

Phinda Power Producers (Pty) Ltd

# **NOISE REPORT**

## **FOR SCOPING PURPOSES**

for the

**Proposed Development of a 450 MW Emergency Gas to  
Power Facility near Richards Bay, KwaZulu Natal**



*Study done for:*

savannah  
environmental

*Prepared by:*

 **EARES**  
Enviro Acoustic Research

P.O. Box 2047, Garfontein East, 0060  
Tel: 012 – 004 0362, Fax: 086 – 621 0292, E-mail: [info@eares.co.za](mailto:info@eares.co.za)

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE**

Enviro-Acoustic Research cc was commissioned to undertake a specialist study to determine the potential noise impact on the surrounding environment due to the proposed development of an Emergency Gas to Power Plant near Richards Bay, KwaZulu-Natal.

This report is the result of the (desktop) scoping phase study of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process investigating the potential noise impact that such a facility may have on the surrounding environment, highlighting methodologies, potential issues to be investigated as well as preliminary findings and recommendations. The report considers a preferred site identified during the screening phase for development in terms of acoustics.

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Phinda Power Producers (Pty) Ltd intend on developing a 450MW emergency gas to power facility located on various erven within the Richards Bay IDZ, KwaZulu Natal. Two technology alternatives are investigated, namely:

- a number of engines connected to generators; or
- a number of generator-coupled gas turbines.

The power station will have an installed capacity of up to 450MW, to be operated on either LPG or naphtha as the initial fuel source and later to be converted from utilising LPG/naphtha to natural gas.

### **NOISE IMPACT DETERMINATION AND FINDINGS**

With the preliminary data available, this assessment indicated that there is a slight risk of a noise impact during the construction and operational phases due to the proximity of noise-sensitive receptors to the project site (where noise generating activities may take place).

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the noise impact be investigated in more detail during the EIA phase. The following information would be considered in the more detailed assessment:

- Project design and layout;
- Topography and intervening buildings between the proposed activity and identified NSD;

- A more accurate description of equipment to be used in and around the proposed power plant. This would include data such as the type of equipment, but also the number of that equipment to be used.

Information not provided or available will be estimated using internet sources.

## **CONTENTS OF THE SPECIALIST REPORT – CHECKLIST**

<b>Contents of this report in terms of Regulation GNR 982 of 2014, Appendix 6</b>	<b>Cross-reference in this report</b>
(a) details of – the specialist who prepared the report; and the expertise of that specialist to compile a specialist report including a curriculum vitae;	<b>Section 1</b>
(b) a declaration that the specialist is independent in a form as may be specified by the competent authority;	<b>Section 2</b> <i>(also separate document to this report)</i>
(c) an indication of the scope of, and the purpose for which, the report was prepared; - an indication of the scope of, and age of base data used for the specialist report; - a description of existing impacts of the site, cumulative impacts of the proposed development and levels of acceptable change.	<b>Section 3.3.1 and 5.1</b> <b>Ambient sound levels to be discussed in detail in the Environmental Noise Impact Assessment</b>
(d) the duration, date and season of the site investigation and the relevance of the season to the outcome of the assessment;	<b>Section 3.3.1</b>
(e) a description of the methodology adopted in preparing the report or carrying out the specialised process inclusive of equipment and modelling used;	<b>Section 3.5</b>
(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;	<b>Sections 3.4</b> and <b>Figure 3-3</b> No site alternatives investigated.
(g) an identification of any areas to be avoided, including buffers;	<b>Figure 3-2</b>
(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;	<b>Figure 3-2</b>
(i) a description of any assumptions made and any uncertainties or gaps in knowledge;	<b>Section 8</b>
(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;	<b>Sections 10 and 12</b>
(p) a summary and copies of any comments received during any consultation process and where applicable all responses thereto; and	No comments received <b>(Section 3.5)</b>
(q) any other information requested by the competent authority.	Nothing requested

**This report should be sited as:**

De Jager, M. (2020): "Noise Report for Scoping Purposes for the Proposed Development of a 450 MW Emergency Gas to Power Facility near Richards Bay, KwaZulu Natal". Enviro-Acoustic Research CC, Pretoria

**Client:**

Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd  
for Phinda Power Producers (Pty) Ltd

PO BOX 148  
Sunninghill  
Gauteng  
2157

**Report no:**

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**Author:**

M. de Jager (B. Eng (Chem))

**Review:**

Johan Maré (M. Sc., Pr.Sci.Nat)

**Date:**

September 2020

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## **GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS**

AADT	Annual Average Daily Traffic
AZSL	Acceptable Zone Sound Level (Rating Level)
EARES	Enviro Acoustic Research cc
ECA	Environment Conservation Act (Act 78 of 1989)
EMP	Environmental Management Plan
FEL	Front End Loader
IDZ	Industrial Development Zone
IPP	Independent Power Producer
i.e.	that is
IFC	International Finance Corporation
km	kilometres
LHD	Load haul dumper
LPG	Liquid Petroleum Gas
m	Meters (measurement of distance)
m <sup>2</sup>	Square meter
m <sup>3</sup>	Cubic meter
mamsl	Meters above mean sea level
NEMA	National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act 107 of 1998)
NCR	Noise Control Regulations (under Section 25 of the ECA)
RMPP	Risk Mitigation Power Plant
SABS	South African Bureau of Standards
SANS	South African National Standards
TLB	Tip Load Bucket
UTM	Universal Transverse Mercator
WHO	World Health Organisation

## 1 THE AUTHOR

The Author, Morné de Jager, started his career in the mining industry as a bursar Learner Official (JCI, Randfontein), working in the mining industry, doing various mining related courses (Rock Mechanics, Surveying, Sampling, Safety and Health [Ventilation, noise, illumination etc] and Metallurgy. He did work in both underground (Coal, Gold and Platinum) as well as opencast (Coal) for 4 years. He changed course from Mining Engineering to Chemical Engineering after his second year of his studies at the University of Pretoria.

After graduation he worked as a Water Pollution Control Officer at the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry for two years (first year seconded from Wates, Meiring and Barnard), where duties included the perusal (evaluation, commenting and recommendation) of various regulatory required documents (such as EMPR's, Water Licence Applications and EIA's), auditing of licence conditions as well as the compilation of Technical Documents.

Since leaving the Department of Water Affairs, Morné has been in private consulting for the last 20 years, managing various projects for the mining and industrial sector, private developers, business, other environmental consulting firms as well as the Department of Water Affairs. During that period he has been involved in various projects, either as specialist, consultant, trainer or project manager, successfully completing these projects within budget and timeframe. During that period he gradually moved towards environmental acoustics, focusing on this field exclusively since 2007.

He has been interested in acoustics as from school days, doing projects mainly related to loudspeaker design. Interest in the matter brought him into the field of Environmental Noise Measurement, Prediction and Control. He has been doing work in this field for the past 13 years, and was involved with the following projects in the last few years:

### Wind Energy Facilities

*Full Environmental Noise Impact Assessments for - Bannf (Vidigenix), iNca Gouda (Aurecon SA), Kangnas (Aurecon), Plateau East and West (Aurecon), Wolf (Aurecon), Outeniqwa (Aurecon), Umsinde Emoyeni (ARCUS), Komsberg (ARCUS), Karee and Kolkies Wind Farms (ARCUS), Canyon Springs (Canyon Springs), Perdekraal (ERM), Zen (Savannah Environmental – SE), Goereesoe (SE), Springfontein (SE), Garob (SE), Project Blue (SE), ESKOM Kleinzee (SE), Walker Bay (SE), Oyster Bay (SE), Hidden Valley (SE), Happy Valley (SE), Deep River (SE), Tsitsikamma (SE), AB (SE), West Coast One (SE), Hopefield II (SE), Namakwa Sands (SE), VentuSA Gouda (SE), Dorper (SE), Amakhala Emoyeni (SE), Klipheuwel (SE), Cookhouse (SE), Cookhouse II (SE), Rhebokfontein (SE), Suurplaat (SE), Karoo Renewables (SE), Koningaas (SE), Eskom Aberdene (SE), Spitskop (SE), Castle (SE), Khai Ma (SE), Poortjies (SE), Korana (SE), IE Moorreesburg (SE), Gunstfontein (SE), Vredenburg (Terramanzi), Loeriesfontein (SIVEST), Rhenosterberg (SIVEST), Noupoot*

	<p>(SiVEST), Prieska (SiVEST), Dwarsrug (SiVEST), Msenge Emoyeni (Windlab), Isivunguvungu Wind Farm (Aurecon), Graskoppies (SiVEST), Hartebeest Leege (SiVEST), Ithemba (SiVEST), !Xha Boom (SiVEST), Kokerboom 1 (Aurecon), Kokerboom 2 (Aurecon), Teekloof (Mainstream), Sutherland (CSIR), Rietrug (CSIR), Sutherland 2 (CSIR), Spitskop West (Terramanzi)</p>
<p><b>Mining and Industry</b></p>	<p>Full Environmental Noise Impact Assessments for – Delft Sand (AGES), BECSA – Middelburg (Golder Associates), Kromkrans Colliery (Geovicon Environmental), SASOL Borrow Pits Project (JMA Consulting), Lesego Platinum (AGES), Tweefontein Colliery (Cleanstream Environmental), Evraz Vametco Mine and Plant (JMA), Goedehoop Colliery (Geovicon), Hacra Project (Prescali Environmental), Der Brochen Platinum Project (J9 Environment), Brandbach Sand (AGES), Verkeerdepans Extension (CleanStream Environmental), Dwaalboom Limestone (AGES), Jagdlust Chrome (MENCO), WPB Coal (MENCO), Landau Expansion (CleanStream Environmental), Otjikoto Gold (AurexGold), Klipfontein Colliery (MENCO), Imbabala Coal (MENCO), ATCOM East Expansion (Jones and Wagner), IPP Waterberg Power Station (SE), Kangra Coal (ERM), Schoongesicht (CleanStream Environmental), EastPlats (CleanStream Environmental), Chapudi Coal (Jacana Environmental), Generaal Coal (JE), Mopane Coal (JE), Glencore Boshoeck Chrome (JMA), Langpan Chrome (PE), Vlakpoort Chrome (PE), Sekoko Coal (SE), Frankford Power (REMIG), Strahrae Coal (Ferret Mining), Transalloys Power Station (Savannah), Pan Palladium Smelter, Iron and PGM Complex (Prescali Environmental), Fumani Gold (AGES), Leiden Coal (EIMS), Colenso Coal and Power Station (SiVEST/EcoPartners), Klippoortjie Coal (Gudani), Rietspruit Crushers (MENCO), Assen Iron (Tshikovha), Transalloys (SE), ESKOM Ankerlig (SE), Pofadder CSP (SE), Nooitgedacht Titano Project (EcoPartners), Algoa Oil Well (EIMS), Spitskop Chrome (EMAssistance), Vlakfontein South (Gudani), Leandra Coal (Jacana), Grazvalley and Zoetveld (Prescali), Tjate Chrome (Prescali), Langpan Chromite (Prescali), Vereeniging Recycling (Pro Roof), Meyerton Recycling (Pro Roof), Hammanskraal Billeting Plant 1 and 2 (Unica), Development of Altona Furnace, Limpopo Province (Prescali Environmental), Haakdoorn drift Opencast at Amandelbult Platinum (Aurecon), Landau Dragline relocation (Aurecon), Stuart Coal Opencast (CleanStream Environmental), Tetra4 Gas Field Development (EIMS), Kao Diamonds – Tipping Village Relocation (EIMS), Kao Diamonds – West Valley Tailings Deposit (EIMS), Upington Special Economic Zone (EOH), Arcellor Mittal CCGT Project near Saldanha (ERM), Malawi Sugar Mill Project (ERM), Proposed Mooifontein Colliery (Geovicon Environmental), Goedehoop North Residue Deposit Expansion (Geovicon Environmental), Mutsho 600MW Coal-Fired Power Plant (Jacana Environmental), Tshivhaso Coal-Fired Power Plant (Savannah Environmental), Doornhoek Fluorspar Project (Exigo)</p>
<p><b>Road and Railway</b></p>	<p>K220 Road Extension (Urbansmart), Boskop Road (MTO), Sekoko Mining (AGES), Davel-Swaziland-Richards Bay Rail Link (Aurecon), Moloto Transport Corridor Status Quo Report and Pre-Feasibility (SiVEST), Postmasburg Housing Development (SE), Tshwane Rapid Transport Project, Phase 1 and 2 (NRM Consulting/City of Tshwane), Transnet Apies-river Bridge Upgrade (Transnet), Gautrain Due-diligence (SiVest), N2 Piet Retief (SANRAL), Atterbury Extension, CoT (Bokomoso Environmental)</p>
<p><b>Airport</b></p>	<p>Oudtshoorn Noise Monitoring (AGES), Sandton Heliport (Alpine Aviation), Tete Airport Scoping (Aurecon)</p>
<p><b>Noise monitoring and Audit Reports</b></p>	<p>Peerboom Colliery (EcoPartners), Thabametsi (Digby Wells), Doxa Deo (Doxa Deo), Harties Dredging (Rand Water), Xstrata Coal – Witbank Regional (Xstrata), Sephaku Delmas (AGES), Amakhala Emoyeni WEF (Windlab Developments), Oyster Bay WEF (Renewable Energy Systems), Tsitsikamma WEF Ambient Sound Level study (Cennergis and SE), Hopefield WEF (Umoya), Wesley WEF (Innowind), Ncora WEF (Innowind), Boschmanspoort (Jones and Wagner), Nqamakwe WEF (Innowind), Hopefield WEF Noise Analysis (Umoya), Dassiesfontein WEF Noise Analysis (BioTherm), Transnet Noise Analysis (Aurecon), Jeffries Bay Wind Farm (Globeleq), Sephaku Aganang (Exigo), Sephaku Delmas (Exigo), Beira Audit (BP/GPT), Nacala Audit (BP/GPT), NATREF (Nemai), Rappa Resources (Rayten),</p>

