ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR HUMANSRUS SOLAR 4 DEVELOPMENT, NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE

SPECIALIST REPORT
FINAL VISUAL IMPACT STATEMENT

DATE: 9 November 2015

Document prepared on behalf of:
Cape Environmental Practitioners (Pty) Ltd
For: Humansrus Solar 4 (Pty) Ltd.

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GLOSSARY

Best Practicable Environmental Option (BPEO)
This is the option that provides the most benefit, or causes the least damage, to the environment as a whole, at a cost acceptable to society, in the long, as well as the short, term.

Cumulative Impact
The impact on the environment, which results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, regardless of what agency or person, undertakes such other actions. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor, but collectively significant, actions taking place over a period of time.

Impact (visual)
A description of the effect of an aspect of a development on a specified component of the visual, aesthetic or scenic environment, within a defined time and space.

Issue (visual)
Issues are concerns related to the proposed development, generally phrased as questions, taking the form of "what will the impact of some activity be on some element of the visual, aesthetic or scenic environment?"

Key Observation Points (KOPs)
KOPs refer to receptors (people affected by the visual influence of a project) located in the most critical locations surrounding the landscape modification, who make consistent use of the views associated with the site where the landscape modifications are proposed. KOPs can either be a single point of view that an observer/evaluator uses to rate an area or panorama, or a linear view along a roadway, trail or river corridor.

Management Actions
Actions that enhance the benefits of a proposed development, or avoid, mitigate, restore or compensate for, negative impacts.

Receptors
Individuals, groups or communities who would be subject to the visual influence of a particular project.

Sense of Place
The unique quality or character of a place, whether natural, rural or urban.

Scenic Corridor
A linear geographic area that contains scenic resources, usually, but not necessarily, defined by a route.

Scoping
The process of determining the key issues, and the space and time boundaries, to be addressed in an environmental assessment.

Viewshed
The outer boundary defining a view catchment area, usually along crests and ridgelines. Similar to a watershed. This reflects the area in which, or the extent to which, the landscape modification is likely to be seen.

Zone of Visual Influence (ZVI)
The ZVI is defined as 'the area within which a proposed development may have an influence or effect on visual amenity.'

LIST OF ACRONYMS

APHP	Association of Professional Heritage Practitioners
BLM	Bureau of Land Management (United States)
BPEO	Best Practicable Environmental Option
CALP	Collaborative for Advanced Landscape Planning
DEA&DP	Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning (South Africa)
DEM	Digital Elevation Model
DoC	Degree of Contrast
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EMP	Environmental Management Plan
GIS	Geographic Information System
I&APs	Interested and Affected Parties
IEMA	Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (United Kingdom)
IEMP	Integrated Environmental Management Plan
KOP	Key Observation Point
MAMSL	Metres above mean sea level
NELPAG	New England Light Pollution Advisory Group
PSDF	Provincial Spatial Development Framework
ROD	Record of Decision
SAHRA	South African National Heritage Resources Agency
SDF	Spatial Development Framework
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
VAC	Visual Absorption Capacity
VIA	Visual Impact Assessment
VRM	Visual Resource Management
ZVI	Zone of Visual Influence

This document was completed by Silver Solutions 887 cc trading as VRM Africa, a Visual Impact Study and Mapping organisation located in George, South Africa. VRM Africa cc was appointed as an independent professional visual impact practitioner to facilitate this VIA.

This document was undertaken by the following team:

Stephen Stead	Director/ Visual Impact	APHP accredited VIA Practitioner
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1 INTRODUCTION

VRM Africa was appointed by Cape Environmental Assessment Practitioners (Pty) Ltd to undertake a Visual Statement of the proposed Humansrus Solar 4 for Humansrus Solar 4 (Pty) Ltd. The site is situated near Copperton in the Northern Cape Province. A preliminary site visit was undertaken on the 5th August 2014.

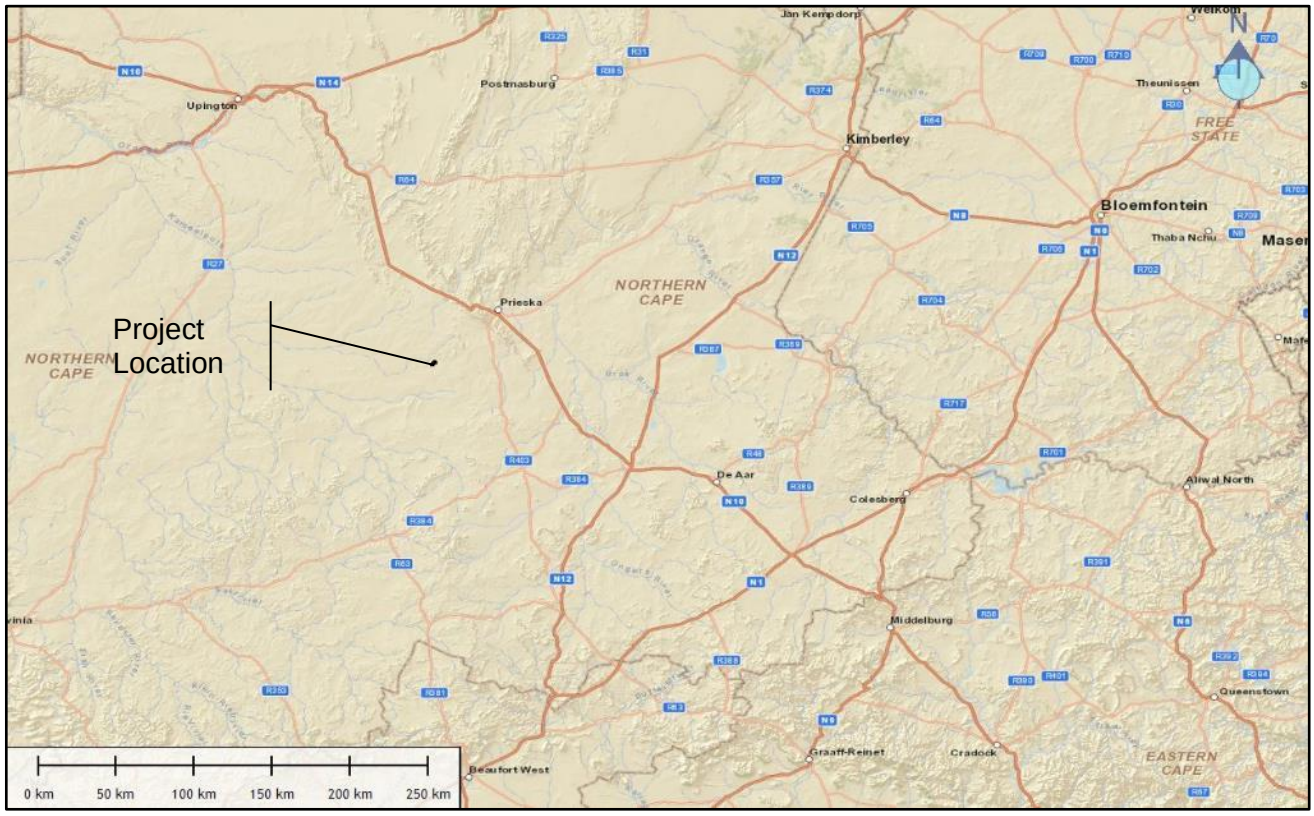


Figure 1: Regional locality map

1.1 Terms of Reference

Landscape significance is assessed by differentiating between those landscapes of recognized or potential significance or sensitivity to modification and landscapes that have low sensitivity and scenic value. Different levels of scenic values require different degrees of management. For example, management of an area with high scenic value might be focused on preserving the existing character of the landscape, and management of an area with little scenic value might allow for major modifications to the landscape. Objectivity and consistency can be greatly increased by using standard assessment criteria to describe and evaluate landscapes, and to also describe proposed projects. (USDI., 2004)

The scope of the study is to cover the entire proposed project area, and the terms of reference for the study are as follows:

- Quantifying and assessing existing scenic resources/visual characteristics on, and around, the proposed site.
- Determining visible extent, view corridors and important viewpoints in order to assess the probable visual impacts of the proposed project.
- Reviewing the legal framework that may have implications for visual/scenic resources.

- Assessing the visual significance of proposed project per phases of operation.
- If a detailed VIA is not required, motivating why further assessment is not required and making general recommendations regarding possible measures to reduce negative visual impacts for inclusion into the proposed project design, including input into the Environmental Management Plan (EMP).

1.2 Assumptions and Limitations

- Information pertaining to the specific heights of activities proposed for the development was limited and, where required, generic heights will be used to define the visibility of the project.
- Although every effort to maintain accuracy was undertaken, as a result of the Digital Elevation Model (DEM) being generated from satellite imagery and not being a true representation of the earth's surface, the viewshed mapping is approximate and may not represent an exact visibility incidence.
- The use of open source satellite imagery was utilised for base maps in the report.
- Some of the mapping in this document was created using Bing Maps (previously *Live Search Maps*, *Windows Live Maps*, *Windows Live Local*, and *MSN Virtual Earth*) and powered by the Enterprise framework.
- The information for the terrain used in the 3D computer model on which the visibility analysis is based on is:
    - The Advanced Spaceborne Thermal Emission and Reflection (ASTER) Radiometer Data (ASTGTM_S2 3E014 and ASTGTM_S24E014 data set). ASTER GDEM is a product of Japan's Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) and National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) in USA. (NASA, 2009)
    - The ASTER DEM is utilised as a tool to determine broad-brush terrain variation and smaller scale terrain variations may not be reflected.
- Determining visual resources is a subjective process where absolute terms are not achievable. Evaluating a landscape's visual quality is complex, as assessment of the visual landscape applies mainly qualitative standards. Therefore, subjectivity cannot be excluded in the assessment procedure. (Lange, 1994)
- The project deliverables, including electronic copies of reports, maps, data, shape files and photographs are based on the author's professional knowledge, as well as available information.
- This study is based on assessment techniques and investigations that are limited by time and budgetary constraints applicable to the type and level of assessment undertaken. VRM Africa reserves the right to modify aspects of the project deliverables if and when new/additional information may become available from research or further work in the applicable field of practice, or pertaining to this study.

1.3 Visual Impact Methodology Summary

The process that VRM Africa follows when undertaking a VIA is based on the United States Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Visual Resource Management method (USDI., 2004). This mapping and GIS-based method of assessing landscape modifications allows for increased objectivity and consistency by using standard assessment criteria.

The VRM process involves the systematic classification of the broad brush landscape types within the receiving environment into one of four VRM Classes. Each VRM Class is associated with management objectives which serves to guide the degree of modification of the proposed site. The Classes are derived by means of a simple matrix with the three variables being the scenic quality, the expected receptor sensitivity to landscape change, and the distance of the proposed landscape modification from key receptor points. The Classes are not prescriptive and are utilised as a guideline to determine visual carrying capacity, where they represent the relative value of the visual resources of an area. Classes I and II are the most valued, Class III represents a moderate value; and Class IV is of least value.

If an impact assessment is required, a Degree of Contrast exercise is undertaken. This is an assessment of the expected change to the receiving environment in terms of the form, line, colour and texture, as seen from the surrounding Key Observation Points. This is to determine if the proposed project meets the visual objectives defined for each of the Classes. If the expected visual contrast is strong, mitigations and recommendations are be made to assist in meeting the visual objectives. To assist in the understanding of the proposed landscape modifications, visual representation, such as photo montages or photos depicting the impacted areas, can be generated. This also serves to inform I&APs and decision-making authorities of the nature and extent of the impact associated with the proposed project/development. There is an ethical obligation in the visualisation process, as visualisation can be misleading if not undertaken ethically.

