellite imagery, it is observed that all three sites exhibit similar topography. The general topography of area is gentle with localised undulations, hills and occasional koppies. There are scattered hilly/mountainous regions with steep slopes in the study area. Brink (1979) mentions 4 slope elements on concave slopes namely; crest, free face, talus and foot slope. Talus deposits are a type of colluvial deposits that accumulate on talus element of slopes. Numerous rock outcrops and potential talus deposits were identified and highlighted in red in Figures 6 - 8.

Various localised drainage features are to be expected given the undulating nature of the topography. The topographical and drainage features will need to be confirmed by site investigation.

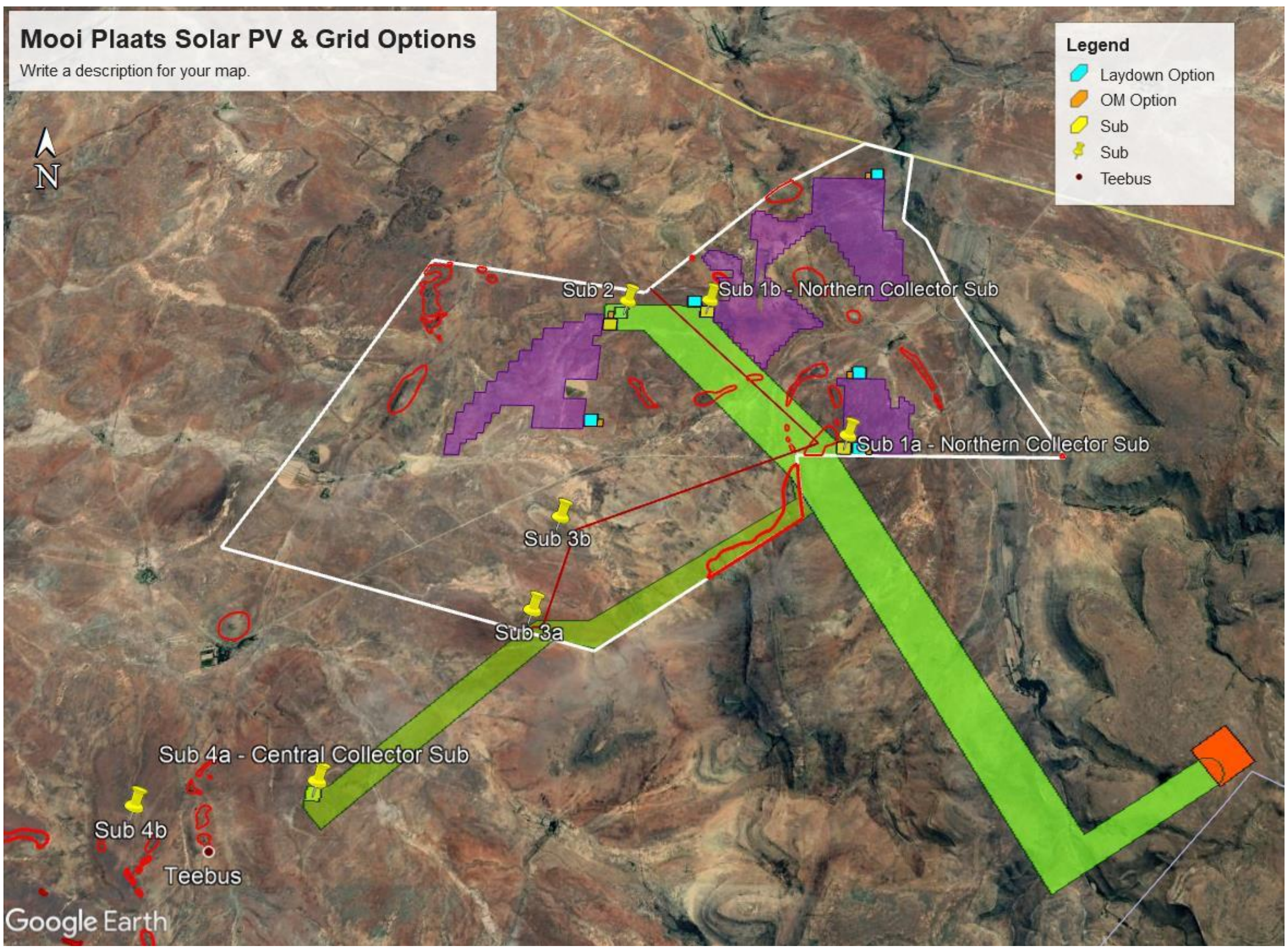


*Figure 6 Mooi Plaats PV Facility and Grid Options Rock Outcrops and Talus Slopes (in red)*

### 6.2.1 Mooi Plaats PV Facility

The topography is generally mildly undulating, with a few isolated ridges and koppies. There are numerous scattered rock outcrops. Talus deposits can be anticipated on the slopes of ridges and koppies. A water point/spring (with small reservoir) was identified in the north eastern section of the study area. A prominent drainage feature / river (approximately east-west trending) was identified in the central region of the site. Another drainage feature borders the eastern boundary of the site.

#### 6.2.1.1 Mooi Plaats Grid Option 1

- **Corridor Option 1a -** links Substation 2 and Substation 1a to the Hydra D MTS.
- **Corridor Option 1b -** links Substation 2 and Substation 1b to the Hydra D MTS.

The northern section of the corridor has generally mildly undulating topography with a few isolated ridges. Talus deposits can be anticipated on the slopes of ridges and koppies (see red outlined areas).

The southern portion of the corridor traverses a number of drainage features as it moves into a hilly / mountainous region in the south. Thereafter it is making a turn to the north east and crosses a prominent drainage feature before meeting the Hydra D substation.

#### 6.2.1.2 Mooi Plaats Grid Option 2

- **Corridor Option 2a -** links Substation 2 and Substation 1a to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector substation located on the Wonderheuvel PV project application site.
- **Corridor Option 2b -** links Substation 2 and Substation 1b to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector substation located on the Wonderheuvel PV project application site.

This Option 2 is longer than Option 1. The northern and southern sections of the Option 2 corridor overlap or runs parallel to a large extent to sections of Option 1. Therefore, in the north, the topography is generally mildly undulating topography with a few isolated ridges. Talus deposits can be anticipated on the slopes of ridges and koppies (see red outlined areas). In the south the corridor traverses several drainage features as it moves into a hilly / mountainous region in the south. Thereafter it is making a turn to the east via central collector substation before meeting the Hydra D substation.

The topography is mildly undulating, except for a ridge roughly in the middle of the section (see red outlines on Figure 6).

### 6.2.2 Wonderheuvel PV Facility and Grid Infrastructure

The topography is generally mildly undulating with a few localised ridges and koppies scattered across the site. There are a number of scattered outcrops/boulders across the site (especially in the north western corner of the site). A hilly/ mountainous region was identified in the north eastern section of the site. A prominent ridge was also identified in the north western section of the site. Steep slopes and talus may be expected in these areas. Prominent drainage features / rivers were identified in the central and northern region of the site.

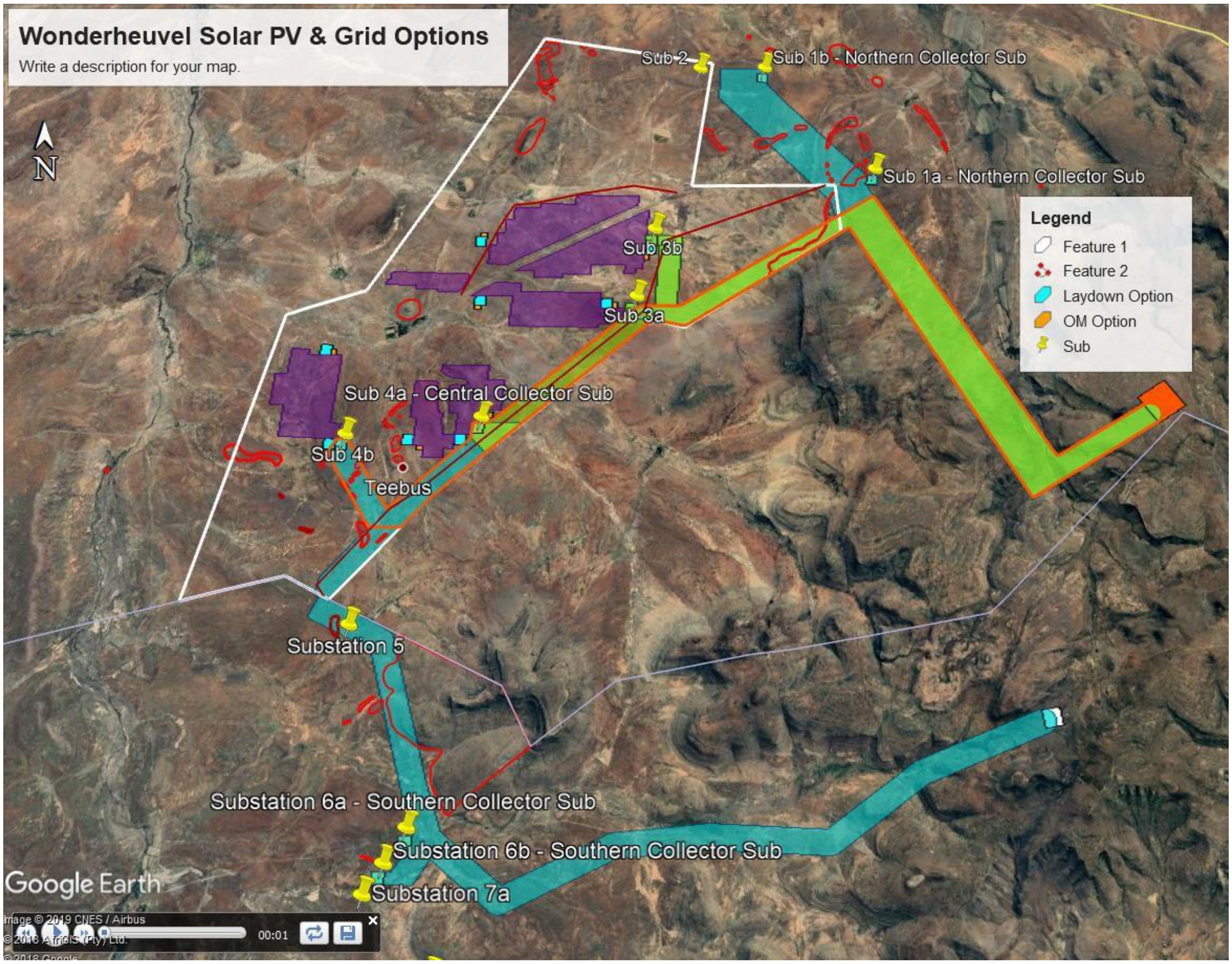


*Figure 7 Wonderheuvel PV Facility and Grid Options Rock Outcrops and Talus Slopes (in red)*

#### *6.2.2.1 Wonderheuvel Grid Option 1*

- **Corridor Option 1a** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.

  i. The *northern connection* links the Proposed Substation 3a to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Northern Collector Substation located on the Mooi Plaats PV project application site.

ii. The *southern connection* links the proposed Substation 4a to the Coleskop WEF Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation located on the Paarde Valley PV Project application site.

- **Corridor Option 1b** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern* connection links the Proposed Substation 3a to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Northern Collector Substation located on the Mooi Plaats PV project application site.
  ii. The *southern connection* links the proposed Substation 4b to the Coleskop WEF Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation located on the Paarde Valley PV Project application site.

- **Corridor Option 1c** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern* connection links the Proposed Substation 3b to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Northern Collector Substation located on the Mooi Plaats PV project application site.
  ii. The *southern connection* links the proposed Substation 4a to the Coleskop WEF Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation located on the Paarde Valley PV Project application site.

- **Corridor Option 1d** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern connection* links the Proposed Substation 3b to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Northern Collector Substation located on the Mooi Plaats PV project application site.
  ii. The *southern connection* links the proposed Substation 4b to the Coleskop WEF Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation located on the Paarde Valley PV Project application site.

All grid Option 1 consists of two limbs a northern and a southern limb, with minor variations. The northern limb has predominantly mildly undulating topography with a few isolated ridges and koppies and drainage valleys especially in the north. Towards the south, the corridor traverses over a prominent drainage feature before it moves into a mountainous/hilly region, towards the Hydra D substation.

The southern limb of the corridor has very similar topography in the west i.e. mildly undulating with a few isolated ridges. Moving east, the corridor tends to follow existing valley lines with steep side slopes before it climbs to the Coleskop Substation. Talus deposits may be expected in this region. The extreme eastern section, close to the Coleskop Substation, traverses a hilly/mountainous region. Steep slopes and talus deposits may be expected.

#### *6.2.2.2 Wonderheuvel Grid Option 2*

- **Corridor Option 2a** - links Substation 3a to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation.
- **Corridor Option 2b** - Option 2b links Substation 3b to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation.

All corridor Option 2 are shorter and follow similar paths with generally minor variations. The topography is predominantly mildly undulating with a few isolated ridges and koppies and drainage valleys towards the north. Towards the south, the corridor traverses over a prominent drainage feature before it moves into a mountainous/hilly region, towards the Hydra D substation.

#### *6.2.2.3 Wonderheuvel Grid Option 3*

- **Corridor Option 3** links Substation 4b to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation.

Corridor Option 3 consists of a slightly longer limb than grid Option 2 and follow similar topography as grid Option 2.

### 6.2.3 Paarde Valley PV Facility and Grid Infrastructure

The topography is generally mildly undulating with a few localised ridges and koppies scattered across the site. There are a number of scattered outcrops/boulders across the site. The north eastern section of the site is situated on a hilly/mountainous zone with steep slopes. There could potentially be talus deposits in this hilly region.

There are a number of drainage features in the southern, central and north eastern regions of the site. A prominent river channel runs parallel to the south western border of the proposed site. The site may be located in or in close proximity to the river flood plains. An approximately east-west trending stream/small river was identified in the northern region of the study area.

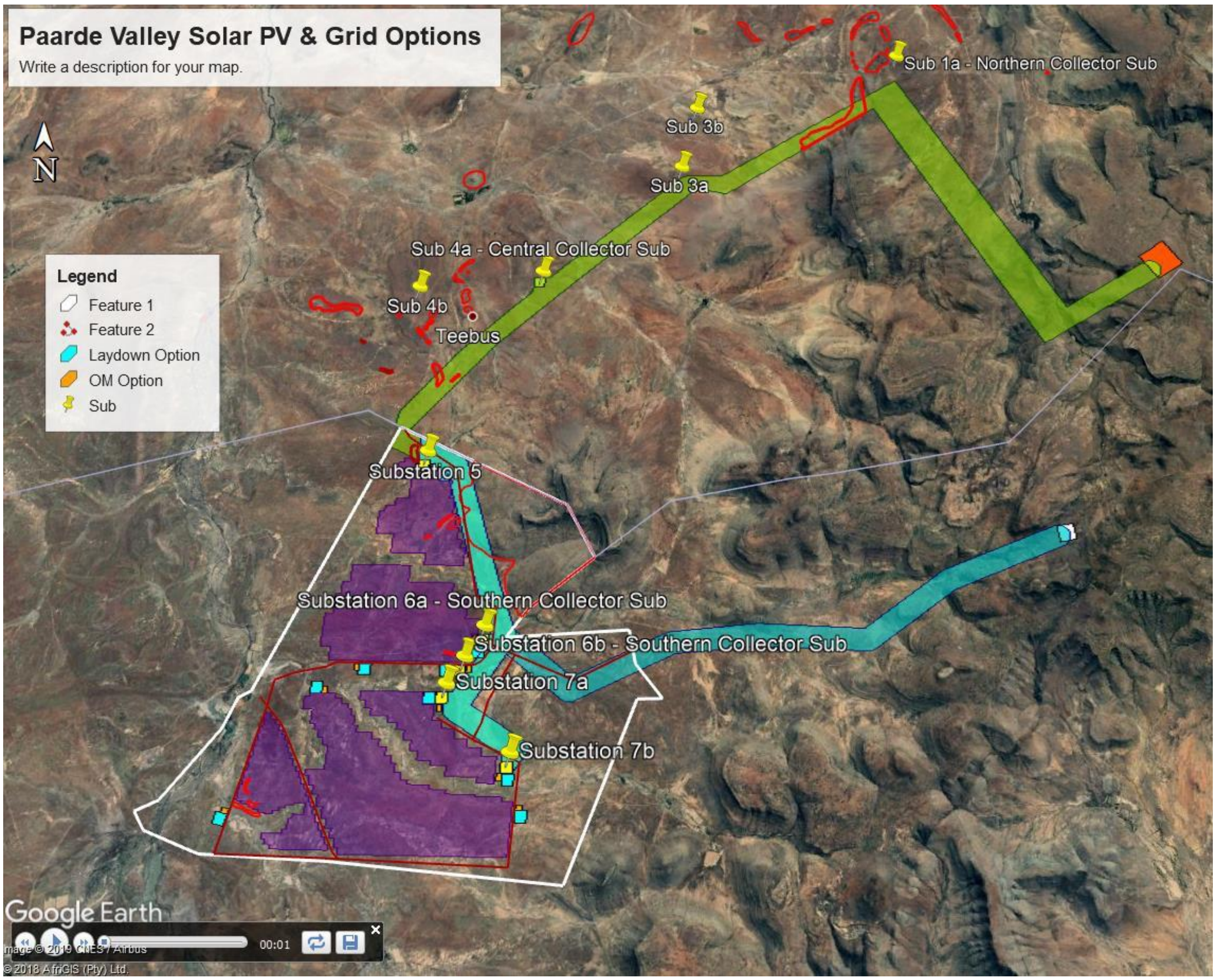


*Figure 8 Paarde Valley PV Facility and Grid Options Rock Outcrops and Talus Slopes (in red)*

#### 6.2.3.1 Paarde Valley Grid Option 1

a. Corridor **Option 1a** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
   i. The *northern connection* links **Substation 5** to Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Sub (Substation 6a will act as Central Collector for this option).
   ii. The *southern connection* links **Substation 7a** to the Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation (Substation 6a will act as Southern Collector for this option).

b. Corridor **Option 1b** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
   i. The *northern connection* links **Substation 5** to Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Sub (Substation 6b will act as Southern Collector for this option).
   ii. The *southern connection* links **Substation 7a** to the Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation (Substation 6b will act as Southern Collector for this option).

c. Corridor **Option 1c** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
   i. The *northern connection* links **Substation 5** to Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Sub (Substation 6a will act as Southern Collector for this option).
   ii. The *southern connection* links **Substation 7b** to the Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation (Substation 6a will act as Southern Collector for this option).

d. Corridor **Option 1d** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
   i. The *northern connection* links **Substation 5** to Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Sub (Substation 6b will act as Southern Collector for this option).
   ii. The *southern connection* links **Substation 7b** to the Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation (Substation 6b will act as Southern Collector for this option).

All corridor Options 1 are fairly similar from a geotechnical perspective. The extreme western portion of the Option 1 corridor has mildly undulating topography with a few isolated ridges. Moving east, the corridor traverses and then runs parallel to a stream/ small river. The extreme eastern section, close to the Coleskop Substation, traverses a hilly/mountainous region. Steep upslopes and talus deposits may be expected.

#### *6.2.3.2 Paarde Valley Grid Option 2*

a. Corridor **Option 2a** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
   iii. The *northern connection* links **Substation 5** to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Sub (<u>substation 4a acts as Central Collector)</u> located on the Wonderveuvel PV Project application site.
   iv. The *southern connection* links **Substation 6a and 7a** to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation (<u>substation 4a acts as Central Collector</u>) located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.

b. Corridor **Option 2b** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
   v. The *northern connection* links **Substation 5** to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Sub (<u>substation 4a acts as Central Collector</u>) located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.
   vi. The *southern connection* links **Substation 6b and 7b** to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation (<u>substation 4a acts as Central Collector</u>) located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.

c. Corridor **Option 2c** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
   vii. The *northern connection* links **Substation 5** to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Sub (<u>substation 4a acts as Central Collector</u>) located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.
   viii. The *southern connection* links **Substation 6a and 7b** to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation (<u>substation 4a acts as Central Collector</u>) located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.

d. Corridor **Option 2d** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
   ix. The *northern connection* links **Substation 5** to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Sub (<u>substation 4a acts as Central Collector</u>) located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.
   x. The *southern connection* links **Substation 6b and 7a** to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation (<u>substation 4a acts as Central Collector</u>) located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.

All Corridor Options 2 are fairly similar form a geotechnical perspective although they all seem to be longer than the corridor Options 1. They run in a north easterly direction with predominantly mildly undulating topography with a few isolated ridges and koppies. Boulders and/or a possible rock outcrop were identified in the southern/central region of the corridor. The corridor route traverses a hilly / mountainous region in the northern section with a steep valley, just before the route makes a turn to the south east. Steep slopes and talus deposits may be expected in this mountainous region. The eastern/south eastern portion of the corridor, before it meets the Hydra D substation, has a steep hilly/mountainous topography with incised valleys. Steep slopes and talus deposits may be expected in this region. The grid Option 2 traverses a number of drainage features in the southern, central and northern sections.

## 6.3 Climate

The climatic regime plays a fundamental role in the development of a soil profile. Weinert (1964) demonstrated that mechanical disintegration is the predominant mode of rock weathering in areas where his climatic "N-value" is greater than 5, while chemical decomposition predominates where the N-value is less than 5. Weinert's climatic N-value for the site ranges between 5 – 10. This implies that mechanical disintegration is the dominant mode of weathering at the site.

## 6.4 Geotechnical Characteristics and Potential Constraints

From the 1:250 000 Geology map, the following near surface conditions may be encountered on site:

### 6.4.1 Beaufort Group

The Beaufort Group, which forms part of the Karoo Supergroup, is represented by the Adelaide Subgroup across all six sites. As mentioned above, the Adelaide Formation is comprised of mud stone with subordinate sandstone. The geotechnical characteristics of these rock types are discussed below:

### 6.4.2 Sandstone

The sandstones of the Karoo Supergroup are closely intercalated with mudrock. The sandstones usually poorly sorted (often containing rock fragments) and have a matrix comprised of clay or iron oxide, and occasionally calcite.

Due to the local climatic conditions, mechanical disintegration is the predominate form of weathering. This typically results in the formation of a relatively thin residual soil mantle overlying the bedrock.

Brink (1983) highlights this variability in the Beaufort Group, where similarly aged thick quartz rich (more resistant to weathering) sandstones are found adjacent to thin, poorly sorted sandstone.

Karoo Sandstone is also noted for have a non-uniform weathering pattern. Dense competent layers are sometimes underlain by less competent layers of lower consistency, therefore, founding conditions in feldspathic sandstones may not always improve with depth (Brink, 1983).

Slope instability may also be encountered in the Karoo sandstones. Brink (1983) notes four main instability types namely; Disintegration of intercalated mudrock, Pore water pressures on intercalated siltstone, Erosion of underlying strata and Block and wedge failures. Slope instability will be assessed during the detailed site investigation however, weathering and erosion of the intercalated mudstone and block/wedge failures are anticipated be the primary instability types.

### 6.4.3 Mudrock

The mudrocks of the Karoo Supergroup are known to break down upon exposure. The mechanisms of breakdown are still unclear, however changes in temperature, humidity, moisture content and stress relief are believed to be possible causes. Three main responses to the breakdown are highlighted by Brink (1983) namely; very little break down of the rock, disintegration of the rock into pieces of various sizes and shapes and lastly, slaking into silt and clay sized particles.

Brink (1983) also noted moisture content related volumetric changes in the Karoo mudrock. Fresh mudrock samples from the Beaufort group were observed to swell upon exposure to water. This property should be considered when founding any structures in or in close proximity to flood plains.

Slope instability may also be encountered in the Karoo mudrock. Brink (1983) highlight two main types of instability namely: the movement of completely weathered / colluvial material and the sliding of rock on bedding planes. Although these instability events were predominantly noted in Kwa Zulu Natal, care should be taken when working with cuttings and long / deep excavations. As mentioned above, mudrock is closely intercalated with sandstone. Undercutting of more weathering resistant sandstone may also occur, which could cause slope instability.

Due to the dry climate, a deep weathering profile/thick residual soils are not expected on site. Residual mudrock soils are also known to be potentially expansive and laboratory tests will need to be undertaken to confirm this.

### 6.4.4 Dolerite

The Karoo Supergroup contains many Jurassic aged dolerite intrusions. The magma predominantly intruded into the weaker argillaceous horizons in the form of sills and occasionally dykes (Brink, 1983).

Fresh/solid dolerite typically forms boulder/fractured dolerite during the initial stages of weathering. Due to mechanical breakdown being the predominate form of weathering in this region, further weathering results in the formation of gravel and/or granular dolerite with sandy soils (Brink, 1983).

Founding conditions on residual dolerite are generally non-problematic in areas with a dry climate. Care should be taken in areas with calcrete, as calcrete powder has being noted to increase the Plasticity Index of the residual dolerite (Brink, 1983).

Dolerite boulders will cause difficult excavation conditions due to their size and scattered occurrences. Hard excavation conditions are also expected in areas with shallow bedrock. Additional site clearing may be required to remove boulders from potential development sites. Potentially unstable talus deposits formed from dolerite corestones may be encountered on slopes.

Weathered dolerite may be targeted for use during construction of internal roads etc. The identification of potential borrow pits and the usage of the dolerite for construction material will need to be confirmed during a more comprehensive site investigation with laboratory testing.

*Figure 9 Dolerite weathering profile with corestones and surface boulders (N10 near the Mooi Plaats site – Google Earth)*

*Figure 10 Dolerite profile with boulders on the surface (N10 near the Mooi Plaats site – Google Earth)*

*Figure 11 Dolerite Ridge with Boulders on surface (N10 near the Mooi Plaats site– Google Earth)*

### 6.4.5 Quaternary Deposits

#### *6.4.5.1 Alluvium / Colluvium/Talus*

Alluvial deposits are created when sediments are transported and deposited by water. Alluvial deposits may be quite thick, variable in composition and be prone to settlement.

Colluvial deposits are created when sediments are transported and deposited by gravity. As mentioned above, talus deposits are a type of colluvial deposits that accumulate on talus element of slopes Talus deposits generally occur where there are steep slopes below a stronger caprock. The caprock on this site is expected to be dolerite and/or sandstone. Talus deposits accumulate at their natural angle of repose and the upper part of talus slopes have a factor of safety that is close to 1.0. Due to weathering and colluvial action, talus deposits are generally poorly sorted, with large/coarse particles occurring with a finer matrix. The finer matrix has less strength than the surrounding unweathered rock fragments/debris, therefore the properties of this matrix influence the stability of the slope. With time, deterioration and weathering of the talus deposits results in instability. In addition to potential slope instability, difficult excavation conditions may be expected due to the large unweathered boulders.

#### *6.4.5.2 Calcrete*

According to the geology map, calcrete underlies a small portion of the proposed Paarde Valley PV facility and the associated grid options.

Calcrete is a deposit formed when soils have been cemented and/or replaced by carbonates. Calcretes are either formed by percolating groundwater or by pedogenic methods. Calcrete deposits may have thicknesses of over 30 m, however they are usually not continuous over depths exceeding 1 – 2 m (Brink, 1979).

Caution should be exercised when founding heavy structures on pedocretes (calcrete) as hard calcrete layers may be underlain by less competent material. Calcretes may also be laterally discontinuous over short distances (in occurrence, composition and degree of development/ cementation).

Brink (1979) notes that a collapsible fabric has been suspected in some powder and nodular calcrete and cemented soils. Small scale karst structures and evidence of small sinkholes have also been observed in weathered calcretes.

Hard excavation conditions are expected in well developed, cemented, calcretes.

Calcrete may be used for wearing course and all layers within the road prism for unpaved roads.

# 7 PRELIMINARY GEOLOGICAL & GEOTECHNICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

From a geological / geotechnical perspective, no fatal flaws have been identified that would prevent the construction of the proposed development at this site.

Further intrusive investigation is recommended for detailed design purposes.

## 7.1 Impact of the Project on the Geological Environment

The impact of the project alternatives on the geological environment will predominantly relate to the impact that the development will have on the soils / rock units beneath the site. Various outcrops/ boulders have been noted across the sites generally associated with ridges. Removal of the boulders (during site clearing) and construction on hilltops and ridge tops, may have a negative (aesthetic / visual) impact on the environment (besides increasing the cost of site preparation in these areas). It is assumed that a visual impact will be undertaken by others.

Both vertebrate and invertebrate fossils have also been found in the Beaufort Group of the Karoo Supergroup. Reptiles, mammal-like reptile (therapsid), amphibian, fish, insect and plant fossils have been discovered (Johnson, 2006). Excavation into the rock and removal of the material will potentially result in damage/destruction of the fossils. The locations of the fossils will have to be determined during an archaeological / palaeontological investigation.

The main potential impact of the project on the geological environment will be the increased ***potential for soil erosion***, caused by the removal of vegetation and the construction activities. Removal of vegetation for terrace preparation and compaction during earthworks will reduce the infiltration of rainwater and therefore increase surface runoff. An increase in runoff will lead to an increase in erosion. Potential impacts of the project on the soils are provided in Sections 7.2 to 7.4 below. The proposed duration of the construction phase was not provided at the time that this report was compiled. For the purpose of the assessment, a construction duration of 1 year was assumed. Please note that the impact rating will change should the construction duration increase. A description of the weighting system and description of terms used is attached in Annexure A.

## 7.2 Mooi Plaats PV Facility and Grid Infrastructure

The impact of the Mooi Plaats PV facility on the general environment was found to be ***"Low"***. The scoring was based on SiVEST guidelines / format for assessing the sites and grid infrastructure:

- "Updated Environmental Impact Assessment Methodology_Ver1 - 2019 SJ"

Areas with steep slopes associated with slope instability and surface bedrock / boulders associated with ridges, where construction will be difficult, have been outlined in red in Figure 6.

It is our professional opinion that the Mooi Plaats PV Facility project may go ahead, if all mitigation measures given in this report are implemented.

*Table 2: MOOI PLAATS SOLAR PV FACILITY & INFRASTRUCTURE IMPACT RATING TABLE*

| MOOI PLAATS SOLAR PV FACILITY | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Soils | Soil disturbance during construction at the PV Facility may destabilise the soil and lead to soil erosion.<br>- Increased soil erosion / runoff due to clearing of vegetation<br>- Construction and use of access roads by heavy duty vehicles and construction equipment may destabilise the soil and lead to soil erosion.<br>- There may be spillages (petroleum/lubricants) from the vehicles<br>- There may be siltation of watercourses due to increased runoff and dust | 1 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 9 | - | Low | - Use of berms and drainage channels to direct water away from the construction areas where necessary<br>- Minimise earthworks and levelling<br>- Use existing access roads wherever possible<br>- Rehabilitate disturbed areas as soon as possible after construction<br>- Correct engineering design of stream and water course crossings<br>- Correct engineering design of any new access roads<br>- Maintain vehicles and only undertake repairs and maintenance work in designated areas<br>- Implement groundcover measures to prevent erosion such as keeping as much natural vegetation as possible, straw mulch, erosion control mats etc.<br>- Contain and control stormwater flow | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 | - | Low | | |
| **Operational Phase** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Soils | Increased soil erosion / runoff due to clearing of vegetation and alteration of natural drainage (paved areas)<br>- There may be spillages (petroleum/lubricants) from the vehicles | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 | - | Low | - Use existing access roads wherever possible<br>- Correct engineering design of stream and water course crossings<br>- Correct engineering design of access roads<br>- Maintain vehicles and only undertake repairs and maintenance work in designated areas<br>- Implement groundcover measures to prevent erosion such as keeping as much natural vegetation as possible, straw mulch, erosion control mats etc.<br>- Contain and control stormwater flow | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 | - | Low | | |
| **Decommissioning Phase** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Soils | Soil disturbance during decommissioning/deconstruction at the PV Facility may destabilise the soil and lead to soil erosion.<br>- Contamination of soil due to chemical spillages from equipment<br>- Construction and use of access roads by heavy duty vehicles and construction equipment may destabilise the soil and lead to soil erosion.<br>- There may be spillages (petroleum/lubricants) from the vehicles<br>- There may be siltation of watercourses due to increased runoff and dust | 1 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 9 | - | Low | Use of berms and drainage channels to direct water away from the decommissioning/deconstruction areas where necessary<br>- Minimise earthworks and levelling<br>- use existing access roads wherever possible<br>- Rehabilitate disturbed areas as soon as possible<br>- Add as much natural vegetation back as possible<br>- Try reinstate natural drainage patterns<br>- Have chemical spill kits on site and remove all spill material when decommissioning any substations.<br>- Maintain vehicles and only undertake repairs and maintenance work in designated areas<br>- Contain and control stormwater flow | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 | - | Low | | |
| **Cumulative** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Soils | No cumulative effect | | | | | | | 0 | | | No cumulative effect | | | | | | | 0 | | | | |

*Table 3: MOOI PLAATS GRID CONNECTION IMPACT RATING TABLE*

| MOOI PLAATS GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Soils | Soil disturbance during construction at the PV Facility may destabilise the soil and lead to soil erosion.<br>- Increased soil erosion / runoff due to clearing of vegetation<br>- Construction and use of access roads by heavy duty vehicles and construction equipment may destabilise the soil and lead to soil erosion.<br>- There may be spillages (petroleum/lubricants) from the vehicles<br>- There may be siltation of watercourses due to increased runoff and dust | 1 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 9 | - | Low | - Use of berms and drainage channels to direct water away from the construction areas where necessary<br>- Minimise earthworks and levelling<br>- Use existing access roads wherever possible<br>- Rehabilitate disturbed areas as soon as possible after construction<br>- Correct engineering design of stream and water course crossings<br>- Correct engineering design of any new access roads<br>- Maintain vehicles and only undertake repairs and maintenance work in designated areas<br>- Implement groundcover measures to prevent erosion such as keeping as much natural vegetation as possible, straw mulch, erosion control mats etc.<br>- Contain and control stormwater flow | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 | - | Low |
| **Operational Phase** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Soils | Increased soil erosion / runoff due to clearing of vegetation and alteration of natural drainage (paved areas)<br>- There may be spillages (petroleum/lubricants) from the vehicles | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 | - | Low | - Use existing access roads wherever possible<br>- Correct engineering design of stream and water course crossings<br>- Correct engineering design of access roads<br>- Maintain vehicles and only undertake repairs and maintenance work in designated areas<br>- Implement groundcover measures to prevent erosion such as keeping as much natural vegetation as possible, straw mulch, erosion control mats etc.<br>- Contain and control stormwater flow | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 | - | Low |
| **Decommissioning Phase** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Soils | Soil disturbance during decommissioning/deconstruction at the PV Facility may destabilise the soil and lead to soil erosion.<br>- Contamination of soil due to chemical spillages from equipment<br>- Construction and use of access roads by heavy duty vehicles and construction equipment may destabilise the soil and lead to soil erosion.<br>- There may be spillages (petroleum/lubricants) from the vehicles<br>- There may be siltation of watercourses due to increased runoff and dust | 1 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 9 | - | Low | Use of berms and drainage channels to direct water away from the decommissioning/deconstruction areas where necessary<br>- Minimise earthworks and levelling<br>- use existing access roads wherever possible<br>- Rehabilitate disturbed areas as soon as possible<br>- Add as much natural vegetation back as possible<br>- Try reinstate natural drainage patterns<br>- Have chemical spill kits on site and remove all spill material when decommissioning any substations.<br>- Maintain vehicles and only undertake repairs and maintenance work in designated areas<br>- Contain and control stormwater flow | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 | - | Low |
| **Cumulative** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Soils | No cumulative effect | | | | | | | 0 | | | No cumulative effect | | | | | | | 0 | | |

### 7.3 Wonderheuvel PV Facility and Grid Infrastructure

The impact of the Wonderheuvel PV facility and Grid Infrastructure on the general environment was found to be ***"Low"***. The scoring was based on SiVEST guidelines / format for assessing the sites and grid infrastructure:

- "Updated Environmental Impact Assessment Methodology_Ver1 - 2019 SJ"

Areas with steep slopes associated with slope instability and surface bedrock / boulders associated with ridges, where construction will be difficult, have been outlined in red in Figure 7.

It is our professional opinion that the Wonderheuvel PV Facility and Grid Infrastructure project may go ahead, if all mitigation measures given in this report are implemented.

