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Palaeontological Impact Assessments & Heritage Management,
Natural History Education, Tourism, Research

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Palaeontological Heritage Resources Comment:

**PROPOSED BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM FOR THE AUTHORIZED AEP
 BLOEMSMOND SOLAR 1 FACILITY ON PORTIONS 5 AND 14 OF THE FARM
 BLOEMSMOND 455 NEAR UPINGTON, SIYANDA DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY,
 NORTHERN CAPE**

A palaeontological heritage assessment (PIA) of the AEP Bloemsmond Solar 1 Facility near Upington was submitted by the author (Almond 2015) and concluded that, given the low palaeontological sensitivity of the project area (1) the proposed development was unlikely to have a significant impact on local fossil heritage resources and (2) pending the potential discovery of significant new fossils remains before or during construction, exemption from further specialist palaeontological studies and mitigation should be granted for this development.

The Bloemsmond Solar 1 Facility has subsequently been granted Environmental Authorization (EA) (DEA Ref. No: 14/12/16/3/3/2/815, dated 26 April 2016).

The applicant now intends to apply for an Amendment to the EA to make provision for a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) within the authorized footprint and adjacent to the on-site sub-station (black rectangle in Figure 1). The footprint of the BESS will be approximately 4.2 hectares.

Given the generally low to very low palaeontological sensitivity of the Bloemsmond Solar 1 project area, it is concluded that:

- the inclusion of a BESS adjacent to the on-site substation will not change the nature or significance any of the impacts assessed in the original PIA study;
- the proposed BESS is unlikely to result in any additional impacts that were not previously assessed; and
- there are no additional management outcomes or mitigation measures in terms of palaeontological heritage that would be applicable to the proposed BESS.

There are no objections on palaeontological heritage grounds to the proposed amendment of the EA for this solar facility.

John E. Almond

Dr John E. Almond (palaeontologist)

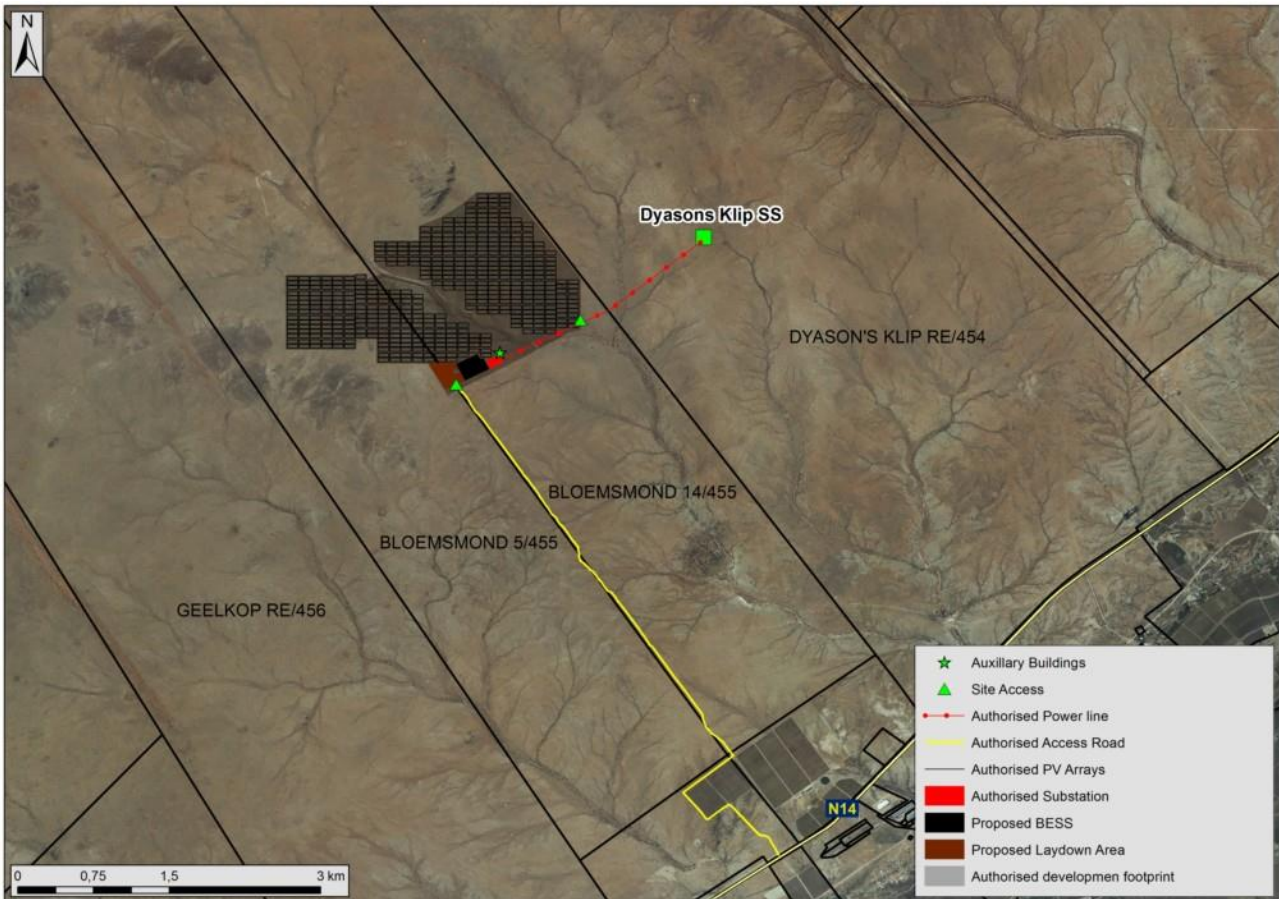


Figure 1: Map showing the location and layout of the authorized AEP Bloemsmond Solar 1 Facility near Upington, Northern Cape including the proposed site for the associated BESS (black rectangle) (Image provided by Cape EAPrac).

REFERENCES

ALMOND, J.E. 2015. Proposed AEP Bloemsmond Solar 1 & Solar 2 PV Facilities on the farm Bloemsmond 455 near Upington, Siyanda District Municipality, Northern Cape. Recommended exemption from further palaeontological studies, 6 pp. Natura Viva cc, Cape Town.