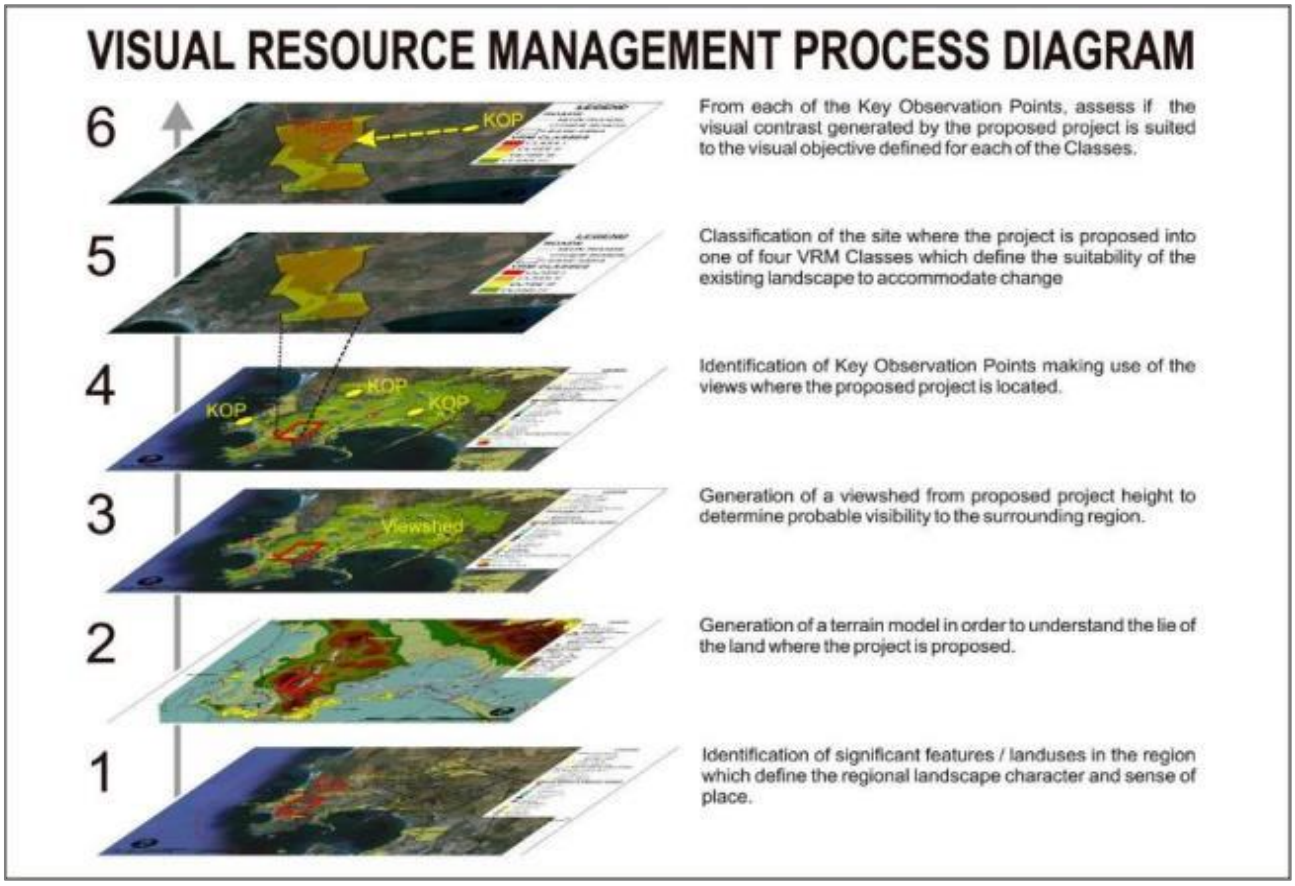


Figure 2: VRM process diagram

2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project will consist of a photovoltaic (PV) solar facility with a generation capacity of 1 x 75MW solar facility on estimated site layout of 220ha. The technology includes PV and/or concentrated PV with fixed, single or double axis tracking technology. Alternatives include two solar sites options, one substation option, two access road options and two selfbuild grid connection options. (CapeEAPrac, 2015)

The No-go alternative proposes that the status quo remains the same and that the proposed development does not go ahead.

The photographs below show examples of existing solar energy photovoltaic (PV) projects.

Figure 3: Photograph example of solar panels
(Source: www.hawaiirenewableenergy.org/Villamesias2)

Figure 4: Example of tracking PV solar panels
(Source: www. solar_tracker16 ecoforlife com au)

Figure 5: Example of solar power panels
(Source: Southern California Gas www.glenmosier.com*)*

Photograph of an example of PV mounting
(Source: VRMA)

Substation with transformers at Sugarloaf Hill *(Source: www.grocotts.co.za)*

Figure 6: Examples of photographs of additional infrastructure

2.1 Planning

The proposed project is located on the Farm 147, Humansrus, Prieska section and is approximately 48 km south-west of the town of Prieska and approximately 2 km east of the small town of Copperton. The town of Copperton falls within the SiyaThemba Local Municipality.

<u>SiyaThemba Local Municipality (LM) IDP</u>

- The SiyaThemba LM has identified solar energy projects as one of their major economic activities.
- The area should develop a unique tourism brand of its own and be marketed on various platforms.

3 PROJECT LANDSCAPE CONTEXT

3.1 Project Visibility

The visible extent, or viewshed, is 'the outer boundary defining a view catchment area, usually along crests and ridgelines' (Oberholzer, 2005). This reflects the area, or extent, where a landscape modification of a specified height would probably be seen. In order to define the extent of the possible influence of the proposed project, a viewshed analysis is undertaken from the proposed sites at a specified height above ground level as indicated in the below table. The maps are informative only as visibility tends to diminish exponentially with distance, which is well recognised in visual analysis literature (Hull & Bishop, 1988).

Table 1: Proposed Project Heights Table

Proposed Activity	Approx. Height (m)
PV panels structures	10
Power line monopoles	25

As depicted in Figure 7 below, the viewshed of both the PV options is strongly fragmented, with the main direction of the visibility to the north and south in the high to medium to high exposure areas. Higher points in the medium to low exposure distance have the potential for visual incidence, but with low levels of visual intrusion. The expected zone of visual influence is expected to be retained in the foreground / middle ground (6km) distance zone.

As depicted in Figure 8 below, the viewshed of the proposed Power Line is also evenly distributed in the surrounding areas with some fragmented to the north. This is due to the height of the proposed power lines in relation to the relatively flat terrain of the landscape. Due to the higher VAC levels of the road and the existing telecommunication line along the road, as well as the built substation to the south, the expected zone of visual influence is expected to remain in the foreground (2km) distance zone.

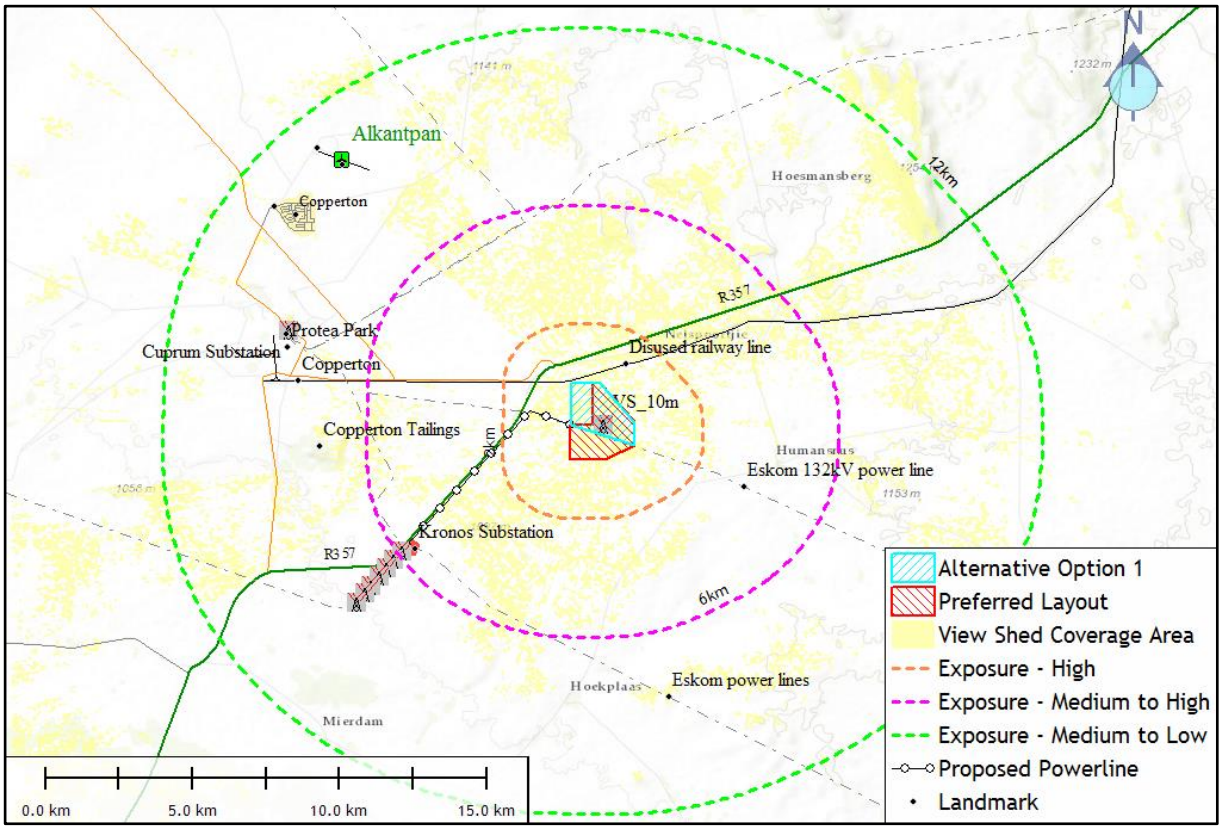


Figure 7: Proposed PV viewshed from sites with offset 10m above ground level overlaid onto Open Source Topographic Map

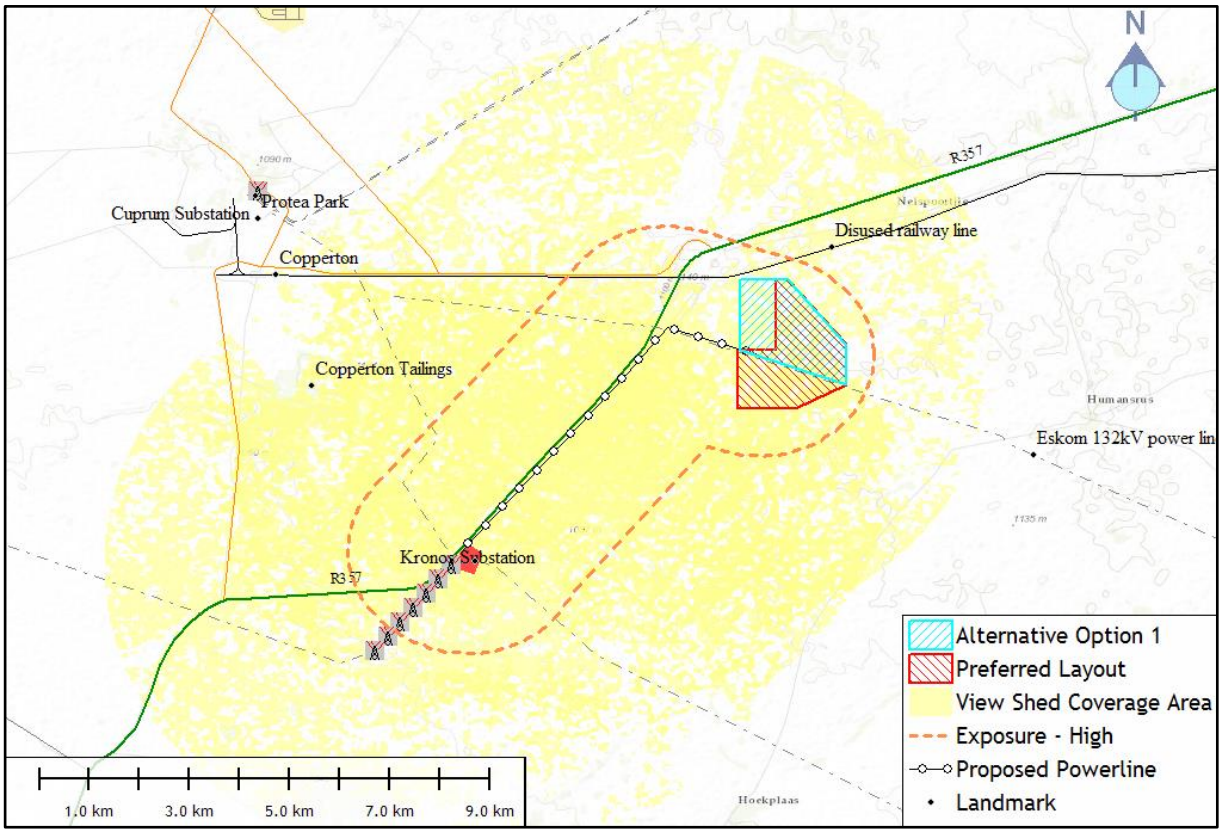


Figure 8: Proposed grid viewshed from site with offset 25m above ground level overlaid onto Open Source Topographic Map

3.2 Landscape Context

A broad-brush regional landscape survey was undertaken to identify key features that define the landscape context within the project approximate viewshed area. The following landmarks were identified as significant in defining the surrounding areas characteristic landscape:

- Copperton mine and tailing storage facility
- Eskom substation and powerlines
- Solar energy context
- R357 road
- Old railway line
- Isolated farmsteads

3.2.1 Copperton Mine

Figure 9: View of Copperton Mine headgear and Waste Rock Dumps as seen from the site

Figure 10: View of Copperton Mine Tailings Storage Facility as seen from the site

The nearest settlement to the site is Copperton, at a distance of 14.4 km, which was originally established for the workers of Copperton Mine. The mine opened in 1972 and closed in 1991 when the majority of the houses were demolished. Copperton was then sold to a private owner after the closing of the mine. The town is currently on a long-term lease by the Request Trust *(SiyaThemba Municipality IDP).* Although there are some trees and shrubs present, the sense of place is one of a derelict, small settlement. The resident population is approximately 70 people. The remaining built structures of the mine itself include the mineshaft, an adjacent concrete shed and large concrete storage tanks, as well as unused lighting pylons. A key feature in the landscape is the Copperton Tailings Storage Facility (TSF) that is located to the west of the proposed site. The steep sided walls and light colour of the oxidised sands increase visual contrast, resulting in the TSF dominating the views of any casual observers.