*Table 4: WONDERHEUVEL SOLAR PV FACILITY IMPACT RATING TABLE*

| Table 4: WONDERHEUVEL SOLAR PV FACILITY & INFRASTRUCTURE IMPACT RATING TABLE | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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 (+ | S | | E | P | R | L | D | I / M | TOTAL | STATUS (+ | S |
| **Construction Phase** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Soils | Soil disturbance during construction at the PV Facility may destabilise the soil and lead to soil erosion.<br>- Increased soil erosion / runoff due to clearing of vegetation<br>- Construction and use of access roads by heavy duty vehicles and construction equipment may destabilise the soil and lead to soil erosion.<br>- There may be spillages (petroleum/lubricants) from the vehicles<br>- There may be siltation of watercourses due to increased runoff and dust | 1 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 9 | - | Low | - Use of berms and drainage channels to direct water away from the construction areas where necessary<br>- Minimise earthworks and levelling<br>- Use existing access roads wherever possible<br>- Rehabilitate disturbed areas as soon as possible after construction<br>- Correct engineering design of stream and water course crossings<br>- Correct engineering design of any new access roads<br>- Maintain vehicles and only undertake repairs and maintenance work in designated areas<br>- Implement groundcover measures to prevent erosion such as keeping as much natural vegetation as possible, straw mulch, erosion control mats etc.<br>- Contain and control stormwater flow | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 | - | Low |
| **Operational Phase** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Soils | Increased soil erosion / runoff due to clearing of vegetation and alteration of natural drainage (paved areas)<br>- There may be spillages (petroleum/lubricants) from the vehicles | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 | - | Low | - Use existing access roads wherever possible<br>- Correct engineering design of stream and water course crossings<br>- Correct engineering design of access roads<br>- Maintain vehicles and only undertake repairs and maintenance work in designated areas<br>- Implement groundcover measures to prevent erosion such as keeping as much natural vegetation as possible, straw mulch, erosion control mats etc.<br>- Contain and control stormwater flow | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 | - | Low |
| **Decommissioning Phase** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Soils | Soil disturbance during decommissioning/deconstruction at the PV Facility may destabilise the soil and lead to soil erosion.<br>- Contamination of soil due to chemical spillages from equipment<br>- Construction and use of access roads by heavy duty vehicles and construction equipment may destabilise the soil and lead to soil erosion.<br>- There may be spillages (petroleum/lubricants) from the vehicles<br>- There may be siltation of watercourses due to increased runoff and dust | 1 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 9 | - | Low | Use of berms and drainage channels to direct water away from the decommissioning/deconstruction areas where necessary<br>- Minimise earthworks and levelling<br>- use existing access roads wherever possible<br>- Rehabilitate disturbed areas as soon as possible<br>- Add as much natural vegetation back as possible<br>- Try reinstate natural drainage patterns<br>- Have chemical spill kits on site and remove all spill material when decommissioning any substations.<br>- Maintain vehicles and only undertake repairs and maintenance work in designated areas<br>- Contain and control stormwater flow | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 | - | Low |
| **Cumulative** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Soils | No cumulative effect | | | | | | | 0 | | | No cumulative effect | | | | | | | 0 | | |

| Table 5: WONDERHEUVEL GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE IMPACT RATING TABLE | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Soils | Soil disturbance during construction at the PV Facility may destabilise the soil and lead to soil erosion.<br>- Increased soil erosion / runoff due to clearing of vegetation<br>- Construction and use of access roads by heavy duty vehicles and construction equipment may destabilise the soil and lead to soil erosion.<br>- There may be spillages (petroleum/lubricants) from the vehicles<br>- There may be siltation of watercourses due to increased runoff and dust | 1 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 9 | - | Low | - Use of berms and drainage channels to direct water away from the construction areas where necessary<br>- Minimise earthworks and levelling<br>- Use existing access roads wherever possible<br>- Rehabilitate disturbed areas as soon as possible after construction<br>- Correct engineering design of stream and water course crossings<br>- Correct engineering design of any new access roads<br>- Maintain vehicles and only undertake repairs and maintenance work in designated areas<br>- Implement groundcover measures to prevent erosion such as keeping as much natural vegetation as possible, straw mulch, erosion control mats etc.<br>- Contain and control stormwater flow | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 | - | Low | |
| **Operational Phase** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Soils | Increased soil erosion / runoff due to clearing of vegetation and alteration of natural drainage (paved areas)<br>- There may be spillages (petroleum/lubricants) from the vehicles | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 | - | Low | - Use existing access roads wherever possible<br>- Correct engineering design of stream and water course crossings<br>- Correct engineering design of access roads<br>- Maintain vehicles and only undertake repairs and maintenance work in designated areas<br>- Implement groundcover measures to prevent erosion such as keeping as much natural vegetation as possible, straw mulch, erosion control mats etc.<br>- Contain and control stormwater flow | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 | - | Low | |
| **Decommissioning Phase** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Soils | Soil disturbance during decommissioning/deconstruction at the PV Facility may destabilise the soil and lead to soil erosion.<br>- Contamination of soil due to chemical spillages from equipment<br>- Construction and use of access roads by heavy duty vehicles and construction equipment may destabilise the soil and lead to soil erosion.<br>- There may be spillages (petroleum/lubricants) from the vehicles<br>- There may be siltation of watercourses due to increased runoff and dust | 1 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 9 | - | Low | Use of berms and drainage channels to direct water away from the decommissioning/deconstruction areas where necessary<br>- Minimise earthworks and levelling<br>- use existing access roads wherever possible<br>- Rehabilitate disturbed areas as soon as possible<br>- Add as much natural vegetation back as possible<br>- Try reinstate natural drainage patterns<br>- Have chemical spill kits on site and remove all spill material when decommissioning any substations.<br>- Maintain vehicles and only undertake repairs and maintenance work in designated areas<br>- Contain and control stormwater flow | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 | - | Low | |
| **Cumulative** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Soils | No cumulative effect | | | | | | | 0 | | | No cumulative effect | | | | | | | 0 | | | |

## 7.4 Paarde Valley PV Facility and Grid Infrastructure

The impact of the Paarde Valley PV facility and Grid Infrastructure on the general environment was found to be ***"Low"***. The scoring was based on SiVEST guidelines / format for assessing the sites and grid infrastructure:

- "Updated Environmental Impact Assessment Methodology_Ver1 - 2019 SJ"

Areas with steep slopes associated with slope instability and surface bedrock / boulders associated with ridges, where construction will be difficult, have been outlined in red in Figure 8.

It is our professional opinion that the Paarde Valley PV Facility project may go ahead, if all mitigation measures given in this report are implemented.

The grid options are discussed separately in Section 9.

*Table 6: PAARDE VALLEY SOLAR PV FACILITY IMPACT RATING TABLE*

| Table 6: PAARDE VALLEY SOLAR PV FACILITY & INFRASTRUCTURE IMPACT RATING TABLE | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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 (+ O | S | | E | P | R | L | D | I / M | TOTAL | STATUS (+ O | S |
| **Construction Phase** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Soils | Soil disturbance during construction at the PV Facility may destabilise the soil and lead to soil erosion.<br>- Increased soil erosion / runoff due to clearing of vegetation<br>- Construction and use of access roads by heavy duty vehicles and construction equipment may destabilise the soil and lead to soil erosion.<br>- There may be spillages (petroleum/lubricants) from the vehicles<br>- There may be siltation of watercourses due to increased runoff and dust | 1 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 9 | - | Low | - Use of berms and drainage channels to direct water away from the construction areas where necessary<br>- Minimise earthworks and levelling<br>- Use existing access roads wherever possible<br>- Rehabilitate disturbed areas as soon as possible after construction<br>- Correct engineering design of stream and water course crossings<br>- Correct engineering design of any new access roads<br>- Maintain vehicles and only undertake repairs and maintenance work in designated areas<br>- Implement groundcover measures to prevent erosion such as keeping as much natural vegetation as possible, straw mulch, erosion control mats etc.<br>- Contain and control stormwater flow | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 | - | Low |
| **Operational Phase** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Soils | Increased soil erosion / runoff due to clearing of vegetation and alteration of natural drainage (paved areas)<br>- There may be spillages (petroleum/lubricants) from the vehicles | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 | - | Low | - Use existing access roads wherever possible<br>- Correct engineering design of stream and water course crossings<br>- Correct engineering design of access roads<br>- Maintain vehicles and only undertake repairs and maintenance work in designated areas<br>- Implement groundcover measures to prevent erosion such as keeping as much natural vegetation as possible, straw mulch, erosion control mats etc.<br>- Contain and control stormwater flow | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 | - | Low |
| **Decommissioning Phase** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Soils | Soil disturbance during decommissioning/deconstruction at the PV Facility may destabilise the soil and lead to soil erosion.<br>- Contamination of soil due to chemical spillages from equipment<br>- Construction and use of access roads by heavy duty vehicles and construction equipment may destabilise the soil and lead to soil erosion.<br>- There may be spillages (petroleum/lubricants) from the vehicles<br>- There may be siltation of watercourses due to increased runoff and dust | 1 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 9 | - | Low | Use of berms and drainage channels to direct water away from the decommissioning/deconstruction areas where necessary<br>- Minimise earthworks and levelling<br>- use existing access roads wherever possible<br>- Rehabilitate disturbed areas as soon as possible<br>- Add as much natural vegetation back as possible<br>- Try reinstate natural drainage patterns<br>- Have chemical spill kits on site and remove all spill material when decommissioning any substations.<br>- Maintain vehicles and only undertake repairs and maintenance work in designated areas<br>- Contain and control stormwater flow | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 | - | Low |
| **Cumulative** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Soils | No cumulative effect | | | | | | | 0 | | | No cumulative effect | | | | | | | 0 | | |

*Table 7: PAARDE GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE IMPACT RATING TABLE*

| Table 7: PAARDE VALLEY GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **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 (+ O** | **S** | | **E** | **P** | **R** | **L** | **D** | **I / M** | **TOTAL** | **STATUS (+ O** | **S** |
| **Construction Phase** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Soils | Soil disturbance during construction at the PV Facility may destabilise the soil and lead to soil erosion.<br>- Increased soil erosion / runoff due to clearing of vegetation<br>- Construction and use of access roads by heavy duty vehicles and construction equipment may destabilise the soil and lead to soil erosion.<br>- There may be spillages (petroleum/lubricants) from the vehicles<br>- There may be siltation of watercourses due to increased runoff and dust | 1 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 9 | - | Low | - Use of berms and drainage channels to direct water away from the construction areas where necessary<br>- Minimise earthworks and levelling<br>- Use existing access roads wherever possible<br>- Rehabilitate disturbed areas as soon as possible after construction<br>- Correct engineering design of stream and water course crossings<br>- Correct engineering design of any new access roads<br>- Maintain vehicles and only undertake repairs and maintenance work in designated areas<br>- Implement groundcover measures to prevent erosion such as keeping as much natural vegetation as possible, straw mulch, erosion control mats etc.<br>- Contain and control stormwater flow | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 | - | Low |
| **Operational Phase** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Soils | Increased soil erosion / runoff due to clearing of vegetation and alteration of natural drainage (paved areas)<br>- There may be spillages (petroleum/lubricants) from the vehicles | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 | - | Low | - Use existing access roads wherever possible<br>- Correct engineering design of stream and water course crossings<br>- Correct engineering design of access roads<br>- Maintain vehicles and only undertake repairs and maintenance work in designated areas<br>- Implement groundcover measures to prevent erosion such as keeping as much natural vegetation as possible, straw mulch, erosion control mats etc.<br>- Contain and control stormwater flow | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 | - | Low |
| **Decommissioning Phase** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Soils | Soil disturbance during decommissioning/deconstruction at the PV Facility may destabilise the soil and lead to soil erosion.<br>- Contamination of soil due to chemical spillages from equipment<br>- Construction and use of access roads by heavy duty vehicles and construction equipment may destabilise the soil and lead to soil erosion.<br>- There may be spillages (petroleum/lubricants) from the vehicles<br>- There may be siltation of watercourses due to increased runoff and dust | 1 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 9 | - | Low | Use of berms and drainage channels to direct water away from the decommissioning/deconstruction areas where necessary<br>- Minimise earthworks and levelling<br>- use existing access roads wherever possible<br>- Rehabilitate disturbed areas as soon as possible<br>- Add as much natural vegetation back as possible<br>- Try reinstate natural drainage patterns<br>- Have chemical spill kits on site and remove all spill material when decommissioning any substations.<br>- Maintain vehicles and only undertake repairs and maintenance work in designated areas<br>- Contain and control stormwater flow | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 | - | Low |
| **Cumulative** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Soils | No cumulative effect | | | | | | | 0 | | | No cumulative effect | | | | | | | 0 | | |

## 8 COMPARATIVE ASSESSMENT OF ALTERNATIVES GRID CONNECTIONS

A comparative assessment of the PV Infrastructure Alternatives as well as alternative grid connections is given in Tables 8 and 9 below.

Construction over mountainous and steep/hilly areas has a higher risk of causing erosion than construction over flatter areas (roads in steep areas are more prone to erosion and require longer routes to be constructed, not just straight roads along the route). Longer routes will have a greater impact on the soils, as there will be a greater area affected by the construction activities, greater distance for vehicles to travel, etc.

Construction on, or in close proximity to mountainous and steep/hilly areas, has a higher risk of slope instability. Loose/unstable talus deposits are expected to be present in these areas. Mitigation measures, to allow construction in these areas, will increase the construction costs.

Therefore, from a geological and geotechnical perspective the following corridor options are preferred:

- Mooi Plaats PV Facility – Option1
- Wonderheuven PV Facility – Options 2 and 3
- Paarde Valley PV Facility – Option 1

*Table8: PV Infrastructure Alternatives (Laydown Areas & O&M Buildings); Power Line Corridors and Associated Substations)*

**Key**

| | |
|---|---|
| **PREFERRED** | The alternative will result in a low impact / reduce the impact |
| **FAVOURABLE** | The impact will be relatively insignificant |
| **LEAST PREFERRED** | The alternative will result in a high impact / increase the impact |
| **NO PREFERENCE** | The alternative will result in equal impacts |

| PV INFRASTRUCTURE ALTERNATIVES (LAYDOWN AREAS AND O&M BUILDINGS) | Preference | Reasons (incl. potential issues) |
|---|---|---|
| **MOOI PLAATS SOLAR PV FACILITY:** | | |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 1 | No preference | The geology is the same at all 6 site options: mudrock and sandstone of Adelaide Formation. Hence there is no preference. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 2 | No preference | |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 3 | No preference | |

| PV INFRASTRUCTURE ALTERNATIVES (LAYDOWN AREAS AND O&M BUILDINGS) | Preference | Reasons (incl. potential issues) |
|---|---|---|
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 4 | No preference | |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 5 | No preference | |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 6 | No preference | |
| **WONDERHEUVEL SOLAR PV FACILITY:** | | |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 1 | Favourable | The geology is comprised of quaternary unconsolidated sands; sands could be of significant thickness and founding conditions could be adverse. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 2 | Favourable | The geology is comprised of quaternary unconsolidated sands; sands could be of significant thickness and founding conditions could be adverse. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 3 | Preferred | The geology is comprised of mudrock and sandstone of Adelaide Formation |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 4 | Preferred | The geology is comprised of mudrock and sandstone of Adelaide Formation |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 5 | Favourable | The geology is comprised of quaternary unconsolidated sands; sands could be of significant thickness and founding conditions could be adverse. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 6 | Preferred | The geology is comprised of mudrock and sandstone of Adelaide Formation |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 7 | Preferred | The geology is comprised of mudrock and sandstone of Adelaide Formation |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 8 | Preferred | The geology is comprised of mudrock and sandstone of Adelaide Formation |
| **PAARDE VALLEY SOLAR PV FACILITY:** | | |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 1 | Favourable | The geology is comprised of quaternary unconsolidated sands; sands could be of significant thickness and founding conditions could be adverse. |

| PV INFRASTRUCTURE ALTERNATIVES (LAYDOWN AREAS AND O&M BUILDINGS) | Preference | Reasons (incl. potential issues) |
|---|---|---|
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 2 | Favourable | The geology is comprised of Jurassic age dolerite; it appears that this Site Option 2 is close or at a contact with the sedimentary rock of Adelaide Formation. Founding problems may arise. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 3 | Preferred | The geology is comprised of mudrock and sandstone of Adelaide Formation |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 4 | Preferred | The geology is comprised of mudrock and sandstone of Adelaide Formation |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 5 | Favourable | The geology is comprised of quaternary unconsolidated sands; sands could be of significant thickness and founding conditions could be adverse. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 6 | Preferred | The geology is comprised of Jurasic age dolerite |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 7 | Preferred | The geology is comprised of Jurasic age dolerite |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 8 | Favourable | The geology is comprised of quaternary unconsolidated sands; sands could be of significant thickness and founding conditions could be adverse. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 9 | Preferred | The geology is comprised of mudrock and sandstone of Adelaide Formation |

*Table 9: Grid Connection Infrastructure Alternatives (Power Line Corridors and Associated Substations)*

| GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE ALTERNATIVES (POWER LINE CORRIDORS AND ASSOCIATED SUBSTATIONS) | Preference | Reasons (incl. potential issues) |
|---|---|---|
| **MOOI PLAATS SOLAR PV FACILITY:** | | |
| Grid Connection Option 1a | Preferred | Shorter Route<br>Both routes, Option 1a and 1b, underlain by similar bedrock<br>Both routes traverse drainage features/small rivers<br>From an engineering perspective, both options will have similar founding conditions<br>Smaller section of this route traverses near / over mountainous / hilly topography in the north west region of the corridors.<br>Therefore, the corridor Option 1 has less risk of slope instability, possibly less talus deposits, less chance of soil erosion, possibly lower construction cost. |
| Grid Connection Option 1b | Preferred | Shorter Route<br>Both routes, Option 1a and 1b, underlain by similar bedrock<br>Both routes traverse drainage features/small rivers<br>From an engineering perspective, both options will have similar founding conditions<br>Smaller section of this route traverses near / over mountainous / hilly topography in the north west region of the corridors.<br>Therefore, the corridor Option 1 has less risk of slope instability, possibly less talus deposits, less chance of soil |

| GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE ALTERNATIVES (POWER LINE CORRIDORS AND ASSOCIATED SUBSTATIONS) | Preference | Reasons (incl. potential issues) |
|---|---|---|
| | | erosion, possibly lower construction cost. |
| Grid Connection Option 2a | Favourable | Longer Route<br>Both routes, Options 2a and 2b, underlain by similar bedrock<br>Both routes traverse drainage features/small rivers<br>From an engineering perspective, both options will have similar founding conditions<br>Therefore, the corridor option has more risk of slope instability, possibly more talus deposits, higher chance of soil erosion, possibly higher construction cost. |
| Grid Connection Option 2b | Favourable | Longer Route<br>Both routes, Options 2a and 2b, underlain by similar bedrock<br>Both routes traverse drainage features/small rivers<br>From an engineering perspective, both options will have similar founding conditions<br>Therefore, the corridor option has more risk of slope instability, possibly more talus deposits, higher chance of soil erosion, possibly higher construction cost. |
| **WONDERHEUVEL SOLAR PV FACILITY:** | | |
| Grid Connection Option 1a | Favourable | Two separate grid connection<br>All options (Options 1a, 1b, 1c and 1d) underlain by similar bedrock<br>All routes traverse drainage features / small rivers |

| GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE ALTERNATIVES (POWER LINE CORRIDORS AND ASSOCIATED SUBSTATIONS) | Preference | Reasons (incl. potential issues) |
|---|---|---|
| | | From an engineering perspective, all options will have similar founding conditions<br>This route traverses more mountainous / hilly topography than corridor Options 2 and 3.<br>Therefore, the corridor Option 1 has more risk of slope instability, possibly more talus deposits, higher chance of soil erosion, possibly higher construction cost. |
| Grid Connection Option 1b | Favourable | Two separate grid connection<br>All options (Options 1a, 1b, 1c and 1d) underlain by similar bedrock<br>All routes traverse drainage features / small rivers<br>From an engineering perspective, all options will have similar founding conditions<br>This route traverses more mountainous / hilly topography than corridor Options 2 and 3.<br>Therefore, the corridor Option 1 has more risk of slope instability, possibly more talus deposits, higher chance of soil erosion, possibly higher construction cost. |
| Grid Connection Option 1c | Favourable | Two separate grid connection<br>All options (Options 1a, 1b, 1c and 1d) underlain by similar bedrock<br>All routes traverse drainage features / small rivers<br>From an engineering perspective, all options will have similar founding conditions |

| GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE ALTERNATIVES (POWER LINE CORRIDORS AND ASSOCIATED SUBSTATIONS) | Preference | Reasons (incl. potential issues) |
|---|---|---|
| | | This route traverses more mountainous / hilly topography than corridor Options 2 and 3.<br>Therefore, the corridor Option 1 has more risk of slope instability, possibly more talus deposits, higher chance of soil erosion, possibly higher construction cost. |
| Grid Connection Option 1d | Favourable | Two separate grid connection<br>All options (Options 1a, 1b, 1c and 1d) underlain by similar bedrock<br>All routes traverse drainage features / small rivers<br>From an engineering perspective, all options will have similar founding conditions<br>This route traverses more mountainous / hilly topography than corridor Options 2 and 3.<br>Therefore, the corridor Option 1 has more risk of slope instability, possibly more talus deposits, higher chance of soil erosion, possibly higher construction cost. |
| Grid Connection Option 2a | Preferred | Shorter route; similar impacts for Options 2a and 2b.<br>Both options are underlain by similar bedrock<br>Both routes traverse drainage features / small rivers<br>From an engineering perspective, both options will have similar founding conditions<br>Smaller section of this route traverses near / over more mountainous / hilly topography than corridor Option 1. |

| GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE ALTERNATIVES (POWER LINE CORRIDORS AND ASSOCIATED SUBSTATIONS) | Preference | Reasons (incl. potential issues) |
|---|---|---|
| | | Therefore, the corridor Option 2 has less risk of slope instability, possibly less talus deposits, less chance of soil erosion, possibly lower construction cost. |
| Grid Connection Option 2b | Preferred | Shorter route; similar impacts for Options 2a and 2b.<br>Both options are underlain by similar bedrock<br>Both routes traverse drainage features / small rivers<br>From an engineering perspective, both options will have similar founding conditions<br>Smaller section of this route traverses near / over more mountainous / hilly topography than corridor Option 1.<br>Therefore, the corridor Option 2 has less risk of slope instability, possibly less talus deposits, less chance of soil erosion, possibly lower construction cost. |
| Grid Connection Option 3 | Preferred | Slightly longer route than Option 2.<br>Route traverses by similar bedrock as Option 2<br>It traverses drainage features / small rivers<br>From an engineering perspective, this option will have similar founding conditions<br>Smaller section of this route traverses near / over more mountainous / hilly topography than corridor Option 1.<br>Therefore, the corridor Option 3 has less risk of slope instability, possibly less talus deposits, less chance of soil |

| GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE ALTERNATIVES (POWER LINE CORRIDORS AND ASSOCIATED SUBSTATIONS) | Preference | Reasons (incl. potential issues) |
|---|---|---|
| | | erosion, possibly lower construction cost. |
| **PAARDE VALLEY SOLAR PV FACILITY:** | | |
| Grid Connection Option 1a | Preferred | Shorter Route<br>Both options, Option 1a and 1b, are underlain by similar bedrock<br>Both routes traverse drainage features / small rivers<br>From an engineering perspective, both options will have similar founding conditions<br>From an engineering perspective, all options will have similar founding conditions |
| Grid Connection Option 1b | Preferred | Shorter Route<br>Both options, Option 1a and 1b, are underlain by similar bedrock<br>Both routes traverse drainage features / small rivers<br>From an engineering perspective, both options will have similar founding conditions<br>From an engineering perspective, all options will have similar founding conditions |
| Grid Connection Option 1c | Preferred | Slightly longer route. Both options, Option 1c and 1d, are underlain by similar bedrock<br>Both routes traverse drainage features / small rivers<br>From an engineering perspective, both options will have similar founding conditions<br>From an engineering perspective, all options will have similar founding conditions |

| GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE ALTERNATIVES (POWER LINE CORRIDORS AND ASSOCIATED SUBSTATIONS) | Preference | Reasons (incl. potential issues) |
|---|---|---|
| Grid Connection Option 1d | Preferred | Slightly longer route. Both options, Option 1c and 1d, are underlain by similar bedrock<br>Both routes traverse drainage features / small rivers<br>From an engineering perspective, both options will have similar founding conditions |
| Grid Connection Option 2a | Favourable | Longer route<br>All options, Option 2a, 2b, 2c and 2d are underlain by similar bedrock<br>all routes traverse drainage features / small rivers<br>From an engineering perspective, all options will have similar founding conditions |
| Grid Connection Option 2b | Favourable | Longer route<br>All options, Option 2a, 2b, 2c and 2d are underlain by similar bedrock<br>all routes traverse drainage features / small rivers<br>From an engineering perspective, all options will have similar founding conditions |
| Grid Connection Option 2c | Favourable | Longer route<br>All options, Option 2a, 2b, 2c and 2d are underlain by similar bedrock<br>all routes traverse drainage features / small rivers<br>From an engineering perspective, all options will have similar founding conditions |
| Grid Connection Option 2d | Favourable | Longer route<br>All options, Option 2a, 2b, 2c and 2d are underlain by similar bedrock |

| GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE ALTERNATIVES (POWER LINE CORRIDORS AND ASSOCIATED SUBSTATIONS) | Preference | Reasons (incl. potential issues) |
|---|---|---|
| | | all routes traverse drainage features / small rivers<br>From an engineering perspective, all options will have similar founding conditions |

## 9 CONCLUSIONS

The desktop geotechnical assessment did not identify any fatal flaws that, from a geological and geotechnical perspective, would prevent the construction of the proposed Usombomvu PV Energy Facilities.

The potential impacts the project may have on the geology, relate to soils that could be impacted by the construction activities. There may be a potential for soil erosion, due to removal of vegetation and exposure of the soils to the elements, during construction. The impacts were found to be of "***negative low impact***".

Various corridor options were studied for each PV facility. While all options are considered suitable for development, the following options were found to be preferable from a geological and geotechnical perspective:

- Mooi Plaats PV Facility – Grid Option 1
- Wonderheuven PV Facility – Grid Option 2 and 3
- Paarde Valley PV Facility – Grid Option 1

The geological impacts will be similar.

Due the very similar bedrock geology, similar geotechnical conditions are expected across all options.

From a geological and geotechnical perspective, based on the minimal negative impacts on the geology and soils and the recommendations for mitigation measures, it is recommended that the **Usombomvu PV Energy Facilities** project receives the go ahead from the Competent Authority.

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## 10 REFERENCES


1. Brink, A.B.A. (1983). *Engineering Geology of South Africa Volume 1-4*. Building Publications Pretoria.
2. Johnson, C.R., Anhaeusser, C.R. and Thomas, R.J. (2006). *The Geology of South Africa*. Council for Geoscience.

# Annexure A: Impact Assessment Methodology

# 1 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) METHODOLOGY

The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Methodology assists in evaluating the overall effect of a proposed activity on the environment. Determining of the significance of an environmental impact on an environmental parameter is determined through a systematic analysis.

## 1.1 Determination of Significance of Impacts

Significance is determined through a synthesis of impact characteristics which include context and intensity of an impact. Context refers to the geographical scale (i.e. site, local, national or global), whereas intensity is defined by the severity of the impact e.g. the magnitude of deviation from background conditions, the size of the area affected, the duration of the impact and the overall probability of occurrence. Significance is calculated as shown in **Table 1**.

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 total number of points scored for each impact indicates the level of significance of the impact.

## 1.2 Impact Rating System

The impact assessment must take account of the nature, scale and duration of effects on the environment and whether such effects are positive (beneficial) or negative (detrimental). Each issue / impact is also assessed according to the various project stages, as follows:

- Planning;
- 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 has also been included.

***The significance of Cumulative Impacts should also be rated (As per the Excel Spreadsheet Template).***

### *1.2.1 Rating System Used to Classify Impacts*

The rating system is applied to the potential impact on the receiving environment and includes an objective evaluation of the possible mitigation of the impact. Impacts have been consolidated into one (1) rating. In assessing the significance of each issue the following criteria (including an allocated point system) is used:

**Table 1:** Rating of impacts criteria

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **ENVIRONMENTAL PARAMETER** | | |
| A brief description of the environmental aspect likely to be affected by the proposed activity (e.g. Surface Water). | | |
| **ISSUE / IMPACT / ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECT / NATURE** | | |
| Include a brief description of the impact of environmental parameter being assessed in the context of the project. This criterion includes a brief written statement of the environmental aspect being impacted upon by a particular action or activity (e.g. oil spill in surface water). | | |
| **EXTENT (E)** | | |
| This is defined as the area over which the impact will be expressed. Typically, the severity and significance of an impact have different scales and as such bracketing ranges are often required. This is often useful during the detailed assessment of a project in terms of further defining the determined. | | |
| 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 |
| **PROBABILITY (P)** | | |
| 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). |
| **REVERSIBILITY (R)** | | |
| This describes the degree to which an impact on an environmental parameter 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. |
| **IRREPLACEABLE LOSS OF RESOURCES (L)** | | |
| 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. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **DURATION (D)** | | |
| This describes the duration of the impacts on the environmental parameter. Duration indicates the lifetime of the impact as a result of the proposed activity. | | |
| 1 | Short term | The impact and its effects will either disappear with mitigation or will be mitigated through natural process in a span shorter than the construction phase (0 – 1 years), or the impact and its effects 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 and its effects 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 – 50 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 transient (Indefinite). |
| **INTENSITY / MAGNITUDE (I / M)** | | |
| Describes the severity of an impact (i.e. whether the impact has the ability to alter the functionality or quality of a system permanently or temporarily). | | |
| 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 (system collapse). Rehabilitation and remediation often impossible. If possible rehabilitation and remediation often unfeasible due to extremely high costs of rehabilitation and remediation. |
| **SIGNIFICANCE (S)** | | |

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. This describes the significance of the impact on the environmental parameter. The calculation of the significance of an impact uses the following formula:

**Significance = (Extent + probability + reversibility + irreplaceability + duration) x magnitude/intensity.**

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** |
|---|---|---|
| | | |
| 5 to 23 | Negative Low impact | The anticipated impact will have negligible negative effects and will require little to no mitigation. |
| 5 to 23 | Positive Low impact | The anticipated impact will have minor positive effects. |
| 24 to 42 | Negative Medium impact | The anticipated impact will have moderate negative effects and will require moderate mitigation measures. |
| 24 to 42 | Positive Medium impact | The anticipated impact will have moderate positive effects. |
| 43 to 61 | Negative High impact | The anticipated impact will have significant effects and will require significant mitigation measures to achieve an acceptable level of impact. |
| 43 to 61 | Positive High impact | The anticipated impact will have significant positive effects. |
| 62 to 80 | 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". |
| 62 to 80 | Positive Very high impact | The anticipated impact will have highly significant positive effects. |

The table below is to be represented in the Impact Assessment section of the report. The excel spreadsheet template can be used to complete the Impact Assessment.

**Table 2:** Rating of impacts template and example

| 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** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Vegetation and protected plant species | Vegetation clearing for access roads, turbines and their service areas and other infrastructure will impact on vegetation and protected plant species. | 2 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 39 | - | Medium | **Outline/explain the mitigation measures to be undertaken to ameliorate the impacts that are likely to arise from the proposed activity. These measures will be detailed in the EMPr.** | 2 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 24 | - | Low |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Operational Phase** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fauna | Fauna will be negatively affected by the operation of the wind farm due to the human disturbance, the presence of vehicles on the site and possibly by noise generated by the wind turbines as well. | 2 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 36 | - | Medium | **Outline/explain the mitigation measures to be undertaken to ameliorate the impacts that are likely to arise from the proposed activity. These measures will be detailed in the EMPr.** | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 22 | - | Low |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Decommissioning Phase** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Fauna | Fauna will be negatively affected by the decommissioning of the wind farm due to the human disturbance, the presence and operation of vehicles and heavy machinery on the site and the noise generated. | 2 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 30 | - | Medium | **Outline/explain the mitigation measures to be undertaken to ameliorate the impacts that are likely to arise from the proposed activity. These measures will be detailed in the EMPr.** | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 18 | - | Low |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

**Cumulative**

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Broad-scale ecological processes | Transformation and presence of the facility will contribute to cumulative habitat loss and impacts on broad-scale ecological processes such as fragmentation. | 2 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 26 | - | Medium | **Outline/explain the mitigation measures to be undertaken to ameliorate the impacts that are likely to arise from the proposed activity. These measures will be detailed in the EMPr.** | 2 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 22 | - | Low |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

# Annexure B: Specialist's Curriculum Vitae

# CECILIA CANAHAI

| | |
|---|---|
| **Profession** | *Engineering Geologist / Scientist* |
| **Position in Firm** | *Technical Director* |
| **Area of Specialisation** | *Geotechnical, Environmental, Waste Management* |
| **Qualifications** | *Pr.Sci.Nat., MSc (Eng Geol), BSc (Eng Geology)* |
| **Years of Experience** | *31 Years* |
| **Years with Firm** | *20 Years* |

## SUMMARY OF EXPERIENCE

Cecilia Canahai gained her first site experience working as a site geologist for oil and gas exploration, in Romania, in 1988. She completed drilling supervision, sampling, gas chromatography, borehole logging and interpretation, report writing and made recommendations for drilling parameters.

Cecilia joined Moore Spence Jones (Pty) Ltd in 1997 as an engineering geologist, where she completed numerous geotechnical investigations for township and industrial development, sports facility developments, private residential properties and pipeline investigations. She has completed slope stability analyses with recommendations for rehabilitation. Other aspects of her experience include dam and tunnel geotechnical investigations. She acquired her first experience as an environmentalist while carrying out groundwater pollution monitoring, at SAPREF.

All projects have included fieldwork, on site testing, site supervision of works, material sampling, interpretation of laboratory results, client liaison, and reporting.

Cecilia joined JG Afrika (Pty) Ltd in 1999 as an environmentalist / engineering geologist.

As an engineering geologist she has worked on various projects, inter alia, geotechnical investigations for rural water supply schemes, housing developments, roads investigations, materials investigations, lateral support design and geotechnical investigations for dams and tunnels.

As an environmental practitioner she has successfully completed numerous Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping and EIA reports, Solid Waste Management, Environmental Management Programme Reports and Closure Reports for various mines/ borrow pits and Environmental Audits. She was also involved in other aspects of the environmental field such as scoping and public participation, impact assessment, mitigation and monitoring and preparation of environmental management plans (EMP).

Cecilia was the Pietermaritzburg Branch Quality System Manager, involved in the maintaining the office' quality standard in terms of ISO 9001 (JG Afrika is ISO 9001 certified) between 2002 and 2007, when work commitments required her to hand over this particular task to someone else.

Cecilia became a shareholder in 2010 and a partner in 2012. Since 2010 her duties are business development and marketing in the fields of engineering geology geotechnical engineering; waste management; environmental science, aquatic health and water resources management, as well as managing various multi- disciplinary projects.