	<p><i>Measurement Report for Sephaku Delmas (Ages), Measurement Report for Sephaku Aganang (Ages), Development noise measurement protocol for Mamba Cement (Exigo), Measurement Report for Mamba Cement (Exigo), Measurement Report for Nokeng Fluorspar (Exigo), Tsitsikamma Community Wind Farm Pre-operation sound measurements (Cennergi), Waainek WEF Operational Noise Measurements (Innowind), Sedibeng Brewery Noise Measurements (MENCO), Tsitsikamma Community Wind Farm Operational noise measurements (Cennergi), Noupoot Wind Farm Operational noise measurements (Mainstream),</i></p>
<p><b>Small Noise Impact Assessments</b></p>	<p><i>TCTA AMD Project Baseline (AECOM), NATREF (Nemai Consulting), Christian Life Church (UrbanSmart), Kosmosdale (UrbanSmart), Louwardia K220 (UrbanSmart), Richards Bay Port Expansion (AECOM), Babalegi Steel Recycling (AGES), Safika Slag Milling Plant (AGES), Arcelor Mittal WEF (Aurecon), RVM Hydroplant (Aurecon), Grootvlei PS Oil Storage (SiVEST), Rhenosterberg WEF, (SiVEST), Concerto Estate (BPTrust), Ekuseni Youth Centre (MENCO), Kranskop Industrial Park (Cape South Developments), Pretoria Central Mosque (Noman Shaikh), Soshanguve Development (Maluleke Investments), Seshego-D Waste Disposal (Enviroexcellence), Zambesi Safari Equipment (Owner), Noise Annoyance Assessment due to the Operation of the Gautrain (Thornhill and Lakeside Residential Estate), Upington Solar (SE), Ilangalethu Solar (SE), Pofadder Solar (SE), Flagging Trees WEF (SE), Uyekraal WEF (SE), Ruuki Power Station (SE), Richards Bay Port Expansion 2 (AECOM), Babalegi Steel Recycling (AGES), Safika Ladium (AGES), Safika Cement Isando (AGES), RareCo (SE), Struisbaai WEF (SE), Perdekraal WEF (ERM), Kotula Tsatsi Energy (SE), Olievenhoutbosch Township (Nali), , HDMS Project (AECOM), Quarry extensions near Ermelo (Rietspruit Crushers), Proposed uMzimkhulu Landfill in KZN (nZingwe Consultancy), Linksfield Residential Development (Bokomoso Environmental), Rooihuiskraal Ext. Residential Development, CoT (Plandev Town Planners), Floating Power Plant and LNG Import Facility, Richards Bay (ERM), Floating Power Plant project, Saldanha (ERM), Vopak Growth 4 project (ERM), Elandspoot Ext 3 Residential Development (Gibb Engineering)</i></p>
<p><b>Project reviews and amendment reports</b></p>	<p><i>Loperberg (Savannah), Dorper (Savannah), Penhoek Pass (Savannah), Oyster Bay (RES), Tsitsikamma Community Wind Farm Noise Simulation project (Cennergi), Amakhala Emoyeni (Windlab), Spreeukloof (Savannah), Spinning Head (SE), Kangra Coal (ERM), West Coast One (Moyeng Energy), Rhebokfontein (Moyeng Energy), De Aar WEF (Holland), Quarterly Measurement Reports – Dangote Delmas (Exigo), Quarterly Measurement Reports – Dangote Lichtenburg (Exigo), Quarterly Measurement Reports – Mamba Cement (Exigo), Quarterly Measurement Reports – Dangote Delmas (Exigo) Quarterly Measurement Reports – Nokeng Exigo), Proton Energy Limited Nigeria (ERM), Hartebeest WEF Update (Moorreesburg) (Savannah Environmental), Modderfontein WEF Opinion (Terramanzi), IPD Vredenburg WEF (IPD Power Vredenburg)</i></p>

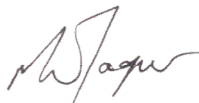
**Contact details for the Author are:**

Author: Morné de Jager  
 Company: Enviro-Acoustic Research cc  
 Website: <http://www.eares.co.za>  
 Email: [morne@eares.co.za](mailto:morne@eares.co.za)  
 Office number: 012 004 0362  
 Mobile number: 082 565 4059

## 2 DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

I, Morné de Jager declare that:

- I act as the 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 noise measurement reports, environmental noise impact assessments, including knowledge of the National Environmental Management Act (107 of 1998), the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations of 2010, and any regulations and guidelines that have relevance to the proposed activity or work;
- I will comply with the Act, regulations and all other applicable legislation;
- I will take into account, to the extent possible, the matters listed in regulation 8 of the regulations when preparing the application and any report relating to the application;
- I have no, and will not engage in, conflicting interests in the undertaking of the activity;
- I undertake to disclose to the applicant and the competent authority all material information in my possession that reasonably has or may have the potential of influencing - any decision to be taken with respect to the project or application by the competent authority; and - the objectivity of any report, plan or document to be prepared by myself for submission to the competent authority;
- I will ensure that the comments of all interested and affected parties are considered and recorded in reports that are submitted to the competent authority in respect of the application, provided that comments that are made by interested and affected parties in respect of a final report that will be submitted to the competent authority may be attached to the report without further amendment to the report;
- I will provide the competent authority with access to all information at my disposal regarding the project or application, whether such information is favourable to the applicant or not
- all the particulars furnished by me in this report are true and correct;
- will perform all other obligations as expected from an environmental assessment practitioner in terms of the Regulations; and
- I realise that a false declaration is an offence in terms of regulation 71 and is punishable in terms of section 24F of the Act.



Signature of the environmental practitioner:

**Enviro-Acoustic Research cc**

Name of company:

**2020 / 09 / 30**

Date:

## 3 INTRODUCTION

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Enviro-Acoustic Research cc was commissioned to undertake a specialist study to determine the potential noise impact on the surrounding environment with the development of a 450MW emergency gas to power facility located within the Richards Bay IDZ.

This report is the result of the scoping (desktop) phase study of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process investigating the potential noise impact that such a facility may have on the surrounding environment, highlighting methodologies, potential issues to be investigated, as well as preliminary findings and recommendations.

***It is important to note this document is only the Scoping Level report. The potential noise impact is investigated using a conceptual scenario.***

### 3.2 BRIEF PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Phinda Power Producers (Pty) Ltd intend on developing a 450MW emergency gas to power facility located on various erven within the Richards Bay IDZ, KwaZulu Natal (refer to **Figure 3-1** for regional location). The 450MW Emergency Risk Mitigation Power Plant (RMPP) involves the construction of a gas-fired power station which will provide mid-merit power supply<sup>[1]</sup> to the electricity grid. The 450MW RMPP is planned to operate on a mid-merit basis at a minimum annual average dispatch rate of ~50% (i.e. operational between 5am and 9:30pm daily and being deployed on average for 72% over the year during this time period).

The 450MW RMPP has been designed and developed as a power balance system to manage electricity demand during day time peak periods to provide energy, capacity and ancillary services to promote the stability of the national grid and assist in levelling out the variability in renewables energy electricity supply and meet short term fluctuations in electricity demand. In addition, the 450MR RMPP can provide back up support for day time base load generation in the event of unscheduled maintenance on Eskom's base load electricity generation fleet.

The power station will have an installed capacity of up to 450MW, to be operated on either LPG or naphtha as the initial fuel source and later to be converted from utilising LPG/naphtha

to natural gas. For the initial fuel source, either Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG) would be supplied by road from the existing LPG import terminal in Richards Bay, or naphtha would be supplied via pipeline from the import berths at Richards Bay. Once Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) import and regassification infrastructure is established in Richards Bay in accordance with the Department of Minerals and Energy, Transnet Limited and the Independent Power Producer (IPP) Office's planning, natural gas would be supplied to the 450MW RMPP via a natural gas pipeline from this import terminal.

The use of either Naphtha or LPG and the associated infrastructure required in respect of each of these alternative fuel sources, will be investigated further within the EIA phase and the preferred fuel source presented. The LNG terminal and regassification infrastructure and naphtha supply infrastructure at the port of Richards Bay and the relevant pipelines do not form part of the scope of this assessment, whereas LPG infrastructure does form part of this report.

The main infrastructure associated with the facility includes the following:

- » Main Power Island consisting of either gas turbines comprising of air intake, air filter structures and exhaust stack for the generation of electricity through the use of natural gas, naphtha or LPG; or Gas engines comprising of reciprocating internal combustion engines and exhaust stack utilising LPG or natural gas.
- » Generator and Auxiliary transformers.
- » Balance of Plant systems.
- » Dry Cooling systems.
- » Auxiliaries.
- » 132kV interconnecting substation and power lines connecting to the grid transmission infrastructure (The power lines to the grid transmission structure will be applied for under a separate environmental approval process).
- » LPG fuel pipe routing between the LPG storage site and the power plant site **or** Naphtha import pipeline from the port of Richards Bay to the onsite storage of Naphtha (the Naphtha pipeline will be applied for under a separate environmental approval process).
- » Stormwater management ponds.
- » LPG storage comprising of up to 15 000m<sup>3</sup> of storage in total, comprising of a number of either bullets or spheres storage tanks in design **or**; Naphtha storage on the power plant site of up to 90,000m<sup>3</sup> in total, comprising of of a number of tanks,

- » Once imported LNG is available in Richards Bay, the 450MP RMPP will be converted from utilising LPG / Naphta to the use of regassified LNG by means of a new dedicated natural gas pipeline which will replace or supplement the LPG / Naphtha supply to the power plant (The approval for the pipeline will be conducted under a separate process);
- » 3 effluent reticulation systems - i.e. 1) sanitary wastewater system; 2) oily water collection system and 3) storm water and rainwater collection system.
- » Diesel generator to provide start-up power to the first gas engine / turbine.

### 3.3 STUDY AREA

The facility is proposed in the vicinity of Richards Bay, located within the boundaries of the City of uMhlathuze Local Municipality and the King Cetshwayo District Municipality. A site locality map is presented in **Figure 3-1** illustrating the location of the preferred site. The preferred site is further described in terms of environmental components that may contribute or change the sound character in the area.

#### 3.3.1 Existing Ambient Sound and Noise Levels

Sound levels were measured during July 2020 with the results summarized in **section 5.1**. Due to industrial noises dominating in this area, the season when the measurements are collected has no influence on the measurement results.

#### 3.3.2 Topography

ENPAT<sup>1</sup> (1998) describes the topography as "*Plains*", while Musina L. & Rutherford (The vegetation of South Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland)<sup>2</sup> delineates the area as "*flat coastal plain*". There are little natural features that could act as noise barriers considering practical distances at which sound propagates.

#### 3.3.3 Surrounding Land Use

The project is proposed within the Altron Industrial Area close to Richards Bay, with mainly industrial uses taking place in the area.

#### 3.3.4 Roads

The R34 pass the site to the south and traffic noises are expected to influence ambient sound levels.

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<sup>1</sup> Van Riet, W. Claassen, P. van Rensburg, J. van Viegen & L. du Plessis, "*Environmental Potential Atlas for South Africa*", Pretoria, 1998.

<sup>2</sup> Musina L. & Rutherford." The vegetation of South Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland". Strelitzia 19, South African National Biodiversity Institute, Pretoria. 2006.



### 3.3.5 Other Industrial Activities

The preferred site is proposed in an existing industrial area.

### 3.3.6 Ground conditions and vegetation

The preferred site falls within the Savanna biome, with the vegetation type being Coastal Forest and Thornveld. Considering GoogleEarth® imagery it appears that the vegetation has been significantly disturbed by anthropogenic activities.

## 3.4 POTENTIAL NOISE-SENSITIVE RECEPTORS (DEVELOPMENTS) AND NO-GO AREAS

An assessment of the preferred site was done using available aerial images (GoogleEarth®) to identify potential dwellings that could be considered to be noise-sensitive developments (NSD). The site was visited in July 2020 to confirm the status of these NSD, with the identified NSD<sup>3</sup> indicated on **Figure 3-2**.

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<sup>3</sup> Around 60 small structures rented to workers/contractors in the area.