3.2.2 Kronos and Cuprum Substations

Figure 11: View of existing Cuprum substation

The Cuprum Substation was built to serve Copperton Mine and still operates together with Kronos substation, which lies several kilometres to the south. There are existing powerlines that run through the area.

3.2.3 Local Solar Energy Context

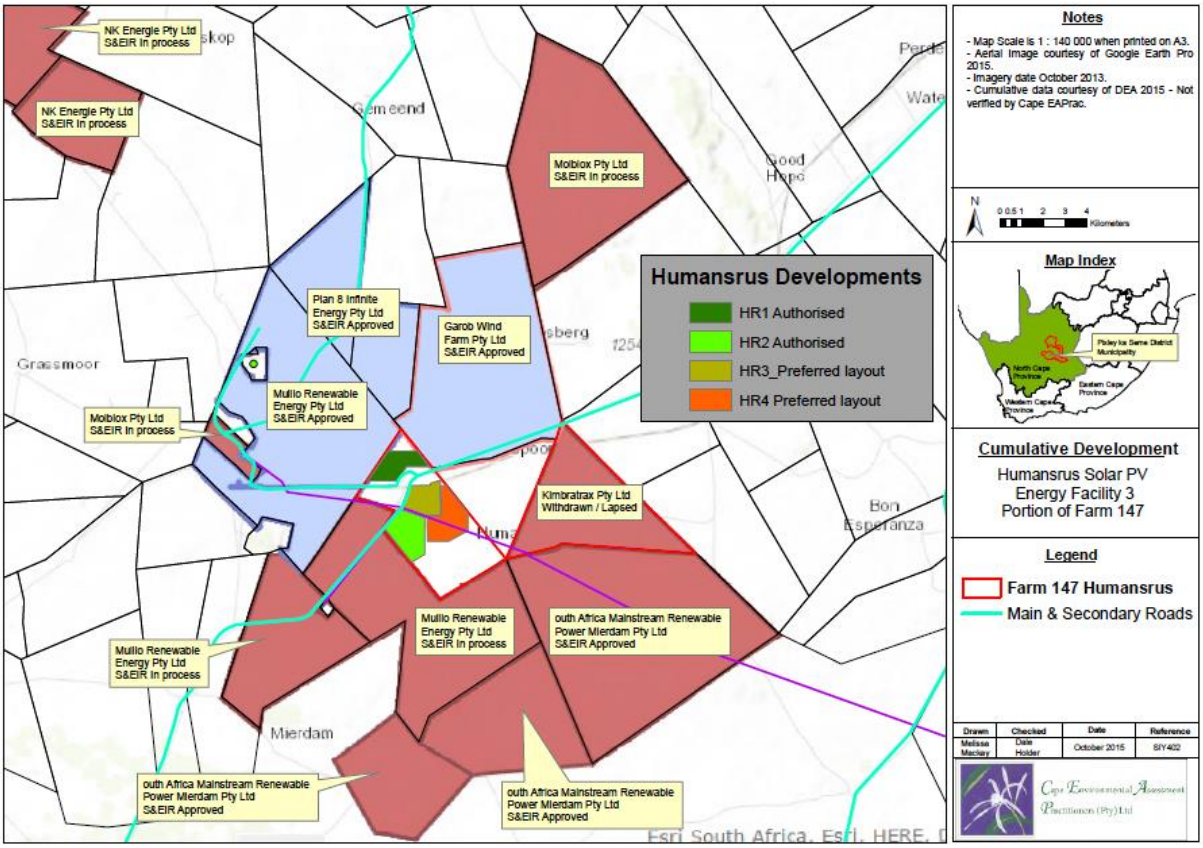


Figure 12: Copperton cumulative development map indicating the various projects proposed and authorised within the area. (CapeEAPrac, 2015)

As a result of the substation and the suitable conditions for solar energy generation, many solar energy projects are proposed in the surrounding areas including:

- There are a number of additional proposed PV facility sites currently being assessed; at Hoekplaas Dam Farm, at Struisbult (Portion 1 of Farm 104) and on Farm Hoekplaas (Remainder of Farm No. 146).
- There is an approved 190-turbine development that will occupy two sites between the R357 and the R386 to Carnarvon.
- A proposed 56-turbine wind energy farm is being considered on a site to the north of the Struisbult PV facility site.

As a result of the visual massing effect of the combined solar energy facilities, it is likely that the landscape will become highly modified and a change in the current sense of place is most likely.

3.2.4 Transport Infrastructure

Figure 13: View of the old railway line with the Copperton mine in the background

Figure 14: View east showing the tarred section of the R357 road

The R357 links the N10 in the east to the small town of Vanwyksvlei in the west. The section between the N10 and the Copperton mine has been tarred. There are numerous minor gravel roads that divert off the main road to access isolated farming areas and farmsteads. Also evident in the landscape is the old railway line. The rails have been lifted but the flat support and cuttings are still apparent.

3.2.5 Isolated Farmsteads

Other than the mine, the landuse in the area is predominantly sheep farming with a few isolated farmsteads located in more sheltered topographic places. Receptors residing in these areas would be more sensitive to landscape change, unless they were involved with other PV projects. There are no residential receptors living in any of the high visual exposure areas to the proposed project.

4 SITE REVIEW

The site is characterised by flat open terrain covered with Karoo scrub vegetation. As indicated in the profiles below, the west to east profile reflects little topographic undulation with the small rise in the west representing the bridge that crosses over the old railway line. Slightly higher ground to the east would contain visibility from some of the ground level views in the east. The north to south profile reflects a slightly more varied profile with the watershed located in the central area but without any significant topographical prominence. A slopes analysis indicated that there were a few steep slopes but those are associated with man-made modifications such as the bridge and borrow pits.

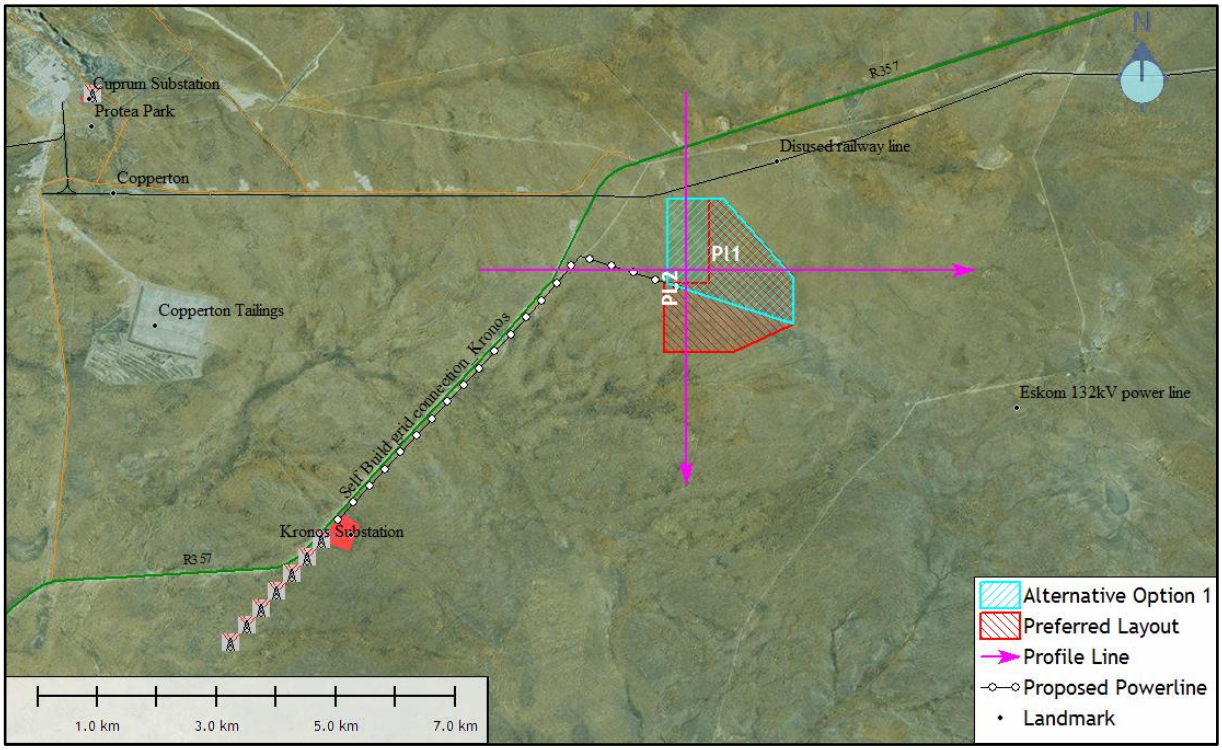
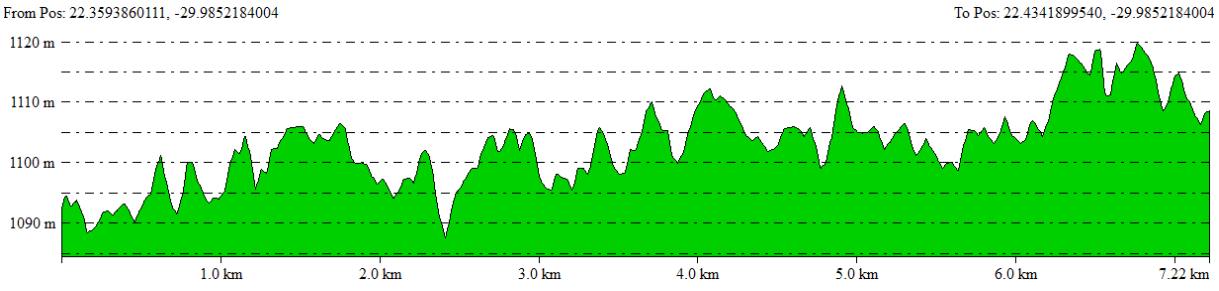


Figure 15: Landscape character and profile line map

West to East Profile



North to South Profile

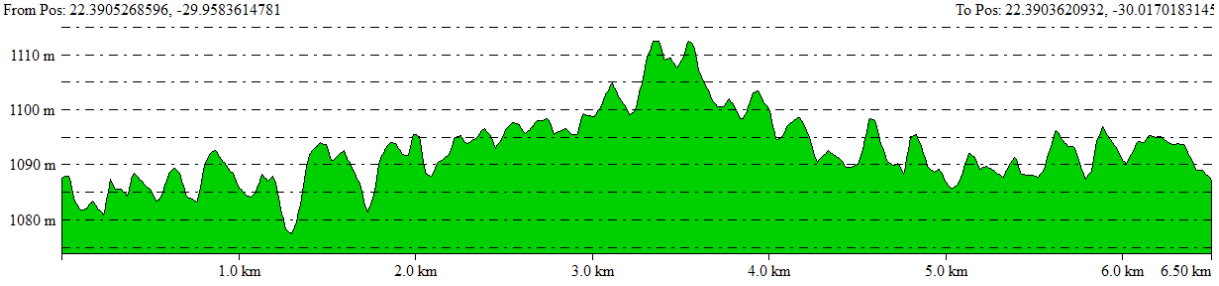


Figure 16: West-east and north-south profile lines which run though the proposed site

Figure 17: View of existing transmission lines crossing the site.

Figure 18: View to the east showing local sense of place with the disused railway line cutting.

Table 2: Site Scenic Quality Rating Table

Aspect	Rating	Motivation
Landform	1	The terrain is mainly flat with little undulation or feature definition.
Vegetation	2	Vegetation is Bushmanland Arid Grassland and is low in height, uniform and sparse.
Water	0	Water is not apparent.
Colour	2	Colours are uniform, based on earth-browns and grey-browns of the vegetation and offers little variety.
Scarcity	2	The landscape forms a small component of a much larger Bushmanland landscape.
Adjacent scenery	3	The value of the landscape relates to its openness and apparent lack of development.
Cultural Modif.	0	Cultural modifications are limited to farming tracks and fences and do not detract from the scenic quality.
Total	10	The scenic quality is rated C (Low) mainly due to the uniformity of the landscape in terms of landform and vegetation.