## PROFESSIONAL REGISTRATIONS & INSTITUTE MEMBERSHIPS

**Pr.Sci.Nat.** - Registered with the South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions - Registration No 400011/00: Environmental Science & Geological Science

**SAIEG** - Member of the South African Institute for Engineering and Environmental Geologists - Membership No 03/211

**IAIA** - Member of the International Association of Impact Assessment; Membership No 1686

## EDUCATION

**1983 – Certificate of Baccalaureate** – Pitesti, Romania
**1987 – BSc (Hons)** (Eng Geol) – University of Bucharest, Romania
**1988 – MSc** (Eng Geol) – University of Bucharest, Romania

## SPECIFIC EXPERIENCE

**JG Afrika (Pty) Ltd (Previously Jeffares & Green (Pty) Ltd)**

**2010 - 2019**
**Position – Technical Director**

**Sicello Bulk Water Main:** EIA & EMPR for water main al Sicello

**Kumba Iron Ore** Biomonitoring Programme for aquatic health

**Kriel Power Station** – Geotechnical Investigation for ash dam complex stability and stability monitoring for a period of 11 months

**New Ash Facility** at Tutuka Power Station for Eskom detail design for water return dams and appurtenant structure and infrastructure as part of an ADF team

**New Ash Facility** at Kusile Power Station for Eskom detail design for water return dams and appurtenant structure and infrastructure as part of an ADF team

**Camden New Ash Dam Facility** detail design, encompassing geotechnical investigation for the new ADF, water return dams and appurtenant structure and infrastructure

**New Ash Facility** at Kendal Power Station for Eskom

**Hendrina Step-In and Go-Higher Ash Dam Facility** detail design, encompassing geotechnical investigation for the extension of the existing ADF

**Mathjabeng Solar Park**

**Atlas Substation EIA** for Closure and Risk Assessment and Due Diligence

**Gauteng Department of Roads and Transportation:** Environmental assessment for 15 Intersection upgrades

Geotechnical Investigation in support of the Feasibility Study for a **5 GW power Solar Park** in the Northern Cape Province of South Africa (presidential project)

Feasibility Study for the potential sources of water for the **Tikwa Wind Farm**

**N11 Sections 6 & 7 Borrow Pit Closure**

Various **Water Use Licence Applications**

Basic Assessment for the installation of **Fibre Optic Cable between Aliwal North and George**

**Baseline study for Eskom WTW and WWTW** for readiness for Blue Drop / Green Drop Certification

Basic Assessment for the installation of **Fibre Optic Cable between Johannesburg and Cape Town**

Various Geotechnical Investigations for Rand Water Pipelines

Various **Environmental Basic Assessments** for Rand Water Pipelines

Various **Geotechnical Investigations** for various Eskom towers (3 year Contract)

**2009 – 2010**
**Position –Executive Associate**

**N4 Rustenburg to Swartruggens:** Geotechnical investigation for N4 road rehabilitation

**Pikitup OSH** Legal Audits

**Dumbe Coalline Geotechnical investigation** for Transnet (stability of proposed cuttings)

Various **Geotechnical Investigations** for Rand Water Pipelines

Various **Environmental Basic Assessments** for Rand Water Pipelines

Various **Geotechnical Investigations** for various Eskom towers (3 year Contract)

Basic Assessment for the installation of **Fibre Optic Cable** between Pretoria and Rustenburg

Materials recovery facility in **Ekandustria Waste Licence Application** and Basic assessment

**2008 – 2009**
**Position – Associate**

**Pikitup Environmental Compliance**

**Rand Water G25 Pipeline Basic Assessment** study downgraded to and Environmental Management Plan; Saved the Client R100 000,00 in fees.

**Pikitup Garden sites and Depot sites** Application for Waste Licences & Basic Assessment studies

**Pretoria North Modal Interchange:** full Environmental Impact Assessment for intermodal facility

**N11 Section 4: Environmental services** for obtaining Authorization for road rehabilitation and borrow pits

Various Geotechnical Investigations for Eskom towers (3 year Contract)

**N6:** Environmental services and Applications for Borrow Pits Closures

**N12 Section 12:** Environmental Auditing for road construction

**2007 – 2008**
**Position – Associate**

**N6 Section 8 Closure Documentation** for quarry and borrow pits for Road Rehabilitation

**Lesotho Lowlands Water Supply Scheme:** Geotechnical Investigation

**Lusikisiki Police Station** Geotechnical Investigation

**Toscana Ridge Geotechnical Investigation** for Housing development

**Phinda Game Reserve:** Geotechnical investigation for Housing development

**Lusikisiki Police Station:** Geotechnical Investigation.

**Pretoria North Station Modal Interchange:** full Environmental Impact Assessment for various road realignments, modal interchange and railway refurbishment in Pretoria.

**N1 Section 14**: Full Environmental Impact Assessment for the N1 rehabilitation.

**Mt Ayliff & Mt Frere Access Roads** – Environmental services for obtaining authorization from DEAET and DME for 12 access roads and associated borrow pits.

**N2 Pongola Borrow pits**: Application for borrow pits Closure

**N2 Section 32:** environmental services for obtaining Authorization for road rehabilitation and borrow pits

**Umzimkhulu Municipality:** Various environmental services for the upgrade of roads in Umzimkhulu

**Environmental Management Plan** for the rehabilitation of Dorpspruit River, Pietermaritzburg

**Kwamashu Police Station** Basic Assessment Report

**2006 – 2007**
**Position – Associate**

**Elliottdale Landfill Site** Classification and Permitting

**Impendle Housing Development** (1500 units): Geotechnical Investigation.

**Lesotho Lowlands Bulk Water Supply Scheme**: Geotechnical Investigation

**Environmental Impact Assessment** for various access roads in the Mt Frere and Mt Ayliff areas for the Umzimvubu Municipality.

**Bubu Access Road** : Geotechnical and materials investigation

**Erf 3 Bishopstowe**: Geotechnical Investigation for housing development

**Willowton Proposed Shopping Centre**: Geotechnical Investigation

**Black Umfolozi River Bridge**: Basic Assessment for environmental authorization

**Mtwalume River sand mining Environmental Management Plan**

**Vulindlela Access Road:** Environmental Management Plan for construction

**Inhlazuka CWSS Environmental Management** Plan for construction

**Ladysmith Development:** Preliminary Geotechnical & Environmental assessments

**Black Umfolozi River Bridge** - Basic Assessment Report as per NEMA Regulations 386.

**Erf 3 Bishopstowe Geotechnical investigation** for housing development

**Vulindlela Access Roads** – Environmental services for road rehabilitation.

**2005 – 2006**
**Position – Engineering & Environmental Geologist**

**Closure of Landfill Site Hluhluwe & Identification** of new Landfill Site to replace the old Landfill Site

**N11 Sections 6 and 7 Borrow Pits and Quarry Permitting:** environmental services (EIA & EMPR's) 10 borrow pits and one quarry

**N12 Section 12 Borrow Pits & Quarry Permitting**: environmental services (EIA & EMPR's) for 8 borrow pits and one quarry

**Impendle Community Water Supply Schemes** – Environmental services for obtaining authorization from DAEA for the construction of a community pipeline and associated structures.

**Masomonco Community Water Supply Scheme** - Environmental services for obtaining authorization from DAEA for the construction of a community pipeline and associated structure.

**KwaNovuka Community Water Supply Scheme** - Environmental services for obtaining authorization from DAEA for the construction of a community pipeline and associated structure.

**Umtshezi Municipality Land Use Management System** – Broad Environmental Scan

**Vryheid Housing Development** – Geotechnical Investigation

**Illovo River Mining Right** – environmental services for a sand mining operation on the Illovo River

**Kwa Gqugquma Community Water Supply Scheme** - Environmental services for obtaining authorization from DAEA for the construction of a community pipeline and associated structure.

**2004 – 2005**
**Position – Engineering & Environmental Geologist**

**Georgedale development** – environmental services for sand mining

**God's Haven Housing Development** – Geotechnical Investigation

**Kwa Senge Clinic** – Geotechnical Investigation

**Umdoni Municipality Cemetery** – Geotechnical & Environmental Assessments

**N6 Borrow Pits and Quarry Permitting: environmental services** (EIA & EMPR's) 10 borrow pits and one quarry

**Umkomaas River Mining Right** – environmental services for sand mining operations on the Umkomaas River

**Umkomaas River Footbridge** – Geotechnical Investigation

**Marburg Prison** – Geotechnical Investigation

**Enkanyezini Community Water Supply Scheme** - Environmental services for obtaining authorization from DAEA for the construction of a community pipeline and associated structures.

**Shemula Community Water Supply Scheme** - Environmental services for obtaining authorization from DAEA for the construction of a community pipeline and associated structures.

**Mtwalume River Mining Permit** – environmental services for sand mining operation on the Mtwalume River.

**Umzimkulu River Mining Right** – environmental services for sand mining operations on the Umzimkulu River

**Umvoti River Mining Rights and Permits** – environmental services for various sand mining operations on the Umvoti River

**N2 Pongola quarry** – Geotechnical Investigation

**Rugged Glen** - Environmental services for upgrading and construction of new structures.

**2003 – 2004**
**Position – Engineering & Environmental Geologist**

**Kwa Mpande Geotechnical Investigation** for school

**St Ives Environmental Scoping** for tourism development on the Midlands Meander

**Ladysmith Petrol Station** – Geotechnical Investigation and Scoping report

**Kwa Ngwanase Community Water Supply Scheme** – Geotechnical investigation for pipeline and associated structures.

**Kwa Ngwanase Community Water Supply Scheme** Environmental Scoping for proposed pipeline and associated structures.

**Emkhuzeni & Mhlangana Community Water Supply Schemes** – Geotechnical investigation for pipelines and associated structures.

**Emkhuzeni & Mhlangana Community Water Supply Schemes** Environmental Scoping for proposed pipelines and associated structures.

**Inanda Dam Mining Permit** – environmental services for a sand mining operation on the Inanda Dam.

**Mdloti River Mining Conversion** of old right to Mining Right.

**Edwin Swales** – Environmental Managemnt Plan compilation and Auditing.

**Estcourt Prison** – Geotechnical Investigation

**Kombuzi Environmental Management Programme** report for mining

**Umhlumayo Community Water Supply Scheme** – Geotechnical Investigation

**2002 – 2003**
**Position – Engineering & Environmental Geologist**

**Dumbe Housing Development** – Geotechnical Investigation.

**Clouds oh Hope** – Children's Home – Geotechnical Investigation

**C4 Water Pipeline** – Johennesburg – Geotechnical Investigation.

**Kombuzi Community Water Supply Scheme** – Geotechnical investigation for pipeline and associated structures.

**Hlahlindlela Community Water Supply Scheme** – Geotechnical investigation for pipeline and associated structures.

**Shemula Community Water Supply Scheme** – Geotechnical investigation for pipeline and associated structures.

**Mt Frere rehabilitation of 3 roads** – Geotechnical Investigation

**Mbono Community Water Supply Scheme** – Geotechnical investigation for pipeline and associated structures.

**Camperdown Spar** - Geotechnical Investigation for failed pavement.

**Thokoza Community Water Supply Scheme** – Geotechnical investigation for pipeline and associated structures.

**Nqutu Community Water Supply Scheme** – Geotechnical investigation for pipeline and associated structures.

**Taxi Rank at Lusikisiki** – Geotechnical Investigation

**Kwa Hlope Community Water Supply Scheme** – Geotechnical investigation for pipeline and associated structures.

**Mbazwane Community Water Supply Scheme** – Geotechnical investigation for pipeline and associated structures.

**2001 – 2002**
**Position – Engineering & Environmental Geologist**

**Amangwe Community Water supply Scheme** Enviornmental Scoping for Pipeline and associated structure

**Black Umfolozi River Bridge** - Basic Assessment Report as per NEMA Regulations 386.

**Mt Ayliff & Mt Frere Access Roads** – Environmental services for obtaining authorization from DEAET and DME for access roads and associated borrow pits.

**Erf 3 Bishopstowe Geotechnical investigation** for housing development

**2000 – 2001**
**Position – Engineering & Environmental Geologist**

**Black Umfolozi River Bridge** - Basic Assessment Report as per NEMA Regulations 386.

**Mt Ayliff & Mt Frere Access Roads** – Environmental services for obtaining authorization from DEAET and DME for access roads and associated borrow pits.

**Erf 3 Bishopstowe Geotechnical investigation** for housing development

**1999 – 2000**
**Position – Engineering & Environmental Geologist**

**Nzinga and Langkloof CWSS**: Geotechnical Investigation for pipeline and reservoirs, Environmental Scoping: & Environmental Management Programme reports for mining

**Mbazwana CWSS: Geotechnical Investigation** for pipeline and reservoirs, & Environmental Scoping

**Nhlangano to Sicunusa Road**: Geotechnical & Materials Investigation

**Edendale Hospital New Wing**: Geotechnical Investigation

**Spandikroon, Dival & Mhlabathini CWSS**: Geotechnical Investigations for pipeline and reservoirs, Environmental Scoping: reports

**Tugela Estates CWSS:** Geotechnical Investigations for pipeline and reservoirs

**Debep Quarry Drilling Investigation** for materials for road Construction

**N2 Road Rehabilitation** at Kei River Geotechnical investigation for road rehabilitation

## Moore Spence Jones (Pty) Ltd

**1998 – 1999**
**Position – Engineering & Environmental Geologist**

**Indian Ocean Fertilizers** (Richards Bay): Geotechnical Investigation for new plant

**Housing Development at Hammarsdale**: Geotechnical investigation for foundations, earthworks, suitability of materials for road construction, etc.

**Zimbali Housing Development**: Geotechnical investigation for foundations, earthworks, suitability of materials for road construction, etc.

**Cato Manor**: Stability Investigation of platform cuttings

**Mpophomeni Housing Development**: Geotechnical investigation for foundations, earthworks, suitability of materials for road construction, etc.

**Fleetguard Pmb**: Geotechnical investigation for warehouse foundations, earthworks, suitability of materials for road construction, etc.

**Stukenberg Water Pipeline**: Geotechnical investigation for slope stability, pipeline re-routing and tunnel investigation, etc.

**Booth Road Housing Development**: Geotechnical investigation for foundations, earthworks, suitability of materials for road construction, etc.

**1996 – 1998**
**Position – Engineering & Environmental Geologist**

**Gateway Development**: Geotechnical Investigation for founding conditions, Assessment of waste, Site stability, etc.

**Azalea Housing Development** Geotechnical investigation for foundations, earthworks, suitability of materials for road construction, etc.

**Matatiele Housing Development** Geotechnical investigation for foundations, earthworks, suitability of materials for road construction, etc.

**Kwa Dabeka Housing Development** Geotechnical investigation for foundations, earthworks, suitability of materials for road construction, etc.

**Newlands West: Geotechnical Investigation** at cracked houses

**AECI**: Geotechnical Investigation into the stability of the slimes dams at AECI

**SAPREF**: Groundwater Pollution monitoring

### Craiova Drilling Company Romania

**1988 – 1992**
**Position – Site Geologist**

Site geologist - Responsible for Drilling supervision at various oil & gas exploration & exploitation boreholes. Main duties included sample and core analysis and description, data logging and interpretation, down-the-hole logging and on site interpretation, gas chromatography and geo-service logging, compilation of reports and recommendations for drilling parameters.

A major project Mrs Canahai was involved in, was the drilling supervision of a 6000 m deep exploration hole. Responsibilities included liaison with design engineers and contractors, gas chromatography and geo-service logging, compilation of reports and recommendations for drilling parameters.

## CONTINUED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### Courses

**2000** - Integrated Environmental Management Course – (University of KwaZulu Natal)
**2001** - Environmental Auditing Course - (University of KwaZulu Natal)
**2003** - ISO 9001:2000; Registered Internal and Suppliers Auditors Course - (Wynleigh International)
**2003** - Waste Management Course – (University of Pretoria)
**2005** SHEQMAN Course – (Advance A.C.T.)

**2017** Resource Efficiency Cleaner Production - 2-Day End User Training CSIR Pretoria
**2018** Energy Management Systems Implementation - End User Training CSIR Pretoria

**Published Papers**

**1988** - "Mineralogical Study of Devonian Deposits of the Hercinic Orogen, Dobrogea", *MSc Thesis*, University of Bucharest (Engineering Geology), 1988.

## PERSONAL DETAILS

Nationality – South African
Date of Birth – 1965-03-30
Domicile – Johannesburg, South Africa

**Languages**
English – Very Good
Romanian – Excellent

SiVEST

# Appendix 6F

# Social Impact Assessment

# PROPOSED UMSOBOMVU SOLAR PV ENERGY FACILITIES AND ASSOCIATED GRID INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT EASTERN AND NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCES

**SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT**
**November 2019**


Prepared by:

Dr Neville Bews & Associates
SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSORS

PO Box 145412
Bracken Gardens
1452

Submitted to:

SiVEST

4 Pencarrow Crescent,
La Lucia Ridge Office Estate,
Umhlanga Rocks,
4320

# DETAILS OF PROJECT

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Report Title | : | Social Impact Assessment Scoping Report for the Umsobomvu Solar PV Facilities and Associated Grid Infrastructure |
| Author | : | Dr Neville Bews |
| DEA Reference Number | : | |
| Project Developer | : | Mooi Plaats Solar Power (Pty) Ltd / Wonderheuvel Solar Power (Pty) Ltd / Paarde Valley Solar Power (Pty) Ltd |
| Environmental Consultant | : | **SiVEST Environmental Division** |
| Review Period | : | 16 April, 2019 – 12 November, 2019 |
| Status of Report | : | Second Draft Report |

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## INTRODUCTION

Mooi Plaats Solar Power (Pty) Ltd, Wonderheuvel Solar Power (Pty) Ltd , and Paarde Valley Solar Power (Pty) Ltd has proposed the development of three separate solar photovoltaic facilities with associated grid connection infrastructure to be set up under separate Special Purpose Vehicles (SPV) as follows:

- Wonderheuvel Solar PV Facility under Wonderheuvel Solar Power (Pty) Ltd
- Mooi Plaats Solar PV Facility under Mooi Plaats Solar Power (Pty) Ltd
- Paarde Valley Solar PV Facility under Paarde Valley Solar Power (Pty) Ltd.

In this regard SiVEST Environmental Division has been contracted to undertake the environmental impact assessment of the project and in turn has appointed Dr Neville Bews & Associates to undertake the social impact assessment.

## APPROACH TO STUDY

Data was gathered by means of the following techniques.

### Collection of data

Data was gathered through:

- The project description prepared by the project proponent.
- Statistics South Africa, Census 2011 and other relevant demographic data generated by Stats SA such as the Quarterly Labour Force Survey and Mid-year population estimates.
- Discussions with the project proponents and Environmental Impact Assessment Consultants.
- A literature review of various documents such as the relevant Municipal Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) and other specialist reports and documents.
- A broader literature scan.

### Impact assessment technique

The assessment technique used to evaluate the social impacts was provided by SiVEST Environmental Division and is attached in Appendix 1.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

It is proposed that the following three solar photovoltaic (PV) energy facilities, with associated grid connection infrastructure, be developed on the following farm portions:

- ***Mooi Plaats Solar PV Facility***, on an application site of approximately 5 303 ha, comprising the following farm portions:
  - Portion 1 of Leuwe Kop No 120
  - Remainder of Mooi Plaats No 121.
- ***Wonderheuvel Solar PV Facility***, on an application site of approximately 5 652 ha, comprising the following farm portions:
  - Remainder of Mooi Plaats No 121
  - Portion 3 of Wonder Heuvel No 140
  - Portion 5 of Holle Fountain No 133.
- ***Paarde Valley Solar PV Facility***, on an application site of approximately 2 631 ha, comprising the following farm portion:
  - Portion 2 of Paarde Valley No 62
  - Portion 7 of the Farm Leeuw Hoek No. 61.

**Solar PV Components**

*Mooi Plaats Solar PV Energy Facility:*

The proposed Mooi Plaats Solar PV Energy Facility will include the following components:

- Three (3) PV array areas, occupying a combined total area of approximately 777 hectares (ha).
- The proposed solar PV energy facility will have a maximum total generation capacity of approximately **400 MW** and will comprise approximately **1 142 857** PV modules. The final number of modules as well as their configuration will only be determined in the detailed design phase.
- PV modules will be either fixed tilt mounting or single axis tracking mounting, and the modules will be either crystalline silicon or thin film technology. Each module will be approximately 2 m wide and between 1 m and 4 m in height, depending on the mounting type.
- Internal roads, between 4 m and 10 m wide, will provide access to the PV arrays. Existing site roads will be used wherever possible, although new site roads will be constructed where necessary.
- Up to three (3) temporary construction laydown / staging areas of approximately 4 ha each.

- Operation and maintenance (O&M) buildings will be provided for each PV array area, occupying a site of approximately 1 ha each. Up to a maximum of three (3) O&M buildings will thus be constructed.
- Medium voltage cabling will link the solar PV energy facility to the grid connection infrastructure. These cables will be laid underground wherever technically feasible.

*Wonderheuvel Solar PV Energy Facility:*

The proposed Wonderheuvel Solar PV Energy Facility will include the following components:

- Six (6) PV array areas, occupying a combined total area of approximately 864 ha.
- The proposed solar PV energy facility will have a maximum total generation capacity of approximately **480 MW** and will comprise approximately **1 371 429** PV modules. The final number of modules as well as their configuration will only be determined in the detailed design phase.
- PV modules will be either fixed tilt mounting or single axis tracking mounting, and the modules will be either crystalline silicon or thin film technology. Each module will be approximately 2 m wide and between 1 m and 4 m in height, depending on the mounting type.
- Internal roads, between 4 m and 10 m wide, will provide access to the PV arrays. Existing site roads will be used wherever possible, although new site roads will be constructed where necessary.
- Up to a maximum of four (4) temporary construction laydown / staging areas of approximately 4 ha each.
- Operation and maintenance (O&M) buildings will be provided for each PV array area, occupying a site of approximately 1 ha each. However, certain PV array areas will share O&M buildings. Up to a maximum of four (4) O&M buildings will thus be constructed.
- Medium voltage cabling will link the solar PV energy facility to the grid connection infrastructure. These cables will be laid underground wherever technically feasible.

*Paarde Valley Solar PV Energy Facility:*

The proposed Paarde Valley Solar PV Energy Facility will include the following components:

- Five (5) PV array areas, occupying a combined total area of approximately 1 337 ha.
- The proposed solar PV energy facility will have a maximum total generation capacity of approximately **700 MW** and will comprise approximately **2 000 000** PV modules. The final number of modules as well as their configuration will only be determined in the detailed design phase.
- PV modules will be either fixed tilt mounting or single axis tracking mounting, and the modules will be either crystalline silicon or thin film technology. Each module will be approximately 2 m wide and between 1 m and 4 m in height, depending on the mounting type.

- Internal roads, between 4 m and 10 m wide, will provide access to the PV arrays. Existing site roads will be used wherever possible, although new site roads will be constructed where necessary.
- Up to five (5) temporary construction laydown / staging areas of approximately 4 ha each.
- Operation and maintenance (O&M) buildings will be provided for each PV array area, occupying a site of approximately 1 ha each. Up to a maximum of five (5) O&M buildings will thus be constructed.
- Medium voltage cabling will link the solar PV energy facility to the grid connection infrastructure. These cables will be laid underground wherever technically feasible.

**Grid Connection Infrastructure**

The proposed grid connection infrastructure will include the following components:

- New on-site substations and collector substations to serve each solar PV energy facility, each occupying an area of up to approximately 4 ha.
- A new 132 kV overhead power line connecting the on-site substations and/or collector substations to either the Hydra D Main Transmission Substation (MTS) or the proposed Coleskop Wind Energy Facility (WEF) substation, from where the electricity will be fed into the national grid. The type of power line towers being considered at this stage to include both lattice and monopole towers which will be up to 25 m in height.

Grid connection infrastructure alternatives have been provided for each PV project. These alternatives essentially provide for different route alignments with associated substations contained within an assessment corridor between approximately 400 m and 900 m wide. This is to allow for flexibility to route the power line on either side of the existing high voltage Eskom power lines. The respective alternatives are as follows:

***Mooi Plaats Solar PV Grid Connection**:*

The alternatives essentially provide for two (2) different route alignments with associated substations contained within an assessment corridor between approximately 400 m and 900 m wide. The alternatives are as follows:

**Option 1:**

- **Corridor Option 1a** - links Substation 2 and Substation 1a to the Hydra D MTS.
- **Corridor Option 1b** - links Substation 2 and Substation 1b to the Hydra D MTS.

**Option 2:**

- **Corridor Option 2a** - links Substation 2 and Substation 1a to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector substation located on the Wonderheuvel PV project application site.

- **Corridor Option 2b** - links Substation 2 and Substation 1b to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector substation located on the Wonderheuvel PV project application site.

***Wonderheuvel Solar PV Grid Connection:***
The alternatives essentially provide for three (3) different route alignments with associated substations contained within an assessment corridor between approximately 400m and 900m wide. The alternatives are as follows:

**Option 1:**

- **Corridor Option 1a** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern connection* links the Proposed Substation 3a to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Northern Collector Substation located on the Mooi Plaats PV project application site.
  ii. The *southern connection* links the proposed Substation 4a to the Coleskop WEF Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation located on the Paarde Valley PV Project application site.

- **Corridor Option 1b** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern* connection links the Proposed Substation 3a to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Northern Collector Substation located on the Mooi Plaats PV project application site.
  ii. The *southern connection* links the proposed Substation 4b to the Coleskop WEF Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation located on the Paarde Valley PV Project application site.

- **Corridor Option 1c** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern* connection links the Proposed Substation 3b to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Northern Collector Substation located on the Mooi Plaats PV project application site.
  ii. The *southern connection* links the proposed Substation 4a to the Coleskop WEF Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation located on the Paarde Valley PV Project application site.

- **Corridor Option 1d** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern connection* links the Proposed Substation 3b to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Northern Collector Substation located on the Mooi Plaats PV project application site.

ii. The *southern connection* links the proposed Substation 4b to the Coleskop WEF Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation located on the Paarde Valley PV Project application site.

**Option 2:**

- **Corridor Option 2a** - links Substation 3a to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation.

- **Corridor Option 2b** - Option 2b links Substation 3b to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation (substation 4a acts as Central Collector).

**Option 3:**

- **Corridor Option 3** links Substation 4b to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation.

***Paarde Valley Solar PV Grid Connection:***

The alternatives essentially provide for two (2) different route alignments with associated substations contained within an assessment corridor between approximately 400 m and 900 m wide. The alternatives are as follows:

**Option 1:**

- Corridor **Option 1a** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.

i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Sub (Substation 6a will act as Central Collector for this option).

ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 7a to the Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation (Substation 6a will act as Southern Collector for this option).

- Corridor **Option 1b** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.

i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Sub (Substation 6b will act as Southern Collector for this option).

ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 7a to the Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation (Substation 6b will act as Southern Collector for this option).

- Corridor **Option 1c** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.

i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Sub (Substation 6a will act as Southern Collector for this option).
ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 7b to the Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation (Substation 6a will act as Southern Collector for this option).

- Corridor **Option 1d** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Sub (Substation 6b will act as Southern Collector for this option).
  ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 7b to the Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation (Substation 6b will act as Southern Collector for this option).

**Option 2:**

- Corridor **Option 2a** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Sub located on the Wonderveuvel PV Project application site.
  ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 6a and 7a to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.

- Corridor **Option 2b** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Sub located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.
  ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 6b and 7b to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.

- Corridor **Option 2c** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Sub located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.
  ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 6a and 7b to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.

- Corridor **Option 2d** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Sub located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.
  ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 6b and 7a to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.

**Location**

The project is situated across the Northern and Eastern Cape provinces with Mooi Plaats, and Wonderheuvel falling within the Umsobomvu local and Pixley ka Seme district municipalities in the Northern Cape Province. Paarde Valley falls within the Inxuba Yethemba local and Chris Hani district municipalities in the Eastern Cape Province.

**IMPACTS IDENTIFIED**

The impacts discussed above are assessed below in respect of the following three photovoltaic facilities and their respective associated grid infrastructure:

- Mooi Plaats Solar PV Facility
- Wonderheuvel Solar PV Facility
- Paarde Valley Solar PV Facility.

From a social perspective it makes far more sense to assess each of the solar PV facilities together with their respective associated grid infrastructure based on the following reasons:

1. The solar PV facilities and associated grid infrastructure are interdependent. If the one was not to exist neither would the other. In this sense each is an integral part of the other and cannot function independently.
2. The focus at a social level is far broader than is the case with certain other specialist studies that may have a narrower, project footprint specific emphasis.
   a. For instance, to consider certain aspects such as job creation; the influx of workers; socio-economic stimulation and the transformation of the sense of place in isolation would deter from the actual impact that may occur when considered on a combined basis and in essence would not make logical sense.
3. Any site specific implications associated with the grid infrastructure alternatives can be specifically addressed and mitigated as well as noted when discussing the motivation for selecting the socially preferred grid connection alternatives.

These impacts are assessed in respect of the following phases of the project:

- Planning and design

- Construction
- Operational
- Decommissioning, and
- The ‘no go” option.

**Construction phase**

Most of the impacts discussed above apply over the short-term to the construction phase of the project and include:

- Annoyance, dust and noise
- Increase in crime
- Increased risk of HIV infections
- Influx of construction workers and job seekers
- Hazard exposure
- Disruption of daily living patterns
- Disruptions to social and community infrastructure
- Job creation and skills development
- Socio-economic stimulation.

**Operational phase**

The social impacts that apply to the operational phase of the project are:

- Transformation of the sense of place and
- Economic
    - Job creation and skills development
    - Socio-economic stimulation

**Decommissioning**

If the project was to be completely decommissioned the major social impacts likely to be associated with this would be the loss of jobs and revenue stream that stimulated the local economy and flowed into the municipal coffers.

**‘No Go’ Alternative**

The ‘no go’ option would mean that the social environment is not affected as the status quo would remain. On a negative front it would also mean that all the positive aspects associated with the project would not materialise. Considering that Eskom’s coal fired power stations are a huge contributor to carbon emissions the loss of a chance to supplement the National Grid through renewable energy would be significant at a national, if not at a global level.

**Cumulative impacts**

In this regard the following cumulative impacts are addressed below:

- Risk of HIV
- Sense of place
- Service supplies and infrastructure, and
- The economic benefit.

No fatal flaws associated with the cumulative impacts are evident at a social level. The findings support the recommendations of the various reports undertaken for the different renewable energy projects in the region that, on an overall basis, the social benefits of renewable energy projects outweigh the negative benefits and that the negative social impacts can be mitigated.

**COMPARATIVE ASSESSMENT OF LAYOUT ALTERNATIVES**

As no social preference emerged in respect of any of the grid connection option the other specialist reports were perused to establish if there was any preference that would have an influence on the social. Based on this analysis the following preferences were identified and supported on a social basis:

**PV infrastructure alternatives (laydown areas and O&M buildings)**

| MOOI PLAATS SOLAR PV FACILITY | |
|---|---|
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 1 | Preferred |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 2 | Preferred |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 3 | Preferred |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 4 | Least preferred |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 5 | Least preferred |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 6 | Least preferred |
| **WONDERHEUVEL SOLAR PV FACILITY** | |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 1 | Preferred |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 2 | Preferred |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 3 | Preferred |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 4 | Preferred |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 5 | Least preferred |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 6 | Least preferred |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 7 | Least preferred |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 8 | Least preferred |
| **PAARDE VALLEY SOLAR PV FACILITY** | |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 1 | Preferred |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 2 | Preferred |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 3 | Preferred |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 4 | Preferred |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 5 | Preferred |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 6 | Least preferred |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 7 | Least preferred |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 8 | Least preferred |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 9 | Least preferred |

**Grid Connection Infrastructure Alternatives (Power Line Corridors and Associated Substations)**

| MOOI PLAATS SOLAR PV FACILITY | |
|---|---|
| Grid Connection Option 1a | Preferred |
| Grid Connection Option 1b | Preferred |
| Grid Connection Option 2a | Favourable |
| Grid Connection Option 2b | Favourable |
| **WONDERHEUVEL SOLAR PV FACILITY** | |
| Grid Connection Option 1a | Least preferred |
| Grid Connection Option 1b | Least preferred |
| Grid Connection Option 1c | Least preferred |
| Grid Connection Option 1d | Least preferred |
| Grid Connection Option 2a | Favourable |
| Grid Connection Option 2b | Favourable |
| Grid Connection Option 3 | Preferred |
| **PAARDE VALLEY SOLAR PV FACILITY** | |
| Grid Connection Option 1a | Least preferred |
| Grid Connection Option 1b | Least preferred |
| Grid Connection Option 1c | Least preferred |
| Grid Connection Option 1d | Least preferred |
| Grid Connection Option 2a | Preferred |
| Grid Connection Option 2b | Preferred |
| Grid Connection Option 2c | Preferred |
| Grid Connection Option 2d | Preferred |

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In assessing the social impact of the Umsobomvu Solar PV Facilities, it was found that in respect of the energy needs of the country and South Africa's need to reduce its carbon emissions that the project fits with national, provincial and municipal policy.

Regarding the social impacts associated with the project it was found that most apply over the short term to the construction phase of the project. Of these impacts all can be mitigated to within acceptable ranges and there are no fatal flaws associated with the construction or operation of the project.

On a cumulative basis it is evident that the cumulative impacts associated with changes to the social environment of the region are more significant than those attached to the project in isolation. On a negative front there are two issues associated with developments in the region that are of most concern. The first of these issues is the change to the sense of place of an area that was once considered a pristine region of South Africa. The second is the potential, through an influx of labour and an increase in transportation to constructions sites, of the risk for the prevalence of HIV to rise in an area that has a relatively low HIV prevalence rate. In this regard it is important that the relevant authorities recognise these issues and find ways of mitigating them to ensure that they do not undermine the benefit that renewable energy projects bring, both to the region as well as to the country as a whole. These issues are beyond a project specific basis and as such will need to be addressed at a higher level.

### Impact statement

The project site and surrounding areas are sparsely populated with the agricultural potential of the area being low. Accordingly, the negative social impacts associated with the proposed Mooi Plaats, Wonderheuvel and Paarde Valley solar PV facilities and associated grid connection infrastructure are of low to moderate significance with most occurring over the short term construction phase. The project has a positive element which outweighs the negative in that it will contribute towards the supply of renewable energy into a grid system heavily reliant on coal powered energy generation. In this sense the projects form part of a national effort to reduce South Africa's carbon emissions and thus carries with it a significant social benefit and is thus supported and should proceed.

**EIA phase**

As the area is sparsely populated and the negative social impacts associated with all three solar PV facilities and associated grid infrastructure of moderate significance it is most unlikely that any further social study will be necessary. This will, however, be dependent on the outcome of the public participation process which may result in a need to update the current report by incorporating the comments recorded and updating the social impacts accordingly.