Figure 3-1: Locality map indicating the proposed project focus area



Figure 3-2: Aerial image indicating potentially noise-sensitive receptors close to the proposed project focus area

### 3.5 COMMENTS REGARDING NOISE IMPACTS RECEIVED DURING THE SCOPING PHASE

At the time of writing this report the Author was not aware of any comments received from any Interested and Affected Party about the project regarding noise.

### 3.6 TERMS OF REFERENCE

A noise impact assessment must be completed for the following reasons:

- It was identified as an environmental theme needing further investigation i.t.o. the National Screening Tool as per the procedures of Government Gazette 43110 of 20 March 2020;
- A change in land use as highlighted in SANS 10328:2008, section 5.3;
- If an industry is to be established within 1,000 m from a potential noise sensitive development (SANS 10328:2008 [5.4 (h)]) *or visa versa*;
- If a source of low-frequency noise (such as cooling or ventilation fans - SANS 10328:2008 [5.4 (l)]) is to be established within 2,000 m from a potential noise sensitive development *or visa versa*;
- It is a controlled activity in terms of the NEMA regulations and an ENIA is required, because:
  - It may cause a disturbing noise that is prohibited in terms of section 18(1) of the Government Notice 579 of 2010;
  - It is a potential environmental theme to be further assessed as identified using the national environmental screening tool as required by GG No. 43110 of 20 March 2020 (GN R320 of 2020);
- It is generally required by the local or district authority as part of the environmental authorization or planning approval in terms of Regulation 2(d) or GN R154 of 1992;

#### 3.6.1 Requirements as per GG 43110

The Department of Environmental Affairs also promulgated Regulation 320, dated 20 March 2020 as published in Government Gazette No. 43110. The Procedures for the Assessment and Minimum Criteria for Reporting on Identified Environmental Themes in Terms of Sections 24(5)(a) and (h) and 44 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998, when applying for Environmental Authorisation would be applicable to this project.

This regulation defines the requirements for undertaking a site sensitivity verification, specialist assessment and the minimum report content requirements for environmental impact where a specialist assessment is required but no protocol has been prescribed. It requires that the current land use be considered using the national web based

environmental screening tool to confirm the site sensitivity available at: <https://screening.environment.gov.za>.

If an applicant intending to undertake an activity identified in the scope of this protocol for which a specialist assessment has been identified on the screening tool on a site identified as being of:

- "very high" sensitivity for noise, must submit a Noise Specialist Assessment; or
- "low" sensitivity for noise, must submit a Noise Compliance Statement.

On a site where the information gathered from the site sensitivity verification differs from the designation of "very high" sensitivity on the screening tool and it is found to be of a "low" sensitivity, a Noise Compliance Statement must be submitted.

On a site where the information gathered from the initial site sensitivity verification differs from the designation of "low" sensitivity on the screening tool and it is found to be of a "very high" sensitivity, a Noise Specialist Assessment must be submitted.

If any part of the proposed development footprint falls within an area of "very high" sensitivity, the assessment and reporting requirements prescribed for the "very high" sensitivity apply to the entire footprint excluding linear activities for which noise impacts are associated with construction activities only and the noise levels return to the current levels after the completion of construction activities, in which case a compliance statement applies. In the context of this protocol, development footprint means the area on which the proposed development will take place and includes any area that will be disturbed.

The output of the Environmental Screening Tool is illustrated in **Figure 3-3**, indicating that the screening tool did not identify any Very High Sensitivity areas (relating to noise) close to the proposed development. The site visit however did identify a number of dwellings (see **Figure 3-2**) that are used for residential purposes within 2,000m from the proposed activity.

With a number of potential noise-sensitive receptors living within 2,000m from future noise-generating activities, whilst it is likely that a compliance statement will suffice, this assessment is adopting the precautionary approach, and recommends a future Noise Specialist Assessment.

### 3.6.2 Requirements as per South African National Standards

In South Africa the document that addresses the issues specifically concerning environmental noise is SANS 10103:2008. It has been thoroughly revised in 2008 and brought in line with the guidelines of the World Health Organisation (WHO). It provides the maximum average ambient noise levels during the day and night to which different types of developments indoors may be exposed.

In addition, SANS 10328:2008 specifies the methodology to assess the potential noise impacts on the environment due to a proposed activity that might impact on the environment. This standard also stipulates the minimum requirements to be investigated for Scoping purposes. These minimum requirements are:

- a) The purpose of the investigation;
- b) A brief description of the planned development or the changes that are being considered;
- c) A brief description of the existing environment;
- d) The identification of the noise sources that may affect the particular development, together with their respective estimated sound pressure levels or sound power levels (or both);
- e) The identified noise sources that were not taken into account and the reasons why they were not investigated;
- f) The identified NSDs and the estimated impact on them;
- g) Any assumptions made with regard to the estimated values used;
- h) An explanation, either by a brief description or by reference, of the methods that were used to estimate the existing and predicted rating levels;
- i) The location of the measurement or calculation points, i.e. a description, sketch or map;
- j) Estimation of the environmental noise impact;
- k) Alternatives that were considered and the results of those that were investigated;
- l) A list of all the interested or affected parties that offered any comments with respect to the environmental noise impact investigation;
- m) A detailed summary of all the comments received from interested or affected parties as well as the procedures and discussions followed to deal with them;
- n) Conclusions that were reached;
- o) Recommendations, i.e. if there could be a significant impact, or if more information is needed, a recommendation that an environmental noise impact assessment be conducted; and

- p) If remedial measures will provide an acceptable solution, which would prevent a significant impact, these remedial measures should be outlined in detail and included in the final record of decision if the approval is obtained from the relevant authority. If the remedial measures deteriorate after a certain time and a follow-up auditing or maintenance programme (or both) is instituted, this programme should be included in the final recommendations and accepted in the record of decision if the approval is obtained from the relevant authority.

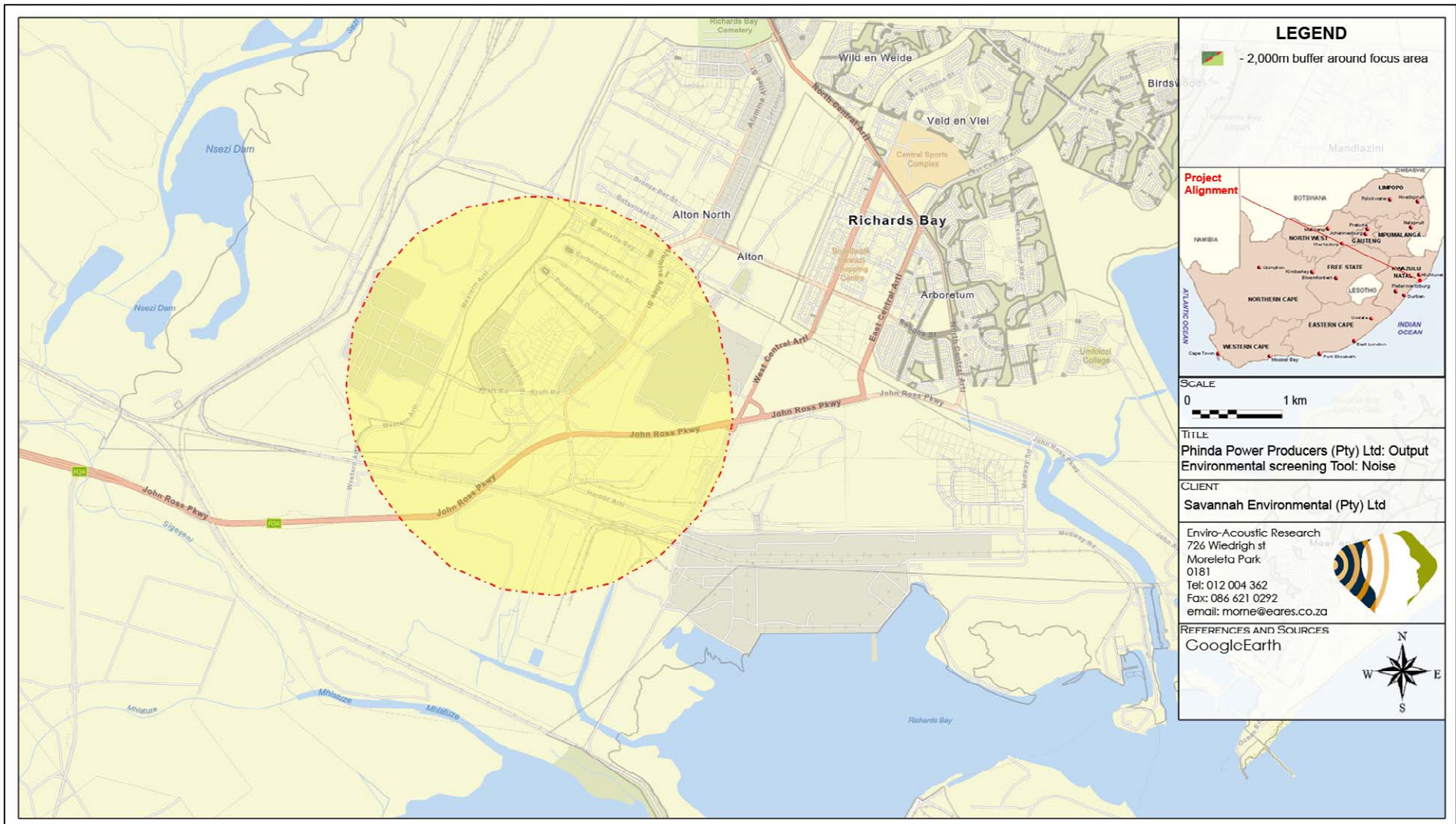


Figure 3-3: Output from the Environmental Screening Tool – Noise Theme



## 4 LEGAL CONTEXT, POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

### 4.1 THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA CONSTITUTION ACT (“THE CONSTITUTION”)

The environmental rights contained in Section 24 of the Constitution provide that everyone is entitled to an environment that is not harmful to his or her well-being. In the context of noise, this requires a determination of what level of noise is harmful to well-being. The general approach of the common law is to define an acceptable level of noise as that which the reasonable person can be expected to tolerate under particular circumstances. The subjectivity of this approach can be problematic, which has led to the development of noise standards (see **Section 4.5**).

“Noise pollution” is specifically included in Part B of Schedule 5 of the Constitution, which means that noise pollution control is a local authority competence, provided that the local authority concerned has the capacity to carry out this function.

### 4.2 THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT ACT (ACT 107 OF 1998)

The National Environmental Management Act (“NEMA”) defines “pollution” to include any change in the environment, including noise. A duty therefore arises under section 28 of NEMA to take reasonable measures while establishing and operating any facility to prevent noise pollution occurring. NEMA sets out measures, which may be regarded as reasonable. They include the following measures:

1. to investigate, assess and evaluate the impact on the environment
2. to inform and educate employees about the environmental risks of their work and the manner in which their tasks must be performed to avoid causing significant pollution or degradation of the environment
3. to cease, modify or control any act, activity or process causing the pollution or degradation
4. to contain or prevent the movement of the pollution or degradation
5. to eliminate any source of the pollution or degradation
6. to remedy the effects of the pollution or degradation

In addition, a number of regulations have been promulgated as Regulation 982 of December 2014 (Government Notice 38282) in terms of this Act. It defines minimum information requirements for specialist reports, with Government Gazette (GG) 43110 (20 March 2020) updating the minimum requirements for reporting.

GG 43110 prescribe general requirements for undertaking site sensitivity verification and for protocols for the assessment and minimum report content requirements of environmental impacts for environmental themes for activities requiring environmental authorisation. These protocols were promulgated in terms of sections 24(5)(a), (h) and 44 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998.

When the requirements of a protocol apply, the requirements of Appendix 6 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, as amended, (EIA Regulations), promulgated under sections 24(5) and 44 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998), are replaced by these requirements. This will be addressed in the future Environmental Noise Impact Assessment.

### **4.3 THE ENVIRONMENT CONSERVATION ACT (ACT 73 OF 1989)**

The Environment Conservation Act (ECA) allows the Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (now the Ministry of Environmental Affairs) to make regulations regarding noise, among other concerns. See also **section 4.3.1**.

#### **4.3.1 Noise Control Regulations (GN R154 of 1992)**

In terms of section 25 of the ECA, the national Noise Control Regulations (GN R154 in *Government Gazette* No. 13717 dated 10 January 1992) were promulgated.

The NCRs were revised under Government Notice Number R. 55 of 14 January 1994 to make it obligatory for all authorities to apply the regulations.

Subsequently, in terms of Schedule 5 of the Constitution, legislative responsibility for administering the noise control regulations was devolved to provincial and local authorities. Provincial Noise Control Regulations exist in the Free State, Gauteng and Western Cape provinces but not in KwaZulu-Natal province and therefore the National Regulations will be in effect.