(Key: A= scenic quality rating of ≥19; B = rating of 12 – 18, C= rating of ≤11)

Table 3: Site Receptor Sensitivity Rating Table

Aspect	Rating	Motivation
Type user	Low	The location is very remote and receptors are few and mainly transport related. The road is utilised mainly for access to the mining town of Copperton. There are no landscape based visual resources in the area attracting people and tourism to the area. There is a single farmstead within the viewshed, but this farm is also associated with a renewable solar project.
Amount use	Low	The area is approximately 40 km from the nearest main road and town of Prieska.
Public interest	Low	The area is very remote and there are no significant visual resources in the vicinity.
Adjacent land users	Low	All of the adjacent farms have been identified as renewable projects.
Special zoning	Low	Numerous applications for renewable energy projects have been lodged with the Department of Environmental Affairs whereby the area has been unofficially identified as a renewable solar energy node.

4.1 Visual Resource Management Findings

The BLM has defined four Classes that represent the relative value of the visual resources of an area and are defined making use of the VRM Matrix below:

- **Classes I and II** are the most valued
- **Class III** represents a moderate value
- **Class IV** is of least value

The Classes are not prescriptive and are utilised as a guideline to determine the carrying capacity of a visually preferred landscape that is utilised to assess the suitability of the landscape change associated with the proposed project. The Visual Inventory Classes are defined using the matrix below and with motivation, can be adjusted to Visual Resource Management Classes which take zoning and regional planning into consideration if applicable.

Table 4: VRM Class Summary Table

Aspect	Rating	Motivation
Exposure	Medium to Low	The large scale of the proposed landscape modification in relation to the flat surrounding Bushmanland agricultural landscape, results in visibility being widespread across the landscape. The one kilometre distance to the R357 reduces the exposure to the road users.
Scenic Quality	Low	The scenic quality is rated C (Low) mainly due to the uniformity of the landscape in terms of landform and vegetation.
Sensitivity	Low	The area is very remote and there are no significant visual resources in the vicinity. All of the adjacent farms have been identified as renewable projects. The location is very remote and receptors are few and mainly transport related. The road is utilised mainly for access to the mining town of Copperton. There are no local significant landscape-based visual resources attracting people to the area. There is a single farmstead within the viewshed, but this farm is also associated with a renewable solar project.
Inventory	IV	Due to low receptor sensitivity, the remoteness of the location and the medium scenic quality a Class IV visual inventory was defined for the area. Conventional practice would require a Class III VRM Class in order to preserve an element of the rural landscape as the property is currently zoned agricultural. However, due to the large number of authorised and proposed SEF / WEF surrounding the site, the area has become a renewable energy node of development. This factor, in conjunction with the low scenic quality and receptor sensitivity ratings, motivates for a Class IV visual objective. This would allow for higher levels of contrast within the landscape, but contained within the bounds of best practice.
VRM Class	IV	

5 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 Impact Alternatives

The following alternatives were defined from the preliminary specialist findings during the scoping phase:

- PV
  - Humansrus Solar 4 Preferred Layout
  - Humansrus Solar 4 Alternative Layout
- Substations
  - On site substation HRS Solar 4
- Road access
  - Access road entrance 01_R357
  - Access road entrance 02_R357
- Grid connection
  - Selfbuild grid conection to Kronos station

5.2 Nature of the visual impact

The following visual impacts could take place during the life time of the proposed PV project:

Construction

- Loss of site landscape character due to the removal of vegetation and the construction of the PV structures and associated infrastructure.
- Wind-blown dust due to the removal of large areas of vegetation.
- Possible soil erosion from temporary roads crossing drainage lines.
- Windblown litter from the laydown and construction sites.

Operation

- Light spillage making a glow effect that would be clearly noticeable to the surrounding dark sky night landscapes.
- Massing effect on the landscape from a large scale modification.
- On-going soil erosion.
- On-going windblown dust.
- Sunlight glint off PV structures.

Decommissioning

- Movement of vehicles and associated dust.
- Wind-blown dust from the disturbance of cover vegetation / gravel.

Cumulative

- A long term change in landuse setting a precedent for other similar type of solar and wind energy projects.
- Construction of informal settlements in the town of Copperton (and surrounds) from in-migration of persons seeking construction employment from the many different solar and wind energy projects planned for the area.

The following visual impacts could take place during the life time of the proposed transmission line:

Construction
- Possible soil erosion from temporary roads crossing drainage lines.
- Windblown litter from the lay-down and construction sites.

Operation
- On-going soil erosion.
- On-going windblown dust.
- Sunlight glint off cables and structures.

Decommissioning
- Movement of vehicles and associated dust.
- Windblown dust from the disturbance of cover vegetation/gravel.

Cumulative
- Massing effects from numerous power lines converging on the substations.
- Cluttering effects from add-hoc routings that are not aligned with existing Eskom power line corridors.

5.3 Impact Assessment Rating Criteria

Visual impact significance impacts were defined making use of the DEA&DP Guideline for involving Visual and Aesthetic Specialists in EIA processes. *(Oberholzer. 2005).*

Extent	**Geographical area of influence.** **Site Related (S):** *extending only as far as the activity* **Local (L):** limited to i*mmediate surroundings.* **Regional (R):** *affecting a larger metropolitan or regional area* **National (N):** *affecting large parts of the country* **International (I):** *affecting areas across international boundaries*
Duration	**Predicted lifespan** **Short term (S):** *duration of the construction phase.* **Medium term (M):** *duration for screening vegetation to mature.* **Long term (L):** *lifespan of the project.* **Permanent (P):** *where time will not mitigate the visual impact.*
Magnitude	**Magnitude of impact on views, scenic or cultural resources** **Low (L):** *where visual and scenic resources are not affected.* **Moderate (M)**: *where visual and scenic resources are affected* **High (H)**: *where scenic and cultural resources are significantly affected.*
Probability	**Degree of possible visual impact:** **Improbable (I):** *possibility of the impact occurring is very low.* **Probable (P):** *distinct possibility that the impact will occur.* **Highly probable (HP):** *most likely that the impact will occur.* **Definite (D):** *impact will occur regardless of any prevention measures.*
Significance	**A synthesis of nature, duration, intensity, extent and probability** **Low (L):** will not have an influence on the decision. **Moderate (M):** should have an influence on the decision unless it is mitigated. **High (H):** would influence the decision regardless of any possible mitigation.
Confidence	Key uncertainties and risks in the VIA process, which may influence the accuracy of, and confidence in, the VIA process.

Source: DEA&DP Guideline for involving Visual and Aesthetic Specialists in EIA Processes

5.4 Preferred PV Option Impact Assessment Findings

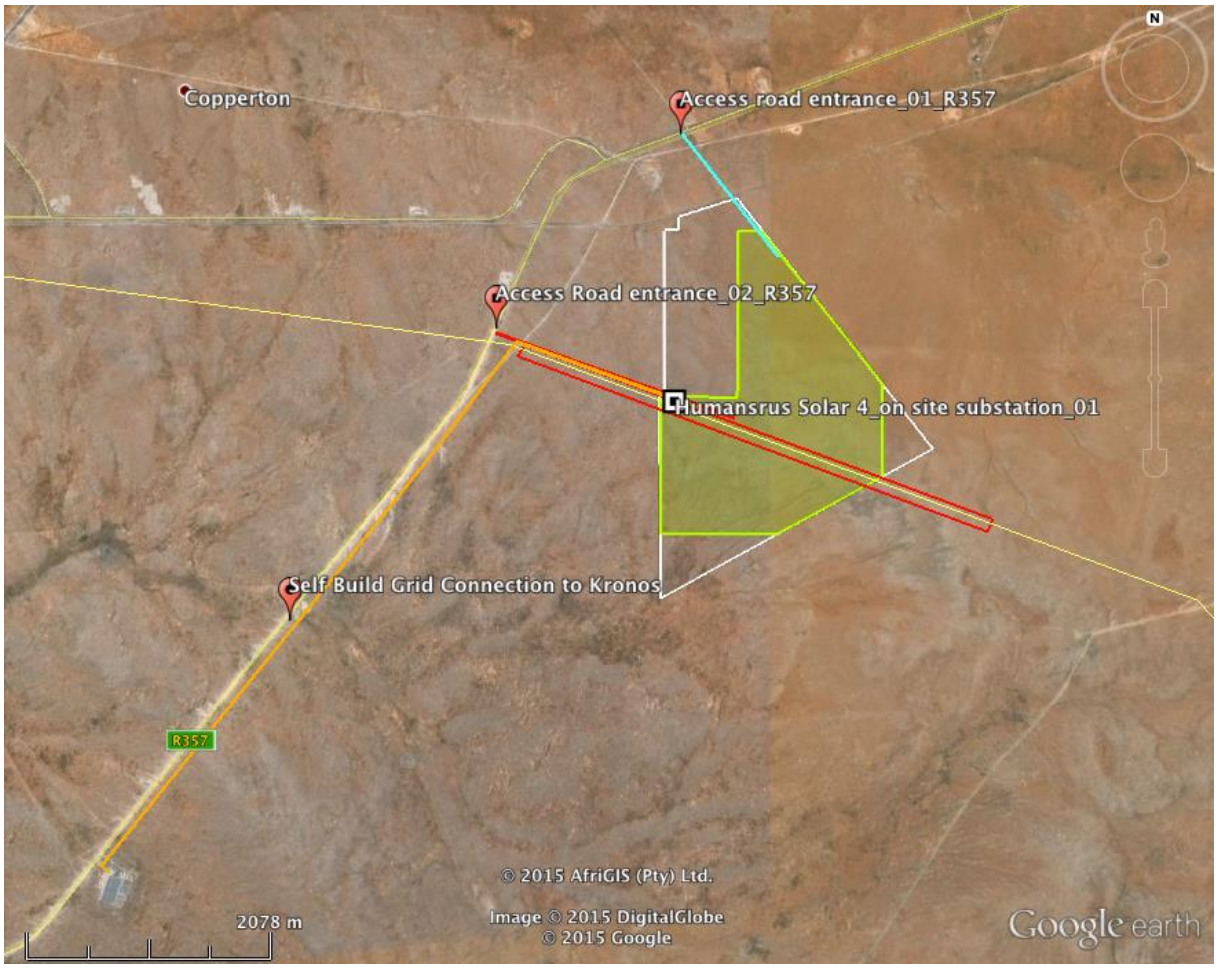


Figure 19: Layout plan of the proposed Preferred PV option and roads, substation and grid connections (CapeEAPrac, 2015)

Table 5: Preferred PV Impact Table

Impact Activity	Phase	Mitigation	Nature	Extent	Duration	Severity	Probability	Significance without	Significance with
PV Solar – Preferred	Cons.	W/Out	-ve	Local	Short	M	P	M	
		With	-ve	Site	Short	L	P		ML
	Ops.	W/Out	-ve	Local	Long	H	P	ML	
		With	-ve	Site	Long	MH	P		L
	Close	W/Out	-ve	Reg.	Perm	VH	P	M	
		With	-ve	Site	Short	VL	P		VL
	Cuml.	W/Out	-ve	Reg.	Long	M	P	M	
		With	+ve	Reg.	Long	L	P		M

The Visual Impact Significance of the PV system and buildings is rated **medium** without mitigation for all phases. Even though stronger visual contrast is expected, the remoteness of the location, the low receptor sensitivity and the medium to low scenic quality of the landscape (which is mine and agriculture landscape related), will reduce the intensity of the landscape change. Mitigation is recommended which would result in **medium to low** visual impact significance for construction and **low** for operation phases. These include management of lights at night and continued management of wind blown dust. Impacts for

closure phase is likely to be **medium** for the short term without dust mitigation, this can be reduce to **very low** should the site be successfully rehabilitated.
The following mitigation are recommended per phase:

PV Site and Structure Construction

- The laydown area should be sited away from the R357 road behind the disused railway line embankment, and preferably not located the more prominent ground to the south.
- Topsoil from the footprints of the road and structures should be dealt with in accordance with EMP.
- The buildings and battery storage facility should be painted a grey-brown colour.
- Fencing should be simple, diamond shaped (to catch wind-blown litter) and appear transparent from a distance. The fences should be checked on a monthly basis for the collection of litter caught on the fence.
- Signage on the R357 should be moderated.
- Lights at night have the potential to significantly increase the visual exposure of the proposed project. It is recommended that mitigations be implemented to reduce light spillage (refer to appendix for general guidelines).

PV Site and Structure Operation

- Control of lights at night to allow only local disturbance to the current dark sky night landscape (refer to appendix for general guidelines).
- Continued erosion control and management of dust.