## PRE AND POST MITIGATION COMPARISON OF IMPACTS FOR ALL THREE SOLAR PV FACILITIES AND ASSOCIATED GRID INFRASTRUCTURE

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Construction Phase** | | | | | |
| **Environmental parameter** | **Issues** | **Rating prior to mitigation** | **Average** | **Rating post mitigation** | **Average** |
| **Health & social wellbeing** | Annoyance, dust and noise | -16 low | **Health & social wellbeing -27 medium** | -8 low | **Health & social wellbeing -20 low** |
| | Increase in crime | -33 medium | | -22 low | |
| | Increased risk of HIV infections | -48 high | | -32 medium | |
| | Influx of construction workers and job seekers | -22 low | | -20 low | |
| | Hazard exposure. | -20 low | | -18 low | |
| | | | | | |
| **Quality of the living environment** | Disruption of daily living patterns | -20 low | **Quality of the living environment -20 low** | -18 low | **Quality of the living environment-18 low** |
| | Disruptions to social and community infrastructure | -20 low | | -18 low | |
| | | | | | |
| **Economic** | Job creation and skills development | +22 low | **Economic +23 low** | +24 medium | **Economic +25 medium** |
| | Socio-economic stimulation | +24 medium | | +24 medium | |
| | | | | | |
| **Operational Phase** | | | | | |
| **Quality of the living environment** | Transformation of the sense of place | -51 high | **Quality of the living environment -51 high** | -34 medium | **Quality of the living environment -34 medium** |
| | | | | | |
| **Economic** | Job creation and skills development | +24 medium | **Economic +26 medium** | +24 medium | **Economic +33 medium** |
| | Socio-economic stimulation | +28 medium | | +42 medium | |
| | | | | | |
| **No Project Alternative** | | | | | |
| **No project** | Status quo will remain | -51 high | **-51 high** | No mitigation measures | |
| | | | | | |
| **Cumulative Impacts** | | | | | |
| **Health & social wellbeing** | Risk of HIV | -51 high | **Health & social wellbeing -51 high** | -32 medium | **Health & social wellbeing -32 medium** |
| | | | | | |
| **Quality of the living environment** | Transformation of sense of place | -51 high | **Quality of the living environment -36.5 medium** | -34 medium | **Quality of the living environment -27 medium** |
| | Services, supplies & infrastructure | -22 low | | -20 low | |
| | | | | | |
| **Economic** | Job creation, skills development and socio-economic stimulation | +36 medium | **Economic +36 medium** | +48 high | **Economic +48 high** |

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

## LIST OF TABLES

## List of Figures

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| **AIDS** | Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome |
| **BID** | Background Information Document |
| **DBSA** | Development Bank of South Africa |
| **DEA** | Department of Environmental Affairs |
| **DM** | District Municipality |
| **EIA** | Environmental Impact Assessment |
| **GPS** | Global Positioning System |
| **HIA** | Heritage Impact Assessment |
| **HIV** | Human Immunodeficiency Virus |
| **I&AP** | Interested and Affected Party |
| **IDP** | Integrated Development Plan |
| **IRP** | Integrated Resource Plan |
| **IRR** | Issues Response Report |
| **kV** | Kilovolt |
| **LM** | Local Municipality |
| **MW** | Megawatt |
| **NBA** | Dr. Neville Bews & Associates |
| **NEMA** | National Environmental Management Act (No. 107 of 1998) |
| **NERSA** | The National Energy Regulator of South Africa |
| **NGO** | Non-Governmental Organisation |
| **NU** | Non-urban area |
| **OHS** | Occupational Health and Safety |
| **PA** | Per Annum (Yearly) |
| **PGDS** | Provincial Growth and Development Strategy |
| **PPP** | Public Participation Process |
| **PV** | Photovoltaic |
| **REIPPPP** | Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Procurement Program |
| **SACPVP** | South African Council for the Property Valuers Profession |
| **SAHRA** | South African Heritage Resources Agency |
| **SAHRIS** | South African Heritage Resources Information System |
| **SDF** | Spatial Development Framework |
| **SIA** | Social Impact Assessment |

| | |
|---|---|
| **SIPs** | Strategic Integrated Projects |
| **SMME** | Small Medium and Micro Enterprises |
| **SPV** | Special Purpose Vehicles |
| **Stats SA** | Statistics South Africa |
| **STDs** | Sexually Transmitted Diseases |
| **ToR** | Terms of Reference |
| **UNESCO** | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization |
| **WEF** | Wind Energy Facility |
| **WHO** | World Health Organisation |
| **WWF** | World Wild Fund for Nature |

## QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE OF SPECIALIST

**Qualifications:**

University of South Africa: B.A. (Honours) – 1984

Henley Management College, United Kingdom: The Henley Post-Graduate Certificate in Management – 1997

Rand Afrikaans University: M.A. (cum laude) – 1999

Rand Afrikaans University: D. Litt. et Phil. – 2000

**Projects:**

The Social Impact Assessment (SIA) for the Gautrain Rapid Rail Link; The impact assessment for the Australian – South African sports development programme; SIA for Kumba Resources, Sishen South Project; Evaluation of a Centre for Violence Against Women for The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime; SIAs for the following Exxaro Resources Ltd.'s mines, Leeuwpan Coal Mine Delmas, Glen Douglas Dolomite Mine Henley-on-Klip, Grootegeluk Open Cast Coal Mine Lephalale; SIA for the South African National Road Agency Limited (SANRAL) on Gauteng Freeway Improvement Project; SIA for SANRAL on the N2 Wild Coast Toll Highway; Research into research outputs of the University for the University of Johannesburg; SIA for Waterfall Wedge housing and business development in Midrand Gauteng; SIA for the Environmental Management Plan for Sedibeng District Municipality; Social and Labour Plan for the Belfast Project on behalf of Exxaro Resources Ltd; SIA for the Transnet New Multi-Product Pipeline (Commercial Farmers) on behalf of Golder Associates Africa (Pty) Ltd; SIA for the Proposed Vale Moatize Power Plant Project in Mozambique on behalf of Golder Associates Africa (Pty) Ltd; SIA for Kumba Resources Ltd.'s proposed Dingleton Resettlement Project at Sishen Iron Ore Mine on behalf of Water for Africa (Pty) Ltd; SIA for Gold Fields West Wits Project for EcoPartners; SIA for the Belfast Project for Exxaro Resources Ltd; SIA for Eskom Holdings Ltd.'s Proposed Ubertas 88/11kV Substation on behalf of KV3 Engineers (Pty) Ltd; SIA for the Mokolo and Crocodile River (West) Water Augmentation Project for the Department of Water and Sanitation on behalf of Nemai Consulting and the Trans Caledonian Water Authority; Assisted Octagon Consulting with the SIA for Eskom's Nuclear 1 Power Plant on behalf of Arcus GIBB Engineering & Science. SIA for the 150MW Photovoltaic Power Plant and Associated Infrastructure for Italgest Energy (Pty) Ltd, on behalf of Kalahari Survey Solutions cc. SIA for Eskom Holdings Limited, Transmission Division's Neptune-Poseidon 400kV Power Line on behalf of Nemai Consulting. Ncwabeni Off-Channel Storage Dam for security of water supply in Umzumbe, Mpumalanga.

Social Impact assessment for Eskom Holdings Limited, Transmission Division, Forskor-Merensky 275kV ±130km Powerline and Associated Substation Works in Limpopo Province. Social impact assessment for the proposed infilling of the Model Yacht Pond at Blue Lagoon, Stiebel Place, Durban.ABC Prieska Solar Project; Proposed 75 MWp Photovoltaic Power Plant and its associated infrastructure on a portion of the remaining extent of ERF 1 Prieska, Northern Cape.Sekoko Wayland Iron Ore, Molemole Local Municipalities in Limpopo Province.Langpan Chrome Mine, Thabazimbi, Limpopo; Jozini Nodal Expansion Implementation Project, Mpumalanga, on behalf of Nemai Consulting; SIA for Glen Douglas Dolomite Burning Project, Midvaal Gauteng, on behalf of Afrimat Limited; SIA for Lyttelton Dolomite mine Dolomite Burning Project, Marble Hall Limpopo on behalf of Afrimat Limited; Tubatse Strengthening Phase 1 – Senakangwedi B Integration for Eskom Transmission on behalf of Nsovo Environmental Consulting; Department of Water and Sanitation, South Africa (2014). Environmental Impact Assessment for the Mzimvubu Water Project: Social Impact Assessment DWS Report No: P WMA 12/T30/00/5314/7. Umkhomazi Water Project Phase 1 – Raw Water Component Smithfield Dam - 14/12/16/3/3/3/94; Water Conveyance Infrastructure - 14/12/16/3/3/3/94/1; Balancing Dam - 14/12/16/3/3/3/94/2. Umkhomazi Water Project Phase 1 – Potable Water Component: 14/12/16/3/3/3/95. Expansion of Railway Loops at Arthursview; Paul; Phokeng and Rooiheuwel Sidings in the Bojanala Platinum District Municipality in the North West Province for Transnet Soc Ltd; Basic Social Impact Assessment for the Cato Ridge Crematorium in Kwazulu-Natal Province; SIA for the Kennedy Road Housing Project, Ward 25 situated on 316 Kennedy Road, Clare Hills (Erf 301, Portion 5); Eskom's Mulalo Main Transmission Substation and Power Line Integration Project, Secunda;

Regularly lecture in the Department of Sociology at the University of Johannesburg and collaborated with Prof.Henk Becker of Utrecht University, the Netherlands, in a joint lecture to present the Social Impact Assessment Masters course via video link between the Netherlands and South Africa. Presented papers on Social Impact Assessments at both national and international seminars. Published on both a national and international level.

**Affiliation:**

The South African Affiliation of the International Association for Impact Assessment.

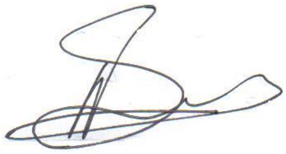
Registered on the database for scientific peer review of iSimangaliso GEF project outputs.

## Declaration of Independence

I, Neville Bews, as the appointed independent specialist, in terms of the 2014 EIA Regulations, hereby declare that I:

- I act as the independent specialist in this application;
- I 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 regard the information contained in this report as it relates to my specialist input/study to be true and correct, and do not have and will not have any financial interest in the undertaking of the activity, other than remuneration for work performed in terms of the NEMA, the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014 and any specific environmental management Act;
- I declare that there are no circumstances that may compromise my objectivity in performing such work;
- I have expertise in conducting the specialist report relevant to this application, 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 have no, and will not engage in, conflicting interests in the undertaking of the activity;
- I have no vested interest in the proposed activity proceeding;
- 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 have ensured that information containing all relevant facts in respect of the specialist input/study was distributed or made available to interested and affected parties and the public, and that participation by interested and affected parties was facilitated in such a manner that all interested and affected parties were provided with a reasonable opportunity to participate and to provide comments on the specialist input/study;
- I have ensured that the comments of all interested and affected parties on the specialist input/study were considered, recorded and submitted to the competent authority in respect of the application;
- all the particulars furnished by me in this specialist input/study are true and correct; and

- I realise that a false declaration is an offence in terms of regulation 48 and is punishable in terms of section 24F of the Act.

Signature of the specialist: 

Name of Specialist: Neville Bews

Date: 12 November 2019

# 1. INTRODUCTION

Mooi Plaats Solar Power (Pty) Ltd, Wonderheuvel Solar Power (Pty) Ltd and Paarde Valley Solar Power (Pty) Ltd has proposed the development of three separate solar photovoltaic facilities with associated grid connection infrastructure to be set up under separate Special Purpose Vehicles (SPV) as follows:

- Wonderheuvel Solar PV Facility under Wonderheuvel Solar Power (Pty) Ltd
- Mooi Plaats Solar PV Facility under Mooi Plaats Solar Power (Pty) Ltd
- Paarde Valley Solar PV Facility under Paarde Valley Solar Power (Pty) Ltd.

The proposed site for these facilities and associated grid connection infrastructure is located some 32 km northwest of Middleburg in the Eastern Cape Province and approximately 19 km southwest of Noupoort in the Northern Cape Province. In this regard SiVEST Environmental Division has been contracted to undertake the environmental impact assessment of the project and in turn has appointed Dr Neville Bews & Associates to undertake the social impact assessment.

## 1.1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of the report is to identify the social baseline conditions in which the proposed Umsobomvu Project will unfold and to acquire an understanding of the proposed project. Against this background to identify the social impacts associated with the proposed project and suggest mitigation measures to limit the effect of these impacts on the social environment within which the project is placed.

## 1.2. STRUCTURE OF REPORT

This specialist study is undertaken in compliance with Requirements of Appendix 6 – GN R326 EIA Regulations 2014, as amended on of 7 April 2017. **Table 1** indicates how the requirements of Appendix 6 have been fulfilled in this report.

## Table 1: Report content requirements in terms of EIA Regulations

| Requirements of Appendix 6 – GN R326 EIA Regulations 2014, as amended on 7 April 2017 | Section of Report |
|---|---|
| 1. (1) A specialist report prepared in terms of these Regulations must contain-<br>(a) details of-<br>(i) the specialist who prepared the report; and<br>(ii) the expertise of that specialist to compile a specialist report including a curriculum vitae; | Page xviii |
| (b) a declaration that the specialist is independent in a form as may be specified by the competent authority; | Page xx |
| (c) an indication of the scope of, and the purpose for which, the report was prepared; | Section 1.1 & 1.2 Page 1 |
| (cA) an indication of the quality and age of base data used for the specialist report; | Section: 1.5.2 Page 5 |
| (cB) a description of existing impacts on the site, cumulative impacts of the proposed development and levels of acceptable change; | Section 5, 6, 7 & 8 Pages 40-80 |
| (d) the duration, date and season of the site investigation and the relevance of the season to the outcome of the assessment; | N/A |
| (e) a description of the methodology adopted in preparing the report or carrying out the specialised process inclusive of equipment and modelling used; | Section 1.4 Page 4 |
| (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; | Section 5-9 Pages 40-80 |
| (g) an identification of any areas to be avoided, including buffers; | N/A |
| (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; | Figures 1, 2 & 3 Pages 8-10 |
| (i) a description of any assumptions made and any uncertainties or gaps in knowledge; | Section 1.5 Pages 4-5 |
| (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; | Sections 6 & 8 Pages 47-65 & 66-79 |
| (k) any mitigation measures for inclusion in the EMPr; | N/A |
| (l) any conditions for inclusion in the environmental authorisation; | N/A |
| (m) any monitoring requirements for inclusion in the EMPr or environmental authorisation; | Sections 6 & 8 Pages 47-65 & 66-79 |
| (n) a reasoned opinion-<br>(i) **[as to]** whether the proposed activity, activities or portions thereof should be authorised;<br>(iA) regarding the acceptability of the proposed activity or activities; and<br>(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 10 Page 84 |
| (o) a description of any consultation process that was undertaken during the course of preparing the specialist report; | N/A |
| (p) a summary and copies of any comments received during any consultation process and where applicable all responses thereto; and | N/A |
| (q) any other information requested by the competent authority. | N/A |
| 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. | N/A |

## 1.3. TERMS OF REFERENCE

To undertake a SIA in respect of the proposed Umsobomvu Project, and accordingly to consider the extent of the proposed project and its likely effect on the social environment within which the project will be placed.

General requirements:

- Adherence to all appropriate best practice guidelines, relevant legislation and authority requirements;
- Adherence to the content requirements for specialist reports in accordance with Appendix 6 of the EIA Regulations 2014, as amended;
- Identification sensitive areas to be avoided (if any) including providing shapefiles/kmls;
- Separate assessment and impact significance ratings for each phase of the six (6) proposed PV developments noting the impacts of the Pre-construction, Construction, Operation, Decommissioning Phases (according to SiVEST's impact rating methodology);
- Cumulative impact identification and assessment as a result of other renewable energy (RE) developments in the area (including; a cumulative environmental impact table(s) and statement, review of the specialist reports undertaken for other Renewable Energy developments and an indication of how the recommendations, mitigation measures and conclusion of the studies have been considered);
- Assessment of the significance of the cumulative impacts (according to SiVEST's impact rating methodology);
- Comparative assessment of alternatives to be provided for each of the six (6) phases and grid connection;
- Recommend mitigation measures in order to minimise the impacts of the proposed development and note any specific mitigation measures for a particular phase; and
- Implications of specialist's findings for the proposed development (e.g. permits, licences etc.).

## 1.4. APPROACH TO STUDY

Data was gathered by means of the following techniques.

### 1.4.1. COLLECTION OF DATA

Data was gathered through:

- The project description prepared by the project proponent.
- Statistics South Africa, Census 2011 and other relevant demographic data generated by Stats SA such as the Quarterly Labour Force Survey and Mid-year population estimates.
- Discussions with the project proponents and Environmental Impact Assessment Consultants.
- A literature review of various documents such as the relevant Municipal Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) and other specialist reports and documents.
- A broader literature scan.

### 1.4.2. IMPACT ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUE

The assessment technique used to evaluate the social impacts was provided by SiVEST Environmental Division and is attached in Appendix 1.

## 1.5. ASSUMPTIONS AND LIMITATIONS

The following assumptions and limitations apply in respect of this report.

### 1.5.1. ASSUMPTIONS

It is assumed that the technical information provided by the project proponent and the environmental consultants SiVEST, is credible and accurate at the time of compiling the report.

It is also assumed that the data provided by the various specialists as used in this report are credible and accurate.

### 1.5.2. Limitations

The demographic data used in this report was sourced from Statistics South Africa and is based on data gathered during Census 2011. This data is somewhat outdated but where possible is supplemented with the latest Stats SA's survey data such as the Mid-year population estimates and the Quarterly Labour Force Survey. The limitation of this is that this survey data is restricted to a provincial level and does not extend to a municipal level.

Some of the information in the documentation available from the district and local municipalities was somewhat outdated but where ever possible that information was aligned with that available from Stats SA.

## 2. Project Description

It is proposed that three (3) Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Energy Facilities, with associated grid connection infrastructure, will be developed, these being:

- ***Mooi Plaats Solar PV Facility***, on an application site of approximately 5 303 ha, comprising the following farm portions:
    - Portion 1 of Leuwe Kop No 120
    - Remainder of Mooi Plaats No 121

- ***Wonderheuvel Solar PV Facility***, on an application site of approximately 5 652 ha, comprising the following farm portions:
    - Remainder of Mooi Plaats No 121
    - Portion 3 of Wonder Heuvel No 140
    - Portion 5 of Holle Fountain No 133

- ***Paarde Valley Solar PV Facility***, on an application site of approximately 3 695 ha, comprising the following farm portion:
    - Portion 2 of Paarde Valley No 62: and
    - Portion 7 of the Farm Leeuw Hoek No. 61.

## 2.1. Solar PV Components

**Mooi Plaats Solar PV Energy Facility:**

The proposed Mooi Plaats Solar PV Energy Facility will include the following components:

- Three (3) PV array areas, occupying a combined total area of approximately 777 hectares (ha).
- The proposed solar PV energy facility will have a maximum total generation capacity of approximately **400 MW** and will comprise approximately **1 142 857** PV modules. The final number of modules as well as their configuration will only be determined in the detailed design phase.
- PV modules will be either fixed tilt mounting or single axis tracking mounting, and the modules will be either crystalline silicon or thin film technology. Each module will be approximately 2 m wide and between 1 m and 4 m in height, depending on the mounting type.
- Internal roads, between 4 m and 10 m wide, will provide access to the PV arrays. Existing site roads will be used wherever possible, although new site roads will be constructed where necessary.
- Up to three (3) temporary construction laydown / staging areas of approximately 4 ha each.
- Operation and maintenance (O&M) buildings will be provided for each PV array area, occupying a site of approximately 1 ha each. Up to a maximum of three (3) O&M buildings will thus be constructed.
- Medium voltage cabling will link the solar PV energy facility to the grid connection infrastructure. These cables will be laid underground wherever technically feasible.

**Wonderheuvel Solar PV Energy Facility:**

The proposed Wonderheuvel Solar PV Energy Facility will include the following components:

- Six (6) PV array areas, occupying a combined total area of approximately 864 ha.
- The proposed solar PV energy facility will have a maximum total generation capacity of approximately **480 MW** and will comprise approximately **1 371 429** PV modules. The final number of modules as well as their configuration will only be determined in the detailed design phase.
- PV modules will be either fixed tilt mounting or single axis tracking mounting, and the modules will be either crystalline silicon or thin film technology. Each module will be approximately 2 m wide and between 1 m and 4 m in height, depending on the mounting type.

- Internal roads, between 4 m and 10 m wide, will provide access to the PV arrays. Existing site roads will be used wherever possible, although new site roads will be constructed where necessary.
- Up to a maximum of four (4) temporary construction laydown / staging areas of approximately 4 ha each.
- Operation and maintenance (O&M) buildings will be provided for each PV array area, occupying a site of approximately 1 ha each. However, certain PV array areas will share O&M buildings. Up to a maximum of four (4) O&M buildings will thus be constructed.
- Medium voltage cabling will link the solar PV energy facility to the grid connection infrastructure. These cables will be laid underground wherever technically feasible.

**Paarde Valley Solar PV Energy Facility:**

The proposed Paarde Valley Solar PV Energy Facility will include the following components:

- Five (5) PV array areas, occupying a combined total area of approximately 1 337 ha.
- The proposed solar PV energy facility will have a maximum total generation capacity of approximately **700 MW** and will comprise approximately **2 000 000** PV modules. The final number of modules as well as their configuration will only be determined in the detailed design phase.
- PV modules will be either fixed tilt mounting or single axis tracking mounting, and the modules will be either crystalline silicon or thin film technology. Each module will be approximately 2 m wide and between 1 m and 4 m in height, depending on the mounting type.
- Internal roads, between 4 m and 10 m wide, will provide access to the PV arrays. Existing site roads will be used wherever possible, although new site roads will be constructed where necessary.
- Up to five (5) temporary construction laydown / staging areas of approximately 4 ha each.
- Operation and maintenance (O&M) buildings will be provided for each PV array area, occupying a site of approximately 1 ha each. Up to a maximum of five (5) O&M buildings will thus be constructed.
- Medium voltage cabling will link the solar PV energy facility to the grid connection infrastructure. These cables will be laid underground wherever technically feasible.

## 2.2. GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE

The proposed grid connection infrastructure will include the following components:

- New on-site substations and collector substations to serve each solar PV energy facility, each occupying an area of up to approximately 4 ha.

- A new 132 kV overhead power line connecting the on-site substations and/or collector substations to either the Hydra D Main Transmission Substation (MTS) or the proposed Coleskop Wind Energy Facility (WEF) substation, from where the electricity will be fed into the national grid. The type of power line towers being considered at this stage to include both lattice and monopole towers which will be up to 25 m in height.

Grid connection infrastructure alternatives have been provided for each PV project. These alternatives essentially provide for different route alignments with associated substations contained within an assessment corridor between approximately 400 m and 900 m wide. This is to allow for flexibility to route the power line on either side of the existing high voltage Eskom power lines. The respective alternatives are as follows:

***Mooi Plaats Solar PV Grid Connection:***

The alternatives essentially provide for two (2) different route alignments with associated substations contained within an assessment corridor between approximately 400 m and 900 m wide. The alternatives are as follows:

**OPTION 1:**

- **Corridor Option 1a** - links Substation 2 and Substation 1a to the Hydra D MTS.
- **Corridor Option 1b** - links Substation 2 and Substation 1b to the Hydra D MTS.

**OPTION 2:**

- **Corridor Option 2a** - links Substation 2 and Substation 1a to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector substation located on the Wonderheuvel PV project application site.
- **Corridor Option 2b** - links Substation 2 and Substation 1b to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector substation located on the Wonderheuvel PV project application site.

***Wonderheuvel Solar PV Grid Connection:***

The alternatives essentially provide for three (3) different route alignments with associated substations contained within an assessment corridor between approximately 400 m and 900 m wide. The alternatives are as follows:

**OPTION 1:**

- **Corridor Option 1a** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.

i. The *northern connection* links the Proposed Substation 3a to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Northern Collector Substation located on the Mooi Plaats PV project application site.
ii. The *southern connection* links the proposed Substation 4a to the Coleskop WEF Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation located on the Paarde Valley PV Project application site.

- **Corridor Option 1b** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern* connection links the Proposed Substation 3a to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Northern Collector Substation located on the Mooi Plaats PV project application site.
  ii. The *southern connection* links the proposed Substation 4b to the Coleskop WEF Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation located on the Paarde Valley PV Project application site.

- **Corridor Option 1c** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern* connection links the Proposed Substation 3b to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Northern Collector Substation located on the Mooi Plaats PV project application site.
  ii. The *southern connection* links the proposed Substation 4a to the Coleskop WEF Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation located on the Paarde Valley PV Project application site.

- **Corridor Option 1d** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern connection* links the Proposed Substation 3b to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Northern Collector Substation located on the Mooi Plaats PV project application site.
  ii. The *southern connection* links the proposed Substation 4b to the Coleskop WEF Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation located on the Paarde Valley PV Project application site.

**OPTION 2:**

- **Corridor Option 2a** - links Substation 3a to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation.

- **Corridor Option 2b** - Option 2b links Substation 3b to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation.

**OPTION 3:**

- **Corridor Option 3** links Substation 4b to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation (substation 4a acts as Central Collector).

**Paarde Valley Solar PV Grid Connection:**

The alternatives essentially provide for two (2) different route alignments with associated substations contained within an assessment corridor between approximately 400 m and 900 m wide. The alternatives are as follows:

**OPTION 1:**

- Corridor **Option 1a** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Sub (Substation 6a will act as Central Collector for this option).
  ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 7a to the Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation (Substation 6a will act as Southern Collector for this option).

- Corridor **Option 1b** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Sub (Substation 6b will act as Southern Collector for this option).
  ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 7a to the Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation (Substation 6b will act as Southern Collector for this option).

- Corridor **Option 1c** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Sub (Substation 6a will act as Southern Collector for this option).
  ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 7b to the Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation (Substation 6a will act as Southern Collector for this option).

- Corridor **Option 1d** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.

i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Sub (Substation 6b will act as Southern Collector for this option).
ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 7b to the Coleskop Substation via the proposed Southern Collector Substation (Substation 6b will act as Southern Collector for this option).

**OPTION 2:**

- Corridor **Option 2a** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Sub located on the Wonderveuvel PV Project application site.
  ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 6a and 7a to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.

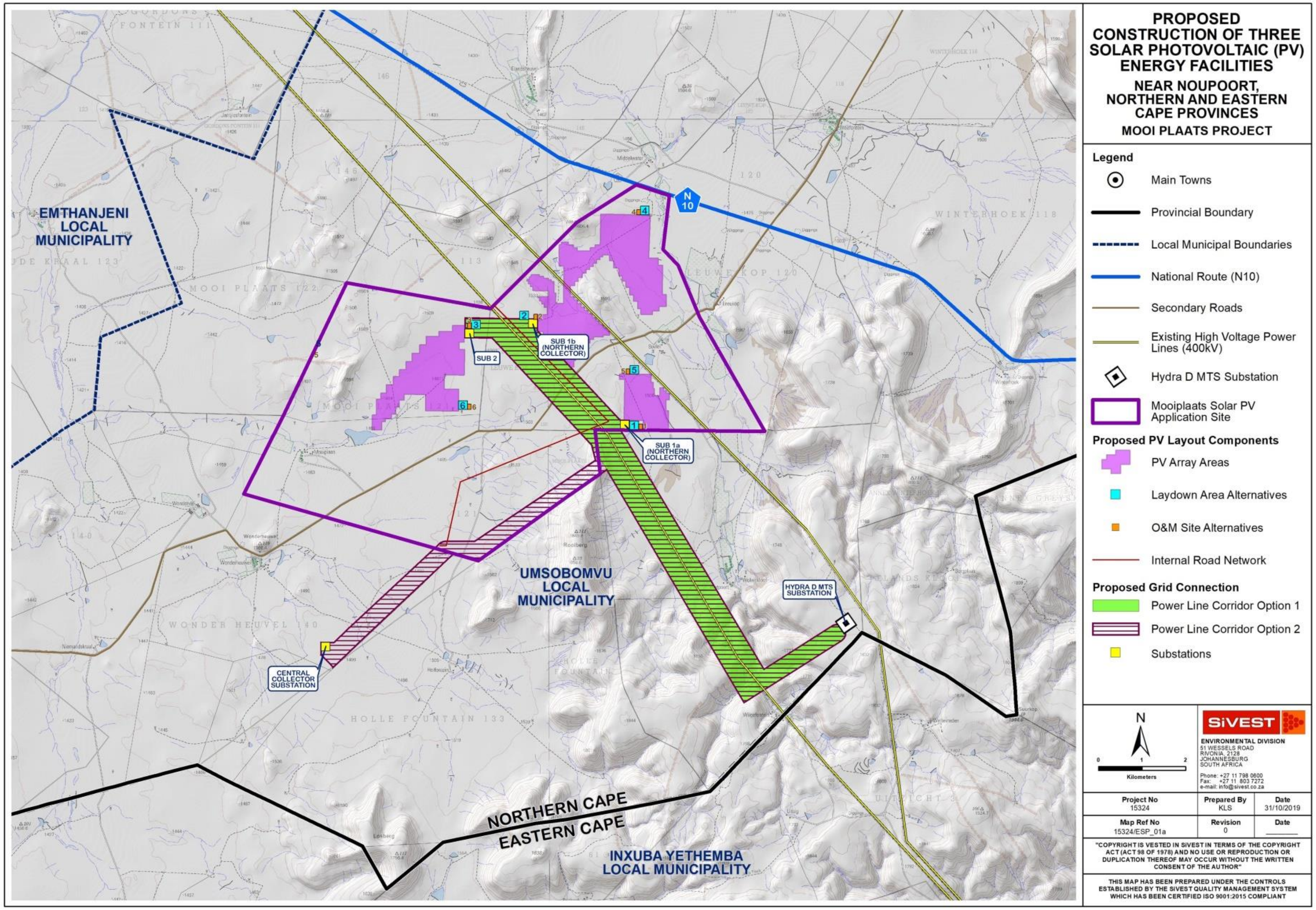
- Corridor **Option 2b** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Sub located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.
  ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 6b and 7b to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.

- Corridor **Option 2c** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Sub located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.
  ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 6a and 7b to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.

- Corridor **Option 2d** involves two (2) separate grid connections to serve the northern and southern sections of the application site.
  i. The *northern connection* links Substation 5 to Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Sub located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.
  ii. The *southern connection* links Substation 6b and 7a to the Hydra D MTS via the proposed Central Collector Substation located on the Wonderheuvel PV Project application site.

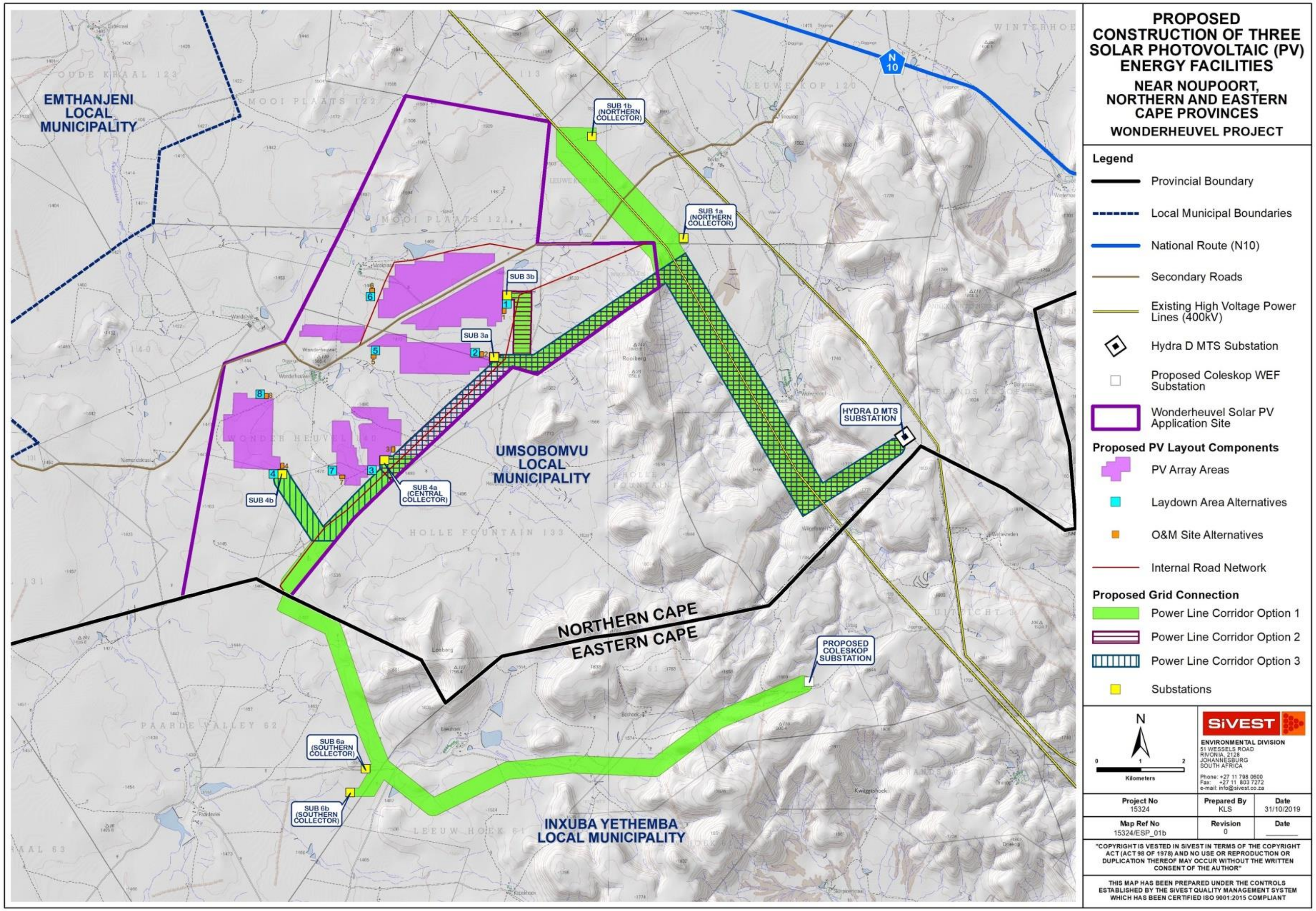
## 2.3. LOCATION

The project is situated across the Northern and Eastern Cape provinces with Mooi Plaats, illustrated in **Figure 1**, and Wonderheuvel, illustrated in **Figure 2**, falling within the Umsobomvu local and Pixley ka Seme district municipalities in the Northern Cape Province. Paarde Valley falls within the Inxuba Yethemba local and Chris Hani district municipalities in the Eastern Cape Province as illustrated in **Figure 3**.



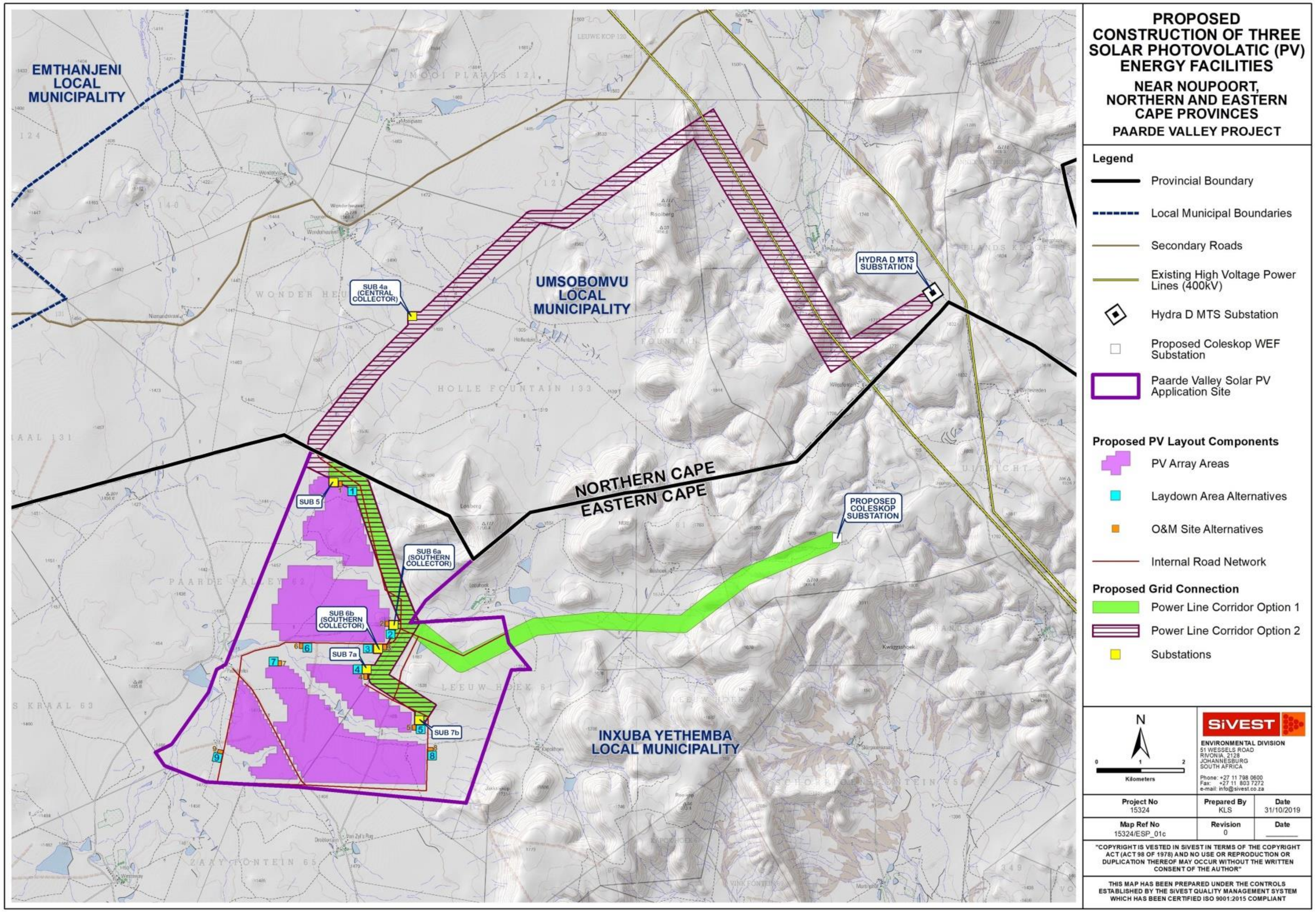

Source: SiVEST Environmental Division

**Figure 1: Mooi Plaats Solar PV Facility – Locality map**




Source: SiVEST Environmental Division

**Figure 2: Wonderheuvel Solar PV Facility – Locality map**




Source: SiVEST Environmental Division

**Figure 3: Paarde Valley Solar PV Facility – Locality map**

## 2.4. EIA ALTERNATIVES

Laydown area and Operation and Maintenance (O&M) building site alternatives are considered in respect of all three solar photovoltaic (PV) energy facilities. In respect of the grid connection infrastructure two corridor options are considered for each of the three solar photovoltaic (PV) energy facilities and in each case are labelled Option 1 and Option 2. Each of these options is described above under 2.2 Grid connection infrastructure.

### 2.4.1. NO-GO ALTERNATIVE

It is mandatory to consider the 'no-go' option in the EIA process. The 'no-go' alternative assumes that the site remains in its current state, i.e. there is no construction of any of the solar photovoltaic (PV) energy facilities and associated grid connection infrastructure and that the status quo would proceed.