The National Noise Control Regulations (GN R154 1992) defines:

**"controlled area"** as:

a piece of land designated by a local authority where, in the case of-

- c) industrial noise in the vicinity of an industry-
- i. the reading on an integrating impulse sound level meter, taken outdoors at the end of a period of 24 hours while such meter is in operation, exceeds 61 dBA; or

- ii. the calculated outdoor equivalent continuous "A"-weighted sound pressure level at a height of at least 1,2 meters, but not more than 1,4 meters, above the ground for a period of 24 hours, exceeds 61 dBA.

**"disturbing noise"** as:

noise level which exceeds the zone sound level or, if no zone sound level has been designated, a noise level which exceeds the ambient sound level at the same measuring point by 7 dBA or more.

**"zone sound level"** as:

a derived dBA value determined indirectly by means of a series of measurements, calculations or table readings and designated by a local authority for an area. *This is the same as the Rating Level as defined in SANS 10103.*

***In addition:***

In terms of Regulation 2 -

"A local authority may –

*(c): if a noise emanating from a building, premises, vehicle, recreational vehicle or street is a disturbing noise or noise nuisance, or may in the opinion of the local authority concerned be a disturbing noise or noise nuisance, instruct in writing the person causing such noise or who is responsible therefor, or the owner or occupant of such building or premises from which or from where such noise emanates or may emanate, or all such persons, to discontinue or cause to be discontinued such noise, or to take steps to lower the level of the noise to a level conforming to the requirements of these Regulations within the period stipulated in the instruction: Provided that the provisions of this paragraph shall not apply in respect of a disturbing noise or noise nuisance caused by rail vehicles or aircraft which are not used as recreational vehicles;*

*(d): before changes are made to existing facilities or existing uses of land or buildings, or before new buildings are erected, in writing require that noise impact assessments or tests are conducted to the satisfaction of that local authority by the owner, developer, tenant or occupant of the facilities, land or buildings or that, for the purposes of regulation 3(b) or (c), reports or certificates in relation to the noise impact to the satisfaction of that local authority are submitted by the owner, developer, tenant or occupant to the local authority on written demand";*

In terms of Regulation 4 of the Noise Control Regulations:

*"No person shall make, produce or cause a disturbing noise, or allow it to be made, produced or caused by any person, machine, device or apparatus or any combination thereof".*

#### **4.4 NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT: AIR QUALITY ACT (ACT 39 OF 2004)**

Section 34 of the National Environmental Management: Air Quality Act (Act 39 of 2004) makes provision for:

- (1) the Minister to prescribe essential national noise standards -
  - (a) for the control of noise, either in general or by specified machinery or activities or in specified places or areas; or
  - (b) for determining -
    - (i) a definition of noise
    - (ii) the maximum levels of noise
- (2) When controlling noise the provincial and local spheres of government are bound by any prescribed national standards.

This section of the Act has been promulgated, but no such standards have yet been issued. Draft regulations have however, been promulgated for adoption by Local Authorities.

An atmospheric emission licence issued in terms of Section 22 may contain conditions in terms of noise.

##### **4.4.1 Model Air Quality Management By-law for adoption and adaptation by Municipalities (GN 579 of 2010)**

Model Air Quality Management By-Laws for adoption and adaptation by municipalities was published by the Department of Water and Environmental Affairs in the Government Gazette of 2 July 2010 as Government Notice 579 of 2010.

The main aim of the model air quality management by-law is to assist municipalities in the development of their air quality management by-law within their jurisdictions. It is also the aim of the model by-law to ensure uniformity across the country when dealing with air quality management challenges. Therefore, the model by-law is developed to be generic in order to deal with most of the air quality management challenges. With Noise Control being covered under the Air Quality Act (Act 39 of 2004), noise is also managed in a separate section under this Government Notice.

- **IT IS NOT** the aim of the model by-law to have legal force and effect on municipalities when published in the Gazette; and
- **IT IS NOT** the aim of the model by-law to impose the by-law on municipalities.

Therefore, a municipality will have to follow the legal process as set out in the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act (Act No. 32 of 2000) when adopting and adapting the model by-law to its local jurisdictions.

#### **4.5 NOISE STANDARDS**

There are a few South African national scientific standards (SANS) relevant to noise from mines, industry and roads. They are:

- SANS 10103:2008. The measurement and rating of environmental noise with respect to annoyance and to speech communication;
- SANS 10210:2004. Calculating and predicting road traffic noise;
- SANS 10328:2008. Methods for environmental noise impact assessments.
- SANS 10357:2004. The calculation of sound propagation by the Concave method;
- SANS 10181:2003. The Measurement of Noise Emitted by Road Vehicles when Stationary; and
- SANS 10205:2003. The Measurement of Noise Emitted by Motor Vehicles in Motion.

The relevant standards use the equivalent continuous rating level as a basis for determining what is acceptable. The levels may take single event noise into account, but single event noise by itself does not determine whether noise levels are acceptable for land use purposes. With regards to SANS 10103:2008, the recommendations are likely to inform decisions by authorities, but non-compliance with the standard will not necessarily render an activity unlawful *per se*.

#### **4.6 WHITE PAPER ON NATIONAL TRANSPORT POLICY (SEPTEMBER 1996)**

The White Paper sets the vision for transport in South Africa that provides for *safe, reliable, effective, efficient and fully integrated transport operations and infrastructure which..... are environmentally and economically sustainable*. The White Paper further states that *“the provision of transportation infrastructure and the operation of the transportation system have the potential for causing damage to the physical and social environment, inter alia, through atmospheric and noise pollution, ecological damage and severance. ... The Department of Transport is committed to an integrated environmental management*

*approach in the provision of transport". It is also stated that "As part of the overall long-term vision for the South African transport system, transport infrastructure will, inter alia, be structured to ensure environmental sustainability and internationally accepted standards". One of the strategic objectives for transport infrastructure to achieve this vision is to promote environmental protection and resource conservation.*

#### **4.7 INTERNATIONAL GUIDELINES**

While a number of international guidelines and standards exist, those selected below are used by numerous countries for environmental noise management.

##### **4.7.1 Guidelines for Community Noise (WHO, 1999)**

The World Health Organization's (WHO) document on the *Guidelines for Community Noise* is the outcome of the WHO expert task force meeting held in London, United Kingdom, in April 1999. It is based on the document entitled "Community Noise" that was prepared for the WHO and published in 1995 by the Stockholm University and Karolinska Institute.

The scope of WHO's effort to derive guidelines for community noise is to consolidate actual scientific knowledge on the health impacts of community noise and to provide guidance to environmental health authorities and professionals trying to protect people from the harmful effects of noise in non-industrial environments.

Guidance on the health effects of noise exposure of the population has already been given in an early publication of the series of Environmental Health Criteria. The health risk to humans from exposure to environmental noise was evaluated and guideline values derived. The issue of noise control and health protection was briefly addressed.

The document uses the  $L_{Aeq}$  and  $L_{A,max}$  noise descriptors to define noise levels. It should be noted that a follow-up document focusing on Night-time Noise Guidelines for Europe was prepared and released (WHO, 2009).

##### **4.7.2 Night Noise Guidelines for Europe (WHO, 2009)**

Refining previous Community Noise Guidelines issued in 1999, and incorporating more recent research, the WHO released a comprehensive report on the health effects of night time noise, along with new (non-mandatory) guidelines for use in Europe. Rather than a maximum of 30 dB inside at night (which equals 45-50 dB max outside), the WHO now recommends a maximum year-round outside night-time noise average of 40 dB to avoid sleep disturbance and its related health effects. The report notes that only below 30 dB

(outside annual average) are “*no significant biological effects observed,*” and that between 30 and 40 dB, several effects are observed, with the chronically ill and children being more susceptible; however, “*even in the worst cases the effects seem modest.*” Elsewhere, the report states more definitively, “*There is no sufficient evidence that the biological effects observed at the level below 40 dB (night, outside) are harmful to health.*” At levels over 40 dB, “*Adverse health effects are observed*” and “*many people have to adapt their lives to cope with the noise at night. Vulnerable groups are more severely affected.*”

The 184-page report offers a comprehensive overview of research into the various effects of noise on sleep quality and health (including the health effects of non-waking sleep arousal), and is recommended reading for anyone working with noise issues. The use of an outdoor noise standard is in part designed to acknowledge that people do prefer to leave windows open when sleeping, though the year-long average may be difficult to obtain (it would require longer-term sound monitoring that is usually budgeted for by either industry or neighbourhood groups).

While recommending the use of the average level, the report notes that some instantaneous effects occur in relation to specific maximum noise levels, but that the health effects of these “cannot be easily established.”

#### **4.7.3 Equator Principles**

The **Equator Principles** (EPs) are a voluntary set of standards for determining, assessing and managing social and environmental risk in project financing. Equator Principles Financial Institutions (EPFIs) commit to not providing loans to projects where the borrower will not or is unable to comply with their respective social and environmental policies and procedures that implement the EPs.

The EPs were developed by private sector banks and were launched in June 2003. The banks chose to model the EPs on the environmental standards of the World Bank and the social policies of the International Finance Corporation (IFC). 67 financial institutions (October 2009) have adopted the EPs, which have become the de facto standard for banks and investors on how to assess major development projects around the world. The environmental standards of the World Bank have been integrated into the social policies of the IFC since April 2007 as the IFC’s Environmental, Health and Safety (EHS) Guidelines.

#### **4.7.4 IFC: General EHS Guidelines – Environmental Noise Management**

These guidelines are applicable to noise created beyond the property boundaries of a development that conforms to the EPs.

It states that noise prevention and mitigation measures should be applied where predicted or measured noise impacts from a project facility or operations exceed the applicable noise level guideline at the most sensitive point of reception. The preferred method for controlling noise from stationary sources is to implement noise control measures at the source.

It goes as far as to propose methods for the prevention and control of noise emissions, including:

- Selecting equipment with lower sound power levels;
- Installing silencers for fans;
- Installing suitable mufflers on engine exhausts and compressor components;
- Installing acoustic enclosures for equipment casing radiating noise;
- Improving the acoustic performance of constructed buildings, apply sound insulation;
- Installing acoustic barriers without gaps and with a continuous minimum surface density of 10 kg/m<sup>2</sup> in order to minimize the transmission of sound through the barrier. Barriers should be located as close to the source or to the receptor location to be effective;
- Installing vibration isolation for mechanical equipment;
- Limiting the hours of operation for specific pieces of equipment or operations, especially mobile sources operating through community areas ;
- Re-locating noise sources to less sensitive areas to take advantage of distance and shielding;
- Placement of permanent facilities away from community areas if possible;
- Taking advantage of the natural topography as a noise buffer during facility design;
- Reducing project traffic routing through community areas wherever possible;
- Planning flight routes, timing and altitude for aircraft (airplane and helicopter) flying over community areas; and
- Developing a mechanism to record and respond to complaints.

It sets noise level guidelines (see **Table 4-1**) as well as highlighting the certain monitoring requirements pre- and post-development. It adds another criterion in that the existing background ambient noise level should not rise by more than 3 dBA. This criterion will effectively sterilize large areas of any development. It is, therefore, the considered opinion that this criterion was introduced to address cases where the existing ambient noise level is already at, or in excess of the recommended limits.



**Table 4-1: IFC Table .7.1-Noise Level Guidelines**

Receptor type	One hour $L_{Aeq}$ (dBA)	
	Daytime 07:00 - 22:00	Night-time 22:00 – 07:00
<b>Residential; institutional; educational</b>	55	45
<b>Industrial; commercial</b>	70	70

The document uses the  $L_{Aeq,1\text{ hr}}$  noise descriptors to define noise levels. It does not determine the detection period, but refers to the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) standards, which requires the fast detector setting on the Sound Level Meter during measurements for Europe.

## 5 SOUND CHARACTER AND AMBIENT SOUND LEVELS

### 5.1 AMBIENT SOUND MEASUREMENTS

Ambient sound levels were measured at a number of locations previously during July 2020 in accordance with the South African National Standard SANS 10103:2008 "***The measurement and rating of environmental noise with respect to land use, health, annoyance and to speech communication***". Together with GNR 320 of 20 March 2020, the standard specifies the acceptable techniques for sound measurements including:

- type of equipment (Class 1);
- minimum duration of measurement;
- microphone positions and height above ground level;
- calibration procedures and instrument checks; and
- supplementary weather measurements and observations.

Short-term (10-minutes) measurements were collected over a period of two (2) nights close to residential dwellings within the industrial area as per the requirements of GG 43110 of 20 March 2020. There are approximately 60 structures<sup>4</sup> used by contractors in the area as residential dwellings. The data collected is summarized in **Table 5-1**.

**Table 5-1: Summary of average sound levels measured**

Monitoring location	GPS Co-ordinate	Night-time sound level (L <sub>Aeq,i</sub> ) - dBA	Night-time sound level (L <sub>Aeq,f</sub> ) - dBA	Night-time statistical sound level (L <sub>A90,f</sub> ) - dBA	Night-time rating level i.t.o SANS 10103
RBNSTSL11 (Night 1, 10 PM)	-28.764698°, 32.020459°	54.3	53.4	49.6	Central Business District
RBNSTSL11 (Night 1, 04 AM)	-28.764698°, 32.020459°	55.5	53.8	50.2	Central Business District
RBNSTSL11 (Night 2, 10 PM)	-28.764698°, 32.020459°	52.1	51	46.8	Urban (with main roads, workshops, etc.)
RBNSTSL11 (Night 2, 04 AM)	-28.764698°, 32.020459°	55.3	54.3	48.1	Central Business District

Considering the results of the measurement data:

- Ambient sound levels close to the residential dwellings are elevated and higher than the World Health Organization recommended noise limits for residential use;

<sup>4</sup> Brian’s Contractors Accommodation, 083 625 5069

- Ambient noise levels in the Alton Industrial area is elevated and typical of a busy urban (with roads, business and workshops) to central business noise district. It should be noted that SANS 10103 highlights that ambient sound levels in an industrial noise district (appropriately zoned) up to 70 dBA is expected and typical.

## 6 POTENTIAL NOISE SOURCES

Increased noise levels are directly linked with the various activities associated with the construction of the proposed power station and related infrastructure, as well as the operation phase of the activity.

### 6.1 POTENTIAL NOISE SOURCES: CONSTRUCTION NOISES

#### 6.1.1 Construction Activities

Construction activities could include:

- Additional traffic to and from the site, as well as traffic on the site;
- Site preparation, including the site clearing and levelling, development of internal site roads and security fencing;
- Establishment of contractors camp, storage and laydown areas;
- Earthworks, possible blasting (if hard rock is encountered) and piling activities;
- Development of the foundations;
- Laying of pipelines and establishment of the switchyard; and
- Construction of infrastructure and facilities.

Maximum noises generated can be audible over a large distance, however, are generally of very short duration. If maximum noise levels however exceed 65 dBA at a receptor, or if it is clearly audible with a significant number of instances where the noise level exceeds the prevailing ambient sound level with more than 15 dB the noise can increase annoyance levels and may ultimately result in noise complaints. Potential maximum noise levels generated by construction equipment as well as the potential extent are presented in **Table 6-1**. The potential extent depends on a number of factors, including the prevailing ambient sound levels during the instance the maximum noise event occurred, as well as the spectral character of the noise and the ambient soundscape in the surroundings.

Average or equivalent sound levels are another factor that impacts on the ambient sound levels and is the constant sound level that the receptor can experience. Typical sound power levels associated with various activities that may be found at a construction site is presented in **Table 6-2**.

## 6.2 POTENTIAL NOISE SOURCES: COMMISSIONING

Temporary noises may be generated during the start-up and commissioning phase of the plant. These can be considered as temporary noises, and excluding the testing of the safety equipment, the noise levels are similar to the noises considered for the worse-case operational scenario and will be addressed as part of the operation phase.

## 6.3 POTENTIAL NOISE SOURCES: OPERATION NOISES

The developer is currently investigating the most feasible alternatives for the emergency gas to power facility, with the options being:

- Gas engine technology, coupled with generators;
- Single cycle gas turbine technology, coupled with generators.

The main noise generating equipment are the:

- reciprocating internal combustion engines or gas turbines;
- cooling system, normally radiators coupled with fans;
- the exhaust stacks.

Typical sound power levels associated with various power generation equipment or activities are presented in **Table 6-2**.

## 6.4 POTENTIAL NOISE SOURCES: DECOMMISSIONING

Being located within an industrial area, once power-generation activities cease it is more likely that the area be repurposed, with existing infrastructure repurposed, upgraded or modified where possible before decommissioning takes place. For the purpose of this report, decommissioning will start when power generation stops, signalling the beginning of the dismantling of the equipment. Activities that may take place include:

- Dismantling of all equipment;
- Removal of all remaining redundant infrastructure (buildings and structures, dams, workshop, access roads, possibly the offices and other buildings, etc.);
- Removal of any contaminated soil;
- The rehabilitation of disturbed areas including the necessary ripping of compacted soils and the shaping of rehabilitated areas to ensure free drainage;
- (Potential) Seeding of disturbed areas (if necessary, to re-establish vegetation);  
and
- Monitoring and maintenance of the rehabilitated areas.

However, while there are numerous activities that can take place during the decommissioning stage, the potential noise impact will only be discussed in general. This is because the noise impacts associated with the decommissioning phase is normally less than both the construction and operation phases for the following reasons:

- Final decommissioning normally takes place only during the day, a time period when existing ambient sound levels are higher, generally masking most external noises for surrounding receptors; and
- There is a lower urgency of completing this phase and less equipment remains onsite (and are used simultaneously) to affect the final decommissioning.

**Table 6-1: Potential maximum noise levels generated by construction equipment**

Equipment Description <sup>5</sup>	Impact Device?	Maximum Sound Power Levels (dBA)	Operational Noise Level at given distance considering potential <b>maximum</b> noise levels (Cumulative as well as the mitigatory effect of potential barriers or other mitigation not included – simple noise propagation modelling only considering distance) (dBA)											
			5 m	10 m	20 m	50 m	100 m	150 m	200 m	300 m	500 m	750 m	1000 m	2000 m
Backhoe	No	114.7	89.7	83.7	77.6	69.7	63.7	60.1	57.6	54.1	49.7	46.2	43.7	37.6
Compactor (ground)	No	114.7	89.7	83.7	77.6	69.7	63.7	60.1	57.6	54.1	49.7	46.2	43.7	37.6
Compressor (air)	No	114.7	89.7	83.7	77.6	69.7	63.7	60.1	57.6	54.1	49.7	46.2	43.7	37.6
Concrete Batch Plant	No	117.7	92.7	86.7	80.6	72.7	66.7	63.1	60.6	57.1	52.7	49.2	46.7	40.6
Concrete Mixer Truck	No	119.7	94.7	88.7	82.6	74.7	68.7	65.1	62.6	59.1	54.7	51.2	48.7	42.6
Crane	No	119.7	94.7	88.7	82.6	74.7	68.7	65.1	62.6	59.1	54.7	51.2	48.7	42.6
Dozer	No	119.7	94.7	88.7	82.6	74.7	68.7	65.1	62.6	59.1	54.7	51.2	48.7	42.6
Drum Mixer	No	114.7	89.7	83.7	77.6	69.7	63.7	60.1	57.6	54.1	49.7	46.2	43.7	37.6
Dump Truck	No	118.7	93.7	87.7	81.6	73.7	67.7	64.1	61.6	58.1	53.7	50.2	47.7	41.6
Excavator	No	119.7	94.7	88.7	82.6	74.7	68.7	65.1	62.6	59.1	54.7	51.2	48.7	42.6
Flat Bed Truck	No	118.7	93.7	87.7	81.6	73.7	67.7	64.1	61.6	58.1	53.7	50.2	47.7	41.6
Front End Loader	No	114.7	89.7	83.7	77.6	69.7	63.7	60.1	57.6	54.1	49.7	46.2	43.7	37.6
Generator (>25KVA)	No	116.7	91.7	85.7	79.6	71.7	65.7	62.1	59.6	56.1	51.7	48.2	45.7	39.6
Generator (<25KVA)	No	104.7	79.7	73.7	67.6	59.7	53.7	50.1	47.6	44.1	39.7	36.2	33.7	27.6
Grader	No	119.7	94.7	88.7	82.6	74.7	68.7	65.1	62.6	59.1	54.7	51.2	48.7	42.6
Impact Pile Driver	Yes	129.7	104.7	98.7	92.6	84.7	78.7	75.1	72.6	69.1	64.7	61.2	58.7	52.6
Jackhammer	Yes	119.7	94.7	88.7	82.6	74.7	68.7	65.1	62.6	59.1	54.7	51.2	48.7	42.6
Mounted Impact Hammer	Yes	124.7	99.7	93.7	87.6	79.7	73.7	70.1	67.6	64.1	59.7	56.2	53.7	47.6
Slurry Trenching Machine	No	116.7	91.7	85.7	79.6	71.7	65.7	62.1	59.6	56.1	51.7	48.2	45.7	39.6
Vibratory Concrete Mixer	No	114.7	89.7	83.7	77.6	69.7	63.7	60.1	57.6	54.1	49.7	46.2	43.7	37.6
Vibratory Pile Driver	No	129.7	104.7	98.7	92.6	84.7	78.7	75.1	72.6	69.1	64.7	61.2	58.7	52.6
Welder/Torch	No	107.7	82.7	76.7	70.6	62.7	56.7	53.1	50.6	47.1	42.7	39.2	36.7	30.6

<sup>5</sup> Equipment list and Sound Power Level source: [http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/noise/construction\\_noise/handbook/handbook09.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/noise/construction_noise/handbook/handbook09.cfm)

**Table 6-2: Potential equivalent noise levels generated by various equipment**

Equipment Description	Sound Power Levels (dBA)	Operational Noise Level at given distance considering equivalent (average) sound power emission levels (Cumulative as well as the mitigatory effect of potential barriers or other mitigation not included) (dBA)							
		10 m	20 m	50 m	100 m	200 m	500 m	1000 m	2000 m
Black start facility	102.9	71.9	65.9	57.9	51.9	48.4	45.9	37.9	31.9
Bulldozer CAT D9	111.9	80.9	74.9	66.9	60.9	57.4	54.9	46.9	40.9
Cement truck (with cement)	111.7	80.7	74.7	66.7	60.7	57.2	54.7	46.7	40.7
Crane	107.5	76.5	70.5	62.5	56.5	53.0	50.5	42.5	36.5
Diesel Generator (Large - mobile)	106.1	75.1	69.1	61.2	55.1	51.6	49.1	41.2	35.1
Dumper/Haul truck - Terex 30 ton	112.2	81.2	75.2	67.2	61.2	57.7	55.2	47.2	41.2
Electrical Turbine Generator	116.7	85.7	79.7	71.8	65.7	62.2	59.7	51.8	45.7
Elevated Flare	124.0	93.0	87.0	79.0	73.0	69.5	67.0	59.0	53.0
Excavator - Hitachi EX1200	113.1	82.1	76.1	68.1	62.1	58.6	56.1	48.1	42.1
Exhaust Fans	90.6	59.6	53.5	45.6	39.6	36.0	33.5	25.6	19.6
Extraction fan/blower (flue gas stack)	119.0	88.0	82.0	74.0	68.0	64.5	62.0	54.0	48.0
FEL - Bell L1806C	102.7	71.7	65.7	57.7	51.7	48.2	45.7	37.7	31.7
General noise	108.8	77.8	71.8	63.8	57.8	54.2	51.8	43.8	37.8
General Noise - Construction (commercial)	96.5	65.6	59.5	51.6	45.6	42.0	39.5	31.6	25.6
Generator building	96.0	65.0	59.0	51.0	45.0	41.5	39.0	31.0	25.0
Grader - Operational Hitachi	108.9	77.9	71.9	63.9	57.9	54.4	51.9	43.9	37.9
Intake Fans	97.7	66.8	60.7	52.8	46.8	43.2	40.7	32.8	26.8
JBL TLB	108.8	77.8	71.8	63.8	57.8	54.3	51.8	43.8	37.8
Road Transport Reversing/Idling	108.2	77.2	71.2	63.3	57.2	53.7	51.2	43.3	37.2
Road Truck average	109.6	78.7	72.6	64.7	58.7	55.1	52.6	44.7	38.7
Rock Breaker, CAT	120.7	89.7	83.7	75.7	69.7	66.2	63.7	55.7	49.7
Silenced radiator	98.3	67.3	61.3	53.4	47.3	43.8	41.3	33.4	27.3
Steam Turbine Condenser	105.4	74.4	68.4	60.4	54.4	50.9	48.4	40.4	34.4
Steam venting	101.7	70.7	64.7	56.7	50.7	47.2	44.7	36.7	30.7
Turbine Generator	116.7	85.7	79.7	71.8	65.7	62.2	59.7	51.8	45.7
Ventilation Fan	110.1	79.1	73.1	65.1	59.1	55.6	53.1	45.1	39.1
Vibrating roller	106.3	75.3	69.3	61.3	55.3	51.8	49.3	41.3	35.3
Water Cooling Fans	113.0	82.0	76.0	68.0	62.0	58.5	56.0	48.0	42.0



## **7 METHODS: NOISE IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND SIGNIFICANCE**

### **7.1 WHY NOISE CONCERNS COMMUNITIES<sup>6</sup>**

Noise can be defined as "unwanted sound", and an audible acoustic energy that adversely affects the physiological and/or psychological well-being of people, or which disturbs or impairs the convenience or peace of any person. One can generalise by saying that sound becomes unwanted when it:

- Hinders speech communication;
- Impedes the thinking process;
- Interferes with concentration;
- Obstructs activities (work, leisure and sleeping); and
- Presents a health risk due to hearing damage.

However, it is important to remember that whether a given sound is "noise" depends on the listener or hearer. The driver playing loud rock music on their car radio hears only music, but the person in the traffic behind them hears nothing but noise.

Response to noise is unfortunately not an empirical absolute, as it is seen as a multi-faceted psychological concept, including behavioural and evaluative aspects. For instance, in some cases, annoyance is seen as an outcome of disturbances, in other cases it is seen as an indication of the degree of helplessness with respect to the noise source.

Noise does not need to be loud to be considered "disturbing". One can refer to a dripping tap in the quiet of the night, or the irritating "thump-thump" of the music from a neighbouring house at night when one would like to sleep.

Severity of the annoyance depends on factors such as:

- Background sound levels, and the background sound levels the receptor is used to;
- The manner in which the receptor can control the noise (helplessness);
- The time, unpredictability, frequency distribution, duration, and intensity of the noise;
- The physiological state of the receptor; and
- The attitude of the receptor about the emitter (noise source).

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<sup>6</sup>World Health Organization, 1999; Noise quest, 2010; Journal of Acoustical Society of America, 2009

## 7.2 IMPACT ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

### 7.2.1 Overview: The common characteristics

The word "noise" is generally used to convey a negative response or attitude to the sound received by a listener. There are four common characteristics of sound, any or all of which determine the listener response and the subsequent definition of the sound as "noise". These characteristics are:

- Intensity;
- Loudness;
- Annoyance; and
- Offensiveness.

Of the four common characteristics of sound, intensity is the only one which is not subjective and can be quantified. Loudness is a subjective measure of the effect sound has on the human ear. As a quantity it is therefore complicated, but has been defined by experimentation on subjects known to have normal hearing.

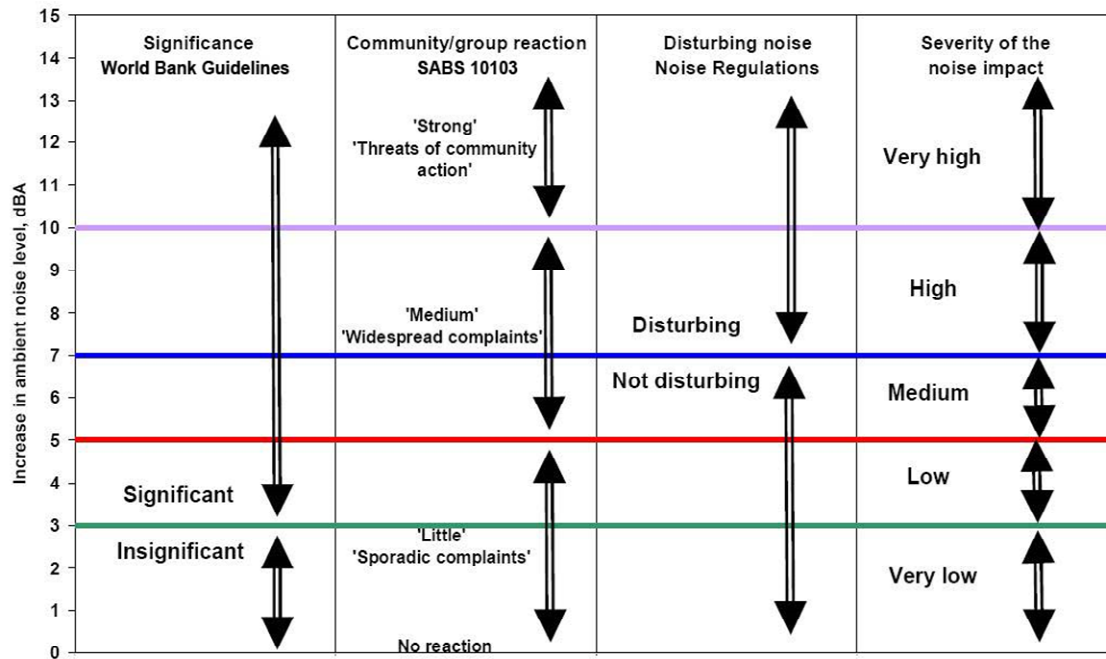
The annoyance and offensive characteristics of noise are also subjective. Whether or not a noise causes annoyance mostly depends upon its reception by an individual, the environment in which it is heard, the type of activity and mood of the person and how acclimatised or familiar that person is to the sound.

### 7.2.2 Noise criteria of concern

The criteria used in this report were drawn from the criteria for the description and assessment of environmental impacts considering the EIA Regulations (2014), SANS 10103:2008, as well as guidelines from the WHO.

There are a number of criteria that are of concern for the assessment of noise impacts. These can be summarised in the following manner:

- *Increase in noise levels:* People or communities often react to an increase in the ambient noise level they are used to, which is caused by a new source of noise. With regards to the Noise Control Regulations (promulgated in terms of the ECA), an increase of more than 7 dBA is considered a disturbing noise. See also **Figure 7-1**.
- *Zone Sound Levels:* Previously referred to as the acceptable rating levels, it sets acceptable noise levels for various areas. See also **Table 7-1**.
- *Absolute or total noise levels:* Depending on their activities, people generally are tolerant to noise up to a certain absolute level, e.g. 65 dBA. Anything above this level will be considered unacceptable.



**Figure 7-1: Criteria to assess the significance of impacts stemming from noise**

In South Africa, the document that addresses the issues concerning environmental noise is SANS 10103:2008 (See also **Table 7-1**). It provides the equivalent ambient noise levels (referred to as Rating Levels),  $L_{Req,d}$  and  $L_{Req,n}$ , during the day and night respectively to which different types of developments may be exposed.

Acoustical measurements indicate an area where the ambient sound levels are very high, typical of an industrial area and the following study area rating levels are proposed:

- “Equator principles” (55 and 45 dBA day/night-time Rating i.t.o. IFC Noise Limits).

SANS 10103:2008 also provides a guideline for estimating community response to an increase in the general ambient noise level caused by an intruding noise. If  $\Delta$  is the increase in sound level, the following criteria are of relevance:

- **$\Delta \leq 3$  dBA:** An increase of 3 dBA or less will not cause any response from a community. It should be noted that for a person with average hearing acuity an increase of less than 3 dBA in the general ambient noise level would not be noticeable.
- **$3 < \Delta \leq 5$  dBA:** An increase of between 3 dBA and 5 dBA will elicit ‘little’ community response with ‘sporadic complaints’. People will just be able to notice a change in the sound character in the area.
- **$5 < \Delta \leq 15$  dBA:** An increase of between 5 dBA and 15 dBA will elicit a ‘medium’ community response with ‘widespread complaints’. In addition, an increase of 10 dBA is subjectively perceived as a doubling in the loudness of a noise. For an increase of

more than 15 dBA the community reaction will be 'strong' with 'threats of community action'.

Note that an increase of more than 7 dBA is defined as a disturbing noise and prohibited (National Noise Control Regulations).

**Table 7-1: Acceptable Zone Sound Levels for noise in districts (SANS 10103:2008)**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Type of district	Equivalent continuous rating level ( $L_{Req,T}$ ) for noise dBA					
	Outdoors			Indoors, with open windows		
	Day/night $L_{R,dn}^a$	Daytime $L_{Req,d}^b$	Night-time $L_{Req,n}^b$	Day/night $L_{R,dn}^a$	Daytime $L_{Req,d}^b$	Night-time $L_{Req,n}^b$
a) Rural districts	45	45	35	35	35	25
b) Suburban districts with little road traffic	50	50	40	40	40	30
c) Urban districts	55	55	45	45	45	35
d) Urban districts with one or more of the following: workshops; business premises; and main roads	60	60	50	50	50	40
e) Central business districts	65	65	55	55	55	45
f) Industrial districts	70	70	60	60	60	50

**7.2.3 Other noise sources of significance**

In addition, other noise sources that may be present should also be considered. During the day, people are generally bombarded with the sounds from numerous sources considered "normal", such as animal sounds, conversation, amenities and appliances (TV/Radio/CD playing in background, computer(s), freezers/fridges, etc.). This excludes activities that may generate additional noise associated with normal work.

At night, sounds that are present are natural sounds from animals, wind as well as other sounds we consider "normal", such as the hum from a variety of appliances (magnetostriction - transformer noises) drawing standby power, freezers and fridges. However: As the plant mainly operates during daylight hours this study will not investigate the night-time scenario.

**7.2.4 Determining the Significance of the Noise Impact**

The level of detail as depicted in the 2014 EIA regulations, as amended on 07 April 2017, was fine-tuned by assigning specific values to each impact. In order to establish a coherent framework within which all impacts could be objectively assessed, it was necessary to

establish a rating system, which was applied consistently to all the criteria. For such purposes each aspect was assigned a value as defined in the third column in the tables below.

The impact consequence is determined by summing the scores of Magnitude (**Table 7-2**), Duration (**Table 7-3**) and Spatial Extent (**Table 7-4**). The impact significance (see **Sections 7.2.5**) is determined by multiplying the Consequence result with the Probability score (**Table 7-5**). An explanation of the impact assessment criteria is defined in the following tables.

**Table 7-2: Impact Assessment Criteria – Magnitude**

<b>This defines the impact as experienced by any receptor. In this report the receptor is defined as any resident in the area, but excludes faunal species.</b>		
<b>Rating</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Score</b>
<i>Minor</i>	Increase in average sound pressure levels between 0 and 3 dB from the expected ambient sound levels. Ambient sound levels are defined by the lower of the measured LA <sub>Aeq,8hr</sub> or LA <sub>Aeq,16hr</sub> during measurement dates. Total projected noise level is less than the Zone Sound Level and/or Equator Principle in wind-still conditions.	2
<i>Low</i>	Increase in average sound pressure levels between 3 and 5 dB from the expected ambient sound levels. Total projected noise levels between 3 and 5 above the Zone Sound Level and/or Equator Principle (wind-less conditions).	4
<i>Moderate</i>	Increase in average sound pressure levels between 5 and 7 dB from the ambient sound levels. Increase in sound pressure levels between 5 and 7 above the Zone Sound Level and/or Equator Principle (wind less conditions). Sporadic complaints expected.	6
<i>High</i>	Increase in average sound pressure levels between 7 and 10 from the ambient sound level. Total projected noise levels between 7 and 10 dBA above the Zone Sound Level and/or Equator Principle (wind-less condition). Medium to widespread complaints expected.	8
<i>Very High</i>	Increase in average ambient sound pressure levels higher than 10 dBA. Total projected noise levels higher than 10 dB above the Zone Sound Level and/or Equator Principle (wind less-conditions). Change of 10 dBA is perceived as 'twice as loud', leading to widespread complaints and even threats of community or group action. Any point where instantaneous noise levels exceed 65 dBA at any receptor.	10

**Table 7-3: Impact Assessment Criteria - Duration**

<b>The lifetime of the impact that is measured in relation to the lifetime of the proposed development (construction, operation and closure phases). Will the receptors be subjected to increased noise levels for the lifetime duration of the project, or only infrequently.</b>		
<b>Rating</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Score</b>
<i>Temporary</i>	Impacts are predicted to be of very short duration (portion of construction period) and intermittent/occasional (0 - 1 year).	1
<i>Short term</i>	Impacts that are short, predicted to last only for the duration of the construction period (2 - 5 years).	2
<i>Medium term</i>	Impacts that will continue for the life of the Project, but ceases when the Project stops operating (5 - 15 years).	3
<i>Long term</i>	Impacts that will continue for the life of the Project, but ceases when the Project stops operating (>15 years).	4
<i>Permanent</i>	Impacts that cause a permanent change in the affected receptor or resource (e.g. removal or destruction of ecological habitat) that endures substantially beyond the Project lifetime.	5

**Table 7-4: Impact Assessment Criteria – Spatial extent**

Classification of the physical and spatial scale of the impact		
Rating	Description	Score
<i>Site</i>	The impacted area extends only as far as the activity, such as the footprint occurring within the total site area.	1
<i>Local</i>	The impact could affect the local area (within 1,000 m from site).	2
<i>Regional</i>	The impact could affect the area including the neighbouring farms, the transport routes and the adjoining towns (further than 1,000 m from site).	3
<i>National</i>	The impact could have an effect that expands throughout the country (South Africa).	4
<i>International</i>	Where the impact has international ramifications that extend beyond the boundaries of South Africa.	5

**Table 7-5: Impact Assessment Criteria - Probability**

This describes the likelihood of the impacts actually occurring, and whether it will impact on an identified receptor. The impact may occur for any length of time during the life cycle of the activity, and not at any given time. The classes are rated as follows:		
Rating	Description	Score
<i>Improbable</i>	The possibility of the impact occurring is none, due either to the circumstances, design or experience. The chance of this impact occurring is zero (0 %).	1
<i>Possible</i>	The possibility of the impact occurring is very low, due either to the circumstances, design or experience. The chances of this impact occurring is defined to be up to 25 %.	2
<i>Likely</i>	There is a possibility that the impact will occur to the extent that provisions must therefore be made. The chances of this impact occurring is defined to be between 25% and 50 %.	3
<i>Highly Likely</i>	It is most likely that the impacts will occur at some stage of the development. Plans must be drawn up before carrying out the activity. The chances of this impact occurring is defined between 50 % to 75 %.	4
<i>Definite</i>	The impact will take place regardless of any prevention plans, and only mitigation actions or contingency plans to contain the effect can be relied on. The chance of this impact occurring is defined to be between 75% and 100 %.	5

In order to assess each of these factors for each impact, the following ranking scales as contained in **Table 7-6** will be used.

**Table 7-6: Assessment Criteria: Ranking Scales**

PROBABILITY		MAGNITUDE	
Description / Meaning	Score	Description / Meaning	Score
Definite/don't know	5	Very high/don't know	10
Highly likely	4	High	8
Likely	3	Moderate	6
Possible	2	Low	4
Improbable	1	Minor	2
DURATION		SPATIAL SCALE	
Description / Meaning	Score	Description / Meaning	Score
Permanent	5	International	5
Long Term	4	National	4
Medium Term	3	Regional	3

Short term	2	Local	2
Temporary	1	Footprint	1

### 7.2.5 Identifying the Potential Impacts

Following the assignment of the necessary weights to the respective aspects, criteria are summed and multiplied by their assigned probabilities, resulting in a Significance Rating (SR) value for each impact (prior to the implementation of mitigation measures).

Significance without mitigation is rated on the following scale:

<b>SR&lt;30</b>	Low (L)	Impacts with little real effect and which should not have an influence on or require modification of the project design or alternative mitigation. No mitigation is required.
<b>30&lt;SR &lt;60</b>	Medium (M)	Where it could have an influence on the decision unless it is mitigated. An impact or benefit which is sufficiently important to require management. Of moderate significance - could influence the decisions about the project if left unmanaged.
<b>SR&gt;60</b>	High (H)	Impact is significant, mitigation is critical to reduce impact or risk. Resulting impact could influence the decision depending on the possible mitigation. An impact which could influence the decision about whether or not to proceed with the project.

### 7.3 REPRESENTATION OF NOISE LEVELS

Noise rating levels will be calculated in detail in this report using the appropriate sound propagation models as defined. It is therefore important to understand the difference between sound or noise level as well as the noise rating level (also see Glossary of Terms, **Appendix A**).

Sound or noise levels generally refers to a level as measured using an instrument, whereas the noise rating level refers to a calculated sound exposure level to which various corrections and adjustments was added. These noise rating levels are further processed into a 3D map illustrating noise contours of constant rating levels or noise isopleths. In this noise scoping report it will be used to illustrate the potential extent of the calculated noises of the project and not a noise level at a specific moment in time.

## 8 ASSUMPTIONS AND LIMITATIONS

### 8.1 MEASUREMENTS OF AMBIENT SOUND LEVELS

Ambient sound levels are the cumulative effects of innumerable sounds generated at various instances both far and near. High measurements may not necessarily mean that noise levels in the area are high. Similarly, a low sound level measurement will not necessarily mean that the area is always quiet, as sound levels will vary over seasons, time of the day, faunal characteristics, vegetation in the area and meteorological conditions (especially wind). This is excluding the potential effect of sounds from anthropogenic origin. It is impossible to quantify and identify the numerous sources that influenced one 10-minute measurement using the reading result at the end of the measurement. Therefore, trying to define ambient sound levels using the result of one 10-minute measurement will be very inaccurate (very low confidence level in the results) for the reasons mentioned above. The more measurements that can be collected at a location the higher the confidence levels in the ambient sound level determined. The more complex the sound environment, the longer the required measurement. However, noise level in the industrial area is high as indicated by the sound level measurements. Ambient sound levels will likely always be high due to the numerous activities taking place in this industrial area.



## 9 PROJECTED NOISE RATING LEVELS

### 9.1 CONSTRUCTION PHASE NOISE IMPACT

Noise levels associated with potential construction activities will only be evaluated during the future noise impact assessment. However, based on **Table 6-1**, maximum noise levels could be in the region of 90 – 105 dBA when working in close quarters to equipment (within 10 m), but noise levels will reduce the further a conceptual receptor (such as a employee) is from a noise-generating activity. For all construction work, workers working with or in close proximity to noise-generating activities or equipment will be exposed to high levels of noise as can be seen from **Table 6-1** (when working within 10 m of noisy equipment).

While maximum noise levels may reach up to 60 dBA at 1,000 meters (worst-case scenario for a pile driver), such noise levels are not a constant, and equivalent (average) A-weighted night-time noise levels of up to 49 dBA may be expected at 2,000 meters (rock breaker - refer also **Table 6-2**).

There are a number of potential NSDs identified living approximately 800m from the properties where construction activities can take place. Due to the existing high ambient sound levels, it is unlikely that the construction activities may impact on the NSD, though, this should be defined during a future noise impact study.

Due to the elevated ambient sound levels, the construction activities should ideally not change the existing ambient sound levels with more than 3 dBA (see also **section 4.7.4**).

### 9.2 OPERATIONAL PHASE NOISE IMPACT

Considering the location of potential noisy activities, this assessment indicates that:

- Considering maximum noise emission levels, operating activities could be audible over a distance of more than 2,000 meters (refer **Table 6-1**);
- Considering equivalent (average) noise emission levels, activities could influence the ambient sound levels up to a distance of 2,000 meters at night (refer **Table 6-2**).

As with the construction phase, the operational activities will increase noise levels in the surrounding area. This can however only be assessed in detail with a noise model.

## 10 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NOISE IMPACT

### 10.1 CONSTRUCTION PHASE NOISE IMPACT

The impact assessment for the various activities defined in **Section 6.1** and discussed in **Section 9.1** that can create noise and may impact on the surrounding environment during the construction phase of development is summarized in the following **Table 10-1**.

**Table 10-1: Impact Assessment: Potential Construction Activities**

<b>Impacts:</b> Increases in noise levels at closest receptors.		
<b>Desktop Sensitivity Analysis (worst-case due to the precautionary principle):</b> Existing ambient sound levels elevated, and the proposed activities should not change the existing ambient sound levels with more than 3 dB.		
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Nature of Impact</b>	<b>Extent of Impact</b>
Increase in noise level at receptors. Disturbing noises.	Increased noises or disturbing noises may increase annoyance levels with project.	Multiple night-time construction activities taking place simultaneously may impact an area within 2,000m from the activities
<b>Significance level for scoping:</b> Medium to low (also see <b>Figure 3-2</b> )		
<b>Gaps in Knowledge:</b> Noise modelling will calculate potential noise levels considering topography, ground surface constants and potential noise-emitting activities.		
<b>Comments:</b> Ambient sound levels are very high, and higher than the recommended noise limit for residential use. Considering the requirements of the IFC, newly introduced noises should not change existing ambient sound levels with more than 3 dB (when existing ambient sound levels are higher than the recommended levels). Without modelling the potential noise levels at the identified NSD is not known and the potential change in ambient sound levels cannot be calculated. As such there is a low confidence in this assessment.		
<b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Mitigation will depend on the noise levels calculated at the closest receptors.		
<b>Recommendations:</b> Scoping level assessment is not sufficient, full Environmental Noise Impact Assessment is required.		

### 10.2 OPERATIONAL PHASE NOISE IMPACT

The impact assessment for the various activities defined in **Section 6.2** and discussed in **section 9.2** will increase the ambient noise levels in the area. The operational noise impact is assessed and summarized in the following **Table 10-2**. Only the night-time scenario was assessed as this is the most critical time period when a quiet environment is desired.

**Table 10-2: Impact Assessment: Operational Activities**

<b>Impacts:</b> Increases in noise levels at closest receptors.		
<b>Desktop Sensitivity Analysis (worst-case due to the precautionary principle):</b> Existing ambient sound levels elevated, and the proposed activities should not change the existing ambient sound levels with more than 3 dB.		
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Nature of Impact</b>	<b>Extent of Impact</b>
Increase in noise level at receptors. Potential disturbing noise levels.	Increased noises or disturbing noises may increase annoyance levels with project.	Multiple night-time operational activities taking place simultaneously may impact an area within 2,000m from the activities
<b>Significance level for scoping:</b> Medium to low (also see <b>Figure 3-2</b> )		
<b>Gaps in Knowledge:</b> Noise modelling will calculate potential noise levels considering topography, ground surface constants and potential noise-emitting activities.		
<b>Comments:</b> Ambient sound levels are very high, and higher than the recommended noise limit for residential use. Considering the requirements of the IFC, newly introduced noises should not change existing ambient sound levels with more than 3 dB (when existing ambient sound levels are higher than the recommended levels). Without modelling the potential noise levels at the identified NSD is not known and the potential change in ambient sound levels cannot be calculated. As such there is a low confidence in this assessment.		
<b>Mitigation Measures:</b> Mitigation will depend on the layout of infrastructure, status of surrounding receptors and the significance of the potential noise impact. Mitigation measures can only be defined with more information.		
<b>Recommendations:</b> Scoping level assessment is not sufficient, full Environmental Noise Impact Assessment is required.		

### 10.3 DECOMMISSIONING PHASE NOISE IMPACT

Final decommissioning activities will have a noise impact lower than either the construction or operational phases. This is because decommissioning and closure activities normally take place during the day using minimal equipment (due to the decreased urgency of the project). While there may be various activities, there is a very small risk for a noise impact.

## 11 EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVES

### 11.1 ALTERNATIVE 1: NO-GO OPTION

The ambient sound levels will remain as is, that being, typical of an industrial noise district with the existing ambient sound levels being elevated.

### 11.2 ALTERNATIVE 2: PROPOSED POWER GENERATION ACTIVITIES

The proposed activities (worse-case evaluated) could raise the noise levels in the area up to 2,000 m from the closest activities, whether construction or operational, though, considering existing high ambient sound levels, the potential area of influence will be significantly smaller. While there are a number of NSD<sup>7</sup> living within 1,000m from the project focus area, they may be used to the high noise levels in the area.

It is difficult to assume how these NSD may perceive the project, as there are numerous factors that will influence the attitude of receptors to the project, including direct impacts (noise, air quality, increased traffic, security and safety concerns, etc) and potential benefits (potential employment, other business opportunities).

However, the project will greatly assist in the economic growth and development challenges South Africa is facing by means of assisting in providing electricity, employment and other business opportunities. With each stage of load shedding representing a shortage of 1000 MW of generating power, this power plant can meet 45% of stage 1 load shedding on its own. People in the area that is not directly affected by increased noises could have a positive perception of the project.

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<sup>7</sup> Around 60 structures at Brian's Contractors Accommodation, 083 625 5069. The owner reported that the residential use is registered with the Local Authority

## 12 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report is a scoping level Noise Assessment of the potential noise environment due to the development of an emergency gas to power plant near Richards Bay, Kwa-Zulu Natal. The power plant will have an installed capacity of up to 450MW, to be operated on either LPG or naphtha as the initial fuel source and later to be converted from utilising LPG/naphtha to natural gas.

With the preliminary data available, this assessment indicated that there is a risk of a noise impact during the construction and operational phases due to the proximity of noise-sensitive receptors to the project site (where noise generating activities may take place).

It is therefore recommended that the noise impact be investigated in more detail during the EIA phase, including further ambient sound measurements. Additional information to be considered will be:

- Project design and layout;
- Topography and intervening buildings between the proposed activity and identified NSD;
- A more accurate description of equipment to be used in and around the proposed power plant. This would include data such as the type of equipment, but also the number of that equipment to be used.

Information not provided or available will be estimated using internet sources.