PV Site and Structures Closure

- All structures should be removed and where possible, recycled.
- Building structures should be broken down (including foundations).
- The rubble should be managed according to NEMWA and deposited at a registered landfill if it cannot be recycled or reused.
- All compacted areas should be rehabilitated according to a rehabilitation specialist.
- Monitoring for soil erosion should be undertaken on a routine basis.

Without mitigation, Cumulative Visual Significance was rated **medium negative**. The proposed site is mainly located on low lying ground, and viewed from few, mainly farming, mining and construction receptors. There is an existing Eskom power line in the background, and a dis-used railway line in the foreground. The Mulilo PV project is currently under construction to the south of the site which will add to the perception that the proposed project is part of a larger SEF development node. However, the only cumulative visual issue could be related to uncoordinated management of the surrounding SEF and WEF projects with regard to litter, different dust management practices, and visually prominent signage. Un-managed, these aspects could detract from the total visual effect of each SEF project seen as an effective single entity within a larger harmonious SEF node. If possible, it is suggested that the DEA set up a Copperton SEF common interest group to assist with the facilitation of integrated planning and management. As the area is without any key visual resources to attract tourists to the area, the large SEF and WEF node has the potential to become a tourist feature in its own right. If effective and integrated planning is undertaken, the cumulative visual significance has the potential to become **medium positive**.

5.5 Alternative PV Option Impact Assessment Findings

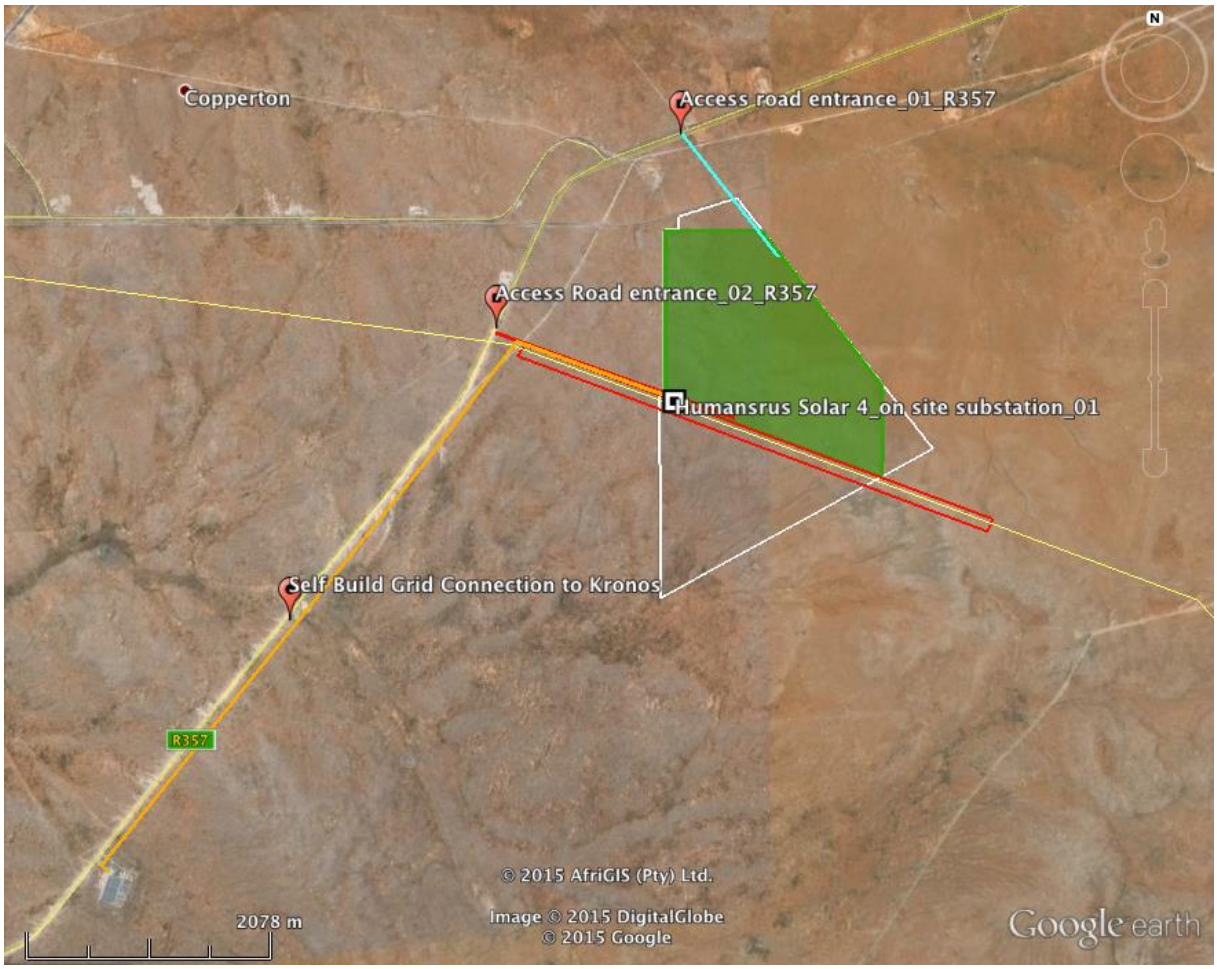


Figure 20: Layout plan of the proposed Alternative PV option and roads, substation and grid connections (CapeEAPrac, 2015)

Due to the similar locality of the proposed options, the visual impacts of the Alternative PV and build structure is rated the same as the Preferred PV option.

5.6 Road Access Impact Assessment (both options)

Table 6: Road Access Impact Table

Impact Activity	Phase	Mitigation	Nature	Extent	Duration	Severity	Probability	Significance without	Significance with
Road access (both options)	Cons.	W/Out	-ve	Local	Short	MH	P	M	
		With	-ve	Site	Short	M	P		L
	Ops.	W/Out	-ve	Local	Long	H	P	M	
		With	-ve	Site	Long	MH	P		L
	Close	W/Out	-ve	Reg.	Perm	VH	P	M	
		With	-ve	Site	Short	VL	P		VL
	Cuml.	W/Out	-ve	Reg.	Long	M	P	L	
		With	+ve	Reg.	Long	L	P		L

The Visual Impact significance without mitigation of both Road access routes was rated **medium** for all phases. This is due there being existing farm roads similarly aligned, the remoteness of the landscape in relation to the relatively small visual footprint of the source impact, and the remoteness of the locality. With mitigation and effective dust management, the Visual Impact Significance was also rated **low** for construction and operation phases, and **very low** should effective rehabilitation be implemented.

The following mitigation are recommended per phase:

Road Access Construction

- The laydown area should be sited away from the R357 road behind the disused railway line embankment, and preferably not located the more prominent ground to the south.
- If very dry conditions prevail and dust becomes a nuisance, dust suppression measures need to be implemented.
- Topsoil from the footprints of the road and structures should be dealt with in accordance with the EMP.
- Construction should preferable not take place at nighttime.

Road Access Operation

- If very dry conditions prevail and dust becomes a nuisance, dust suppression measures need to be implemented.

Road Access Closure

- If very dry conditions prevail and dust becomes a nuisance, dust suppression measures need to be implemented.
- Unless required for on-going farm utilisation, all compacted areas should be rehabilitated according to a rehabilitation specialist.
- Monitoring for soil erosion should be undertaken on an annual basis until the impacted areas have been successfully rehabilitated.

Without mitigation, Cumulative Visual Significance for road access was rated ***low***. The proposed roads are located on low-lying ground, and viewed from few, mainly farming, mining and construction receptors. The Mulilo PV project is currently under construction to the south of the site that will add to the perception that the proposed project is part of a larger SEF development node. However, the only cumulative visual issue could be related to uncoordinated management of the surrounding SEF and WEF projects with regard to litter, different dust management practices, and visually prominent signage. Un-managed, these aspects could detract from the total visual effect of each SEF project seen as an effective single entity within a larger harmonious SEF node. If possible, it is suggested that the DEA set up a Copperton SEF common interest group to assist with the facilitation of integrated planning and management. As the area is without any key visual resources to attract tourists to the area, the large SEF and WEF node has the potential to become a tourist feature in its own right. With effective and integrated planning is undertaken, the cumulative visual significance has the potential to be **medium positive** with mitigation.

5.7 Selfbuild Grid Connection to Kronos Substation Impact Assessment

Table 7: Selfbuild Grid Impact Table

Impact Activity	Phase	Mitigation	Nature	Extent	Duration	Severity	Probability	Significance without	Significance with
Selfbiuld Grid and Substation	Cons.	W/Out	-ve	Local	Short	L	P	M	
		With	-ve	Site	Short	L	P		L
	Ops.	W/Out	-ve	Local	Long	L	P	M	
		With	-ve	Site	Long	L	P		L
	Close	W/Out	-ve	Reg.	Perm	L	P	M	
		With	-ve	Site	Short	VL	P		VL
	Cuml.	W/Out	-ve	Reg.	Long	H	P	H	
		With	-ve	Reg.	Long	L	P		L

Without mitigation, Construction and Decommissioning Phases impacts were rated ***medium*** as the ZVI is limited by the small visual footprint of the structures, and the existing telecommunication poles adjacent the road. Construction and Operation Phase impacts were rated ***low*** with mitigation and the management of soil erosion. Due to the potential cluttering of the landscape from all the different power lines converging on the two local substations, the cumulative visual impact significance was rated **high** without mitigation. With mitigation and integrating planning by DEA and Eskom, the cumulative impacts can be reduced to **low**.

Pre-construction Phase Mitigation

- Integration planning with Eskom.

Construction Phase Mitigation

- Strict access control to a single track along the route making use of existing farm tracks for access from the road where possible.
- Soil erosion management to be implemented where required.
- Strict litter control.
- Any extra soil should be shaped to appear natural and re-vegetated.

Operation Phase Mitigation

- On-going erosion control monitoring by the ECO.

Closure Phase Mitigation

- Removal of all structures and recycling of the structure and cables.
- Removal of any foundations and filling of holes created.
- Shape footprint area to reflect natural landscape.
- Rehabilitation and restoration of the footprint and track according to a rehabilitation specialist.

6 CONCLUSION

It is the findings of this report that all of the alternatives are suitable for development **with mitigation**. It was found that the any of the proposed alternatives would not constitute a significant visual impact to the characteristic landscape for the following reasons:

- The proposed project's close proximity to the Copperton mine and TSF.
- The old railway line and borrow pits degrade the landscape in the immediate vicinity.
- The area is an unofficial node for Solar Energy development with adjacent sites already having authorization.
- The alignment of the proposed project with municipal planning.

Due to the flat terrain and the location of the southern extent of the proposed site on a shallow watershed, visibility would extend to cover most of the Foreground distance areas (up to 6km from site). However, the only receptor identified within the viewshed with high exposure was the R357, which is located adjacent to the proposed site.

To assist in reducing the massing and crowding effects of the proposed PV and power line structures the following is recommended:

- That a 75m No-go buffer from the main roads is maintained.
- To reduce visual intrusion from the possible multiple power lines linking up to different proposed PV projects in the vicinity, it is recommended that the power lines as much as possible follow existing transmission line corridors.
- The lay down should be located away from the main roads (as much as possible).
- Dust control measures should be implemented when required.
- Lights at night have the potential to significantly increase the visual exposure of the proposed project. It is recommended that mitigations be implemented to reduce light spillage (refer to Addendum for general guidelines).

Due to the potential cluttering of the landscape from all the different power lines converging on the two local Eskom substations, the cumulative visual impact significance was rated **high** without mitigation. With mitigation and integrating planning with Eskom, the cumulative impacts can be reduced to **low**.

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8 ANNEXURE 1: SPECIALIST DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

DETAILS OF SPECIALIST AND DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Specialist:	VRM AFRICA CC		
Contact person:	STEPHEN STEAD		
Postal address:	P.O BOX 7233, BLANCO		
Postal code:	6531	Cell:	083 560 9911
Telephone:	044 874 0020	Fax:	086 653 3738
E-mail:	steve@vrma.co.za		
Professional affiliation(s) (if any)	Association of Professional Heritage Practitioners South Africa (APHP)		

The specialist appointed in terms of the Regulations

I, **STEPHEN STEAD**, declare that ---

General declaration:

- I act as the independent specialist in this application
  I will perform the work relating to the application in an objective manner, even if this results in views and findings that are not favourable to the applicant
- I declare that there are no circumstances that may compromise my objectivity in performing such work;
- I have expertise in conducting the specialist report relevant to this application, including knowledge of the Act, regulations and any guidelines that have relevance to the proposed activity;
- I will comply with the Act, regulations and all other applicable legislation;
- I have no, and will not engage in, conflicting interests in the undertaking of the activity;
- I undertake to disclose to the applicant and the competent authority all material information in my possession that reasonably has or may have the potential of influencing - any decision to be taken with respect to the application by the competent authority; and - the objectivity of any report, plan or document to be prepared by myself for submission to the competent authority;
- all the particulars furnished by me in this form are true and correct; and
- I realise that a false declaration is an offence in terms of Regulation 71 and is punishable in terms of section 24F of the Act.