# 3. APPLICABLE POLICY AND LEGISLATION

Legislation and policy serve to guide the authorities in undertaking and agreeing on projects that are in the interest of the country as a whole. Consequently, the fit of the project with the relevant national, provincial and municipal legislation and policy is an important consideration. In this respect the following legislation and policy is applicable to the project.

**International**

- Climate Change Action Plan, 2016-2020, World Bank Group (2016)
- Renewable Energy Vision 2030 – South Africa; World Wildlife Fund for Nature-SA (formerly World Wildlife Fund-SA) (2014)
- REthinking Energy 2017: Accelerating the global energy transformation. International Renewable Energy Agency, (2017)
- Renewable Energy Policies in a Time of Transition. International Renewable Energy Agency (2018)
- Global Warming of 1.5 °C. An IPCC special report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development, and efforts to eradicate poverty. Summary for Policymakers. Subject to copy edit: Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (2018).

**National**

- White Paper on the Energy Policy of the Republic of South Africa (1998)
- White Paper on Renewable Energy (2003)
- A National Climate Change Response Strategy for South Africa (2004)
- National Energy Act (2008)
- Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) for South Africa (2010-2030)
- The Environmental Impact Assessment and Management Strategy for South Africa (2014)
- Government Gazette Vol. 632; 16 February 2018 No. 41445. Department of Environmental Affairs, No. 114, Page No. 92 (2018)
- New Growth Path Framework (2010)
- The National Development Plan (2011)
- National Infrastructure Plan (2012).

**Provincial**

- Eastern Cape Provincial Integrated Sustainable Development Planning Framework (PISDPF)
- Eastern Cape Provincial Growth and Development Plan (2004-2014)
- Eastern Cape Strategic Plan (2015-2020)
- Northern Cape Provincial Growth and Development Strategy (2004-2014)
- Northern Cape Province Twenty Year Review (2014)
- Northern Cape Climate Change Response Strategy
- Northern Cape Spatial Development Framework
- Northern Cape Department of Environment & Nature Conservation Annual Report (2016/17)
- Norther Cape Department of Economic Development & Tourism Annual Report (2017)
- Northern Cape State of the Province Address (2018).

**District and local**

- Chris Hani District Municipality, 2019-2020 Draft Integrated Development Plan Review
- Inxuba Yethemba Local Municipality, 2013/14 Integrated Process Plan Programme
- Pixley ka Seme District Municipality, Integrated Development Plan Draft 2018-2019
- Pixley ka Seme District Municipality, Spatial Development Framework / Land Development Plan 2013 – 2018
- Umsombomvu District Municipality, Integrated Development Plan 2017-2020 1$^{st}$ Review: 2018/19.

## 3.1. POLICY AND LEGISLATION FIT

Considering the nature and location of the project there is a clear fit with international, national, provincial and local, at both district and municipal levels, policy and legislation. For instance, the World Wild Life Fund for Nature (WWF)

> "…*calls for a more ambitious plan, suggesting that the IRP* [Integrated Resource Plan for Electricity] *should provide for an 11-19% share of electricity capacity by 2030, depending on the country's growth rate over the next fifteen years*" (Sager, 2014, p. 5).

The issue of climate change is high on the agenda of all levels of government in South Africa with the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism indicating that:

> "*The efforts of all stakeholders will be harnessed to achieve the objectives of the Government's White Paper on Renewable Energy (2003) and the Energy Efficiency Strategy, promoting a sustainable development path through coordinated government policy* (Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, 2004, p. 23) "

DEAT goes further in specifically listing renewable energy sources, including solar, wind power and biomass, as a tool in promoting mitigation against climate change.

In terms of the capacity determinations of the Minister of Energy, in consultation with the National Energy Regulator (NERSA), it has been established that South Africa required:

> "*14 725 MW of renewable energy (comprising of solar PV: 6 225 MW, wind: 6 360 MW, CSP: 1 200 MW, small hydro: 195 MW, landfill gas: 25 MW, biomass: 210 MW, biogas: 110 MW and the small scale renewable energy programme: 400 MW)*" (Independent Power Producer Office, 2018a, p. 5).

With the Northern Cape contributing 8 652 GWh in respect of solar (Independent Power Producers Procurement Office, 2018b, p. 3) and the Eastern Cape contributing 684 GWh (Independent Power Producers Procurement Office, 2018c, p. 3).

On 16 February 2018 the boundaries of eight Renewable Energy Zones (REZs) that are of strategic importance for large scale solar photovoltaic and wind for the country were gazetted (Government Gazette No. 41445, 2018). Although the project falls outside of these zones it will nevertheless contribute towards the requirement of renewable energy highlighted by the development of these zones.

The Northern Cape Department of Economic Development and Tourism identifies six economic development opportunities, one of which is renewable energy, and states that:

> "*During the financial year* [2017/18] *the intension* (sic) *is to focus on additional opportunities such as, Renewable Energy, a focus area of the 9-Point Plan*" (Northern Cape Province. Department of Economic Development & Tourism, 2017, p. 10 & 15).

The importance of renewable energy facilities within the Northern Cape has been recognised in the province's Twenty Year Review 2014 where it is indicated that:

> "*The New Growth Path that was adopted by national government in 2010 identified the green economy as a new economic sector that will be key to the creation of jobs. The focus of the green economy is on renewable energy and the Northern Cape was identified as the solar hub of the country with a number of solar plants being established across the province*" (Northern Cape Province, 2014, p. 153).

On a municipal level wide support is also evident across the affected municipalities. The IDP of the Chris Hani DM states that:

> " …*we can see that CHDM is now ready to address the scourge of climate change and make it beneficial to the citizens of this region through greening, recycling, and renewable energy initiatives…* [and the Renewable Energy Sector is listed] *As a Special Development Area* [as follows] *Manufacturing, Industry Mining and Renewable Energy Sectors*" (Chris Hani District Municipality, 2019, p. 171 & 254).

The Pixley ka Seme DM also recognises the potential of renewable energy initiatives and states in its Spatial Development Plan that:

> "*The Pixley Ka Seme District area with its abundance of sunshine and vast tracts of available land has been attracting considerable interest from solar energy investors of late. The high solar index of the area, as indicated by the Solar Index Diagram, provides many opportunities in terms of the development of renewable energy.*
>
> *The growth and development context in the district has also changed radically since 2013 (after it had been stagnant for decades) owing mainly to private and public investments in the area as a hub for renewable energy generation and*

*astronomy, respectively*" (Pixley Ka Seme District Municipality, 2014, p. 44 & 52).

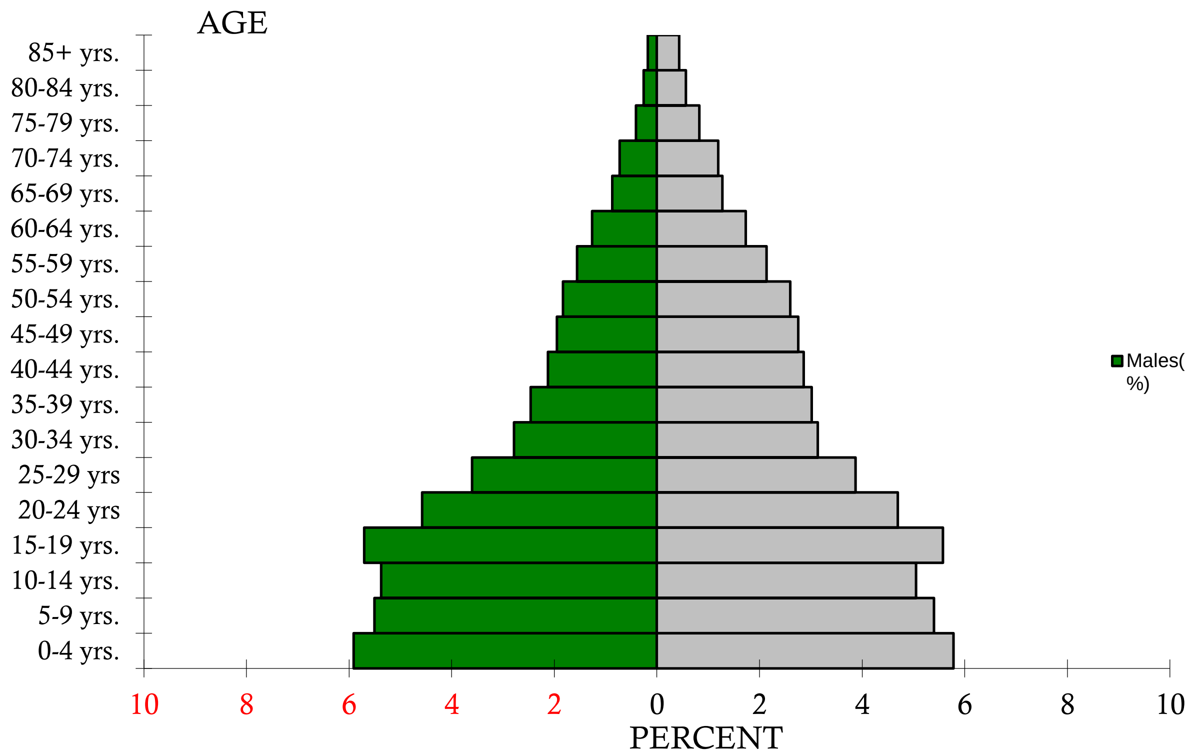
Considering the policy and legislation referred to above it seems that the project largely aligned with this framework. Notwithstanding this, however, the provision that the project conforms to appropriate scale and form, particularly considering the cumulative impacts associated with similar such projects in the area, will need to be considered on a broader basis than can be done as far as this report is concerned. In this regard attention will need to be given to the cumulative impacts at a later point in the report in as far as they relate to the social environment. In the following section a description of the affected environment is provided.

# 4. DESCRIPTION OF THE AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The Mooi Plaats and Wonderheuvel solar PV facilities fall within the Northern Cape Province while the Paarde Valley Solar PV Facility is located within the Eastern Cape Province. In the Northern Cape the Pixley ka Seme (DC7) district and Umsobomvu (NC072) local municipalities are affected by the project while in the Eastern Cape the project impacts the Chris Hani district (DC13) and Inxuba Yethemba (EC131) local municipalities. The closest towns to the project are Noupoort and Hanover in the Northern Cape and Middelburg in the Eastern Cape, all of which fall within the Karoo Region. The demographics pertaining to these areas, as sourced from Statistics South Africa Census 2011, are described below.

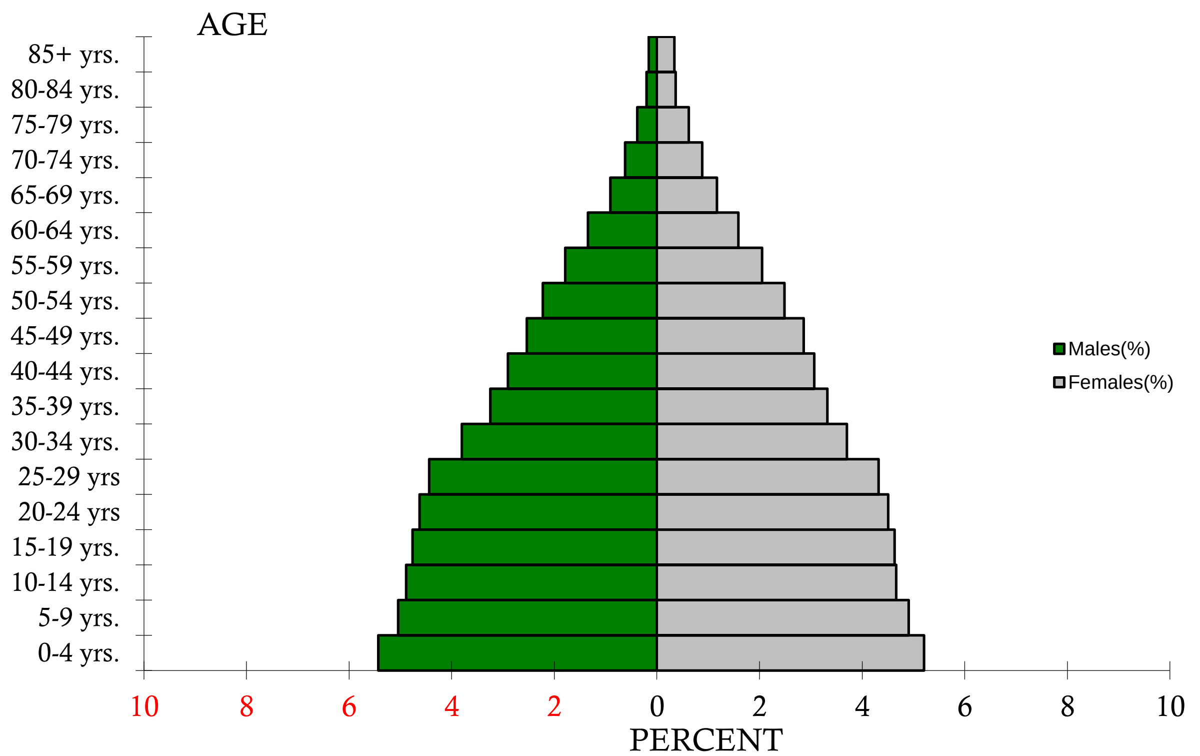
## 4.1. PROVINCIAL

The Eastern Cape Province covers an area of 168 965.98 km² and has a population of 6 562 053 people, resulting in a population density of 38.84 people per km² according to Census 2011 (Statistics South Africa, 2011). The Northern Cape Province covers an area of 372 889.36 km² and, over the same period, had a population of 1 145 861 people giving it a population density of 3.07 people per km². In respect of age structure 33% of the population of the Eastern Cape are below 16 years while 60.2% are between 15 and 64 years of age and 6.7% are above 64 years. The corresponding figures pertaining to the Northern Cape are as follows; below 16 years = 30.1%, between 15 and 64 years = 64.2% and above 64 years = 5.7%. The population pyramids of the Eastern and Northern Cape provinces are illustrated in **Figure 4** and **Figure 5** respectively.




Source: (Statistics South Africa, 2011)

**Figure 4: Population pyramid Eastern Cape Province**




Source: (Statistics South Africa, 2011)

**Figure 5: Population pyramid Northern Cape Province**

According to the 2018 Mid-year population estimates (Statistics South Africa, 2018a), with a population of 6 522 700 in 2018, the Eastern Cape accounts for 11.3% of the total population across the country marginally below the Western Cape with an estimated population of 6 621 100 or 11.5% of the total population of South Africa. The Northern Cape Province has the smallest population with an estimated population of 1 225 600 in 2018. As the Mid-year population estimates remain at a provincial level and are not projected to the district and local municipal levels, for comparative purposes, data gathered during Census 2011, will be used where appropriate, notwithstanding it being somewhat outdated.

On this basis and in respect of population groupings at 86.26%, the dominant population group in the Eastern Cape is black African with the dominant population of the Northern Cape, at 50.35%, also being black African people. At 49.7% and 53.8% respectively Afrikaans is the dominant home language spoken across both provinces.

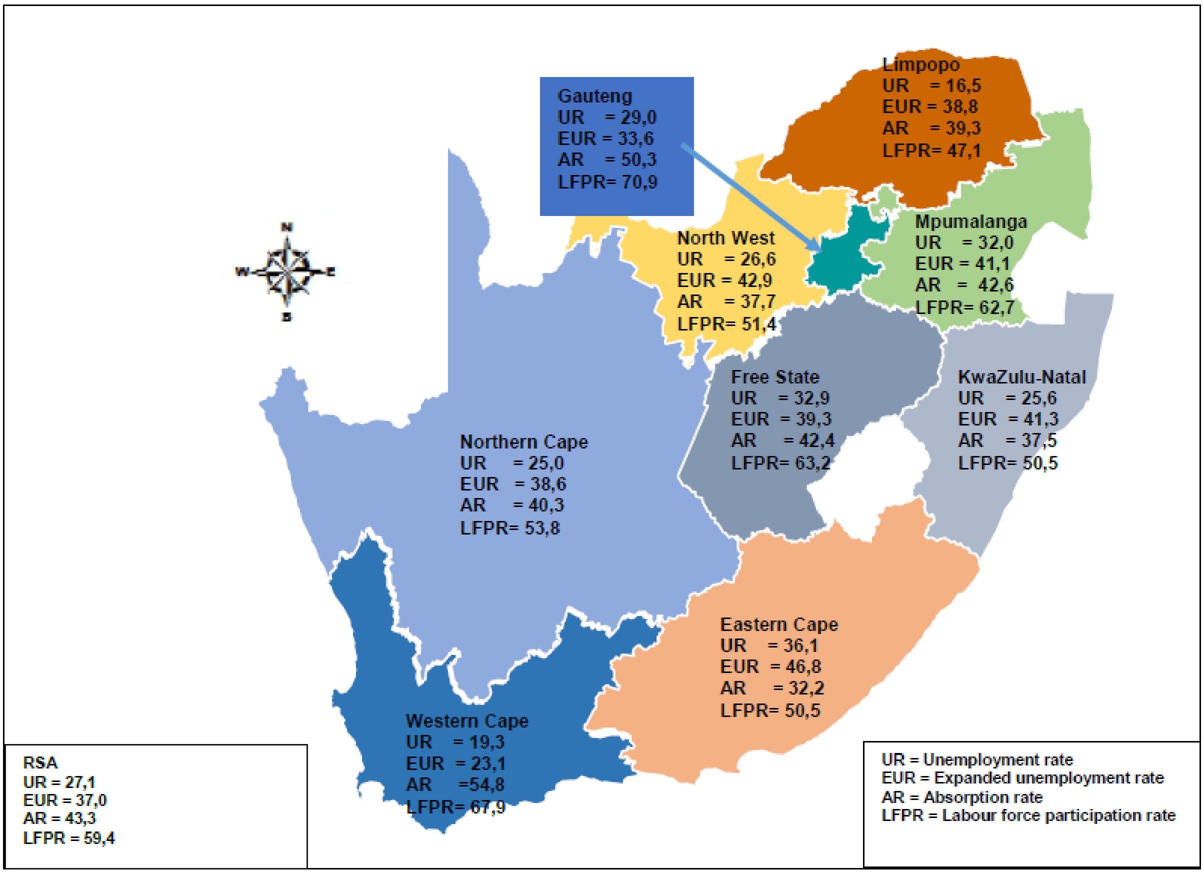
The dependency ratio of the Eastern Cape, which indicates the burden placed on the population of working age, between 15 and 64 years, who support children under 15 years and people over 65 years, is 66.0 while that of the Northern Cape is 55.7. The sex ratio, which measures the proportion of males to females, in the Eastern Cape is 89.0 indicating a higher number of females in the province while that of the Northern Cape is 97.3 also indicating a higher female to male ratio across the province. Between 1996 and 2001 the population growth rate of the Eastern Cape was 0.42% p.a. while between 2001 and 2011 it was 0.44% p.a. The corresponding data for the Northern Cape was -0.40 between 1996 and 2001 and 1.44 between 2001 and 2011.

In 2011 the official unemployment rate in the Eastern Cape was 37.4% with the official unemployment rate amongst the youth, aged between 15 and 34 years, being 47.3%. The corresponding figures for the Northern Cape are 27.4% and 34.5% respectively. In the 4$^{th}$ Quarter of 2018 the official unemployment rate in the Eastern Cape had dropped to 36.1% while that in the Northern Cape had dropped to 25%. These figures must, however, be considered with caution as the official unemployment rate is defined by Stats SA as follows;

> "*Unemployed persons are those (aged 15–64 years) who:*
>
> *a) Were not employed in the reference week and;*
>
> *b) Actively looked for work or tried to start a business in the four weeks preceding the survey interview and;*
>
> *c) Were available for work, i.e. would have been able to start work or a business in the reference week or;*

*d) Had not actively looked for work in the past four weeks but had a job or business to start at a definite date in the future and were available.*" (Statistics South Africa, 2018b, p. 17).

Considering this in the 4th Quarter of 2018, the expanded unemployment rate in the Eastern Cape was 46.8% while that in the Northern Cape stood at 38.6%. During this period the labour absorption rate in the Eastern Cape was 32.2% while the labour force participation rate was 50.5%. In the Northern Cape the labour force absorption rate was 40.3% and the labour force participation rate was 53.8%. A summary of the labour market indicators illustrated on a comparative basis across South Africa is provided in **Figure 6**.




Source: (Statistics South Africa, 2018b, p. 9)

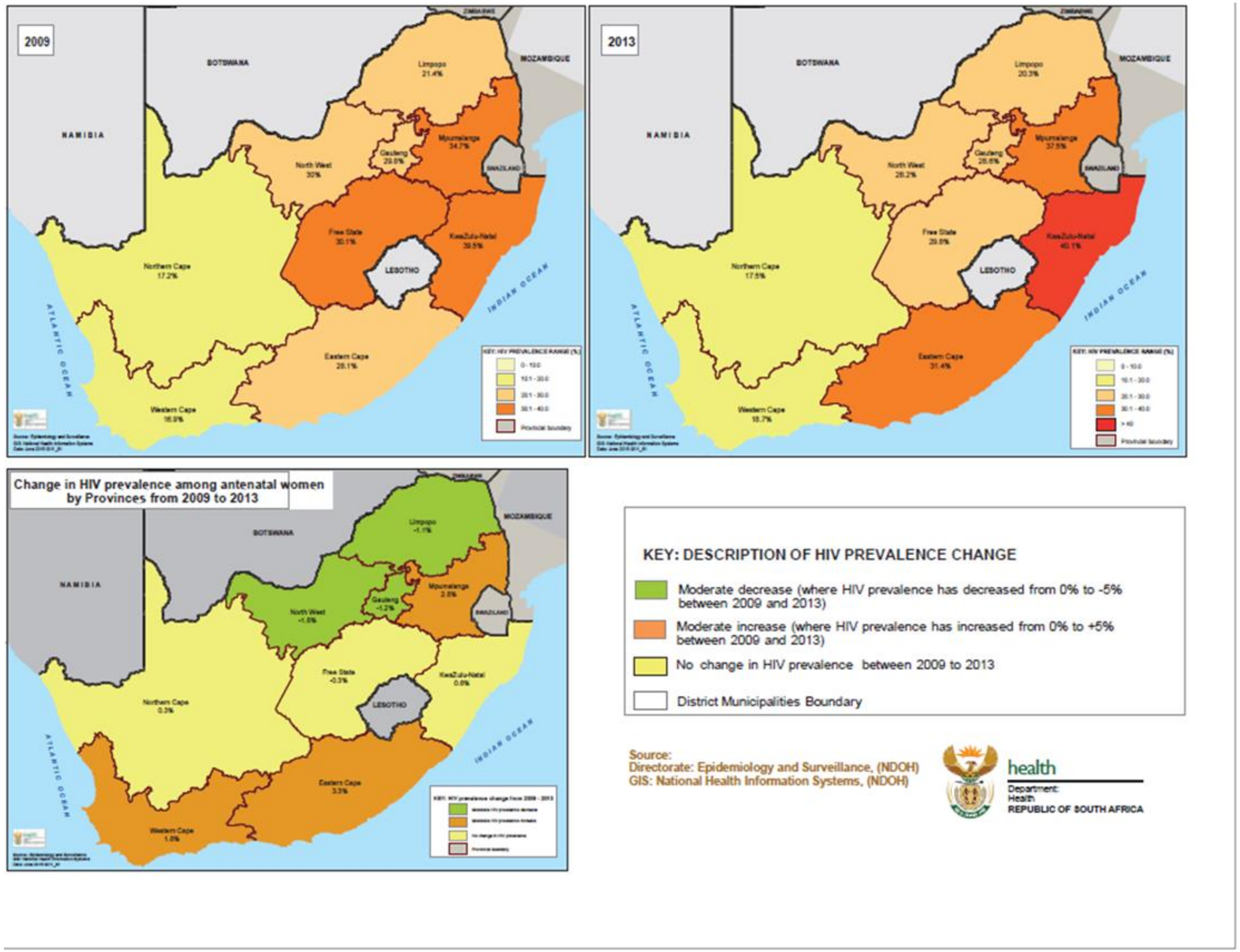
**Figure 6: Labour market indicators 4th Quarter 2018**

In respect of households, the 2011 Census indicated that there were 1 687 385 households in the Eastern Cape with an average household size of 3.9 and 301 405 households in the Northern Cape with an average household size of 3.8. Of the households in the Eastern Cape, 49.6% were female headed, 63.2% lived in formal dwellings and 59.6% either owned or were paying off their dwelling. The corresponding figures for the Northern Cape are 38.8% female headed households with 82.4% living in formal dwellings and 55.1% having either owned or were paying off their dwelling.

Regarding household services in 2011, 40.4% of households in the Eastern Cape and 60.1% in the Northern Cape had flush toilets connected to the sewerage system. In respect of refuse removal 41% of households in the Eastern Cape and 64% in the Northern Cape had their refuse removed on a weekly basis. Piped water was delivered to 32.8% and 45.8% of households in the Eastern and Northern Cape respectively while 75% of households in the Eastern Cape and 85.4% in the Northern Cape used electricity as a means of energy for lighting.

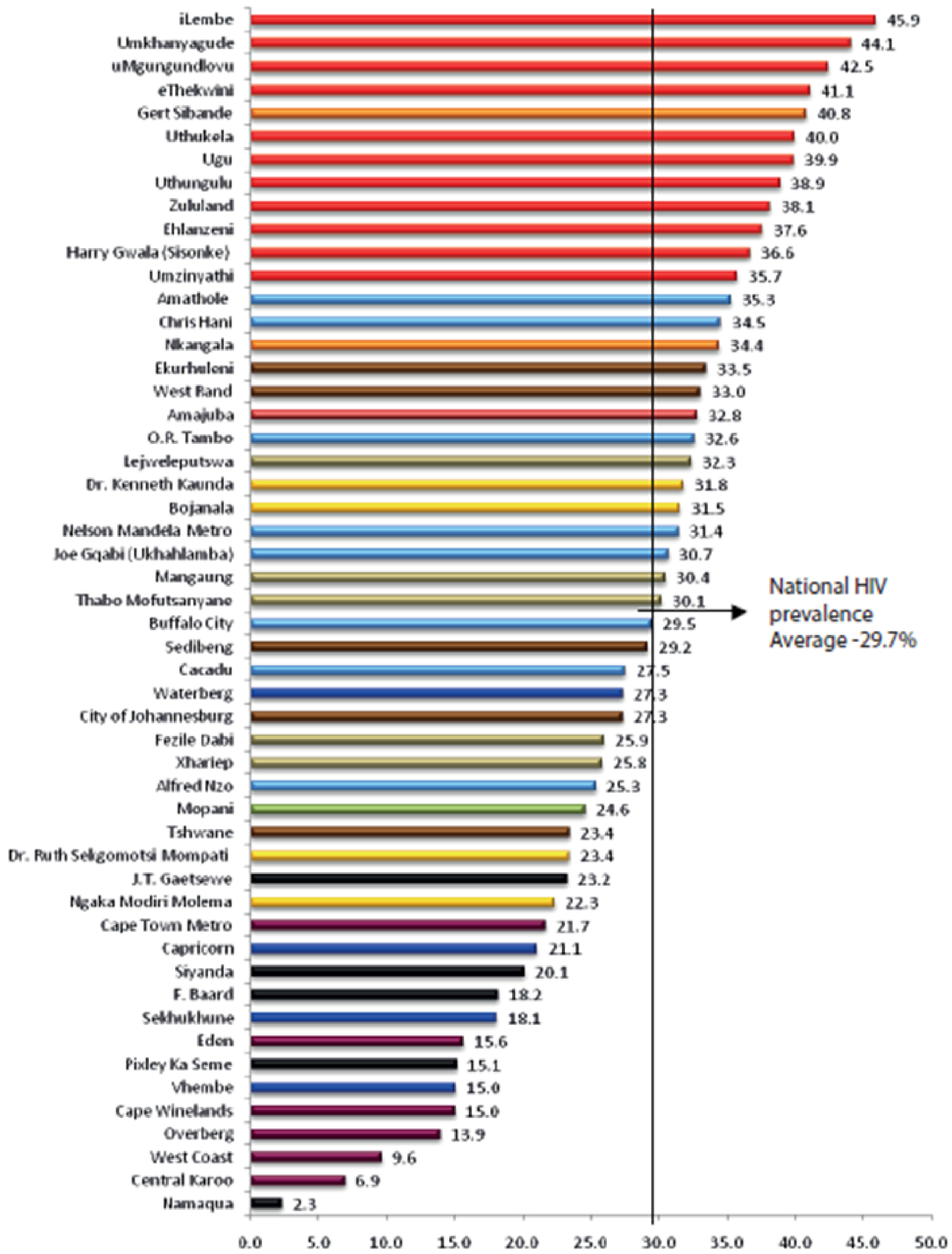
Concerning HIV prevalence amongst prenatal women in both the Eastern and Northern Cape provinces, in 2013 the Northern Cape had the lowest prevalence rate across South Africa at 17.5% followed by the Western Cape at 18.7% while the Eastern Cape had an HIV prevalence rate of 31.4%. At the same point the highest level of HIV prevalence amongst antenatal women was in KwaZulu-Natal with a prevalence rate of 40.1% while the national rate was 29.7%. HIV prevalence amongst antenatal women across South Africa is illustrated in **Figure 7**.

The 2013 National Antenatal Sentinel HIV Prevalence Survey extended to the district level which indicated that the Namaqua District Municipality had the lowest level of HIV prevalence across the country at 2.3% followed by the Central Karoo District at 6.9%. Of the 52 districts surveyed the Pixley Ka Seme district had the seventh lowest level of HIV prevalence at 15.0% while the Chris Hani district had a relatively high level at 34.5%. As the project falls within a remote area of the Chris Hani district and Inxuba Yethemba local municipalities it is likely that the level of HIV prevalence will be somewhat low in the vicinity of the project. It is probable that the high HIV levels in the district will be associated with the more densely populated urban areas of Cradock and Middelburg amongst others and is also due to the fact that the Chris Hani district serves as a linking node to all regions in the Eastern Cape. It is well documented that the spread of HIV is associated with transport corridors (Singh & Malaviya, 1994; Ramjee & Gouws, 2002; Djemai, 2018; Strauss, et al., 2018). The prevalence of HIV amongst antenatal women as it occurred across the district municipalities in 2013 is illustrated in **Figure 8**.




Source: (National Department of Health, 2015, p. 27)

**Figure 7: HIV prevalence amongst antenatal women – South Africa 2009 – 2013**




Source: (National Department of Health, 2015, p. 29)

**Figure 8: HIV prevalence across the 52 districts – 2013**

Attention is now turned towards the district and local municipalities which are compared together with both the provinces in **Table 2** to **Table 5**.

## 4.2. MUNICIPAL

The project impacts the two district municipalities of Pixle ka Seme and Chris Hani as well as their respective local municipalities of Umsobomvu and Inxuba Yethemba. On a district level Pixley ka Seme covers the greatest land area and has the lowest population density at 1.80/km$^2$, while at a local municipal level although the Inxuba Yethemba covers the largest geographical area it also has the largest population resulting in a population density of 5.62/km$^2$. In respect of population grouping, at 93.35% black African people are the dominant population group across all districts and the Umsobomvu Local Municipality while the coloured population group dominates within the Pixdley ka Seme Local Municipality. isiXhosa is the dominant home language spoken across all municipalities except Pixley ka Seme where Afrikaans is the dominant home language. Demographic data pertaining to the district and local municipalities is compared together with that applicable to the Northern and Eastern Cape Provinces in **Table 2**.

The Pixley ka Seme region is primarily a sheep farming area, also renown for stud farms where high-quality race horses are bred. The towns of Colesberg, Norvalspont and Noupoort all fall within the Umsobomvu Local Municipality. The economy of the area revolves around agriculture, the services industry, tourism and hospitality.

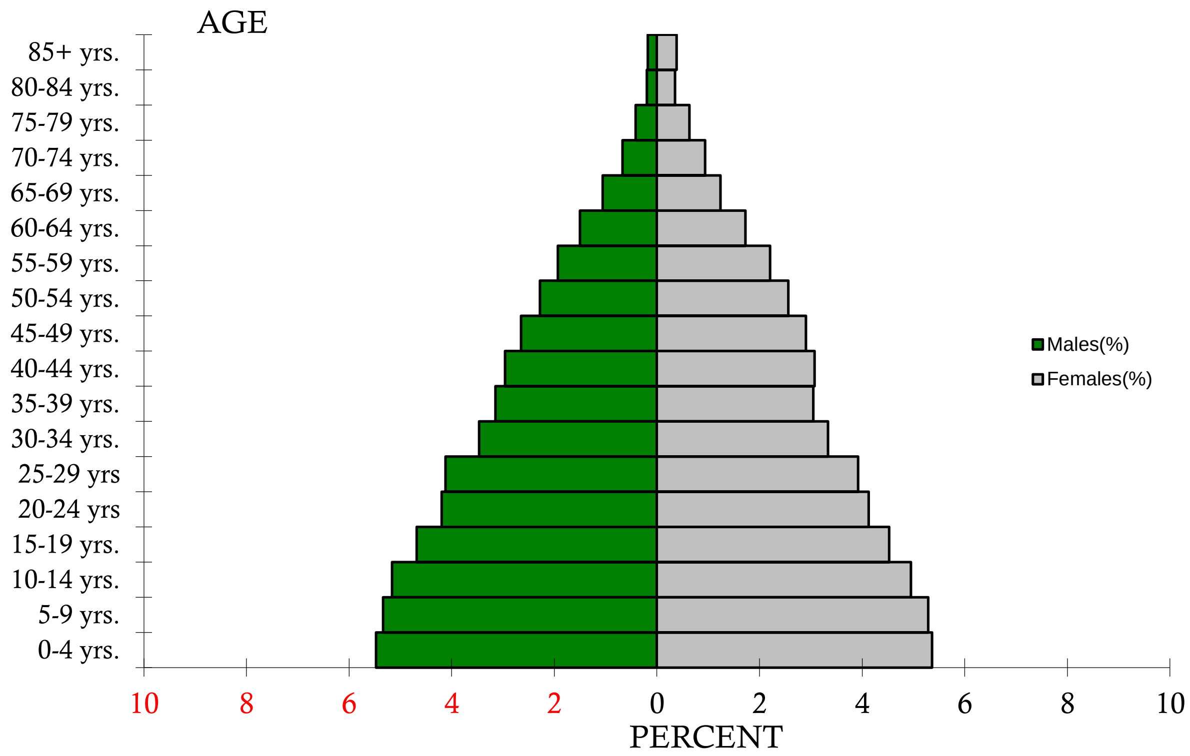
The Inxuba Yethemba Local Municipality incorporates the towns of Cradock and Middelburg and the surrounding rural areas comprise mainly of commercial farms and small settlements. The economic drivers in the area are community and financial services, trade, transportation and agriculture with some tourism with the Mount Zebra National Park falling within the area.