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# **APPENDIX A**

## Glossary of Acoustic Terms, Definitions and General Information



<i>1/3-Octave Band</i>	A filter with a bandwidth of one-third of an octave representing four semitones, or notes on the musical scale. This relationship is applied to both the width of the band, and the centre frequency of the band. See also definition of octave band.
<i>A – Weighting</i>	An internationally standardised frequency weighting that approximates the frequency response of the human ear and gives an objective reading that therefore agrees with the subjective human response to that sound.
<i>Air Absorption</i>	The phenomena of attenuation of sound waves with distance propagated in air, due to dissipative interaction within the gas molecules.
<i>Alternatives</i>	A possible course of action, in place of another, that would meet the same purpose and need (of proposal). Alternatives can refer to any of the following, but are not limited hereto: alternative sites for development, alternative site layouts, alternative designs, alternative processes and materials. In Integrated Environmental Management the so-called “no go” alternative refers to the option of not allowing the development and may also require investigation in certain circumstances.
<i>Ambient</i>	The conditions surrounding an organism or area.
<i>Ambient Noise</i>	The all-encompassing sound at a point being composed of sounds from many sources both near and far. It includes the noise from the noise source under investigation.
<i>Ambient Sound</i>	The all-encompassing sound at a point being composite of sounds from near and far.
<i>Ambient Sound Level</i>	Means the reading on an integrating impulse sound level meter taken at a measuring point in the absence of any alleged disturbing noise at the end of a total period of at least 10 minutes after such a meter was put into operation. In this report the term Background Ambient Sound Level will be used.
<i>Amplitude Modulated Sound</i>	A sound that noticeably fluctuates in loudness over time.
<i>Applicant</i>	Any person who applies for an authorisation to undertake a listed activity or to cause such activity in terms of the relevant environmental legislation.
<i>Assessment</i>	The process of collecting, organising, analysing, interpreting and communicating data that is relevant to some decision.
<i>Attenuation</i>	Term used to indicate reduction of noise or vibration, by whatever method necessary, usually expressed in decibels.
<i>Audible frequency Range</i>	Generally assumed to be the range from about 20 Hz to 20,000 Hz, the range of frequencies that our ears perceive as sound.
<i>Ambient Sound Level</i>	The level of the ambient sound indicated on a sound level meter in the absence of the sound under investigation (e.g. sound from a particular noise source or sound generated for test purposes). Ambient sound level as per Noise Control Regulations.
<i>Broadband Noise</i>	Spectrum consisting of a large number of frequency components, none of which is individually dominant.
<i>C-Weighting</i>	This is an international standard filter, which can be applied to a pressure signal or to a <i>SPL</i> or <i>PWL</i> spectrum, and which is essentially a pass-band filter in the frequency range of approximately 63 to 4000 Hz. This filter provides a more constant, flatter, frequency response, providing significantly less adjustment than the A-scale filter for frequencies less than 1000 Hz.
<i>Controlled area (as per National Noise Control Regulations)</i>	a piece of land designated by a local authority where, in the case of- (a) road transport noise in the vicinity of a road- (i) the reading on an integrating impulse sound level meter, taken outdoors at the end of a period extending from 06:00 to 24:00 while such meter is in operation, exceeds 65 dBA; or (ii) the equivalent continuous "A"-weighted sound pressure level at a height of at least 1,2 metres, but not more than 1,4 metres, above the ground for a period extending from 06:00 to 24:00 as calculated in accordance with SABS 0210-1986, titled: "Code of Practice for calculating and predicting road traffic noise", published under

	<p>Government Notice No. 358 of 20 February 1987, and projected for a period of 15 years following the date on which the local authority has made such designation, exceeds 65 dBA;</p> <p>(b) aircraft noise in the vicinity of an airfield, the calculated noisiness index, projected for a period of 15 years following the date on which the local authority has made such designation, exceeds 65 dBA; or</p> <p>(c) industrial noise in the vicinity of an industry-</p> <p>(i) the reading on an integrating impulse sound level meter, taken outdoors at the end of a period of 24 hours while such meter is in operation, exceeds 61 dBA; or</p> <p>(ii) the calculated outdoor equivalent continuous "A"-weighted sound pressure level at a height of at least 1,2 metres, but not more than 1,4 metres, above the ground for a period of 24 hours, exceeds 61 dBA;</p>
<i>dB(A)</i>	Sound Pressure Level in decibel that has been A-weighted, or filtered, to match the response of the human ear.
<i>Decibel (db)</i>	A logarithmic scale for sound corresponding to a multiple of 10 of the threshold of hearing. Decibels for sound levels in air are referenced to an atmospheric pressure of 20 $\mu$ Pa.
<i>Diffraction</i>	The process whereby an acoustic wave is disturbed and its energy redistributed in space as a result of an obstacle in its path, Reflection and refraction are special cases of diffraction.
<i>Direction of Propagation</i>	The direction of flow of energy associated with a wave.
<i>Disturbing noise</i>	Means a noise level that exceeds the zone sound level or, if no zone sound level has been designated, a noise level that exceeds the ambient sound level at the same measuring point by 7 dBA or more.
<i>Environment</i>	The external circumstances, conditions and objects that affect the existence and development of an individual, organism or group; these circumstances include biophysical, social, economic, historical, cultural and political aspects.
<i>Environmental Control Officer</i>	Independent Officer employed by the applicant to ensure the implementation of the Environmental Management Plan (EMP) and manages any further environmental issues that may arise.
<i>Environmental impact</i>	A change resulting from the effect of an activity on the environment, whether desirable or undesirable. Impacts may be the direct consequence of an organisation's activities or may be indirectly caused by them.
<i>Environmental Impact Assessment</i>	An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) refers to the process of identifying, predicting and assessing the potential positive and negative social, economic and biophysical impacts of any proposed project, plan, programme or policy that requires authorisation of permission by law and that may significantly affect the environment. The EIA includes an evaluation of alternatives, as well as recommendations for appropriate mitigation measures for minimising or avoiding negative impacts, measures for enhancing the positive aspects of the proposal, and environmental management and monitoring measures.
<i>Environmental issue</i>	A concern felt by one or more parties about some existing, potential or perceived environmental impact.
<i>Equivalent continuous A-weighted sound exposure level (<math>L_{Aeq,T}</math>)</i>	The value of the average A-weighted sound pressure level measured continuously within a reference time interval $T$ , which have the same mean-square sound pressure as a sound under consideration for which the level varies with time.
<i>Equivalent continuous A-weighted rating level (<math>L_{Req,T}</math>)</i>	The Equivalent continuous A-weighted sound exposure level ( $L_{Aeq,T}$ ) to which various adjustments has been added. More commonly used as ( $L_{Req,d}$ ) over a time interval 06:00 – 22:00 ( $T=16$ hours) and ( $L_{Req,n}$ ) over a time interval of 22:00 – 06:00 ( $T=8$ hours). It is a calculated value.
<i>F (fast) time weighting</i>	(1) Averaging detection time used in sound level meters. (2) Fast setting has a time constant of 125 milliseconds and provides a fast reacting display response allowing the user to follow and measure not too rapidly fluctuating sound.

<i>Footprint area</i>	Area to be used for the construction of the proposed development, which does not include the total study area.
<i>Free Field Condition</i>	An environment where there is no reflective surfaces.
<i>Frequency</i>	The rate of oscillation of a sound, measured in units of Hertz (Hz) or kiloHertz (kHz). One hundred Hz is a rate of one hundred times per second. The frequency of a sound is the property perceived as pitch: a low-frequency sound (such as a bass note) oscillates at a relatively slow rate, and a high-frequency sound (such as a treble note) oscillates at a relatively high rate.
<i>Green field</i>	A parcel of land not previously developed beyond that of agriculture or forestry use; virgin land. The opposite of Greenfield is Brownfield, which is a site previously developed and used by an enterprise, especially for a manufacturing or processing operation. The term Brownfield suggests that an investigation should be made to determine if environmental damage exists.
<i>G-Weighting</i>	An International Standard filter used to represent the infrasonic components of a sound spectrum.
<i>Harmonics</i>	Any of a series of musical tones for which the frequencies are integral multiples of the frequency of a fundamental tone.
<i>I (impulse) time weighting</i>	(1) Averaging detection time used in sound level meters as per South African standards and Regulations. (2) Impulse setting has a time constant of 35 milliseconds when the signal is increasing (sound pressure level rising) and a time constant of 1,500 milliseconds while the signal is decreasing.
<i>Impulsive sound</i>	A sound characterized by brief excursions of sound pressure (transient signal) that significantly exceed the ambient sound level.
<i>Infrasound</i>	Sound with a frequency content below the threshold of hearing, generally held to be about 20 Hz. Infrasonic sound with sufficiently large amplitude can be perceived, and is both heard and felt as vibration. Natural sources of infrasound are waves, thunder and wind.
<i>Integrated Development Plan</i>	A participatory planning process aimed at developing a strategic development plan to guide and inform all planning, budgeting, management and decision-making in a Local Authority, in terms of the requirements of Chapter 5 of the Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000).
<i>Integrated Environmental Management</i>	IEM provides an integrated approach for environmental assessment, management, and decision-making and to promote sustainable development and the equitable use of resources. Principles underlying IEM provide for a democratic, participatory, holistic, sustainable, equitable and accountable approach.
<i>Interested and affected parties</i>	Individuals or groups concerned with or affected by an activity and its consequences. These include the authorities, local communities, investors, work force, consumers, environmental interest groups and the general public.
<i>Key issue</i>	An issue raised during the Scoping process that has not received an adequate response and that requires further investigation before it can be resolved.
<i>L<sub>A90</sub></i>	the sound level exceeded for the 90% of the time under consideration
<i>Listed activities</i>	Development actions that is likely to result in significant environmental impacts as identified by the delegated authority (formerly the Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism) in terms of Section 21 of the Environment Conservation Act.
<i>L<sub>AMin</sub> and L<sub>AMax</sub></i>	Is the RMS (root mean squared) minimum or maximum level of a noise source.
<i>Loudness</i>	The attribute of an auditory sensation that describes the listener's ranking of sound in terms of its audibility.
<i>Magnitude of impact</i>	Magnitude of impact means the combination of the intensity, duration and extent of an impact occurring.
<i>Masking</i>	The raising of a listener's threshold of hearing for a given sound due to the presence of another sound.
<i>Mitigation</i>	To cause to become less harsh or hostile.

<i>Negative impact</i>	A change that reduces the quality of the environment (for example, by reducing species diversity and the reproductive capacity of the ecosystem, by damaging health, or by causing nuisance).
<i>Noise</i>	a. Sound that a listener does not wish to hear (unwanted sounds). b. Sound from sources other than the one emitting the sound it is desired to receive, measure or record. c. A class of sound of an erratic, intermittent or statistically random nature.
<i>Noise Level</i>	The term used in lieu of sound level when the sound concerned is being measured or ranked for its undesirability in the contextual circumstances.
<i>Noise-sensitive development</i>	developments that could be influenced by noise such as: a) districts (see table 2 of SANS 10103:2008) 1. rural districts, 2. suburban districts with little road traffic, 3. urban districts, 4. urban districts with some workshops, with business premises, and with main roads, 5. central business districts, and 6. industrial districts; b) educational, residential, office and health care buildings and their surroundings; c) churches and their surroundings; d) auditoriums and concert halls and their surroundings; e) recreational areas; and f) nature reserves. In this report Noise-sensitive developments is also referred to as a Potential Sensitive Receptor
<i>Octave Band</i>	A filter with a bandwidth of one octave, or twelve semi-tones on the musical scale representing a doubling of frequency.
<i>Positive impact</i>	A change that improves the quality of life of affected people or the quality of the environment.
<i>Property</i>	Any piece of land indicated on a diagram or general plan approved by the Surveyor-General intended for registration as a separate unit in terms of the Deeds Registries Act and includes an erf, a site and a farm portion as well as the buildings erected thereon
<i>Public Participation Process</i>	A process of involving the public in order to identify needs, address concerns, choose options, plan and monitor in terms of a proposed project, programme or development
<i>Reflection</i>	Redirection of sound waves.
<i>Refraction</i>	Change in direction of sound waves caused by changes in the sound wave velocity, typically when sound wave propagates in a medium of different density.
<i>Reverberant Sound</i>	The sound in an enclosure which results from repeated reflections from the boundaries.
<i>Reverberation</i>	The persistence, after emission of a sound has stopped, of a sound field within an enclosure.
<i>Significant Impact</i>	An impact can be deemed significant if consultation with the relevant authorities and other interested and affected parties, on the context and intensity of its effects, provides reasonable grounds for mitigating measures to be included in the environmental management report. The onus will be on the applicant to include the relevant authorities and other interested and affected parties in the consultation process. Present and potential future, cumulative and synergistic effects should all be taken into account.
<i>S (slow) time weighting</i>	(1) Averaging times used in sound level meters. (2) Time constant of one [1] second that gives a slower response which helps average out the display fluctuations.
<i>Sound Level</i>	The level of the frequency and time weighted sound pressure as determined by a sound level meter, i.e. A-weighted sound level.
<i>Sound Power</i>	Of a source, the total sound energy radiated per unit time.
<i>Sound Pressure Level (SPL)</i>	Of a sound, 20 times the logarithm to the base 10 of the ratio of the RMS sound pressure level to the reference sound pressure level. International

		values for the reference sound pressure level are 20 micropascals in air and 100 millipascals in water. SPL is reported as $L_p$ in dB (not weighted) or in various other weightings.
<i>Soundscape</i>		Sound or a combination of sounds that forms or arises from an immersive environment. The study of soundscape is the subject of acoustic ecology. The idea of soundscape refers to both the natural acoustic environment, consisting of natural sounds, including animal vocalizations and, for instance, the sounds of weather and other natural elements; and environmental sounds created by humans, through musical composition, sound design, and other ordinary human activities including conversation, work, and sounds of mechanical origin resulting from use of industrial technology. The disruption of these acoustic environments results in noise pollution.
<i>Study area</i>		Refers to the entire study area encompassing all the alternative routes as indicated on the study area map.
<i>Sustainable Development</i>		Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It contains within it two key concepts: the concept of "needs", in particular the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment's ability to meet present and the future needs (Brundtland Commission, 1987).
<i>Tread braked</i>		The traditional form of wheel brake consisting of a block of friction material (which could be cast iron, wood or nowadays a composition material) hung from a lever and being pressed against the wheel tread by air pressure (in the air brake) or atmospheric pressure in the case of the vacuum brake.
<i>Zone of Potential Influence</i>		The area defined as the radius about an object, or objects beyond which the noise impact will be insignificant.
<i>Zone Sound Level</i>		Means a derived dBA value determined indirectly by means of a series of measurements, calculations or table readings and designated by a local authority for an area. This is similar to the Rating Level as defined in SANS 10103:2008.

**End of Report**