Signature of the specialist:

SILVER SOLUTIONS TRADING AS VRM AFRICA

Name of company (if applicable):

23 JANUARY 2013

Date:

8.1 Curriculum Vitae

Curriculum Vitae (CV)

1. **Position**: Owner / Director
2. **Name of Firm**: Visual Resource Management Africa cc *(www.vrma.co.za)*
3. **Name of Staff**: Stephen Stead
4. **Date of Birth**: 9 June 1967
5. **Nationality:** South African
6. **Contact Details:** **Tel: +27 (0) 44 876 0020**
   Cell: +27 (0) 83 560 9911
   Email: steve@vrma.co.za

7. **Educational qualifications**:
   - University of Natal (Pietermaritzburg):
   - Bachelor of Arts: Psychology and Geography
   - Bachelor of Arts (Hons): Human Geography and Geographic Information Management Systems

8. **Professional Accreditation**
   - Association of Professional Heritage Practitioners (APHP) Western Cape
     - Accredited VIA practitioner member of the Association (2011)

9. **Association involvement:** :
   - International Association of Impact Assessment (IAIA) South African Affiliate
     - Past President (2012 - 2013)
     - President (2012)
     - President-Elect (2011)
     - Conference Co-ordinator (2010)
     - National Executive Committee member (2009)
     - Southern Cape Chairperson (2008)

10. **Conferences Attended:**
    - IAIAsa 2012
    - IAIAsa 2011
    - IAIA International 2011 (Mexico)
    - IAIAsa 2010
    - IAIAsa 2009
    - IAIAsa 2007

11. **Continued Professional Development:**
    - Integrating Sustainability with Environment Assessment in South Africa (IAIAsa Conference, 1 day)
    - Achieving the full potential of SIA (Mexico, IAIA Conference, 2 days 2011)
    - Researching and Assessing Heritage Resources Course (University of Cape Town, 5 days, 2009)

12. Countries of Work Experience:

- South Africa, Mozambique, Malawi, Lesotho, Kenya and Namibia

13. Relevant Experience:

Stephen gained six years of experience in the field of Geographic Information Systems mapping and spatial analysis working as a consultant for the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health and then with an Environmental Impact Assessment company based in the Western Cape. In 2004 he set up the company Visual Resource Management Africa which specializes in visual resource management and visual impact assessments in Africa. The company makes use of the well documented Visual Resource Management methodology developed by the Bureau of Land Management (USA) for assessing the suitability of landscape modifications. In association with ILASA qualified landscape architect Liesel Stokes, he has assessed of over 100 major landscape modifications through-out southern and eastern Africa. The business has been operating for eight years and has successfully established and retained a large client base throughout Southern Africa which include amongst other, Rio Tinto (Pty) Ltd, Bannerman (Pty) Ltd, Anglo Coal (Pty) Ltd, Eskom (Pty) Ltd, NamPower and Vale (Pty) Ltd, Ariva (Pty) Ltd, Harmony Gold (Pty) Ltd, Mellium Challenge Account (USA), Pretoria Portland Cement (Pty) Ltd

14. Languages:

- English – First Language
- Afrikaans – fair in speaking, reading and writing

15. Projects:

A list of ***some*** of the large scale projects that VRMA has assessed has been attached below with the client list indicated per project (Refer to www.vrma.co.za for a full list of projects undertaken).

YEAR	NAME	DESCRIPTION	LOCATION
2014	Joram Solar	Solar Energy	Northern Cape
2014	RERE PV Postmasberg	Solar Energy	Northern Cape
2014	RERE CPV Upington	Solar Energy	Northern Cape
2014	Rio Tinto RUL Desalinisation Plant	Industrial	Namibia
2014	NamPower PV	Solar Energy	Namibia
2014	Pemba Oil and Gas Port Expansion	Industrial	Mozambique
2014	Brightsource CSP Upington	Solar Energy	Northern Cape
2013	Cape Winelands DM Regional Landfill	Industrial	Western Cape
2013	Drennan PV Solar Park	PV Solar Energy	Eastern Cape
2013	Eastern Cape Mari-culture	Mari-culture	Eastern Cape
2013	Eskom Pantom Pass Substation	Substation /Tx lines	Knysna
2013	Frankfort Paper Mill	Plant	Free State
2013	Gibson Bay Wind Farm Transmission lines	Tranmission lines	Eastern Cape
2013	Houhoek Eskom Substation	Substation /Tx lines	Western Cape
2013	Mulilo PV Solar Energy Sites (x4)	PV Solar Energy	Northern Cape
2013	Namies Wind Farm	Wind Energy	Northern Cape
2013	Rossing Z20 Pit and WRD	Mining	Namibia
2013	SAPPI Boiler Upgrade	Plant	Mpumalanga
2013	Tumela WRD	Mine	North West

2013	Weskusfleur Substation (Koeburg)	Substation /Tx lines	Western Cape
2013	Yzermyn coal mine	Mine	Mpumalanga
2012	Afrisam	Mine	Saldana
2012	Bitterfontein	PV Energy	N Cape
2012	Bitterfontein slopes	Slopes Analysis	N Cape
2012	Kangnas PV	Energy	N Cape
2012	Kangnas Wind	Energy	N Cape
2012	Kathu CSP Tower	Solar Power	Northern Cape
2012	Kobong Hydro	Hydro & Powerline	Lesotho
2012	Letseng Diamond Mine Upgrade	Mine	Lesotho
2012	Lunsklip Windfarm	Windfarm	Stilbaai
2012	Mozambique Gas Engine Power Plant	Plant	Mozambique
2012	Ncondezi Thermal Power Station	Substation /Tx lines	Mozambique
2012	Sasol CSP Tower	Solar Power	Free State
2012	Sasol Upington CSP Tower	Solar Power	Northern Cape
2011	Beaufort West PV Solar Power Station	Power Station	Beaufort West
2011	Beaufort West Wind Farm	Wind Energy	Beaufort West
2011	De Bakke Cell Phone Mast	Mast	Western Cape
2011	ERF 7288 PV	PV	Beaufort West
2011	Gecko Industrial park	Industrial	Namibia
2011	Green View Estates	Residential	Mossel Bay
2011	Hoodia Solar	PV expansion	Beaufort West
2011	Kalahari Solar Power Project	Solar Power	Northern Cape
2011	Khanyisa Power Station	Power Station	Western Cape
2011	Laingsburg Windfarm	Level 4	Mpumalanga
2011	Olvyn Kolk PV	Solar Power	Northern Cape
2011	Otjikoto Gold Mine	Mining	Namibia
2011	PPC Rheebieck West Upgrade	Industrial	
2011	Slopes analysis Erf 7288 Beaufort West	Slopes	Beaufort West
2011	Southern Arterial	Road	George
2010	Bannerman Etango Uranium Mine	Mining	Namibia
2010	Bantamsklip Transmission Revision	Transmission	Eastern Cape
2010	Beaufort West Urban Edge	Mapping	Beaufort West
2010	Bon Accord Nickel Mine	Mine	Barbeton
2010	Herolds Bay N2 Development Baseline	Residential	George
2010	MTN Lattice Hub Tower	Structure	George
2010	N2 Herolds Bay Residental	Residential	Herolds Bay
2010	Onifin(Pty) Ltd Hartenbos Quarry Extension	Mining	Mossel Bay
2010	Rossing South Board Meeting	Mining	Namibia
2010	Still Bay East	Mapping	SA, WC
2010	Vale Moatize Coal Mine and Railwayline	Mining_rail	Mozambique

2010	Vodacom Mast	Structure	Reichterbosch
2010	Wadrif Dam	Dam	Beaufort West
2009	Asazani Zinyoka UISP Housing	Residential Infill	Mossel Bay
2009	Bantamsklip GIS Mapping	Mappig	Western Cape
2009	Eden Telecommunication Tower	Structure Tower	George
2009	George Landscape Characterisation	George SDF	George
2009	George Western Bypass	Structure Road	George
2009	Rossing Uranium Mine Phase 2	Mining	Namibia
2009	Sun Ray Wind Farm	Wind Energy	Still Bay
2008	Bantamsklip Transmission Lines Scoping	Transmission	Western Cape
2008	Erf 251 Damage Assessment	Residential VIA	Great Brak
2008	Erongo Uranium Rush SEA	SEA	Namibia
2008	Evander South Gold Mine Preliminary VIA	Mining	Mpumalanga
2008	George Open Spaces System	George SDF	George
2008	GrooteSchuur Heritage Mapping	Mapping	Cape Town
2008	Hartenbos River Park	Residential VIA	Hartenbos
2008	Kaaimans Project	Residential	Wilderness
2008	Lagoon Garden Estate	Residential VIA	Great Brak
2008	Moquini Beach Hotel	Resort	Mossel Bay
2008	NamPower Coal fired Power Station	Power Station	Namibia
2008	Oasis Development	Residential VIA	Plettenberg Bay
2008	RUL Sulpher Handling Facility	Mining	Walvis Bay
2008	Stonehouse Development	Residential VIA	Plettenberg Bay
2008	Walvis Bay Power Station	Structure	Namibia.
2007	Calitzdorp Retirement Village	Residential VIA	Calitzdorp
2007	Calitzdorp Visualisation	Visualisation	Calitzdorp
2007	Camdeboo Estate	Residential VIA	Graaff Reinet
2007	Destiny Africa	Residential	George
2007	Droogfontein Farm 245	Residential VIA	Danabaai
2007	Floating Liquified Natural Gas Facility	Structure tanker	Mossel Bay
2007	George Municipality Densification	George SDF	George
2007	George Municipality SDF	George SDF	George
2007	Kloofsig Development	Residential VIA	Vleesbaai
2007	OCGT Power Plant Extension	Structure Power Plant	Mossel Bay
2007	Oudtshoorn Municipality SDF	Mapping	Oudtshoorn
2007	Oudtshoorn Shopping Complex	Structure Mall	Oudtshoorn
2007	Pezula Infill (Noetzie)	Residential VIA	Knysna
2007	Pierpoint Nature Reserve	Residential VIA	Knysna
2007	Pinnacle Point Golf Estate	Golf/Residential	Mossel Bay
2007	Rheebok Development Erf 252 Apeal	Residential VIA	Great Brak
2007	Rossing Uranium Mine Phase 1	Mining	Namibia

2007	Ryst Kuil/Riet Kuil Uranium Mine	Mining	Beaufort West
2007	Sedgefield Water Works	Structure	Sedgefield
2007	Sulpher Handling Station Walvis Bay Port	Industrial	Namibia
2007	Trekkopje Uranium Mine	Mining	Namibia
2007	Weldon Kaya	Residential VIA	Plettenberg Bay
2006	Fancourt Visualisation Modelling	Visualisation	George
2006	Farm Dwarsweg 260	Residential VIA	Great Brak
2006	Fynboskruin Extention	Residential VIA	Sedgefield
2006	Hanglip Golf and Residential Estate	Golf/Residential	Plettenberg Bay
2006	Hansmoeskraal	Slopes Analysis	George
2006	Hartenbos Landgoed Phase 2	Residential VIA	Hartenbos
2006	Hersham Security Village	Residential VIA	Great Brak
2006	Ladywood Farm 437	Residential VIA	Plettenberg Bay
2006	Le Grand Golf and Residential Estate	Golf/Residential	George
2006	Paradise Coast	Residential VIA	Mossel Bay
2006	Paradyskloof Residential Estate	Residential VIA	Stellenbosch
2006	Riverhill Residential Estate	Residential VIA	Wilderness
2006	Wolwe Eiland Access Route	Road	Victoria Bay
2005	Harmony Gold Mine	Mining	Mpumalanga.
2005	Knysna River Reserve	Residential VIA	Knysna
2005	Kruisfontein Infill	Mapping	Knysna
2005	Lagoon Bay Lifestyle Estate	Residential VIA	Glentana
2005	Outeniquabosch Safari Park	Residential	Mossel Bay
2005	Proposed Hotel Farm Gansevallei	Resort	Plettenberg Bay
2005	Uitzicht Development	Residential VIA	Knysna
2005	West Dunes	Residential VIA	Knysna
2005	Wilderness Erf 2278	Residential VIA	Wilderness
2005	Wolwe Eiland Eco & Nature Estate	Residential VIA	Victoria Bay
2005	Zebra Clay Mine	Mining	Zebra
2004	Gansevallei Hotel	Residential VIA	Plettenberg Bay
2004	Lakes Eco and Golf Estate	Golf/Residential	Sedgefield
2004	Trekkopje Desalination Plant	Structure Plant	Namibia
1995	Greater Durban Informal Housing Analysis	Photogrametry	Durban

9 ANNEXURE 2: QUESTIONNAIRES AND VRM TERMINOLOGY

9.1 Methodology Detail

Viewshed

The visible extent, or viewshed, is 'the outer boundary defining a view catchment area, usually along crests and ridgelines' *(Oberholzer, 2005).* This reflects the area, or extent, where the landscape modification would probably be seen. However, visibility tends to diminish exponentially with distance, which is well recognised in visual analysis literature. Therefore the views of a landscape modification would not necessarily influence the landscape character within all areas of the viewshed. The information for the terrain used in the 3D computer model on which the visibility analysis is based on the Advanced Spaceborne Thermal Emission and Reflection (ASTER) Radiometer Data, a product of Japan's Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) and National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) in USA. (NASA, 2009)

Receptor Exposure

The area where a landscape modification starts to influence the landscape character is termed the Zone of Visual Influence (ZVI) and is defined by the U.K. Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment's (IEMA) *'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment'* as 'the area within which a proposed development may have an influence or effect on visual amenity (of the surrounding areas).'

The inverse relationship of distance and visual impact is well recognised in visual analysis literature *(Hull, R.B. and Bishop, I.E., 1988)*. According to Hull and Bishop, exposure, or visual impact, tends to diminish exponentially with distance. The areas where most landscape modifications would be visible are located within 2 km from the site of the landscape modification. Thus the potential visual impact of an object diminishes at an exponential rate as the distance between the observer and the object increases due to atmospheric conditions prevalent at a location, which causes the air to appear greyer, thereby diminishing detail. For example, viewed from 1000 m from a landscape modification, the impact would be 25% of the impact as viewed from 500 m from a landscape modification. At 2000m it would be 10% of the impact at 500 m. The relationship is indicated in the following graph generated by Hull and Bishop.

The VRM methodology also takes distance from a landscape modification into consideration in terms of understanding visual resource. Three distance categories are defined by the Bureau of Land Management. The distance zones are:

i. ***Foreground / Middle ground***, up to approximately 6km, which is where there is potential for the sense of place to change;
ii. ***Background areas***, from 6km to 24km, where there is some potential for change in the sense of place, but where change would only occur in the case of very large landscape modifications; and
iii. ***Seldom seen areas***, which fall within the Foreground / Middle ground area but, as a result of no receptors, are not viewed or are seldom viewed.

Scenic Quality

In terms of the VRM methodology, landscape character is derived from a combination of scenic quality, receptor sensitivity to landscape change, and distance of the proposed landscape modification from key receptor points. The scenic quality is determined making use of the VRM scenic quality questionnaire (refer to addendum). Seven scenic quality criteria area scored on a 1 (low) to 5 (high) scale. The scores are totalled and assigned a A (High), B (Moderate) or C (low) based on the following split:
A= scenic quality rating of ≥19;
B = rating of 12 – 18,
C= rating of ≤11

The seven scenic quality criteria are defined below:

- **Land Form:** Topography becomes more of a factor as it becomes steeper, or more severely sculptured.
- **Vegetation:** Primary consideration given to the variety of patterns, forms, and textures created by plant life.
- **Water:** That ingredient which adds movement or serenity to a scene. The degree to which water dominates the scene is the primary consideration.
- **Colour:** The overall colour(s) of the basic components of the landscape (e.g., soil, rock, vegetation, etc.) are considered as they appear during seasons or periods of high use.
- **Scarcity:** This factor provides an opportunity to give added importance to one, or all, of the scenic features that appear to be relatively unique or rare within one physiographic region.
- **Adjacent Land Use:** Degree to which scenery and distance enhance, or start to influence, the overall impression of the scenery within the rating unit.
- **Cultural Modifications:** Cultural modifications should be considered, and may detract from the scenery or complement or improve the scenic quality of an area.

Receptor Sensitivity

Sensitivity levels are a measure of public concern for scenic quality. Receptor sensitivity to landscape change is determined by rating the following factors in terms of Low to High:

- **Type of Users:** Visual sensitivity will vary with the type of users, e.g. recreational sightseers may be highly sensitive to any changes in visual quality, whereas workers who pass through the area on a regular basis may not be as sensitive to change.
- **Amount of Use:** Areas seen or used by large numbers of people are potentially more sensitive.
- **Public Interest:** The visual quality of an area may be of concern to local, or regional, groups. Indicators of this concern are usually expressed via public controversy created in response to proposed activities.
- **Adjacent Land Uses:** The interrelationship with land uses in adjacent lands. For example, an area within the viewshed of a residential area may be very sensitive, whereas an area surrounded by commercially developed lands may not be as visually sensitive.
- **Special Areas:** Management objectives for special areas such as Natural Areas, Wilderness Areas or Wilderness Study Areas, Wild and Scenic Rivers, Scenic Areas,

Scenic Roads or Trails, and Critical Biodiversity Areas frequently require special consideration for the protection of their visual values.

- **Other Factors:** Consider any other information such as research or studies that include indicators of visual sensitivity.

Visual Resource Management (VRM) Classes

The VRM Classes represent the relative value of the visual resources of an area and are determined making use of the VRM Class Matrix see Table 8 below:

i. **Classes I and II** are the most valued;
ii. **Class III** represents a moderate value; and
iii. **Class IV** is of least value.

The Classes are not prescriptive and are utilised as a guideline to determine visual carrying capacity. The Visual Inventory Classes are defined using the matrix below and with motivation, can be adjusted to Visual Resource Management Classes:

		VISUAL SENSITIVITY LEVELS								
		High			Medium			Low		
SCENIC QUALITY	A (High)	II	II	II	II	II	II	II	II	II
	B (Medium)	II	III	III/ IV *	III	IV	IV	IV	IV	IV
	C (Low)	III	IV	IV	IV	IV	IV	IV	IV	IV
DISTANCE ZONES		Fore/middle ground	Background	Seldom seen	Fore/middle ground	Background	Seldom seen	Fore/middle ground	Background	Seldom seen

* If adjacent areas are **Class III** or lower, assign **Class III**, if higher, assign **Class IV**

The visual objectives of each of the classes is listed below:

- The Class I objective is to preserve the existing character of the landscape, the level of change to the characteristic landscape should be very low, and must not attract attention. Class I is assigned when a specialist decision is made to maintain a natural landscape.
- The Class II objective is to retain the existing character of the landscape and the level of change to the characteristic landscape should be low. Management activities may be seen, but should not attract the attention of the casual observer, and should repeat the basic elements of form, line, colour and texture found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.
- The Class III objective is to partially retain the existing character of the landscape, where the level of change to the characteristic landscape should be moderate. Management activities may attract attention, but should not dominate the view of the casual observer, and changes should repeat the basic elements found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.
- The Class IV objective is to provide for management activities which require major modifications of the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the

landscape can be high, and these management activities may dominate the view and be the major focus of the viewer's (s') attention.

Key Observation Points (KOPs)

KOPs are defined by the Bureau of Land Management as the people (receptors) located in strategic locations surrounding the property that make consistent use of the views associated with the site where the landscape modifications are proposed. These locations are important in terms of the VRM methodology, which requires that the Degree of Contrast (DoC) that the proposed landscape modifications will make to the existing landscape be measured from these most critical locations, or receptors, surrounding the property.

To define the KOPs, potential receptor locations were identified in the viewshed analysis, and screened, based on the following criteria:

- Angle of observation;
- Number of viewers;
- Length of time the project is in view;
- Relative project size;
- Season of use;
- Critical viewpoints, e.g. views from communities, road crossings; and
- Distance from property.

Contrast Rating

The contrast rating, or impacts assessment phase, is undertaken to determine if the VRM Class Objectives are met. The suitability of landscape modification is assessed by comparing the degree of potential contrast from the proposed activity in comparison to the existing contrast created by the existing landscape. This is done by evaluating the level of change to the existing landscape by assessing the line, colour, texture and form, in relation to the visual objectives defined for the area. The following criteria are utilised in defining the DoC:

- **None**: The element contrast is not visible or perceived.
- **Weak**: The element contrast can be seen but does not attract attention.
- **Moderate**: The element contrast begins to attract attention and begins to dominate the characteristic landscape.
- **Strong**: The element contrast demands attention, will not be overlooked, and is dominant in the landscape.

As an example, in a Class I area, the visual objective is to preserve the existing character of the landscape, and the resultant contrast to the existing landscape should not be notable to the casual observer and cannot attract attention. In a Class IV area example, the objective is to provide for proposed landscape activities which require major modifications of the existing character of the landscape. Based on whether the VRM objectives are met, mitigations, if required, are defined to avoid, reduce or mitigate the proposed landscape modifications so that the visual impact does not detract from the surrounding landscape sense of place.

Photo Montages and 3D Visualisation

As a component in this contrast rating process, visual representation, such as photo montages are vital in large-scale modifications, as this serves to inform I&APs and decision-making authorities of the nature and extent of the impact associated with the proposed project/development. There is an ethical obligation in this process, as visualisation can be misleading if not undertaken ethically. In terms of adhering to standards for ethical representation of landscape modifications, VRM Africa subscribes to the Proposed Interim Code of Ethics for Landscape Visualisation developed by the Collaborative for Advanced Landscape Planning (CALP) (July 2003)*(Sheppard, S.R.J., 2005)*.This code states that professional presenters of realistic landscape visualisations are responsible for promoting full understanding of proposed landscape changes, providing an honest and neutral visual representation of the expected landscape, by seeking to avoid bias in responses and demonstrating the legitimacy of the visualisation process. Presenters of landscape visualisations should adhere to the principles of:

- Access to Information
- Accuracy
- Legitimacy
- Representativeness
- Visual Clarity and Interest

The Code of Ethical Conduct states that the presenter should:

- Demonstrate an appropriate level of qualification and experience.
- Use visualisation tools and media that are appropriate to the purpose.
- Choose the appropriate level of realism.
- Identify, collect and document supporting visual data available for, or used in, the visualisation process.
- Conduct an on-site visual analysis to determine important issues and views.
- Seek community input on viewpoints and landscape issues to address in the visualisations.
- Provide the viewer with a reasonable choice of viewpoints, view directions, view angles, viewing conditions and timeframes appropriate to the area being visualised.
- Estimate and disclose the expected degree of uncertainty, indicating areas and possible visual consequences of the uncertainties.
- Use more than one appropriate presentation mode and means of access for the affected public.
- Present important non-visual information at the same time as the visual presentation, using a neutral delivery.
- Avoid the use, or the appearance of, ‘sales’ techniques or special effects.
- Avoid seeking a particular response from the audience.
- Provide information describing how the visualisation process was conducted and how key decisions were taken *(Sheppard, S.R.J., 2005)*.

9.2 Questionnaires

Scenic Quality Rating Questionnaire

KEY FACTORS	**RATING CRITERIA AND SCORE**		
SCORE	**5**	**3**	**1**
Land Form	High vertical relief as expressed in prominent cliffs, spires or massive rock outcrops, or severe surface variation or highly eroded formations or detail features that are dominating and exceptionally striking and intriguing.	Steep-sided river valleys, or interesting erosion patterns or variety in size and shape of landforms; or detail features that are interesting, though not dominant or exceptional.	Low rolling hills, foothills or flat valley bottoms; few or no interesting landscape features.
Vegetation	A variety of vegetative types as expressed in interesting forms, textures and patterns.	Some variety of vegetation, but only one or two major types.	Little or no variety or contrast in vegetation.
Water	Clear and clean appearing, still or cascading white water, any of which are a dominant factor in the landscape.	Flowing, or still, but not dominant in the landscape.	Absent, or present but not noticeable.
Colour	Rich colour combinations, variety or vivid colour: or pleasing contrasts in the soil, rock, vegetation, water.	Some intensity or variety in colours and contrast of the soil, rock and vegetation, but not a dominant scenic element.	Subtle colour variations contrast or interest: generally mute tones.
Adjacent Scenery	Adjacent scenery greatly enhances visual quality.	Adjacent scenery moderately enhances overall visual quality.	Adjacent scenery has little or no influence on overall visual quality.
Scarcity	One of a kind: unusually memorable, or very rare within region. Consistent chance for exceptional wildlife or wildflower viewing etc.	Distinctive, though somewhat similar to others within the region.	Interesting within its setting, but fairly common within the region.
SCORE	**2**	**0**	**-4**
Cultural Modification	Modifications add favourably to visual variety, while promoting visual harmony.	Modifications add little or no visual variety to the area, and introduce no discordant elements.	Modifications add variety but are very discordant and promote strong disharmony.

Sensitivity Level Rating Questionnaire

FACTORS	QUESTIONS	
Type of Users	**Maintenance of visual quality is:**	
	A major concern for most users	High
	A moderate concern for most users	Moderate
	A low concern for most users	Low
Amount of use	**Maintenance of visual quality becomes more important as the level of use increases:**	
	A high level of use	High
	Moderately level of use	Moderate
	Low level of use	Low
Public interest	**Maintenance of visual quality:**	
	A major concern for most users	High
	A moderate concern for most users	Moderate
	A low concern for most users	Low
Adjacent land Users	**Maintenance of visual quality to sustain adjacent land use objectives is:**	
	Very important	High
	Moderately important	Moderate
	Slightly important	Low
Special Areas	**Maintenance of visual quality to sustain Special Area management objectives is:**	
	Very important	High
	Moderately important	Moderate
	Slightly important	Low

9.3 VRM Terminology

FORM	LINE	COLOUR	TEXTURE
Simple	Horizontal		Smooth
Weak	Vertical		Rough
Strong	Geometric		Fine
Dominant	Angular		Coarse
Flat	Acute		Patchy
Rolling	Parallel		Even
Undulating	Curved	Dark	Uneven
Complex	Wavy	Light	Complex
Plateau	Strong	Mottled	Simple
Ridge	Weak		Stark
Valley	Crisp		Clustered
Plain	Feathered		Diffuse
Steep	Indistinct		Dense
Shallow	Clean		Scattered
Organic	Prominent		Sporadic
Structured	Solid		Consistent

Simple	Basic, composed of few elements	**Organic**	Derived from nature; occurring or developing gradually and naturally
Complex	Complicated; made up of many interrelated parts	**Structure**	Organised; planned and controlled; with definite shape, form, or pattern
Weak	Lacking strength of character	**Regular**	Repeatedly occurring in an ordered fashion
Strong	Bold, definite, having prominence	**Horizontal**	Parallel to the horizon
Dominant	Controlling, influencing the surrounding environment	**Vertical**	Perpendicular to the horizon; upright
Flat	Level and horizontal without any slope; even and smooth without any bumps or hollows	**Geometric**	Consisting of straight lines and simple shapes
Rolling	Progressive and consistent in form, usually rounded	**Angular**	Sharply defined; used to describe an object identified by angles
Undulating	Moving sinuously like waves; wavy in appearance	**Acute**	Less than 90°; used to describe a sharp angle
Plateau	Uniformly elevated flat to gently undulating land bounded on one or more sides by steep slopes	**Parallel**	Relating to or being lines, planes, or curved surfaces that are always the same distance apart and therefore never meet
Ridge	A narrow landform typical of a highpoint or apex; a long narrow hilltop or range of hills	**Curved**	Rounded or bending in shape
Valley	Low-lying area; a long low area of land, often with a river or stream running through it, that is surrounded by higher ground	**Wavy**	Repeatedly curving forming a series of smooth curves that go in one direction and then another
Plain	A flat expanse of land; fairly flat dry land, usually with few trees	**Feathered**	Layered; consisting of many fine parallel strands
Steep	Sloping sharply often to the extent of being almost vertical	**Indistinct**	Vague; lacking clarity or form
Prominent	Noticeable; distinguished, eminent, or well-known	**Patchy**	Irregular and inconsistent;
Solid	Unadulterated or unmixed; made of the same material throughout; uninterrupted	**Even**	Consistent and equal; lacking slope, roughness, and irregularity
Broken	Lacking continuity; having an uneven surface	**Uneven**	Inconsistent and unequal in measurement irregular
Smooth	Consistent in line and form; even textured	**Stark**	Bare and plain; lacking ornament or relieving features
Rough	Bumpy; knobbly; or uneven, coarse in texture	**Clustered**	Densely grouped
Fine	Intricate and refined in nature	**Diffuse**	Spread through; scattered over an area
Coarse	Harsh or rough to the touch; lacking detail	**Diffuse**	To make something less bright or intense

10 ANNEXURE 3: GENERAL LIGHTS AT NIGHT MITIGATION

Mitigation:

- Effective light management needs to be incorporated into the design of the lighting to ensure that the visual influence is limited to the mine, without jeopardising mine operational safety and security (See lighting mitigations by The New England Light Pollution Advisory Group (NELPAG) and Sky Publishing Corp in 14.2).
- Utilisation of specific frequency LED lighting with a green hue on perimeter security fencing.
- Directional lighting on the more exposed areas of operation, where point light source is an issue.
- No use of overhead lighting and, if possible, locate the light source closer to the operation.
- If possible, the existing overhead lighting method utilised at the mine should be phased out and replaced with an alternative lighting using closer to source, directed LED technology.

Mesopic Lighting

Mesopic vision is a combination of photopic vision and scotopic vision in low, but not quite dark, lighting situations. The traditional method of measuring light assumes photopic vision and is often a poor predictor of how a person sees at night. The light spectrum optimized for mesopic vision contains a relatively high amount of bluish light and is therefore effective for peripheral visual tasks at mesopic light levels. *(CIE, 2012)*

The Mesopic Street Lighting Demonstration and Evaluation Report by the Lighting Research Centre (LRC) in New York found that the 'replacement of white light sources (induction and ceramic metal halide) were tuned to optimize human vision under low light levels while remaining in the white light spectrum. Therefore, outdoor electric light sources that are tuned to how humans see under mesopic lighting conditions can be used to reduce the luminance of the road surface while providing the same, or better, visibility. Light sources with shorter wavelengths, which produce a "cooler" (more blue and green) light, are needed to produce better mesopic vision. Based on this understanding, the LRC developed a means of predicting visual performance under low light conditions. This system is called the unified photometry system. Responses to surveys conducted on new installations revealed that area residents perceived higher levels of visibility, safety, security, brightness, and colour rendering with the new lighting systems than with the standard *High-Purity Standards* (HPS) systems. The new lighting systems used 30% to 50% less energy than the HPS systems. These positive results were achieved through tuning the light source to optimize mesopic vision. Using less wattage and photopic luminance also reduces the reflectance of the light off the road surface. Light reflectance is a major contributor to light pollution (sky glow).' *(Lighting Research Center. New York. 2008)*

‘Good Neighbour – Outdoor Lighting’

Presented by the New England Light Pollution Advisory Group (NELPAG) http://cfa/ www.harvard .edu /cfa/ps/nelpag.html) and Sky & Telescope http://SkyandTelescope.com/). NELPAG and Sky & Telescope support the International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) *(http://www.darksky.org/).* (NELPAG)

What is good lighting? Good outdoor lights improve visibility, safety, and a sense of security, while minimizing energy use, operating costs, and ugly, dazzling glare.

Why should we be concerned? Many outdoor lights are poorly designed or improperly aimed. Such lights are costly, wasteful, and distractingly glary. They harm the night-time environment and neighbours’ property values. Light directed uselessly above the horizon creates murky skyglow — the “light pollution” that washes out our view of the stars.

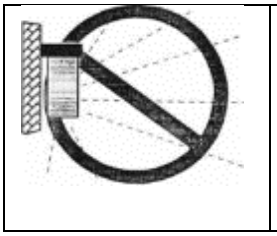
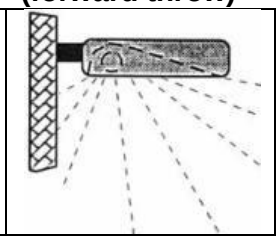
Glare Here’s the basic rule of thumb: If you can see the bright bulb from a distance, it’s a bad light. With a good light, you see lit ground instead of the dazzling bulb. “Glare” is light that beams directly from a bulb into your eye. It hampers the vision of pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers.

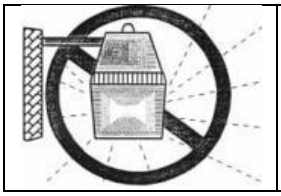
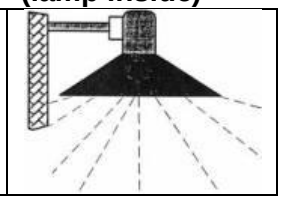
Light Trespass Poor outdoor lighting shines onto neighbours’ properties and into bedroom windows, reducing privacy, hindering sleep, and giving the area an unattractive, trashy look.

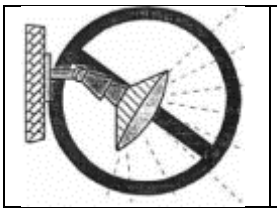
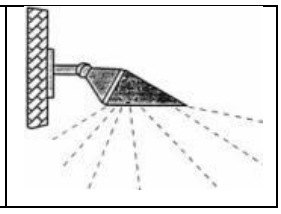
Energy Waste Many outdoor lights waste energy by spilling much of their light where it is not needed, such as up into the sky. This waste results in high operating costs. Each year we waste more than a billion dollars in the United States needlessly lighting the night sky.

Excess Lighting Some homes and businesses are flooded with much stronger light than is necessary for safety or security.

Good and Bad Light Fixtures

Typical “Wall Pack”	**Typical “Shoe Box” (forward throw)**
	
BAD Waste light goes up and sideways	**GOOD** Directs all light down

Typical “Yard Light”	**Opaque Reflector (lamp inside)**
	
BAD Waste light goes up and sideways	**GOOD** Directs all light down

Area Flood Light	**Area Flood Light with Hood**
	
BAD Waste light goes up and sideways	**GOOD** Directs all light down

How do I switch to good lighting?
Provide only enough light for the task at hand; don’t over-light, and don’t spill light off your property. Specifying enough light for a job is sometimes hard to do on paper. Remember that a full Moon can make an area quite bright. Some lighting systems illuminate areas 100 times more brightly than the full Moon! More importantly, by choosing properly shielded lights, you can meet your needs without bothering neighbours or polluting the sky.

1. Aim lights down. Choose “full-cutoff shielded” fixtures that keep light from going uselessly up or sideways. Full-cutoff fixtures produce minimum glare. They create a pleasant-looking environment. They increase safety because you see illuminated people, cars, and terrain, not dazzling bulbs.

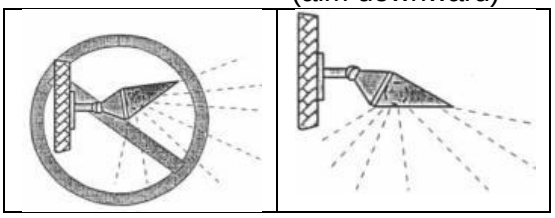
2. Install fixtures carefully to maximize their effectiveness on the targeted area and minimize their impact elsewhere. Proper aiming of fixtures is crucial. Most are aimed too high. Try to install them at night, when you can see where all the rays actually go. Properly aimed and shielded lights may cost more initially, but they save you far more in the long run. They can illuminate your target with a low-wattage bulb just as well as a wasteful light does with a high-wattage bulb.

3. If colour discrimination is not important, choose energy- efficient fixtures utilising yellowish high-pressure sodium (HPS) bulbs. If “white” light is needed, fixtures using compact fluorescent or metal-halide (MH) bulbs are more energy-efficient than those using incandescent, halogen, or mercury-vapour bulbs.

4. Where feasible, put lights on timers to turn them off each night after they are no longer needed. Put home security lights on a motion-detector switch, which turns them on only when someone enters the area; this provides a great deterrent effect!

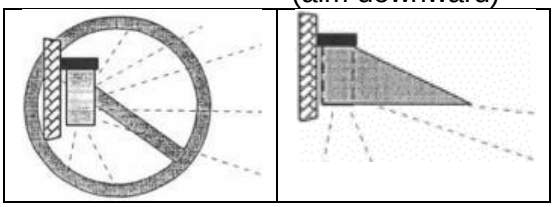
What You Can Do To Modify Existing Fixtures

Change this . . . to this (aim downward)



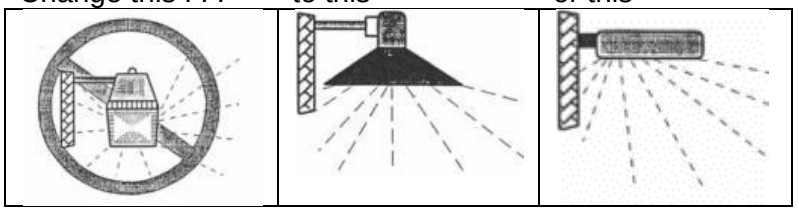
Floodlight:

Change this . . . to this (aim downward)



Wall Pack

Change this . . . to this or this



Yard Light Opaque Reflecter Show Box

Replace bad lights with good lights.
You’ll save energy and money. You’ll be a good neighbour. And you’ll help preserve our view of the stars.