**Table 2: Geographic and demographic data**

| | EASTERN CAPE | DC13: Chris Hani | EC131: Inxuba Yethemba | NORTHERN CAPE | DC7: Pixley ka Seme | NC072: Umsobomvu |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Geographical Area** | 168,965.98 km² | 36,143.54 km² | 11,662.69 km² | 372,889.36 km² | 103,409.91 km² | 6,818.53 km² |
| **Population** | 6,562,053 | 795,461 | 65,560 | 1,145,861 | 186,351 | 28,376 |
| **Households** | 1,687,385 | 210,852 | 18,463 | 301,405 | 49,193 | 7,841 |
| **Population Density** | 38.84/km² | 22.01/km² | 5.62/km² | 3.07/km² | 1.80/km² | 4.16/km² |
| **Household Density** | 9.99/km² | 5.83/km² | 1.58/km² | 0.81/km² | 0.48/km² | 1.15/km² |
| **Female** | 52.92% | 52.65% | 51.69% | 50.69% | 50.59% | 51.76% |
| **Male** | 47.08% | 47.35% | 48.31% | 49.31% | 49.41% | 48.24% |
| **Black African** | 86.26% | 93.35% | 56.21% | 50.35% | 31.45% | 62.56% |
| **Coloured** | 8.26% | 4.12% | 32.17% | 40.31% | 59.17% | 30.57% |
| **White** | 4.73% | 2.02% | 10.51% | 7.09% | 8.08% | 5.66% |
| **Other** | 0.33% | 0.29% | 0.82% | 1.56% | 0.74% | 0.66% |
| **Indian/Asian** | 0.43% | 0.22% | 0.29% | 0.68% | 0.56% | 0.55% |
| **Home Language** | isiXhosa 78.85% | isiXhosa 88.58% | isiXhosa 49.97% | Afrikaans 53.76% | Afrikaans 76.79% | isiXhosa 55.16% |
| | Afrikaans 10.58% | Afrikaans 6.10% | Afrikaans 44.61% | Setswana 33.08% | isiXhosa 17.48% | Afrikaans 38.58% |
| | English 5.61% | English 2.62% | English 3.10% | isiXhosa 5.34% | Setswana 1.71% | Sesotho 1.91% |
| | Sesotho 2.46% | Sign language 0.70% | Other 0.55% | English 3.36% | English 1.63% | English 1.76% |

Source: (Statistics South Africa, 2011)

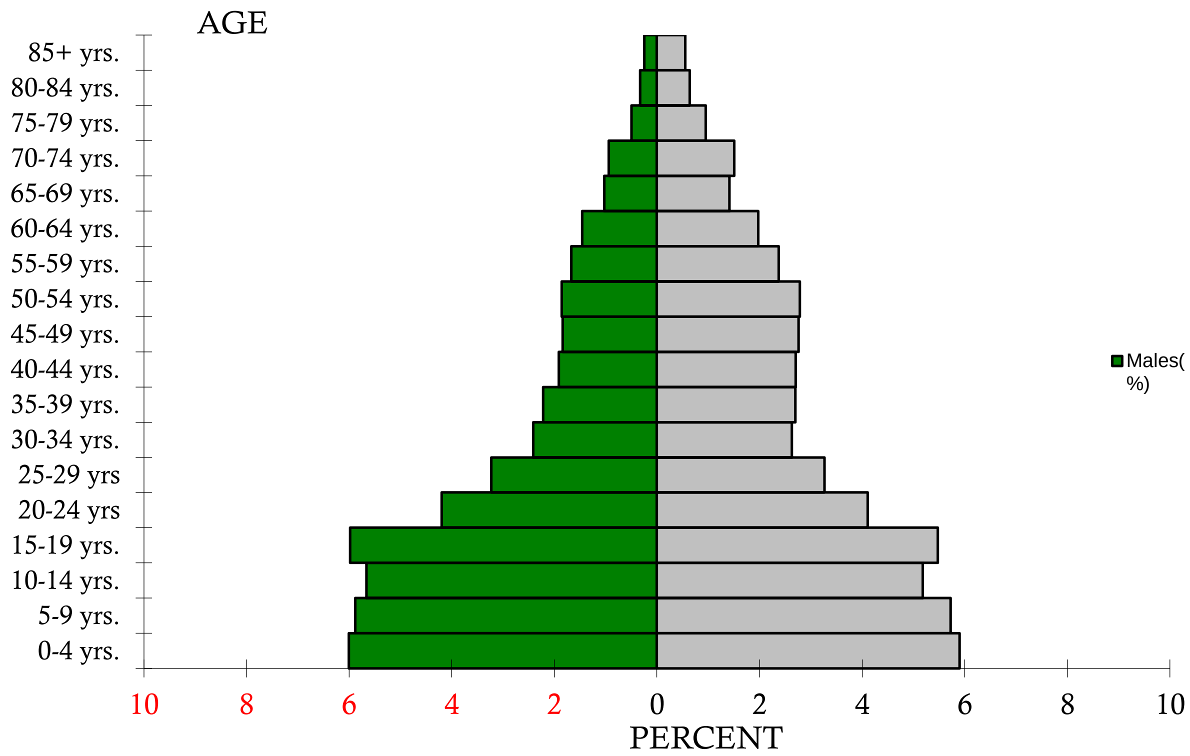
In the Pixley ka Seme district 31.6% of the population, which amounted to 186 351 people in 2011, were under 16 years of age while 62.4% were between 15 and 64 years and 6.1% were over the age of 64. Based on this data the population pyramid of Pixley ka Seme is illustrated in **Figure 9**.




Source: (Statistics South Africa, 2011)

**Figure 9: Population pyramid Pixley ka Seme**

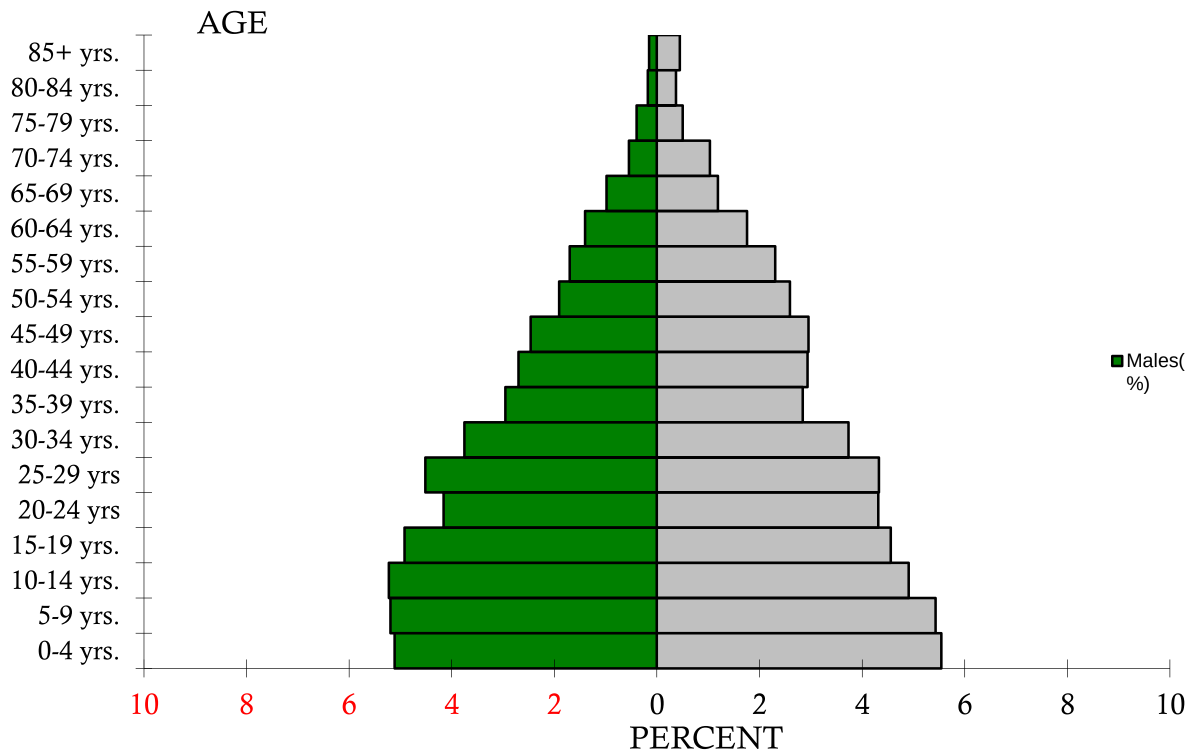
In the Chris Hani district, which had a population of 795 461 people in 2011, 34.4% were under 16 years of age while 67.6% were between 15 and 64 years and 8.1% were over the age of 64. The population pyramid of the Chris Hani district is represented in **Figure 10**.




Source: (Statistics South Africa, 2011)

**Figure 10: Population pyramid Chris Hani**

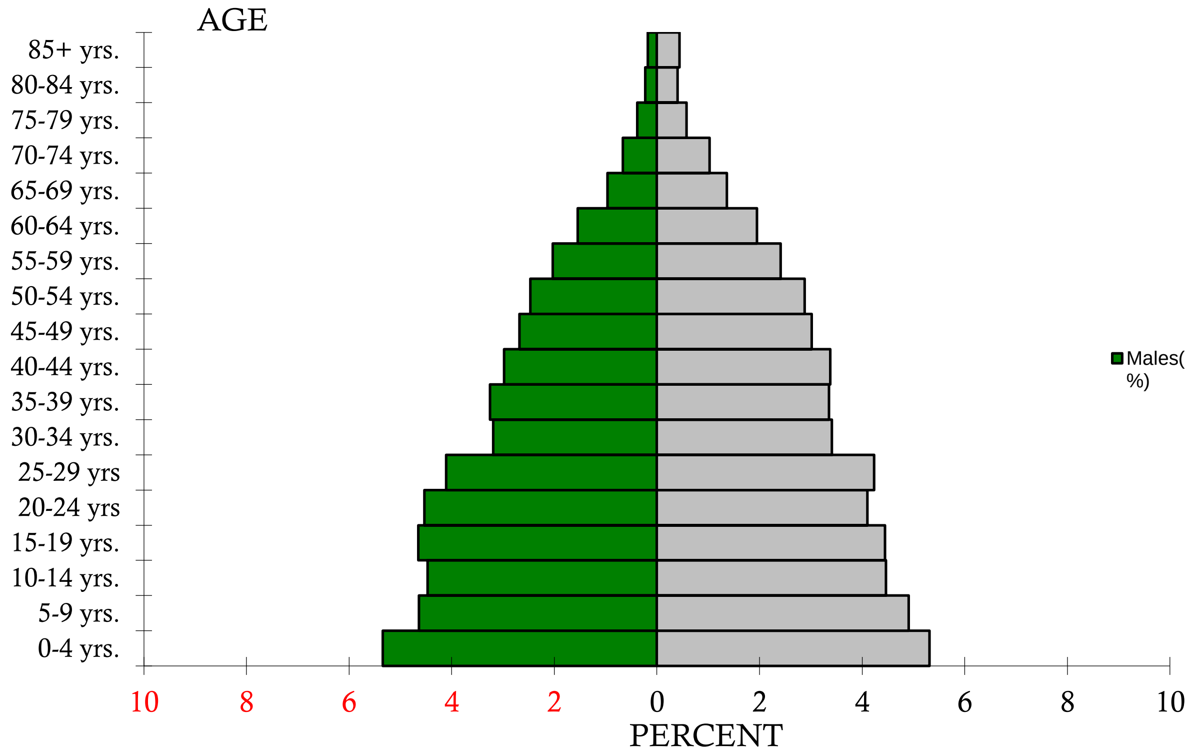
In the Umsobomvu Local Municipality 31.4% of the population of 28 376 people were under 16 years of age, while 62.8% fell between 15 and 64 years and 5.8% were over the age of 64. The population pyramid of the Umsobomvu municipality is represented in **Figure 11**.




Source: (Statistics South Africa, 2011)

**Figure 11: Population pyramid Umsobomvu**

Of the population of 65 560 people in the Inxuba Yethemba Local Municipality, 29.1% were under 16 years of age in 2011 while 64.6% were between 15 and 64 years and 6.2% were over the age of 64 years. The population pyramid of the Inxuba Yethemba is represented in **Figure 12**.




Source: (Statistics South Africa, 2011)

**Figure 12: Population pyramid Inxuba Yethemba**

The dependency ratio, which indicates the burden of support for children under 16 years and people over 64 years placed on the working population aged between 15–64 years, is highest in the Chris Hani district at 73.8% and in Ixuba Yethemba at 54.7%. In respect of sex ratio Pixley ka Seme has a higher proportion of males to females in the population at 97.6 while, at 89.9, the Chris Hani has the highest proportion of females to males. Between 2001 and 2011 the Umsobomvu LM had the highest population growth rate at 1.83% while the Chris Hani district had a negative population growth rate at -0.06%. This data is compared across the region in **Table 3**.

**Table 3: Age structure, dependency ratio, sex ratio and population growth**

| Municipality | Age Structure | | | | | | Dependency Ratio | | Sex Ratio | | Population Growth (% p.a.) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | <15 | | 15-64 | | 65+ | | Per 100 (15-64) | | Males per 100 females | | | |
| | 2001 | 2011 | 2001 | 2011 | 2001 | 2011 | 2001 | 2011 | 2001 | 2011 | 2001 | 2011 |
| **EASTERN CAPE** | 36.6 | 33.0 | 57.1 | 60.2 | 6.3 | 6.7 | 75.0 | 66.0 | 86.2 | 89.0 | 0.42 | 0.44 |
| **DC13: Chris Hani** | 38.8 | 34.4 | 53.9 | 57.6 | 7.3 | 8.1 | 85.5 | 73.8 | 85.9 | 89.9 | -0.34 | -0.06 |
| EC131: Inxuba Yethemba | 30.1 | 29.1 | 64.0 | 64.6 | 5.9 | 6.2 | 56.1 | 54.7 | 92.7 | 93.5 | 0.84 | 0.83 |
| **NORTHERN CAPE** | 32.1 | 30.1 | 62.5 | 64.2 | 5.4 | 5.7 | 60.1 | 55.7 | 93.7 | 97.3 | -0.40 | 1.44 |
| **DC7: Pixley ka Seme** | 32.6 | 31.6 | 61.5 | 62.4 | 5.9 | 6.1 | 62.7 | 60.4 | 94.2 | 97.6 | -1.27 | 1.12 |
| NC072: Umsobomvu | 33.7 | 31.4 | 61.0 | 62.8 | 5.3 | 5.8 | 63.8 | 59.3 | 91.8 | 93.2 | -1.41 | 1.83 |

Source: (Statistics South Africa, 2011)

The unemployment rate in the area is highest in the Chris Hani district and Umsobomvu local municipalities at 39 and 33 percent respectively. The level of unemployment is lowest in the Inxuba Yethemba Local Municipality at 25.7%. In respect of education, at 10.75% Inxuba Yethemba has the lowest percentage of the population that has no schooling with the Umsobomvu having the highest percentage with no schooling at 16.31%. Surprisingly Umsobomvu has the highest percentage of the population having a matric level of education at 23.2% while the Inxuba Yethemba municipality has the highest percentage of the population with an education level higher than matric at 8.6%. Data pertaining to education as discussed above is compared across the municipalities and at the provincial levels in
Table 4.

In respect of the local municipalities associated with the project, Umsobomvu has the fewest number of households at 7 841 compared to the 18 463 households in the Inxuba Yethemba municipality. The average household size across both local municipalities is the same at 3.6. There is a slightly higher percentage of female headed households in Umsobomvu at 41.5% compared to 40.9% in Inxuba Yethemba. Most households in the Inxuba Yethemba LM, at 97%, live in formal dwellings. A relatively low number of households across the study region ranging, between 60.3 and 46.7 percent, either own or are paying off their dwellings. Data pertaining to household dynamics across the region is presented in **Table 5**.

**Table 4: Labour market and education aged 20 +**

| Municipality | Labour Market | | | | Education (age 20 +) | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Unemployment Rate (official) | | Youth Unemployment Rate (Official) 15-34 years | | No Schooling | | Matric | | Higher Education | |
| | 2001 | 2011 | 2001 | 2011 | 2001 | 2011 | 2001 | 2011 | 2001 | 2011 |
| **EASTERN CAPE** | 54.3 | 37.4 | 64.3 | 47.3 | 22.8 | 10.5 | 14.3 | 20.0 | 6.3 | 8.5 |
| **DC13: Chris Hani** | 58.8 | 39.0 | 69.4 | 48.5 | 29.7 | 13.9 | 9.4 | 14.9 | 5.5 | 7.0 |
| EC131: Inxuba Yethemba | 43.2 | 25.7 | 53.7 | 33.2 | 16.5 | 10.7 | 14.0 | 20.2 | 6.0 | 8.6 |
| **NORTHERN CAPE** | 35.6 | 27.4 | 44.1 | 34.5 | 19.3 | 11.3 | 15.8 | 22.9 | 5.9 | 7.2 |
| **DC7: Pix ka Seme** | 36.4 | 28.3 | 44.1 | 35.4 | 26.3 | 14.6 | 12.5 | 20.6 | 5.5 | 5.9 |
| NC072: Umsobomvu | 51.9 | 33.0 | 60.6 | 40.4 | 26.6 | 16.3 | 12.5 | 23.2 | 5.2 | 6.2 |

Source: (Statistics South Africa, 2011)

**Table 5: Household dynamics**

| Municipality | Household dynamics | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Households | | Average household size | | Female headed households | | Formal dwellings | | Housing owned/paying off | |
| | 2001 | 2011 | 2001 | 2011 | 2001 | 2011 | 2001 | 2011 | 2001 | 2011 |
| **EASTERN CAPE** | 1 481 640 | 1 687 385 | 4.2 | 3.9 | 50.9 | 49.6 | 51.5 | 63.2 | 57.1 | 59.6 |
| **DC13: Chris Hani** | 185 297 | 210 852 | 4.2 | 3.8 | 53.6 | 51.6 | 53.1 | 61.9 | 58.3 | 60.3 |
| EC131: Inxuba Yethemba | 16 002 | 18 463 | 3.6 | 3.6 | 36.9 | 40.9 | 97.1 | 97.0 | 40.2 | 46.7 |
| **NORTHERN CAPE** | 245 086 | 301 405 | 3.9 | 3.8 | 37.7 | 38.8 | 81.0 | 82.4 | 60.8 | 55.1 |
| **DC7: Pix ka Seme** | 41 707 | 49 193 | 3.9 | 3.8 | 33.8 | 36.9 | 84.7 | 86.3 | 50.2 | 52.0 |
| NC072: Umsobomvu | 5 848 | 7 841 | 3.9 | 3.6 | 43.1 | 41.5 | 81.8 | 88.2 | 52.4 | 52.7 |

Source: (Statistics South Africa, 2011)

## 4.3. PROJECT FOOT PRINT

At a project foot print specific level the Mooi Plaats and Woderheuvel facilities fall within the Umsobomvu non-urban (NU) area which is sparsely populated with a population density of 0.38 people per square kilometre. The demographic data in respect of the Umsobomvu NU listed as Sub Place 370003002 according to Census 2011 is as follows:

**Geographic area** = 6 516.10 km²
**Population** = 2 452 people
**Population density** = 0.38/km²
**Households** = 892
**Household density** = 0.14/km²

| **Gender** | **People** | **Percentage** |
|---|---|---|
| Male | 1,267 | 51.67% |
| Female | 1,185 | 48.33% |
| **Population group** | | |
| Black African | 1,037 | 42.29% |
| Coloured | 993 | 40.50% |
| White | 411 | 16.76% |
| Indian or Asian | 6 | 0.24% |
| Other | 5 | 0.20% |
| **First language** | | |
| Afrikaans | 1,447 | 61.65% |
| isiXhosa | 759 | 32.34% |
| English | 81 | 3.45% |
| Sesotho | 17 | 0.72% |
| Setswana | 16 | 0.68% |
| Sepedi | 15 | 0.64% |
| Sign language | 7 | 0.30% |
| isiZulu | 4 | 0.17% |
| Xitsonga | 1 | 0.04% |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Age group** | |
| Young (0-14) | 29,5% |
| Working Age (15-64) | 66,1% |
| Elderly (65+) | 4,4% |
| Young (0-14) | 29,5% |
| **Dependency ratio** | 51,4 |
| **Sex ratio** | 107,2 |
| **Education** | |
| No schooling aged 20+ | 21,4% |
| Higher education aged 20+ | 12% |

| | |
|---|---|
| Matric aged 20+ | 10,5% |
| **Households and services** | |
| Average household size | 2,6 |
| Female headed households | 11% |
| Formal dwellings | 95,7% |
| Housing owned/paying off | 16,5% |
| Flush toilet connected to sewerage | 34,7% |
| Weekly refuse removal | 3,5% |
| Piped water inside dwelling | 52,3% |
| Electricity for lighting | 86,6% |

The Paarde Valley facility falls within the Inxuba Yethemba NU, Sub Place 278002001 according to Census 2011. With a population density of 0.89 people per square kilometre the area has a slightly higher population density than Umsobomvu NU. The demographic data in respect of Inxuba Yethemba NU, listed as Sub Place 278002001 in accordance with Census 2011, is as follows:

**Geographic area** = 11,491.97 km²
**Population** = 10,208
**Population density** = 0.89/km²
**Households** = 2,567
**Household density** = 0.22/km²

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Gender** | | |
| Male | 5,466 | 53.80% |
| Female | 4,694 | 46.21% |
| **Population group** | | |
| Black African | 4,987 | 48.85% |
| Coloured | 3,561 | 34.88% |
| White | 1,389 | 13.61% |
| Other | 262 | 2.57% |
| Indian or Asian | 9 | 0.09% |
| **First language** | | |
| Afrikaans | 5,405 | 53.60% |
| isiXhosa | 4,070 | 40.36% |
| English | 383 | 3.80% |
| Other | 99 | 0.98% |
| Sesotho | 39 | 0.39% |
| Setswana | 32 | 0.32% |
| Sign language | 15 | 0.15% |
| Xitsonga | 13 | 0.13% |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| isiNdebele | 9 | 0.09% |
| isiZulu | 9 | 0.09% |
| Sepedi | 7 | 0.07% |
| Tshivenda | 2 | 0.02% |
| SiSwati | 2 | 0.02% |
| Not applicable | 124 | |
| **Age group** | | |
| Young (0-14) | | 28,3% |
| Working Age (15-64) | | 68,8% |
| Elderly (65+) | | 2,9% |
| **Dependency ratio** | | 45,5 |
| **Sex ratio** | | 116,2 |
| **Education** | | |
| No schooling aged 20+ | | 10,7% |
| Higher education aged 20+ | | 8% |
| Matric aged 20+ | | 9,5% |
| **Households and services** | | |
| Average household size | | 3,4% |
| Female headed households | | 10,5% |
| Formal dwellings | | 94,9% |
| Housing owned/paying off | | 12% |
| Flush toilet connected to sewerage | | 20,2% |
| Weekly refuse removal | | 5,9% |
| Piped water inside dwelling | | 37,1% |
| Electricity for lighting | | 86,1% |

The closest urban areas to the Umsobomvu Solar PV Facilities are the towns of:

- Noupoort and satellite settlement of Kwazamuxolo
- Hanover, and
- Middleburg.

**Noupoort and Kwazamuxolo**

Calculated in a straight line, the project is located about 19 km southwest of the town of Noupoort and the adjoining settlement of Kwazamuxolo which are situated in the Umsobomvu Local Municipality and Pixley ka Seme District Municipality in the Northern Cape Province. Attaining municipal status in 1942, Noupoort functioned as a traction changeover facility on the Noupoort-Bloemfontein railway line and was commercially dependent on rail activity. A decline in demand for rail services resulted in an economic decline and the degradation of the town. The satellite settlement of Kwazamuxolo is located alongside Noupoort and the demographics of Noupoort and Kwazamuxolo are provided separately below:

**Noupoort –** Main Place 370005 from Census 2001:
**Geographic area** = 9.42 km²
**Population** = 4 514 people
**Population density** = 479.3/km²
**Households** = 1 036
**Household density** = 110.0/km²

| **Gender** | **People** | **Percentage** |
|---|---|---|
| Female | 1,803 | 54.08% |
| Male | 1,531 | 45.92% |
| **Population group** | | |
| Black African | 3,289 | 98.65% |
| Coloured | 26 | 0.78% |
| Indian or Asian | 13 | 0.39% |
| Other | 5 | 0.15% |
| **First language** | | |
| isiXhosa | 3,175 | 95.23% |
| Afrikaans | 52 | 1.56% |
| English | 37 | 1.11% |
| Sepedi | 15 | 0.45% |
| Other | 12 | 0.36% |
| Setswana | 11 | 0.33% |
| Sign language | 10 | 0.30% |
| Sesotho | 9 | 0.27% |
| isiZulu | 8 | 0.24% |
| isiNdebele | 4 | 0.12% |
| Xitsonga | 1 | 0.03% |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Age group** | |
| Young (0-14) | 34,6% |
| Working Age (15-64) | 58,8% |
| Elderly (65+) | 6,6% |
| **Dependency ratio** | 70,1 |
| **Sex ratio** | 92,7 |
| **Education** | |
| No schooling aged 20+ | 12,8% |
| Higher education aged 20+ | 5,5% |
| Matric aged 20+ | 21,4% |
| **Households and services** | |
| Average household size | 4,2 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Female headed households | 39,2% |
| Formal dwellings | 95,1% |
| Housing owned/paying off | 48,9% |
| Flush toilet connected to sewerage | 97,4% |
| Weekly refuse removal | 86,9% |
| Piped water inside dwelling | 45,1% |
| Electricity for lighting | 92,4% |

**Kwazamuxolo** – Main Place 370006 from Census 2011:
**Geographic area** = 0.74 km²
**Population** = 3 334 people
**Population density** = 4 534.56/km²
**Households** = 913
**Household density** = 1 241.77/km²

| **Gender** | **People** | **Percentage** |
|---|---|---|
| Female | 1,803 | 54.08% |
| Male | 1,531 | 45.92% |
| **Population group** | | |
| Black African | 3,289 | 98.65% |
| Coloured | 26 | 0.78% |
| Indian or Asian | 13 | 0.39% |
| Other | 5 | 0.15% |
| **First language** | | |
| isiXhosa | 3,175 | 95.23% |
| Afrikaans | 52 | 1.56% |
| English | 37 | 1.11% |
| Sepedi | 15 | 0.45% |
| Other | 12 | 0.36% |
| Setswana | 11 | 0.33% |
| Sign language | 10 | 0.30% |
| Sesotho | 9 | 0.27% |
| isiZulu | 8 | 0.24% |
| isiNdebele | 4 | 0.12% |
| Xitsonga | 1 | 0.03% |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Age group** | |
| Young (0-14) | 29% |
| Working Age (15-64) | 63,3% |
| Elderly (65+) | 7,7% |
| **Dependency ratio** | 57,9 |
| **Sex ratio** | 84,9 |
| **Education** | |
| No schooling aged 20+ | 11,6% |

| | |
|---|---|
| Higher education aged 20+ | 2,1% |
| Matric aged 20+ | 19,9% |
| **Household services** | |
| Average household size | 3,6 |
| Female headed households | 51,6% |
| Formal dwellings | 96,3% |
| Housing owned/paying off | 60% |
| Flush toilet connected to sewerage | 79,5% |
| Weekly refuse removal | 98,6% |
| Piped water inside dwelling | 35,2% |
| Electricity for lighting | 94,2% |

**Hanover**

Calculated along a straight line, the project lies some 35 km southwest of Hanover which is situated in the Emthanjeni Local Municipality and Pixley ka Seme District Municipality in the Northern Cape Province. The town was established in 1854 and served as an administrative, educational and religious centre for the surrounding area. Hanover was named after Hanover in Germany and is now situated on the N1, virtually halfway between Cape Town and Johannesburg. Prior to 1884 and due to its central position Hanover also served as a central point for travellers travelling to the various towns and cities across South Africa. However, with the arrival of the railway, this function was to diminish changing the fortunes of the town and its inhabitants. Today the town has a certain tourist attraction with a natural spring, Anglo Boer War history, its central position and location along the N1 and within the Karoo. Demographic data pertaining to Hanover is presented below.

**Hanover –** Main Place 371006 from Census 2011:
**Geographic area** = 80.77 km²
**Population** = 4 594 people
**Population density** = 56.88/km²
**Households** = 1 083
**Household density** = 13.41/km²

| **Gender** | **People** | **Percentage** |
|---|---|---|
| Female | 2,362 | 51.41% |
| Male | 2,232 | 48.59% |
| **Population group** | | |
| Black African | 2,255 | 49.09% |
| Coloured | 2,133 | 46.43% |
| White | 156 | 3.40% |
| Other | 25 | 0.54% |
| Indian or Asian | 25 | 0.54% |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **First language** | | |
| Afrikaans | 2,438 | 54.91% |
| isiXhosa | 1,746 | 39.32% |
| English | 68 | 1.53% |
| Sesotho | 61 | 1.37% |
| Other | 35 | 0.79% |
| Setswana | 34 | 0.77% |
| Sign language | 20 | 0.45% |
| isiZulu | 12 | 0.27% |
| Sepedi | 10 | 0.23% |
| isiNdebele | 8 | 0.18% |
| Xitsonga | 3 | 0.07% |
| Tshivenda | 3 | 0.07% |
| SiSwati | 3 | 0.07% |
| Not applicable | 154 | |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Age group** | |
| Young (0-14) | 34% |
| Working Age (15-64) | 60,6% |
| Elderly (65+) | 5,4% |
| **Dependency ratio** | 65,1 |
| **Sex ratio** | 94,5 |
| **Education** | |
| No schooling aged 20+ | 16,8% |
| Higher education aged 20+ | 4,4% |
| Matric aged 20+ | 18,1% |
| **Households and services** | |
| Average household size | 3,9 |
| Female headed households | 43,7% |
| Formal dwellings | 98% |
| Housing owned/paying off | 38% |
| Flush toilet connected to sewerage | 58,8% |
| Weekly refuse removal | 82,3% |
| Piped water inside dwelling | 34,2% |
| Electricity for lighting | 94,3% |

**Middelburg**

The project lies 32 km northwest of Middelburg when calculated along a straight line. Established in 1852 Middelburg falls within the Inxuba Yethemba Local Municipality in the Chris Hani District Municipality of the Eastern Cape Province and serves as an administrative, educational and religious centre for the surrounding areas. Middelburg also has a certain tourist attraction due to its rich Anglo Boer War history, with the Third Manchester Regiment having been stationed just outside the town, and its central position within the Great Karoo. Demographic data relating to Middelburg is presented below.

**Middelburg –** Main Place 370006 from Census 2011:
**Geographic area** = 44.76 km²
**Population** = 18 681 people
**Population density** = 417.38/km²
**Households** = 5 337
**Household density** = 119.24/km²

| **Gender** | **People** | **Percentage** |
|---|---|---|
| Female | 9,939 | 53.20% |
| Male | 8,742 | 46.80% |
| **Population group** | | |
| Black African | 9,192 | 49.21% |
| Coloured | 8,197 | 43.88% |
| White | 1,167 | 6.25% |
| Other | 74 | 0.40% |
| Indian or Asian | 50 | 0.27% |
| **First language** | | |
| Afrikaans | 9,508 | 52.31% |
| isiXhosa | 7,921 | 43.58% |
| English | 345 | 1.90% |
| Sesotho | 86 | 0.47% |
| Setswana | 83 | 0.46% |
| Sign language | 78 | 0.43% |
| Other | 53 | 0.29% |
| isiZulu | 34 | 0.19% |
| Sepedi | 23 | 0.13% |
| isiNdebele | 19 | 0.10% |
| SiSwati | 13 | 0.07% |
| Xitsonga | 7 | 0.04% |
| Tshivenda | 6 | 0.03% |
| Not applicable | 506 | |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Age group** | |
| Young (0-14) | 31,3% |
| Working Age (15-64) | 62,2% |
| Elderly (65+) | 6,5% |
| **Dependency ratio** | 60,7 |
| **Sex ratio** | 88 |
| **Education** | |
| No schooling aged 20+ | 10,6% |

| | |
|---|---|
| Higher education aged 20+ | 5,9% |
| Matric aged 20+ | 19,5% |
| **Households and services** | |
| Average household size | 3,4 |
| Female headed households | 44,7% |
| Formal dwellings | 95,4% |
| Housing owned/paying off | 51,7% |
| Flush toilet connected to sewerage | 97% |
| Weekly refuse removal | 92,2% |
| Piped water inside dwelling | 89,8% |
| Electricity for lighting | 96,5% |

# 5. IDENTIFICATION OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS

The social impact variables considered across the project are in accordance with Vanclay's list of social impact variables clustered under the following main categories as adapted by Wong (Vanclay, 2002; Wong, 2013) and include;

1. Health and social well-being
2. Quality of the living environment (Liveability)
3. Economic
4. Cultural.

These categories are not exclusive and at times tend to overlap as certain processes may have an impact within more than one category.

Under the following section each of the solar photovoltaic (PV) energy facilities and associated grid connection infrastructure is separately considered and assessed in respect of these impacts.

## 5.1. HEALTH AND SOCIAL WELLBEING

The health and social wellbeing impacts related to the project include.

- Annoyance, dust noise and shadow flicker
- Increase in crime
- Increased risk of HIV infections
- Influx of construction workers and job seekers
- Hazard exposure.

### 5.1.1. ANNOYANCE, DUST AND NOISE

Annoyance, dust and noise will be more evident during the construction phase of the project, as construction activities will result in disruptions and the generation of dust and noise from construction vehicles and equipment. Site specific activities such as site clearance and the deliveries of materials, equipment, plant and the transportation of the workforce along unsealed access roads will generate the most dust and noise. Dust that accumulates on foliage and grasses that is used for grazing may result in the foliage and those grasses becoming unpalatable for livestock and/or game. This may in turn have an effect on farming activities within the vicinity of the project site and along the access road over the construction period. This impact will negatively impact sensitive receptors situated within or in close proximity to the project site, and could also potentially impact surrounding land users. The impact of noise and dust on surrounding land users and local farmsteads can be reduced to acceptable levels through the application of appropriate mitigation measures.

Over the operational phase of the project far less disruptions, dust and noise is expected in the vicinity of the project site, however, along the unsealed access road dusts and noise can be generated by traffic travelling to and from the project site. Even at low speeds heavy vehicles could generate noise in what is a remote area, particularly if they need to at times engage low gear ratios.

### 5.1.2. INCREASE IN CRIME

The projects fall within the Noupoort Precinct which, according to Crime Stats SA, has a relatively high level of crime with a total of 530 reported crimes in 2018[1]. The surrounding precincts of Hanover and Middelburg also have relatively high levels of reported crime at 428 and 1 474 respectively. It is likely that these crimes are associated with the more densely populated urban areas and that the level of crime in the sparsely populated urban areas would be lower, however, there are no available statistics to confirm this. It is often opportunistic crime, stock theft, the abuse of alcohol and relationship related crimes that are associated with construction activities.

Considering the relative remoteness of the project it is unlikely that the project will lead to any significant increase in crime levels in the area, however, it would be prudent for the developers to ensure that processes are put in place through which any suspected criminal activates associated with the project can be easily communicated and swiftly addressed. The

[1]According to Crime Stats SA as at 28 April 2018 www.crimestatssa.com/precinct.php?id=798

construction phase carries with it a higher risk of associated criminal activates than would be associated with the operational phase.

### 5.1.3. Increased risk of HIV infections

At 17.5%, the Northern Cape Province has the lowest HIV prevalence rate when compared to all other South African provinces. At a district level the Pixley ka Seme DM has the seventh lowest HIV prevalence rate when compared against all district municipalities across the country. In contrast the Eastern Cape Province has the third highest provincial HIV prevalence rate and the Chris Hani DM the 14th highest district level prevalence rate, each with relative HIV prevalence rates of 31.4 and 34.5 percent. These higher prevalence rates are likely to occur within the higher density urban areas and along transport corridors. As all three project sites fall within sparsely populated rural areas the HIV prevalence rate within the immediate vicinity of the projects is likely to be low. Considering this together with the fact that sexually transmitted diseases tend to be spread by construction and transport workers (Singh & Malaviya, 1994; Ramjee & Gouws, 2002; Meintjes, Bowen, & Root, 2007; World Bank Group, 2016; Bowen, Dorrington, Distiller, Lake, & Besesar, 2008; Bowen P. , Govender, Edwards, & Cattell, 2016; Kikwasi & Lukwale, 2017; Bowen P. , Govender, Edwards, & Lake, 2018) and the high prevalence of HIV across the Eastern Cape, opens the area to a high risk of HIV infections. This risk is likely to peak during the construction phase of the project as the conduction workforce increases and material and equipment is delivered to site but is likely to subside during the operational phase.

Due to the low HIV prevalence in the area it is important that this issue be given serious attention and that the appropriate mitigation measures are implemented and the situation is closely monitored throughout the construction and operational phases of the project. The risk of the spread of HIV is most prevalent on a cumulative basis and is addressed as such under section 9: Cumulative impacts below.

### 5.1.4. Influx of construction workers and job seekers

It is estimated that over the construction period of each of the three solar PV facilities, the construction workforce will average ~126 workers peaking at ~297 workers. It is likely that 75% of this workforce will be recruited from within local communities. The influx of workers could lead to the disruption of social networks with the formation of temporary relationships and an increase in pregnancy which may place pressures on local family units. Apart from this the arrival of construction workers may result in the formation of a subculture that could manifest in antisocial behaviour which conflicts with the expectations of local communities. This may result in these local communities, who are accustomed to a quiet, rural environment, becoming dissatisfied with the neighbourhood. These disruptions are, however, more likely to occur in the nearby urban areas such as Noupoort, Hanover and to a lesser degree due to the size of the population, in Middleburg, when workers seek recreational activities.

During the operational phase of the project the workforce will be comprised of ~16 workers who will be accommodated off site. Consequently, the risks associated with disruptions to social networks will be minimal over the operation phase of the project.

### 5.1.5. Hazard exposure

The use of heavy equipment and vehicles and an increase in vehicle traffic within the vicinity of all construction sites will result in an increased risk to the personal safety of people and animals. Of particular concern are increased hazards faced by pedestrians, cyclists and motorists with emphasis on vulnerable groups such as children and the elderly. Excavation work and trenches also pose a hazard to the safety of people, particularly children and animals, who may fall into these works and may have difficulty in getting out. However due to the low population numbers within the vicinity of the proposed development this risk is likely to be low and the appropriate mitigation measure, such as fencing, can reduce the impact further. There will also be an increased risk of fires brought about through construction workers lighting fires for cooking and for warmth during cold periods. Nevertheless, with the recommended mitigation measures being successfully put in place this can be controlled.

## 5.2. Quality of the living environment

The following quality of the living environment impacts are related to the project.

- Disruption of daily living patterns
- Disruptions to social and community infrastructure
- Transformation of the sense of place.

### 5.2.1. Disruption of daily living patterns

If there are any disruptions to daily living patterns these are likely to be minimal and restricted to the construction phase of the project. This impact will be mainly associated with the site and the main access roads. These disruptions are only likely to be associated with the delivery of materials and machinery to site and the transportation of workers to and from site.

Disruptions of daily living patterns are likely to be negligible during the operation phase of the project as these will be associated with maintenance and repair activities which will be far less frequent and intense than construction activities are likely to be.

### 5.2.2. DISRUPTION TO SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

An increase in the population of the area as a result of the workforce associated with the project has the potential to place pressure on existing community services supplies and infrastructure such as schools, health care facilities, access to water, electricity and sanitary services. With the workforce associated with the construction phase of each of the solar PV facilities peaking at ~297 people, of which 75% are likely to be recruited locally, it is unlikely that in isolation the project will have any significant effect on social and community infrastructure in the area. However, on a cumulative basis, considering the activities taking place and planned for the area, there is likely to be a significant impact in this regard. This impact is dealt with in greater depth under section 8.3: Cumulative Impacts below.

Over the operational phase of the project, with a smaller workforce being recruited locally, it is unlikely that there will be significant disruptions to community and social infrastructure.

### 5.2.3. TRANSFORMATION OF THE SENSE OF PLACE

Within a social context a sense of place includes a wide range of criteria, all or some of which add meaning to a particular area for individuals and groups. These criteria may include the vista, geography, urban layout, flora and fauna, community, history and fragrance of a place amongst many others and are uniquely interpreted on an individual basis. Some individuals may embrace changes to the sense of place that others may reject and for some it may merely be a change in the demographics of an area that leaves them feeling threatened, vulnerable and insecure. Groups and group membership can help to reinforce the sense of place of an area and can also serve to reinforce fears and suspicions associated with pending changes to the sense of place. A sense of place has much to do with unique individual perceptions attached to the location and is subjective by nature.

One of these criteria is the visual aspect, which was the subject of the Visual Impact Assessment specialist report in which it is indicated that:

> "*The area is not typically valued for its tourism significance and there is limited human habitation resulting in relatively few potentially sensitive receptors in the area. A total of twenty six (26) potentially sensitive receptors were identified in*

*the combined study area, three (3) of which are considered to be sensitive receptors as they are linked to leisure/nature-based tourism activities in the area. None of the receptors are however expected to experience high levels of visual impact from any of the proposed PV facilities or the grid connection infrastructure. Although the N10 receptor road traverses the study area, motorists travelling along this route are only expected to experience moderate impacts from the proposed Mooi Plaats solar PV facility and from the grid connection infrastructure associated with all three projects*" (SiVEST SA (Pty) Ltd, 2019b, p. 116).

Notwithstanding this, however, the issue regarding the sense of place is likely to remain controversial as a sense of place is personal and subjective with some accepting changes to the landscape in support of renewable energy while others may reject them (Farhar, Hunter, Kirkland, & Tierney, 2010; Carlisle, Kane, Solan, & Joe, 2014).

## 5.3. ECONOMIC

The economic impacts related to the project include.

- Job creation and skills development
- Socio-economic stimulation

### 5.3.1. JOB CREATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

The project will lead to the creation of both direct and indirect job which will have a positive economic benefit within the region. In this regard there are ~297 jobs associated with the construction phase of each of the solar PV facilities and 16 with the operational phase of each facility. During construction ~3 569 person-months are likely to be created of which ~2 679 or ~75% will be allocated to local communities creating employment opportunities for residents of Middelburg, Noupoort and Hanover. Many of the beneficiaries are likely to be historically disadvantaged members of the community and the project will provide opportunities to develop skills amongst these people. The operational phase will employ approximately 16 people full time for a period of up to 20 years.

### 5.3.2. SOCIO-ECONOMIC STIMULATION

Apart from these jobs the project is also likely to stimulate the local economy and again this is likely to be most significant at a cumulative level. Nevertheless, there will be a significant economic contribution attached to all three of the solar PV facilities. This contribution will be in the form of disposable salaries and the purchases of services and supplies from the local communities in and around the towns of Noupoort, Hannover and Middleburg estimated at 40% of the total project value yet to be finalised.

Apart from job creation and procurement spend the project will also have broader positive socio-economic impacts as far as socio-economic development contributions are concerned. Although, at the point of writing, the project developer had not as yet put a corporate social responsibility plan in place the intention is to either, fall in line with the REIPPP BID guidelines or put an equivalent plan in place. This will create an opportunity to support the local community over the life span of the operational phase of the project which will stretch over a 20 year period. At a national level the project also has the potential to contribute towards the national grid requirements as part of the Government's vision to source 10.5% of the country's energy through solar power by 2030 (Department of Energy Republic of South Africa, 2018, p. 41).

## 5.4. CULTURAL IMPACTS

At a social level it is likely that any cultural impacts would be associated with sensitive archaeological and/or heritage sites that may be found. In this regard a Heritage Impact Assessment was undertaken and it was found that:

> "*The projected impact assessment indicates that unmitigated impacts during construction can be MEDIUM to HIGH but reduced to LOW with the implementation of management measures. Impacts during the operational and decommissioning phase is projected to be LOW with the implementation of management measures.*
>
> *These findings provide the basis for the recommendation:*
>
> - *further field truthing through an archaeological walk down and palaeontological study covering the site. The aim of this will be to compile a comprehensive database of heritage sites in the study areas, with the aim of developing a heritage management plan for*

> *inclusion in the Environmental Management Plan as derived from the EIA* (PGS Heritage (Pty) Ltd, 2019, p. 37).

At this point no heritage resources have been identified that could have cultural significance. If these are identified at a later point they can be addressed in the heritage report and as such will not be pursued any further at the social level.

## 6. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The impacts discussed above are assessed below in respect of the following three photovoltaic facilities and their respective associated grid infrastructure:

- Mooi Plaats Solar PV Facility
- Wonderheuvel Solar PV Facility
- Paarde Valley Solar PV Facility.

From a social perspective it makes far more sense to assess each of the solar PV facilities together with their respective associated grid infrastructure based on the following reasons:

4. The solar PV facilities and associated grid infrastructure are interdependent. If the one was not to exist neither would the other. In this sense each is an integral part of the other and cannot function independently.
5. The focus at a social level is far broader than is the case with certain other specialist studies that may have a narrower, project footprint specific emphasis.
    a. For instance, to consider certain aspects such as job creation; the influx of workers; socio-economic stimulation and the transformation of the sense of place in isolation would deter from the actual impact that may occur when considered on a combined basis and in essence would not make logical sense.
6. Any site specific implications associated with the grid infrastructure alternatives can be specifically addressed and mitigated as well as noted when discussing the motivation for selecting the socially preferred grid connection alternatives.

These impacts are assessed in respect of the following phases of the project:

- Planning and design
- Construction
- Operational
- Decommissioning, and
- The 'no go" option.

## 6.1. PLANNING AND DESIGN PHASE

It is evident that the project fits with legislation and key planning and policy documentation. In this regard renewable energy facilities are supported on a national, provincial and municipal level as indicated under section 3.1: Policy and legislation fit.

However, provincial and municipal documentation also regards tourism as an important resource for the area. In addition to this there have been concerns raised regarding the cumulative effect of the proliferation of renewable energy in the region and the impact that this may have on the sense of place of the area. In this regard see section 8.3: Transformation of sense of place.

## 6.2. CONSTRUCTION PHASE

Most of the impacts discussed above apply over the short-term to the construction phase of the project and include:

- Annoyance, dust and noise
- Increase in crime
- Increased risk of HIV infections
- Influx of construction workers and job seekers
- Hazard exposure
- Disruption of daily living patterns
- Disruptions to social and community infrastructure
- Job creation and skills development
- Socio-economic stimulation.

In this respect the construction phase of each of the three solar PV facilities including the associated grid infrastructure is separately assessed with suggested mitigation and optimisation measures being presented in the following tables:

- Mooi Plaats Solar PV Facility and associated grid connection infrastructure – **Table 6**
- Wonderheuvel Solar PV Facility and associated grid connection infrastructure – **Table 7**
- Paarde Valley Solar PV Facility and associated grid connection infrastructure – **Table 8**.

**Table 6: Mooi Plaats Solar PV Facility and associated grid connection infrastructure – Construction phase**

| 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 |
| Annoyance, dust and noise | Annoyance, dust and noise generated through construction activities. | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 16 | - | Low | Apply appropriate dust suppressant to gravel roads on a regular basis Ensure that vehicles used to transport sand and building materials are fitted with tarpaulins or covers.<br>Ensure all vehicles are roadworthy and drivers are qualified and made aware of the potential noise and dust issues.<br>Appoint a community liaison officer to deal with complaints and grievances from the public. | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 8 | - | Low |
| Increase in crime | An increase in crime associated with the construction phase of the project. | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 33 | - | Medium | All workers should carry identification cards and wear identifiable clothing.<br>Fence off the construction site and control access to the site.<br>Appoint an independent security company to monitor the site.<br>Appoint a community liaison officer.<br>Encourage local people to report any suspicious activity associated with the construction site to the community liaison officer.<br>A grievance mechanism must be prepared and communicated to surrounding landowners and local communities, to ensure that the project proponent, EPC contractor and sub-contractors remain responsible and accountable. This will also facilitate the | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 22 | - | 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 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | identification and implementation of additional mitigation measures if required.<br>Prevent loitering within the vicinity of the construction camp as well as construction sites by recruiting off site via an offsite recruiting office/agent, whatever is most appropriate. | | | | | | | | | |
| Increased risk of HIV and AIDS | Increased risk of HIV and AIDS due to the influx of workers, job seekers and deliveries and availability of disposable income. | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 48 | - | High | Ensure that an onsite HIV and AIDS policy is in place and that construction workers are exposed to a health and HIV/AIDS awareness educational programme within the first month of construction.<br>Provide voluntary and free counselling, free testing and condom distribution services to the workforce.<br>Where feasible extend the HIV/AIDS programme into the community with specific focus on schools and youth clubs. | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 32 | - | Medium |
| Influx of construction workers and job seekers | Influx of construction workers and job seekers resulting in a temporary change in demographics | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 22 | - | Low | Communicate, through Community Leaders and Ward Councillors, the limitation of opportunities created by the project to prevent an influx of job seekers.<br>Develop and implement a local procurement policy which prioritises “locals first” to reduce the movement of people into the area in search of work.<br>Draw up a recruitment policy in conjunction with Community Leaders | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 20 | - | 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 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | and Ward Councillors and ensure compliance with this policy. | | | | | | | | | |
| Hazard exposure | Exposure to hazards associated with construction activities and the delivery of heavy machinery and equipment to site. | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 20 | - | Low | Ensure all construction equipment and vehicles are properly maintained at all times.<br>Ensure that operators and drivers are properly trained and make them aware, through regular toolbox talks, of any risk they may pose to the community. Place specific emphasis on the vulnerable sector of the population such as children and the elderly.<br>Ensure that fires lit by construction staff are only ignited in designated areas and that the appropriate safety precautions, such as not lighting fires in strong winds and completely extinguishing fires before leaving them unattended, are strictly adhered to.<br>Make staff aware of the dangers of fire during regular tool box talks.<br>A grievance mechanism must be prepared and communicated to surrounding landowners and local communities, to ensure that the project proponent, EPC contractor, and sub-contractors remain responsible and accountable and to facilitate the identification and implementation of | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 18 | - | 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 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | additional mitigation measures if required.<br>Where necessary training should be provided on the implementation of the grievance mechanism to ensure that those who are most likely to be affected by the project are suitably equipped in the mechanism of raising concerns and having these addressed.<br>Compile and implement a Fire Management and Emergency Preparedness Response Plan. | | | | | | | | | |
| Disruption of daily living patterns | Disruption of daily living patterns due to construction activities and deliveries of machinery and heavy equipment to site. | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 20 | - | Low | Ensure that, at all times, people have access to their properties as well as to social facilities.<br>All vehicles must be roadworthy and drivers must be qualified, obey traffic rules, follow speed limits and be made aware of the potential road safety issues.<br>Heavy vehicles should be inspected regularly to ensure their road safety worthiness.<br>The developer and EPC Contractor must ensure that the roads utilised for construction activities are either maintained in the present condition or upgraded if damaged due to construction activities. | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 18 | - | 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 |
| Disruption of services supplies and infrastructure | Disruptions of community facilities and infrastructure due to construction activities and an influx of workers. | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 20 | - | Low | Regularly monitor the effect that the construction activities is having on public infrastructure and immediately report any damage to infrastructure to the appropriate authority. | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 18 | - | Low |
| Job creation and skills development | The creation of job opportunities and the development of skills amongst the workforce. | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 22 | + | Low | Wherever feasible, local residents should be recruited to fill semi and unskilled jobs.<br>Women should be given equal employment opportunities and encouraged to apply for positions.<br>A skills transfer plan should be put in place at an early stage and workers should be given the opportunity to develop skills which they can use to secure jobs elsewhere post-construction.<br>A procurement policy promoting the use of local business should, where possible, be put in place to be applied throughout the construction phase. | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 24 | + | Medium |
| Socio-economic development | Potential for positive socio-economic opportunities for the region associated with downstream business opportunities and corporate social responsibility initiatives. | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 24 | + | Medium | A procurement policy promoting the use of local business should, where possible, be put in place to be applied throughout the construction phase. | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 26 | + | Medium |

**Table 7: Wonderheuvel Solar PV Facility and associated grid connection infrastructure – Construction phase**

| 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 |
| Annoyance, dust and noise | Annoyance, dust and noise generated through construction activities. | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 16 | - | Low | Apply appropriate dust suppressant to gravel roads on a regular basis. Ensure that vehicles used to transport sand and building materials are fitted with tarpaulins or covers. Ensure all vehicles are roadworthy and drivers are qualified and made aware of the potential noise and dust issues. Appoint a community liaison officer to deal with complaints and grievances from the public. | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 8 | - | Low |
| Increase in crime | An increase in crime associated with the construction phase of the project. | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 33 | - | Medium | All workers should carry identification cards and wear identifiable clothing. Fence off the construction site and control access to the site. Appoint an independent security company to monitor the site. Appoint a community liaison officer. Encourage local people to report any suspicious activity associated with the construction site to the community liaison officer. A grievance mechanism must be prepared and communicated to surrounding landowners and local communities, to ensure that the project proponent, EPC contractor and sub-contractors remain responsible and accountable. This will also facilitate the | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 22 | - | 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 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | identification and implementation of additional mitigation measures if required.<br>Prevent loitering within the vicinity of the construction camp as well as construction sites by recruiting off site via an offsite recruiting office/agent, whatever is most appropriate. | | | | | | | | | |
| Increased risk of HIV and AIDS | Increased risk of HIV and AIDS due to the influx of workers, job seekers and deliveries and availability of disposable income. | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 48 | - | High | Ensure that an onsite HIV and AIDS policy is in place and that construction workers are exposed to a health and HIV/AIDS awareness educational programme within the first month of construction.<br>Provide voluntary and free counselling, free testing and condom distribution services to the workforce.<br>Where feasible extend the HIV/AIDS programme into the community with specific focus on schools and youth clubs. | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 32 | - | Medium |
| Influx of construction workers and job seekers | Influx of construction workers and job seekers resulting in a temporary change in demographics | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 22 | - | Low | Communicate, through Community Leaders and Ward Councillors, the limitation of opportunities created by the project to prevent an influx of job seekers.<br>Develop and implement a local procurement policy which prioritises “locals first” to prevent the movement of people into the area in search of work.<br>Draw up a recruitment policy in conjunction with Community Leaders | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 20 | - | 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 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | and Ward Councillors and ensure compliance with this policy. | | | | | | | | | |
| Hazard exposure | Exposure to hazards associated with construction activities and the delivery of heavy machinery and equipment to site. | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 20 | - | Low | Ensure all construction equipment and vehicles are properly maintained at all times.<br>Ensure that operators and drivers are properly trained and make them aware, through regular toolbox talks, of any risk they may pose to the community. Place specific emphasis on the vulnerable sector of the population such as children and the elderly.<br>Ensure that fires lit by construction staff are only ignited in designated areas and that the appropriate safety precautions, such as not lighting fires in strong winds and completely extinguishing fires before leaving them unattended, are strictly adhered to.<br>Make staff aware of the dangers of fire during regular tool box talks.<br>A grievance mechanism must be prepared and communicated to surrounding landowners and local communities, to ensure that the project proponent, EPC contractor, and sub-contractors remain responsible and accountable and to facilitate the identification and implementation of | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 18 | - | 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 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | additional mitigation measures if required.<br>Where necessary training should be provided on the implementation of the grievance mechanism to ensure that those who are most likely to be affected by the project are suitably equipped in the mechanism of raising concerns and having these addressed.<br>Compile and implement a Fire Management and Emergency Preparedness Response Plan. | | | | | | | | | |
| Disruption of daily living patterns | Disruption of daily living patterns due to construction activities and deliveries of machinery and heavy equipment to site. | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 20 | - | Low | Ensure that, at all times, people have access to their properties as well as to social facilities.<br>All vehicles must be road worthy and drivers must be qualified, obey traffic rules, follow speed limits and be made aware of the potential road safety issues.<br>Heavy vehicles should be inspected regularly to ensure their road safety worthiness.<br>The developer and EPC Contractor must ensure that the roads utilised for construction activities are either maintained in the present condition or upgraded if damaged due to construction activities. | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 18 | - | 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 |
| Disruption of services supplies and infrastructure | Disruptions of community facilities and infrastructure due to construction activities and an influx of workers. | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 20 | - | Low | Regularly monitor the effect that the construction activities is having on public infrastructure and immediately report any damage to infrastructure to the appropriate authority. | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 18 | - | Low |
| Job creation and skills development | The creation of job opportunities and the development of skills amongst the workforce. | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 22 | + | Low | Wherever feasible, local residents should be recruited to fill semi and unskilled jobs.<br>Women should be given equal employment opportunities and encouraged to apply for positions.<br>A skills transfer plan should be put in place at an early stage and workers should be given the opportunity to develop skills which they can use to secure jobs elsewhere post-construction.<br>A procurement policy promoting the use of local business should, where possible, be put in place to be applied throughout the construction phase. | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 24 | + | Medium |
| Socio-economic development | Potential for positive socio-economic opportunities for the region associated with downstream business opportunities and corporate social responsibility initiatives. | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 24 | + | Medium | A procurement policy promoting the use of local business should, where possible, be put in place to be applied throughout the construction phase. | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 26 | + | Medium |

**Table 8: Paarde Valley Solar PV Facility and associated grid connection infrastructure – Construction phase**

| 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 |
| Annoyance, dust and noise | Annoyance, dust and noise generated through construction activities. | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 16 | - | Low | Apply appropriate dust suppressant to gravel roads on a regular basis Ensure that vehicles used to transport sand and building materials are fitted with tarpaulins or covers.<br>Ensure all vehicles are roadworthy and drivers are qualified and made aware of the potential noise and dust issues.<br>Appoint a community liaison officer to deal with complaints and grievances from the public. | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 8 | - | Low |
| Increase in crime | An increase in crime associated with the construction phase of the project. | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 33 | - | Medium | All workers should carry identification cards and wear identifiable clothing.<br>Fence off the construction site and control access to the site.<br>Appoint an independent security company to monitor the site.<br>Appoint a community liaison officer.<br>Encourage local people to report any suspicious activity associated with the construction site to the community liaison officer.<br>A grievance mechanism must be prepared and communicated to surrounding landowners and local communities, to ensure that the project proponent, EPC contractor and sub-contractors remain responsible and accountable. This will also facilitate the | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 22 | - | 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 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | identification and implementation of additional mitigation measures if required.<br>Prevent loitering within the vicinity of the construction camp as well as construction sites by recruiting off site via an offsite recruiting office/agent, whatever is most appropriate. | | | | | | | | | |
| Increased risk of HIV and AIDS | Increased risk of HIV and AIDS due to the influx of workers, job seekers and deliveries and availability of disposable income. | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 48 | - | High | Ensure that an onsite HIV and AIDS policy is in place and that construction workers are exposed to a health and HIV/AIDS awareness educational programme within the first month of construction.<br>Provide voluntary and free counselling, free testing and condom distribution services to the workforce.<br>Where feasible extend the HIV/AIDS programme into the community with specific focus on schools and youth clubs. | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 32 | - | Medium |
| Influx of construction workers and job seekers | Influx of construction workers and job seekers resulting in a temporary change in demographics | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 22 | - | Low | Communicate, through Community Leaders and Ward Councillors, the limitation of opportunities created by the project to prevent an influx of job seekers.<br>Develop and implement a local procurement policy which prioritises “locals first” to prevent the movement of people into the area in search of work.<br>Draw up a recruitment policy in conjunction with Community Leaders | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 20 | - | 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 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | and Ward Councillors and ensure compliance with this policy. | | | | | | | | | |
| Hazard exposure | Exposure to hazards associated with construction activities and the delivery of heavy machinery and equipment to site. | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 20 | - | Low | Ensure all construction equipment and vehicles are properly maintained at all times.<br>Ensure that operators and drivers are properly trained and make them aware, through regular toolbox talks, of any risk they may pose to the community. Place specific emphasis on the vulnerable sector of the population such as children and the elderly.<br>Ensure that fires lit by construction staff are only ignited in designated areas and that the appropriate safety precautions, such as not lighting fires in strong winds and completely extinguishing fires before leaving them unattended, are strictly adhered to.<br>Make staff aware of the dangers of fire during regular tool box talks.<br>A grievance mechanism must be prepared and communicated to surrounding landowners and local communities, to ensure that the project proponent, EPC contractor, and sub-contractors remain responsible and accountable and to facilitate the identification and implementation of | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 18 | - | 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 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | additional mitigation measures if required.<br>Where necessary training should be provided on the implementation of the grievance mechanism to ensure that those who are most likely to be affected by the project are suitably equipped in the mechanism of raising concerns and having these addressed.<br>Compile and implement a Fire Management and Emergency Preparedness Response Plan. | | | | | | | | | |
| Disruption of daily living patterns | Disruption of daily living patterns due to construction activities and deliveries of machinery and heavy equipment to site. | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 20 | - | Low | Ensure that, at all times, people have access to their properties as well as to social facilities.<br>All vehicles must be road worthy and drivers must be qualified, obey traffic rules, follow speed limits and be made aware of the potential road safety issues.<br>Heavy vehicles should be inspected regularly to ensure their road safety worthiness.<br>The developer and EPC Contractor must ensure that the roads utilised for construction activities are either maintained in the present condition or upgraded if damaged due to construction activities. | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 18 | - | 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 |
| Disruption of services supplies and infrastructure | Disruptions of community facilities and infrastructure due to construction activities and an influx of workers. | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 20 | - | Low | Regularly monitor the effect that the construction activities is having on public infrastructure and immediately report any damage to infrastructure to the appropriate authority. | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 18 | - | Low |
| Job creation and skills development | The creation of job opportunities and the development of skills amongst the workforce. | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 22 | + | Low | Wherever feasible, local residents should be recruited to fill semi and unskilled jobs.<br>Women should be given equal employment opportunities and encouraged to apply for positions.<br>A skills transfer plan should be put in place at an early stage and workers should be given the opportunity to develop skills which they can use to secure jobs elsewhere post-construction.<br>A procurement policy promoting the use of local business should, where possible, be put in place to be applied throughout the construction phase. | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 24 | + | Medium |
| Socio-economic development | Potential for positive socio-economic opportunities for the region associated with downstream business opportunities. | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 24 | + | Medium | A procurement policy promoting the use of local business should, where possible, be put in place to be applied throughout the construction phase. | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 26 | + | Medium |

## 6.3. OPERATIONAL PHASE

The social impacts that apply to the operational phase of the project are:

- Transformation of the sense of place and
- Economic
  - Job creation and skills development
  - Socio-economic stimulation

In this respect the operational phase of each of the three solar PV facilities including the associated grid infrastructure is separately assessed with suggested mitigation and optimisation measures being presented in the following tables:

- Mooi Plaats Solar PV Facility and associated grid connection infrastructure **– Table 9**
- Wonderheuvel Solar PV Facility and associated grid connection infrastructure **– Table 10**
- Paarde Valley Solar PV Facility and associated grid connection infrastructure **– Table 11**.

**Table 9: Assessment of the Mooi Plaats Solar PV Facility and associated grid connection infrastructure – Operational phase**

| 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 |
| Transformation of the sense of place | Transformation of the sense of place due to the nature of the project. | 2 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 51 | - | High | Apply the mitigation measures suggested in the Visual Impact Assessment Report.<br>Ensure that all affected landowners and tourist associations are regularly consulted.<br>A Grievance Mechanism should be put in place and all grievances should be dealt with in a transparent manner.<br>The mitigation measures recommended in the Heritage Impact Assessment should be followed. | 2 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 34 | - | Medium |
| Job creation and skills development | The creation of job opportunities and the development of skills amongst the workforce. | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 24 | + | Medium | Implement a training and skills development programme for locals.<br>Work closely with the appropriate municipal structures in regard to establishing a social responsibility programme. | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 24 | + | Medium |
| Socio-economic stimulation | Potential for positive socio-economic opportunities for the region associated with downstream business opportunities and corporate social responsibility initiatives. | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 28 | + | Medium | Ensure that the procurement policy supports local enterprises.<br>Establish a social responsibility programme either in line with the REIPPP BID guidelines or equivalent.<br>Work closely with the appropriate municipal structures in regard to establishing a social responsibility programme.<br>Ensure that any trusts or funds are strictly managed in respect of outcomes and funds. | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 42 | + | Medium |

**Table 10: Assessment of the Wonderheuvel Solar PV Facility and associated grid connection infrastructure – Operational phase**

| 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 |
| Transformation of the sense of place | Transformation of the sense of place due to the nature of the project. | 2 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 51 | - | High | Apply the mitigation measures suggested in the Visual Impact Assessment Report.<br>Ensure that all affected landowners and tourist associations are regularly consulted.<br>A Grievance Mechanism should be put in place and all grievances should be dealt with in a transparent manner.<br>The mitigation measures recommended in the Heritage Impact Assessment should be followed. | 2 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 34 | - | Medium |
| Job creation and skills development | The creation of job opportunities and the development of skills amongst the workforce. | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 24 | + | Medium | Implement a training and skills development programme for locals.<br>Work closely with the appropriate municipal structures in regard to establishing a social responsibility programme. | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 24 | + | Medium |
| Socio-economic stimulation | Potential for positive socio-economic opportunities for the region associated with downstream business opportunities and corporate social responsibility initiatives. | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 28 | + | Medium | Ensure that the procurement policy supports local enterprises.<br>Establish a social responsibility programme either in line with the REIPPP BID guidelines or equivalent.<br>Work closely with the appropriate municipal structures in regard to establishing a social responsibility programme.<br>Ensure that any trusts or funds are strictly managed in respect of outcomes and funds. | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 42 | + | Medium |

**Table 11: Assessment of the Paarde Valley Solar PV Facility and associated grid connection infrastructure – Operational phase**

| 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 |
| Transformation of the sense of place | Transformation of the sense of place due to the nature of the project. | 2 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 51 | - | High | Apply the mitigation measures suggested in the Visual Impact Assessment Report.<br>Ensure that all affected landowners and tourist associations are regularly consulted.<br>A Grievance Mechanism should be put in place and all grievances should be dealt with in a transparent manner.<br>The mitigation measures recommended in the Heritage Impact Assessment should be followed. | 2 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 34 | - | Medium |
| Job creation and skills development | The creation of job opportunities and the development of skills amongst the workforce. | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 24 | + | Medium | Implement a training and skills development programme for locals.<br>Work closely with the appropriate municipal structures in regard to establishing a social responsibility programme. | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 24 | + | Medium |
| Socio-economic stimulation | Potential for positive socio-economic opportunities for the region associated with downstream business opportunities and corporate social responsibility initiatives. | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 28 | + | Medium | Ensure that the procurement policy supports local enterprises.<br>Establish a social responsibility programme either in line with the REIPPP BID guidelines or equivalent.<br>Work closely with the appropriate municipal structures in regard to establishing a social responsibility programme.<br>Ensure that any trusts or funds are strictly managed in respect of outcomes and funds. | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 42 | + | Medium |

## 6.4. DECOMMISSIONING PHASE

If the project was to be completely decommissioned the major social impacts likely to be associated with this would be the loss of jobs and revenue stream that stimulated the local economy and flowed into the municipal coffers. It is estimated that the project has a lifespan of approximately 20 years and there is the possibility that after this period the solar facility could be replaced with more up-to-date technology that would extend the life of the facilities. Although the loss of a job is significant and can be devastating on an individual and family level, the total number of jobs under threat could be insignificant as the operational staff complement is estimated at a total of 48 across all three facilities and many of these employees will be skilled and could find alternative employment.

Decommissioning will result in a limited number of jobs being created over a short period of time as components are dismantled and the site is cleared. Although positive, this will be a rather insignificant benefit considering the size of the facilities and the time period attached to decommissioning.

Considering the time period to decommissioning, the uncertainty of what would exactly occur, and the significance of the impact in isolation it would be rather meaningless to attach assessment criteria to decommissioning at this point. However, prior to decommissioning the following mitigation measures are suggested.

**Decommissioning mitigation measures**

- Ensure that a retrenchment package is in place.
- Ensure that staff have been trained in a manner that would provide them with saleable skills within the job market.
- Ensure that the site is cleared responsibly and left in a safe condition.

# 7. ASSESSMENT OF 'NO GO' ALTERNATIVE

The 'no go' option would mean that the social environment is not affected as the status quo would remain. On a negative front it would also mean that all the positive aspects associated with the project would not materialise. Consequently, there would be no job creation, no revenue streams into the local economy and municipal coffers and a lost opportunity to enhance the national grid with a renewable source of energy. Considering that Eskom's coal fired power stations are a huge contributor to carbon emissions the loss of a chance to supplement the National Grid through renewable energy would be significant at a national, if not at a global level. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (6 October 2018, p. 15) has warned that that $Co^2$ emissions need to be reduce by 45% from 2010 levels by 2030 and to zero by 2050 which basically means that coal must go. The no-project alternative is assed in **Table 12** with regard to all three solar PV facilities and associated infrastructure. The no go alternative is identical in respect of each of the solar PV facilities and to avoid unnecessary repetition is present in one table.

**Table 12: No go alterative in respect of all three solar PV facilities**

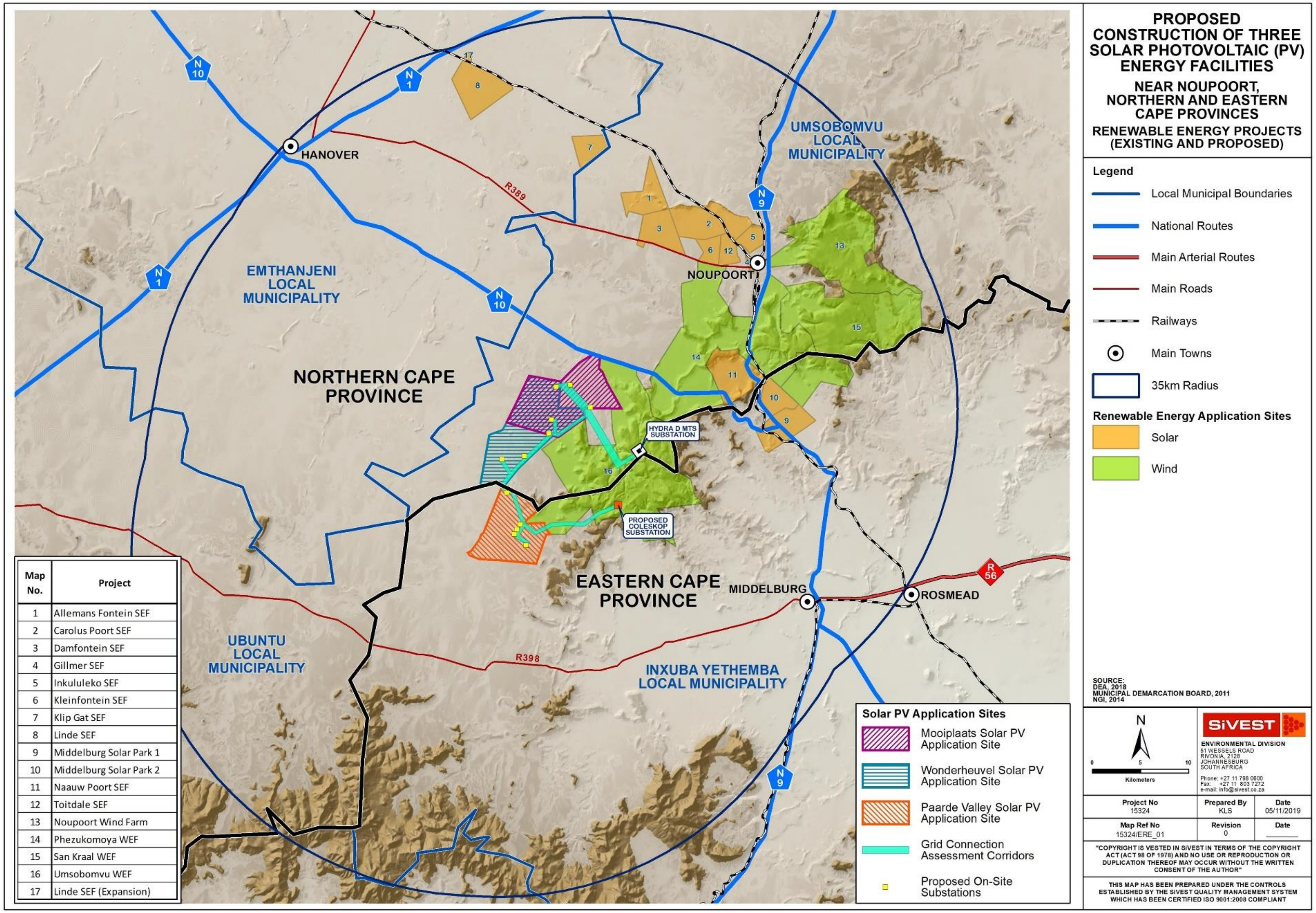
| Environmental Significance | |
|---|---|
| **Environmental Parameter** | No project |
| **Issue/Impact/Environmental Effect/Nature** | Status quo |
| **Extent** | 4 |
| **Probability** | 4 |
| **Reversibility** | 3 |
| **Loss of resources** | 3 |
| **Duration** | 3 |
| **Intensity/magnitude** | 3 |
| **Total** | 51 |
| **Status (+ or -)** | - |
| **Status** | High |

## 8. CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Renewable energy facilities require specific climatic conditions that provide high levels of solar radiation and wind energy. This has resulted in a tendency for these facilities to be clustered in specific areas, such as the Karoo, that provide these ideal conditions. Consequently, this grouping of facilities in specific areas has in turn led to cumulative impacts. In this regard the following projects, illustrated in the map in **Figure 13,** have been identified within a 35 km radius of the proposed Umsobomvu Solar PV Energy Facility:

- Allemans Fontein SEF
- Carolus Poort SEF
- Damfontein SEF
- Gillmer SEF
- Inkululeko SEF
- Kleinfontein SEF
- Klip Gat SEF
- Linde SEF
- Middelburg Solar Park 1

- Middelburg Solar Park 2
- Naauw Poort SEF
- Toitdale SEF
- Noupoort Wind Farm
- Phezukomoya WEF
- San Kraal WEF
- Umsobomvu WEF, and
- Linde SEF (Expansion).




| Map No. | Project |
|---|---|
| 1 | Allemans Fontein SEF |
| 2 | Carolus Poort SEF |
| 3 | Damfontein SEF |
| 4 | Gillmer SEF |
| 5 | Inkululeko SEF |
| 6 | Kleinfontein SEF |
| 7 | Klip Gat SEF |
| 8 | Linde SEF |
| 9 | Middelburg Solar Park 1 |
| 10 | Middelburg Solar Park 2 |
| 11 | Naauw Poort SEF |
| 12 | Toitdale SEF |
| 13 | Noupoort Wind Farm |
| 14 | Phezukomoya WEF |
| 15 | San Kraal WEF |
| 16 | Umsobomvu WEF |
| 17 | Linde SEF (Expansion) |

Source: SiVEST Environmental Division

**Figure 13: Proposed renewable energy developments ~35 km radius from site**

## 8.1. REVIEW OF SPECIALIST REPORTS FOR REFS IN THE AREA

The following more specific social issues have been raised in the specialist reports pertaining to the various renewable energy initiatives identified above.

- **Positive impacts**
  - Job creation; Impacts associated with the construction phase are generally short-term
  - Establishment of local community trust
  - Establishment of renewable energy infrastructure
- **Negative impacts**
  - Sense of place
  - Influx of construction workers
  - Impact on family and community relations – STDs and HIV
  - Risk of stock theft, poaching and damage to farm infrastructure
  - Risk of veld fires
  - Impact of heavy vehicles, damage to roads, safety, noise and dust
  - Loss of agricultural land
  - Impact on tourism
- **Indirect impacts**
  - After construction locals may not find future employment
  - Skills and development – increased employability
- **Cumulative impacts**
  - Development of additional renewable energy facilities – increased potential for job creation
  - Impact on family and community relations – STDs and HIV
  - Sense of place
  - Pressure on municipal and social services
- **No-Go option**
  - Loss of renewable energy infrastructure
  - High carbon emissions
  - Unsustainable way to produce electricity
  - Overall social impact
  - Predominantly low significance (positive impact)
  - In respect of climate change – a positive social benefit for society as a whole.

The details of the reports from which these impacts have been sourced are provided in **Table 13**.

**Table 13: List of EIA reports for projects within a 35 km radius**

| Date | Title of report | DEA Ref number | Consultant responsible for report | Page numbers |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| July 2011 | Establishment of Photovoltaic (Solar Power) Farms in the Northern Cape | 12/12/20/2258 | Sustainable Development Projects cc | 4-5, 37-39, 51 |
| February 2012 | Environmental Basic Impact Assessment Process Draft Basic Assessment Report, Proposed Toitdale Solar Energy Facility Northern Cape Province | 12/12/20/2653 | Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd | 47, 58, 61-62 |
| March 2012 | Social Impact Assessment Aced Middleburg Photovoltaic Solar Energy Facility Eastern Cape Province | Specialist report | Tony Barbour Environmental Consulting and Research | Entire report |
| March 2012 | Environmental Basic Impact Assessment Process Draft Basic Assessment Report, Proposed Middelburg Solar Park 1 Eastern Cape Province | 12/12/20/2465/2 | Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd | 54-63, 71-73 |
| 13 April 2012 | Mainstream Renewable Power South Africa Noupoort (Pty) Ltd. Proposed Construction of a Wind Farm near Noupoort, Northern Cape Province, South Africa. Final Environmental Impact Report | 12/12/20/2319 | SiVEST Environmental Division | 156-177, 221-228, 232-234 |
| May 2012 | Environmental Basic Impact Assessment Process Draft Basic Assessment Report, Proposed Tollie Solar Energy Installation on a site near Noupoort, Northern Cape Province | 14/12/16/3/3/1/528 | Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd | 54-59, 65-68 |
| September 2012 | Environmental Impact Assessment Process Final Basic Assessment Report, Proposed Klip Gat Solar Energy Facility (75MW) near Noupoort, Northern Cape Province | 14/12/16/3/3/2/354 | Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd | 61-62, 71-72, 79 |
| September 2012 | Environmental Impact Assessment Process Final Basic Assessment Report, Proposed Naauw Poort Solar Energy Facility (75MW) near Noupoort, Northern Cape Province | 14/12/16/3/3/2/355 | Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd | 84-86, 95-96, 101, 101-111 |
| November 2012 | Social Impact Assessment Klipgat Solar Energy Facility Northern Cape Province (Draft Report) | Specialist report | Tony Barbour Environmental Consulting and Research | Entire report |
| December 2012 | Environmental Impact Assessment Process Final Basic Assessment Report, Proposed Damfontein Solar Energy Facility near Noupoort, Northern Cape Province | 14/12/16/3/3/1/728 | Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd | 70-72 & 79-81 |
| January 2013 | Environmental Impact Assessment Process Final Basic assessment Report, Allemans Fontein Solar Energy Facility near Noupoort, Northern Cape Province | 14/12/16/3/3/1/730 | Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd | 66-67 & 80-81 |

| Date | Report title | DEA Ref number | Responsible consultant | Page numbers |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| January 2013 | Environmental Impact Assessment Process Final Basic Assessment Report, Proposed Carolus Poort Solar Energy Facility near Noupoort, Northern Cape Province | 14/12/16/3/3/1/729 | Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd | 73-74 |
| January 2013 | Environmental Impact Assessment Process Final Basic Assessment Report, Proposed Gillmer Solar Energy Facility near Noupoort, Northern Cape Province | 14/12/16/3/3/1/735 | Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd | 74-75 & 78-79, 82-83 |
| January 2013 | Environmental Impact Assessment Process Final Basic Assessment Report, Proposed Inkululeko Solar Energy Facility near Noupoort, Northern Cape Province | 14/12/16/3/3/1/553 | Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd | 63, 66 & 68 |
| January 2013 | Environmental Impact Assessment Process Final Basic Assessment Report, Proposed Kleinfontein Solar Energy Facility near Noupoort, Northern Cape Province | 12/12/20/3//2654 | Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd | 45-46, 59, 61 |
| April 2016 | Proposed Umsobomvu Wind Energy Facility, Northern Cape & Eastern Cape Provinces | 14/12/16/3/3/2/730 | Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd | 117-121, 127, 147 |
| December 2017 | Social Impact Assessment Phezukomoya Wind Energy Facility Northern Cape and Eastern Cape Province | Specialist report | Tony Barbour Environmental Consultant and Researcher | Entire report |
| December 2017 | Social Impact Assessment San Kraal Wind Energy Facility Northern and Eastern Cape Province | Specialist report | Tony Barbour Environmental Consultant and Researcher | Entire report |
| March 2018 | Environmental Impact Assessment Report for the Proposed 315 MW Phezukomoya Wind Energy Facility and Grid Connection, Northern and Eastern Cape Provinces | 14/12/16/3/3/2/1028 | Arcus Consultancy Services South Africa (Pty) Limited | ix, 329-338, 350 |
| March 2018 | Environmental Impact Assessment Report for the Proposed 390 MW San Kraal Wind Energy Facility and Grid Connection, Northern and Eastern Cape Provinces | 14/12/16/3/3/2/1029 | Arcus Consultancy Services South Africa (Pty) Limited | vii-viii, 328-337, 350 |

**Recommendation**

Recommendations of the reports reviewed indicate that, on an overall basis, the social benefits of renewable energy projects in the area outweigh the negative benefits and that the negative social impacts can be mitigated.

In this regard the following cumulative impacts are addressed below:

- Risk of HIV
- Sense of place
- Service supplies and infrastructure, and
- The economic benefit.

## 8.2. RISK OF HIV INFECTIONS[2]

With an HIV prevalence rate of 17.5%, the Northern Cape Province has the lowest HIV prevalence rate of all provinces across South African with the Eastern Cape having the third highest rate at 31.4%. At a district level the Pixley ka Seme District Municipality has the 5th lowest HIV prevalence rate across all district municipalities in South Africa at 15.1%. In comparison, the Chris Hani district has the 14th highest HIV prevalence rate across all district municipalities with a rate of 34.5%. It is most likely that this higher prevalence rates in the Chris Hani district will be associated with more densely populated urban areas and along transport routes, considering that the Chris Hani district serves as a linking node to all regions in the Eastern Cape.

With most projects falling within what is a sparsely populated region of the Northern Cape and along the sparsely populated Northern and Eastern Cape boarder, it is likely that HIV prevalence rates will be low within the immediate vicinity of these projects. Consequently, it is important to consider the risk of the spread of HIV associated with these projects, particularly where the workforce is recruited from areas that are likely to have relatively high levels of HIV such as Middelburg and other urban areas further afield. This is important as it is well documented on both an international and local basis that the construction industry carries with it a high risk of HIV (Meintjes, Bowen, & Root, 2007; Bowen, Dorrington, Distiller, Lake, & Besesar, 2008; Wasie, et al., 2015; Bowen P. , Govender, Edwards, & Cattell, 2016; Kikwasi & Lukwale, 2017; Bowen P. , Govender, Edwards, & Lake, 2018) which can be spread amongst the local communities, particularly through an increase in prostitution that follows the

[2] HIV prevalence rates are at 2013 figures based on The 2013 National Antenatal Sentinel HIV Prevalence Survey, South Africa.

availability of disposable income. It is also well documented, on both an international and local level, that HIV is also spread by truck drivers (Singh & Malaviya, 1994; Ramjee & Gouws, 2002; Strauss, et al., 2018) and there is likely to be an increase in truck drivers in the area as equipment and material is delivered to the various construction sites.

These issues, associated with the area being extremely poor and the associated disposable income that will follow the construction workers and truck drivers to the area, will heighten the risk of the spread of HIV infections across what is a rather remote region. In this regard The World Bank (2009, pp. 367-368) had indicated a strong link between infrastructure projects and health as:

> "*Transport, mobility, and gender inequality increase the spread of HIV and AIDS, which along with other infectious diseases, follow transport and construction workers on transport networks and other infrastructure into rural areas, causing serious economic impacts.*"

## 8.3. TRANSFORMATION OF SENSE OF PLACE

There is also a concern amongst various interest groups that the proliferation of renewable energy facilities in the Karoo will have a significant and negative cumulative social impact on the area's isolated, tranquil and pristine environment[3]. In this regard issues such as the aesthetic appearance associated with highly visible solar parks and wind farms; the noise from turbine blades; the loss of bird and bat life and its effect on tourism; as well as the disruption of social networks have all been cited amongst these concerns.

This is, however, a complex issue as there are varying opinions in respect of the aesthetic appearance of renewable energy facilities with some regarding them in a far more positive light than others (Firestone, Bidwell, Gardner, & Knapp, 2018; Schneider, Mudra, & Kozumplíková, 2018). In a study of public attitudes towards onshore windfarms in south-west Scotland it was found that many regarded the visual impact of these developments in a positive light. It must, however, be noted that this was linked with community ownership having a positive impact on public attitudes towards windfarm developments in Scotland (Warren & McFadyen, 2010). A further and important consideration in this regard is of an ethical nature

[3] Amongst others see for instance:
1. Heritage South Africa's Karoo News Group http://heritagesa.org/wp/2222-2/
2. Alternative sources of energy for South Africa in various shades of green (Smit, 2011)
3. Social media sites such as the Facebook Karoo Energy Debate https://www.facebook.com/TheKarooEnergyDebate/
4. Why the Karoo. (Research Chair in the Sociology of Land, Environment and Sustainable Development. Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology, Stellenbosch University, 2016).

associated with community acceptance and energy justice and raises the question of the incorporation of public acceptance, particularly that of the underrepresented, into energy policy (Roddisa, Carvera, Dallimerb, Normana, & Ziva, 2018, pp. 362-363).

## 8.4. SERVICES, SUPPLIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

With the increase in renewable energy facilities in the area it is quite likely that the local authorities, currently hard pressed to deliver services, will find it difficult to keep up with these developments. The influx of construction workers is likely to place pressure on accommodation and the need for both services and supplies. Noupoort, Hanover and Middelburg, being within a 35 km radius of these projects, are likely to bear the brunt of the demand for accommodation, services and supplies. On this basis market demands could inflate costs which may have a negative effect on local communities, particularly the poor, who may be forced to pay higher prices for essential supplies resulting in an escalation in the cost of living in the area.

Social services such as medical and educational facilities could also be placed under pressure due to increased demand. Although this may reach its peak during the construction phase it should be mitigated somewhat by the fact that the construction of the various project will be spread across different timelines, with some project commencing while others reach completion. Employing local people across the various projects and project phases will help in reducing the stress placed on services, supplies and infrastructure in the area.

During the operational phases it is likely that these demands will continue as operational staff take up more long-term residency in the area and are supported by service and maintenance personnel who may spend some time on site on a contractual basis. An influx of temporary maintenance and service workers is likely to last over the operational phase of the projects but is likely to settle within the medium term as the economy adjusts and the municipal authorities are able to respond to this growth.

## 8.5. ECONOMIC BENEFIT

The cumulative economic impact of the project will be both positive and negative. The negative economic impacts, associated with a possible rise in living costs driven by market demand, are considered under the section above. Under this section the positive economic impacts will be addressed.

From a positive perspective the proliferation of renewable energy facilities within the region is likely to result in significant and positive cumulative impacts in the area associated with both direct and indirect job creation, skills development, training opportunities, and the creation of business opportunities for local businesses. The district and local municipalities within the area have identified renewable energy as a strategic economic opportunity in a region that previously had few such opportunities. This is indicated in the various IDPs and LEDs pertaining to the affected municipalities.

## 8.6. ASSESSMENT OF CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

The cumulative impacts discussed above are assessed below in **Table 14**. It must, however, be noted that this assessment is at a superficial level as any in-depth investigation of the cumulative effects of the various developments being planned for the region are beyond the scope of this study as they would require a broad based investigation on a far larger scale.

**Table 14: Assessment of cumulative impacts**

| 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 |
| Risk of HIV infection | Risk associated with the influx of workers in the area. | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 51 | - | High | Mitigation can only be implemented on a regional basis and are not project specific.<br>Ensure that all companies coming into the area have and are implementing an effective HIV/AIDS policy.<br>Introduce HIV/ADS awareness programs to schools and youth institutions.<br>Carefully monitor and report on the HIV status of citizens in the region.<br>Be proactive in dealing with any increase in the HIV prevalence rate in the area. | 3 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 32 | - | Medium |
| Sense of place | The transformation of the sense of place of the region. | 2 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 51 | - | High | Mitigation measures can only be implemented on a regional basis and are not project specific.<br>Consider undertaking a cumulative impact assessment to evaluate the changes taking place across the area on a broader scale.<br>Form a regional work group tasked with addressing the effect of changes to the sense of place of the region.<br>Establish grievance mechanisms to deal with complaints associated with changes to the area.<br>Enlighten the public about the need and benefits of renewable energy.<br>Engage with the tourism businesses and authorities in the region to identify any areas of cooperation that could exist. | 2 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 34 | - | Medium |

| 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 |
| Services, supplies and infrastructure | The influx of construction workers is likely to place pressure on accommodation and the need for both services and supplies. | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 22 | - | Low | <u>Mitigation measures can only be implemented on a regional basis and are not project specific.</u><br>Engage with the municipal authorities to ensure that they are aware of the expansion planned for the area and the possible consequences of this expansion.<br>Ensure that local labour is recruited in respect of these developments in the area. | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 20 | - | Low |
| Economic | A proliferation of renewable energy facilities across the region is likely to result in significant and positive impacts in the area in terms of job creation, skills development, training opportunities and the creation of business opportunities for local businesses. | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 36 | + | Medium | <u>Optimisation measures can only be implemented on a regional basis and are not project specific.</u><br>Implement a training and skills development programme for locals.<br>Ensure that the procurement policy supports local enterprises.<br>Work closely with the appropriate municipal structures in regard to establishing a social responsibility programme.<br>Ensure that any trusts or funds are strictly managed in respect of outcomes and funds allocated. | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 48 | + | High |

The assessment of the cumulative impacts takes into consideration the impacts associated with all renewable energy facilities within a 35 km circumference of the Umsobomvu Solar PV Facilities. On this basis no fatal flaws associated with the cumulative impacts are evident at a social level. The findings support the recommendations of the reports listed in **Table 13** that, on an overall basis, the social benefits of renewable energy projects in the area outweigh the negative benefits and that the negative social impacts can be mitigated.

The impacts as assessed in respect of the construction and operational phases as well as the ‘no-go’ alternative and cumulative impacts are summarised for all three solar PV facilities and respective grid connection infrastructure in **Table 15** with a pre and post mitigation comparison being presented. This summery is in respect of all three solar PV facilities and associated grid connection infrastructure as there are no significant differences in respect of the social impacts associated with these facilities. To present three different comparative tables for each project would be repetitive and superfluous as the impacts associated with all three facilities are identical.

**Table 15: Impact summary for all three solar PV energy facilities and associated grid infrastructure**

| Construction Phase | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Environmental parameter** | **Issues** | **Rating prior to mitigation** | **Average** | **Rating post mitigation** | **Average** |
| **Health & social wellbeing** | Annoyance, dust and noise | -16 low | **Health & social wellbeing -27 medium** | -8 low | **Health & social wellbeing -20 low** |
| | Increase in crime | -33 medium | | -22 low | |
| | Increased risk of HIV infections | -48 high | | -32 medium | |
| | Influx of construction workers and job seekers | -22 low | | -20 low | |
| | Hazard exposure. | -20 low | | -18 low | |
| | | | | | |
| **Quality of the living environment** | Disruption of daily living patterns | -20 low | **Quality of the living environment -20 low** | -18 low | **Quality of the living environment-18 low** |
| | Disruptions to social and community infrastructure | -20 low | | -18 low | |
| | | | | | |
| **Economic** | Job creation and skills development | +22 low | **Economic +23 low** | +24 medium | **Economic +25 medium** |
| | Socio-economic stimulation | +24 medium | | +24 medium | |
| | | | | | |
| **Operational Phase** | | | | | |
| **Quality of the living environment** | Transformation of the sense of place | -51 high | **Quality of the living environment -51 high** | -34 medium | **Quality of the living environment -34 medium** |
| | | | | | |
| **Economic** | Job creation and skills development | +24 medium | **Economic +26 medium** | +24 medium | **Economic +33 medium** |
| | Socio-economic stimulation | +28 medium | | +42 medium | |
| | | | | | |
| **No Project Alternative** | | | | | |
| **No project** | Status quo will remain | -51 high | **-51 high** | No mitigation measures | |
| | | | | | |
| **Cumulative Impacts** | | | | | |
| **Health & social wellbeing** | Risk of HIV | -51 high | **Health & social wellbeing -51 high** | -32 medium | **Health & social wellbeing -32 medium** |
| | | | | | |
| **Quality of the living environment** | Transformation of sense of place | -51 high | **Quality of the living environment -36.5 medium** | -34 medium | **Quality of the living environment -27 medium** |
| | Services, supplies & infrastructure | -22 low | | -20 low | |
| | | | | | |
| **Economic** | Job creation, skills development and socio-economic stimulation | +36 medium | **Economic +36 medium** | +48 high | **Economic +48 high** |

# 9. COMPARATIVE ASSESSMENT OF LAYOUT ALTERNATIVES

As no social preference emerged in respect of any of the grid connection options, the other specialist reports were perused to establish if there was any preference that would have an influence on the social aspect. The results of this analysis are as follows:

**Agricultural Report** (Lanz, 2019, p. 32)
"*There is no preference in terms of the proposed power line route alternatives and all alternatives are supported*."

**Avifauna Report** (Chris van Rooyen Consulting, 2019)
There are no preferences with regard to the PV infrastructure alternatives inclusive of the laydown areas and O&M buildings. In respect of the power line corridors and associated substations the following preferences were identified:

**Mooi Plaats Solar PV Facility:**

Grid connection option 1a & 1b preferred as they are the shorter alternatives.

Grid connection option 2a & 2b are least preferred due to their length over Option 1.

**Wonderheuvel Solar PV Facility:**

Grid connection options 1a, 1b, 1c & 1d are least preferred due to being longer than options 2 and 3.

Grid connection options 2a, 2b & 3 are preferred due to them being shorter.

**Paarde Valley Solar PV Facility:**

Grid connection options 1a, 1b, 1c & 1d are least preferred as they will create a new impact, because for most of the way they do not run parallel to any of the other options.

Grid connection options 2a, 2b, 2c & 2d are preferred as the majority of the way these routes run parallel to the proposed Mooiplaats and Wonderheuvel grid connection options and consequently will not create a new impact.

Due to the ecological importance of birds and the long standing relationship between humans and birds a social significance exists in respect of the avifauna report. This significance is recognised in the comparative assessment of layout alternatives below.

**Ecology Scoping Assessment** (David Hoare Consulting (Pty) Ltd, 2019, p. 106)

> "*If it is technically possible to share a powerline between all three projects, i.e. without having multiple powerlines adjacent to one another, then it is preferable to use a single corridor for all the projects, rather than splitting the projects. Due to the fact that Mooi Plaats only has the option to link to Hydra D MTS, it would be preferable to have all the projects link up to Hydra D MTS than to have an additional powerline linking up to Coleskop WEF – the overall impact will be less if only one corridor is utilized.* ***If projects share a single powerline then the potential impact is very different to if separate powerlines have to be constructed adjacent to one another.***"

As with the avifauna report, the ecological assessment also caries social significance as a result of the interdependency of people and nature and as such is recognised in the comparative assessment.

**Heritage Assessment** (PGS Heritage (Pty) Ltd, 2019)

In respect of the PV infrastructure alternatives, inclusive of the laydown areas and O&M buildings, there are no preferences. With regard to the grid connection infrastructure there is no preference in respect of the Mooi Plaats facility. However, although all alternatives for the Wonderheuvel and Paarde Valley facilities are assessed as being favourable, a paleontological sensitive area situated on the northern corridor towards substation 3a has been identified. Although considered favourable, this area will require monitoring during construction and is consequently recognised in the comparative assessment below.

**Surface Water Assessment** (SiVEST SA (Pty) Ltd, 2019a)

A number of preferred and least preferred options emerged in the surface water assessment. Due to the social significance of securing water resources these preferences are incorporated below in the comparative assessment of the project alternatives.

**Transportation Impact Assessment** (SiVEST SA (Pty) Ltd, 2019c)

No alternatives emerged in the transportation assessment in respect of either the PV infrastructure or the power line corridors and associated substations.

**Visual Impact Assessment** (SiVEST SA (Pty) Ltd, 2019b, pp. 109-117)

The results of the visual assessment identified various preferences which, due to the fact that visual impact will have a significant influence in respect of the social construct 'a sense of place' are incorporated into the comparative assessment below.

Based on the above discussion the socially preferred options are presented in **Table 16**.

**Table 16: Comparative assessment of alternative grid connection infrastructure**

| Key | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Preferred** | The alternative will result in a low impact / reduce the impact | |
| **Favorable** | The impact will be relatively insignificant | |
| **Least preferred** | The alternative will result in a high impact / increase the impact | |
| **No preference** | The alternative will result in equal impacts | |
| | | |
| **PV infrastructure alternatives (laydown areas and O&M buildings)** | **Preference** | **Reasons (incl. potential issues)** |
| **MOOI PLAATS SOLAR PV FACILITY** | | |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 1 | Preferred | Based on findings of the surface water assessment – Lower impact to surface water and consequently lower social risk associated with surface water. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 2 | Preferred | Based on findings of the surface water assessment – Lower impact to surface water and consequently lower social risk associated with surface water. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 3 | Preferred | Based on findings of the surface water assessment – Lower impact to surface water and consequently lower social risk associated with surface water. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 4 | Least preferred | Based on findings of the surface water and visual assessments – Higher impact on surface water is likely to carry associated social risk while higher visual impacts are likely to have a negative effect on a sense of place. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 5 | Least preferred | Based on findings of the surface water assessment – Higher impact on surface water is likely to carry associated social risk. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 6 | Least preferred | Based on findings of the surface water assessment – Higher impact on surface water is likely to carry associated social risk. |
| **WONDERHEUVEL SOLAR PV FACILITY** | | |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 1 | Preferred | Based on findings of the surface water assessment – Lower impact to surface water and consequently lower social risk associated with surface water. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 2 | Preferred | Based on findings of the surface water assessment – Lower impact to surface water and consequently lower social risk associated with surface water. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 3 | Preferred | Based on findings of the surface water assessment – Lower impact to surface water and consequently lower social risk associated with surface water. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 4 | Preferred | Based on findings of the surface water assessment – Lower impact to surface water and consequently lower social risk associated with surface water. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 5 | Least preferred | Based on findings of the surface water assessment – Higher impact on surface water is likely to carry associated social risk. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 6 | Least preferred | Based on findings of the surface water and visual assessments – Higher impact on surface water is likely to carry associated social risk while higher visual impacts are likely to have a negative effect on a sense of place. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 7 | Least preferred | Based on findings of the surface water assessment – Higher impact on surface water is likely to carry associated social risk. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 8 | Least preferred | Based on findings of the surface water and visual assessments – Higher impact on surface water is likely to carry associated social risk while higher visual impacts are likely to have a negative effect on a sense of place. |
| **PAARDE VALLEY SOLAR PV FACILITY** | | |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 1 | Preferred | Based on findings of the surface water assessment – Lower impact to surface water and consequent lower social risk. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 2 | Preferred | Based on findings of the surface water assessment – Lower impact to surface water and consequent lower social risk. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 3 | Preferred | Based on findings of the surface water assessment – Lower impact to surface water and consequent lower social risk. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 4 | Preferred | Based on findings of the surface water assessment – Lower impact to surface water and consequent lower social risk. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 5 | Preferred | Based on findings of the surface water assessment – Lower impact to surface water and consequent lower social risk. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 6 | Least preferred | Based on findings of the surface water assessment – Higher impact on surface water is likely to carry associated social risk. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 7 | Least preferred | Based on findings of the surface water and visual assessments – Higher impact on surface water is likely to carry associated social risk while higher visual impacts are likely to have a negative effect on a sense of place. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 8 | Least preferred | Based on findings of the surface water assessment – Higher impact on surface water is likely to carry associated social risk. |
| Laydown Area and O&M Building Site Option 9 | Least preferred | Based on findings of the surface water assessment – Higher impact on surface water is likely to carry associated social risk. |

| Grid Connection Infrastructure Alternatives (Power Line Corridors and Associated Substations) | Preference | Reasons (incl. Potential issues) |
|---|---|---|
| **MOOI PLAATS SOLAR PV FACILITY** | | |
| Grid Connection Option 1a | Preferred | Based on findings of the surface water assessment – Lower impact to surface water and consequent lower social risk. |
| Grid Connection Option 1b | Preferred | Based on findings of the surface water assessment – Lower impact to surface water and consequent lower social risk. |
| Grid Connection Option 2a | Favourable | Based on the findings of the visual assessment and the association with the social construct "a sense of place". |
| Grid Connection Option 2b | Favourable | Based on the findings of the visual assessment and the association with the social construct "a sense of place". |
| **WONDERHEUVEL SOLAR PV FACILITY** | | |
| Grid Connection Option 1a | Least preferred | Based on findings of the surface water assessment – Higher impact on surface and associated social risk. |
| Grid Connection Option 1b | Least preferred | Based on findings of the surface water assessment – Higher impact on surface and associated social risk. |
| Grid Connection Option 1c | Least preferred | Based on findings of the surface water assessment – Higher impact on surface and associated social risk. |
| Grid Connection Option 1d | Least preferred | Based on findings of the surface water assessment – Higher impact on surface and associated social risk. |
| Grid Connection Option 2a | Favourable | Based on the findings of the surface water and visual assessment and the related social risk and association with the social construct "a sense of place". |
| Grid Connection Option 2b | Favourable | Based on the findings of the surface water and visual assessment and the |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | related social risk and association with the social construct "a sense of place". |
| Grid Connection Option 3 | Preferred | Based on findings of the surface water assessment – Lower impact to surface water and consequent lower social risk. |
| **PAARDE VALLEY SOLAR PV FACILITY** | | |
| Grid Connection Option 1a | Least preferred | Based on findings of the surface water assessment – Higher impact on surface and associated social risk. |
| Grid Connection Option 1b | Least preferred | Based on findings of the surface water assessment – Higher impact on surface and associated social risk. |
| Grid Connection Option 1c | Least preferred | Based on findings of the surface water assessment – Higher impact on surface and associated social risk. |
| Grid Connection Option 1d | Least preferred | Based on findings of the surface water assessment – Higher impact on surface and associated social risk. |
| Grid Connection Option 2a | Preferred | Based on findings of the surface water assessment – Lower impact to surface water and consequent lower social risk. |
| Grid Connection Option 2b | Preferred | Based on findings of the surface water assessment – Lower impact to surface water and consequent lower social risk. |
| Grid Connection Option 2c | Preferred | Based on findings of the surface water assessment – Lower impact to surface water and consequent lower social risk. |
| Grid Connection Option 2d | Preferred | Based on findings of the surface water assessment – Lower impact to surface water and consequent lower social risk. |

# 10. Conclusion and Recommendations

In assessing the social impact of the Umsobomvu Solar PV Facilities, it was found that in respect of the energy needs of the country and South Africa's need to reduce its carbon emissions that the project fits with national, provincial and municipal policy.

Regarding the social impacts associated with the project it was found that most apply over the short term to the construction phase of the project. Of these impacts all can be mitigated to within acceptable ranges and there are no fatal flaws associated with the construction or operation of the project.

On a cumulative basis it is evident that the cumulative impacts associated with changes to the social environment of the region are more significant than those attached to the project in isolation. On a negative front there are two issues associated with developments in the region that are of most concern. The first of these issues is the change to the sense of place of an area that was once considered a pristine region of South Africa. The second is the potential, through an influx of labour and an increase in transportation to constructions sites, of the risk for the prevalence of HIV to rise in an area that has a relatively low HIV prevalence rate. In this regard it is important that the relevant authorities recognise these issues and find ways of mitigating them to ensure that they do not undermine the benefit that renewable energy projects bring, both to the region as well as to the country as a whole. These issues are beyond a project specific basis and as such will need to be addressed at a higher level.

## 10.1. Impact Statement

The project site and surrounding areas are sparsely populated with the agricultural potential of the area being low. Accordingly, the negative social impacts associated with the proposed Mooi Plaats, Wonderheuvel and Paarde Valley solar PV facilities and associated grid connection infrastructure are of low to moderate significance with most occurring over the short term construction phase. The project has a positive element which outweighs the negative in that it will contribute towards the supply of renewable energy into a grid system heavily reliant on coal powered energy generation. In this sense the projects form part of a national effort to reduce South Africa's carbon emissions and thus carries with it a significant social benefit and is thus supported and should proceed.

## 10.2. EIA PHASE

As the area is sparsely populated and the negative social impacts associated with all three solar PV facilities and associated grid infrastructure of moderate significance it is most unlikely that any further social study will be necessary. This will, however, be dependent on the outcome of the public participation process which may result in a need to update the current report by incorporating the comments recorded and updating the social impacts accordingly.

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**Appendix 1:- Environmental impact assessment methodology**

# 1. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) METHODOLOGY

The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Methodology assists in evaluating the overall effect of a proposed activity on the environment. Determining of the significance of an environmental impact on an environmental parameter is determined through a systematic analysis.

## 1.1. Determination of Significance of Impacts

Significance is determined through a synthesis of impact characteristics which include context and intensity of an impact. Context refers to the geographical scale (i.e. site, local, national or global), whereas intensity is defined by the severity of the impact e.g. the magnitude of deviation from background conditions, the size of the area affected, the duration of the impact and the overall probability of occurrence. Significance is calculated as shown in **Table 1**.

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 total number of points scored for each impact indicates the level of significance of the impact.

## 1.2. Impact Rating System

The impact assessment must take account of the nature, scale and duration of effects on the environment and whether such effects are positive (beneficial) or negative (detrimental). Each issue / impact is also assessed according to the various project stages, as follows:

- Planning;
- 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 has also been included.

***The significance of Cumulative Impacts should also be rated (As per the Excel Spreadsheet Template).***

### 1.2.1. Rating System Used to Classify Impacts

The rating system is applied to the potential impact on the receiving environment and includes an objective evaluation of the possible mitigation of the impact. Impacts have been consolidated into one (1) rating. In assessing the significance of each issue the following criteria (including an allocated point system) is used:

**Table 1: Rating of impacts criteria**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **ENVIRONMENTAL PARAMETER** | | |
| A brief description of the environmental aspect likely to be affected by the proposed activity (e.g. Surface Water). | | |
| **ISSUE / IMPACT / ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECT / NATURE** | | |
| Include a brief description of the impact of environmental parameter being assessed in the context of the project. This criterion includes a brief written statement of the environmental aspect being impacted upon by a particular action or activity (e.g. oil spill in surface water). | | |
| **EXTENT (E)** | | |
| This is defined as the area over which the impact will be expressed. Typically, the severity and significance of an impact have different scales and as such bracketing ranges are often required. This is often useful during the detailed assessment of a project in terms of further defining the determined. | | |
| 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 |
| **PROBABILITY (P)** | | |
| 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). |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **REVERSIBILITY (R)** | | |
| This describes the degree to which an impact on an environmental parameter 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. |
| **IRREPLACEABLE LOSS OF RESOURCES (L)** | | |
| 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. |
| **DURATION (D)** | | |
| This describes the duration of the impacts on the environmental parameter. Duration indicates the lifetime of the impact as a result of the proposed activity. | | |
| 1 | Short term | The impact and its effects will either disappear with mitigation or will be mitigated through natural process in a span shorter than the construction phase (0 – 1 years), or the impact and its effects 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 and its effects 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 – 50 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 transient (Indefinite). |

| INTENSITY / MAGNITUDE (I / M) | | |
|---|---|---|
| Describes the severity of an impact (i.e. whether the impact has the ability to alter the functionality or quality of a system permanently or temporarily). | | |
| 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 (system collapse). Rehabilitation and remediation often impossible. If possible rehabilitation and remediation often unfeasible due to extremely high costs of rehabilitation and remediation. |

| SIGNIFICANCE (S) | | |
|---|---|---|
| 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. This describes the significance of the impact on the environmental parameter. The calculation of the significance of an impact uses the following formula:<br><br>**Significance = (Extent + probability + reversibility + irreplaceability + duration) x magnitude/intensity.**<br><br>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** |
| | | |
| 5 to 23 | Negative Low impact | The anticipated impact will have negligible negative effects and will require little to no mitigation. |
| 5 to 23 | Positive Low impact | The anticipated impact will have minor positive effects. |
| 24 to 42 | Negative Medium impact | The anticipated impact will have moderate negative effects and will require moderate mitigation measures. |
| 24 to 42 | Positive Medium impact | The anticipated impact will have moderate positive effects. |
| 43 to 61 | Negative High impact | The anticipated impact will have significant effects and will require significant mitigation measures to achieve an acceptable level of impact. |
| 43 to 61 | Positive High impact | The anticipated impact will have significant positive effects. |
| 62 to 80 | 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". |
| 62 to 80 | Positive Very high impact | The anticipated impact will have highly significant positive effects. |

The table below is to be represented in the Impact Assessment section of the report. The excel spreadsheet template can be used to complete the Impact Assessment.

**Table 2:** Rating of impacts template and example

| 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** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Vegetation and protected plant species | Vegetation clearing for access roads, turbines and their service areas and other infrastructure will impact on vegetation and protected plant species. | 2 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 39 | - | Medium | **Outline/explain the mitigation measures to be undertaken to ameliorate the impacts that are likely to arise from the proposed activity. These measures will be detailed in the EMPr.** | 2 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 24 | - | Low |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Operational Phase** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Fauna | Fauna will be negatively affected by the operation of the wind farm due to the human disturbance, the presence of vehicles on the site and possibly by noise generated by the wind turbines as well. | 2 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 36 | - | Medium | **Outline/explain the mitigation measures to be undertaken to ameliorate the impacts that are likely to arise from the proposed activity. These measures will be detailed in the EMPr.** | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 22 | - | Low |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Decommissioning Phase** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Fauna | Fauna will be negatively affected by the decommissioning of the wind farm due to the human disturbance, the presence and operation of vehicles and heavy machinery on the site and the noise generated. | 2 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 30 | - | Medium | **Outline/explain the mitigation measures to be undertaken to ameliorate the impacts that are likely to arise from the proposed activity. These measures will be detailed in the EMPr.** | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 18 | - | Low |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Cumulative** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Broad-scale ecological processes | Transformation and presence of the facility will contribute to cumulative habitat loss and impacts on broad-scale ecological processes such as fragmentation. | 2 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 26 | - | Medium | **Outline/explain the mitigation measures to be undertaken to ameliorate the impacts that are likely to arise from the proposed activity. These measures will be detailed in the EMPr.** | 2 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 22 | - | Low |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |