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SITE SENSITIVITY VERIFICATION REPORT

FOR THE

PROPOSED EXPANSION OF THE NEXUS^{AG} STORAGE FACILITY FOR AGRICULTURAL CHEMICALS ON ERF 19134, PAARL, DRAKENSTEIN LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, WESTERN CAPE.



APPLICANT:	NEXUS ^{AG} (PTY) LTD.
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANT:	SHARPLES ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES CC AUTHOR: MR WILLAN ADONIS REVIEWER: MS BETSY DITCHAM (EAPASA: 1480)
SES REFERENCE NUMBER:	7/CT/SSVR/07/22
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1. INTRODUCTION

Sharples Environmental Services cc (SES) has been appointed by Nexus^{AG} (Pty) Ltd to undertake the environmental assessment, in accordance with the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act 107 of 1998), in terms of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014 (as amended 2017), for the Proposed Expansion of the Nexus^{AG} Storage Facility for Agricultural Chemicals on Erf 19134, Paarl, Drakenstein Local Municipality, Western Cape.

The site is located on 2 Distillery Street, Charleston Hill, Paarl, and forms a part of the Paarl industrial area. The site is zoned for industrial use*. It is surrounded by other warehouses and businesses to the north, east and south. To the west is the Berg River, and Erf 5058. Nexus^{AG} aims to expand their infrastructure on ER19134, which will allow them to discontinue warehousing at other locations, and channel all storage of goods to one central location. Thereby reducing excessive expenditure on other premises, allowing the organisation relief and continuation given the changing economic climate, and rising fuel prices straining logistics industry.

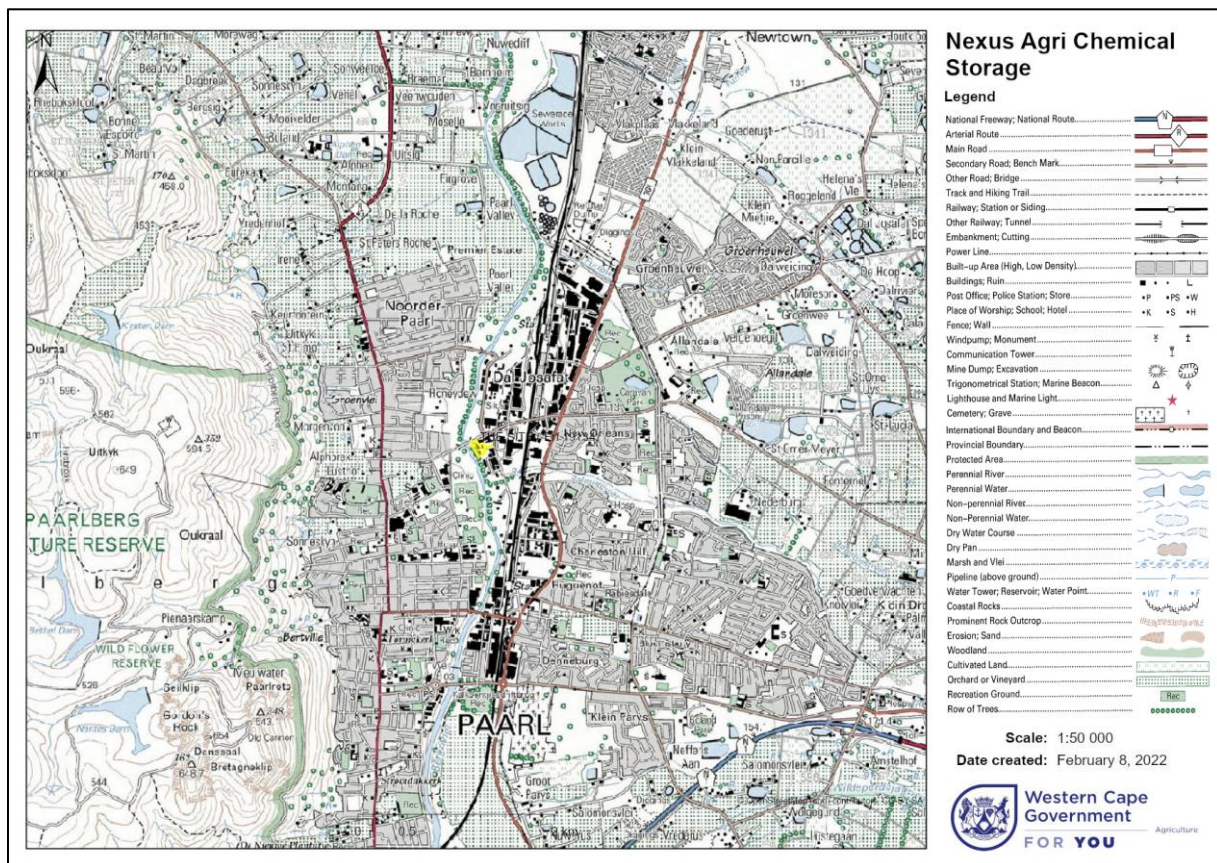


Figure 1: 1:50 000 topographic locality map (SES, 2022)

A sensitivity screening tool report for the site was produced using the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment's Web-based National Environmental Screening Tool. This Site Sensitivity Verification Report (SSVR) reports on the ground truthing undertaken to verify the indicated sensitivity ratings of the screening report, and to motivate why some of the specialist studies recommended by the screening report, will not be undertaken for the proposed development.

The site inspection for this report was undertaken on the 26th of January 2022 by Mr Willan Adonis and Mrs Betsy Ditcham of SES.

1.1. Description of Proposed Activity

The site is approximately 14 546 m² in size and is zoned as Industrial Zone. According to the Drakenstein Zoning Scheme By-law (2018), the Industrial zone is intended to make provision for, *inter alia*:

- "sufficient land to be retained for general manufacturing and large-scale industrial and warehousing purposes and for any activity exercised in connection therewith or addition thereto;
- the location of industrial uses in areas where negative impacts of such uses can be limited to the industrial area and its environs."

Table 1: Property details of proposed development location

No	Farm Name	Farm/ Erf No	Portion	Latitude	Longitude	Property Type
1	PAARL	19134	0	33°42'58.42S	18°58'25.12E	Erven

As per Figure 2 and

Figure 3, the proposed development's scope will entail a 6 335.6 m² expansion (indicated in red) of the existing 3 057.21 m² infrastructure (indicated in gray). This will amount to a total coverage of 9 392.81 m² of an allowed 10 909.5 m² coverage.

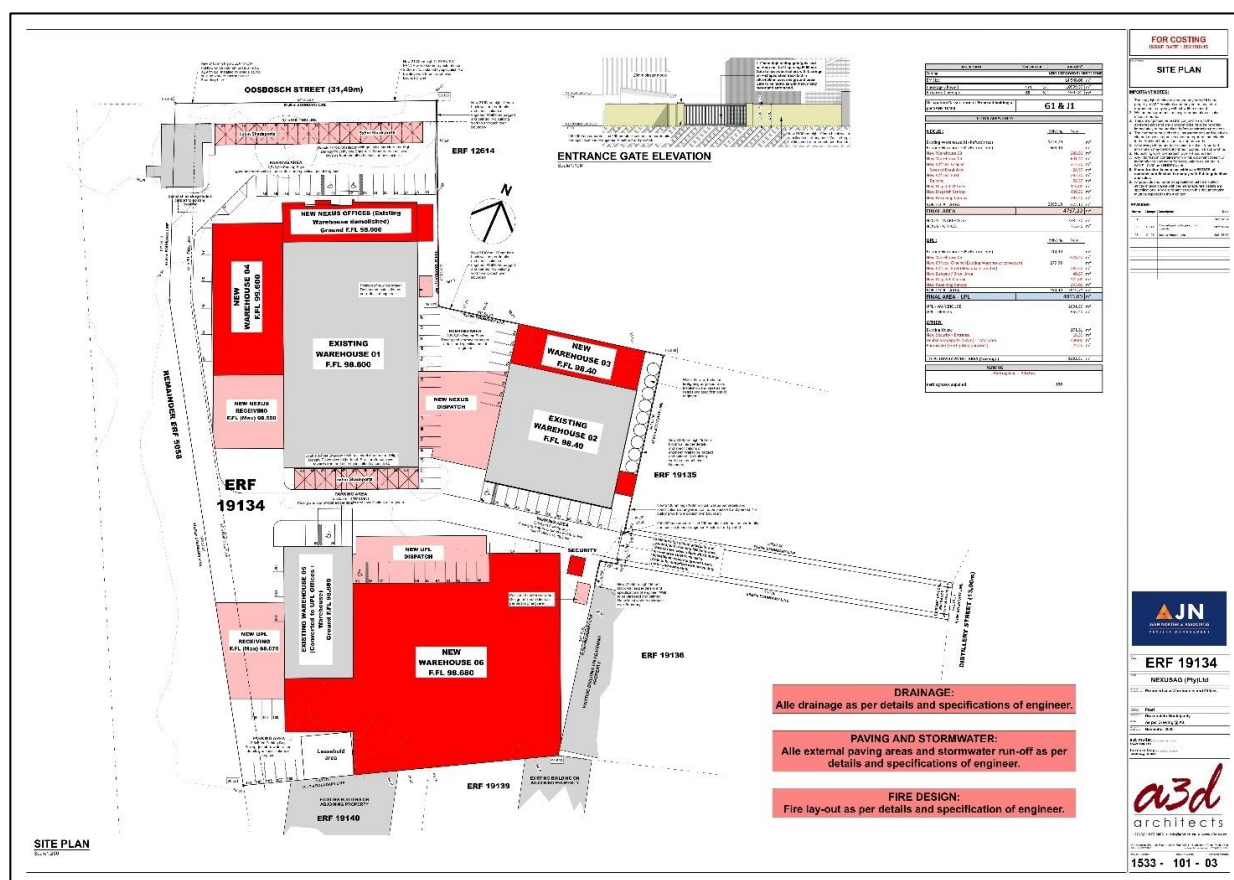


Figure 2: Proposed Layout Plan

DESCRIPTION	% or FACTOR		AREA (m²)	
Zoning	NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS ZONE			
Erf Size	14 546,00 m²			
Coverage allowed	75%	%	10909,50	m²
Proposed Coverage	65	%	9392,81	m²
Occupation Classification of Proposed building as per SANS 10400:	G1 & J1			
FLOOR AREA: UNITS				
NEXUS :	Existing		New	
Existing Warehouse 01 (Refurbished)	1728,70			m²
Existing Warehouse 02 (Refurbished)	663,40			m²
New Warehouse 03			288,80	m²
New Warehouse 04			601,40	m²
New Offices: Ground			314,70	m²
Covered Braai Area			28,50	m²
New Offices: First			282,70	m²
Balcony			38,30	m²
New Dispatch Offices			116,00	m²
New Dispatch Canopy			409,30	m²
New Receiving Canopy			295,40	m²
SUB-TOTAL AREA	2392,10		2375,10	m²
FINAL AREA			4767,20	m²
NEXUS - WAREHOUSE			3282,30	m²
NEXUS - OFFICES			713,40	m²
UPL :	Existing		New	
Existing Warehouse 05 (Refurbished)	213,40			m²
New Warehouse 06			2478,40	m²
New Offices: Ground (Existing Warehouse converted)	279,90			m²
New Offices: First (New space created)			285,50	m²
New Balcony / Braai Area			40,80	m²
New Dispatch Canopy			372,00	m²
New Receiving Canopy			343,00	m²
SUB-TOTAL AREA	493,30		3519,70	m²
FINAL AREA - UPL			4013,00	m²
UPL - WAREHOUSE			2691,80	m²
UPL - OFFICES			565,40	m²
OTHER:				
Existing House			171,81	m²
New Security / Entrance			16,30	m²
Double Shadeports (5x5m) - Total Area			400,00	m²
Pumproom (Firefighting purposes)			24,50	m²
TOTAL DEVELOPMENT AREA (Coverage)			9392,81	m²
PARKING				
Parking bays = 2,5x5m				
Parking Bays supplied			108	

Figure 3: Planned scope

2. FINDINGS OF THE SCREENING TOOL

The DEA Screening Tool Report, was originally conducted on the 31st January 2022 and repeated in July 2022*, it was confirmed that there were no changes to the screening tool. The National Sector Classification Category selected to produce the Screening Tool Report: **Localised infrastructure | Storage | Dangerous Goods | Chemicals**.

2.1. Wind and Solar Developments

There are no wind and solar developments with an approved environmental authorisation or applications under consideration within 30 km radius of the proposed site.

2.2. Environmental Management Frameworks

No intersections with EMF areas found.

2.3. Relevant Development Incentives, Restrictions, Exclusions or Prohibitions

The following development incentives, restrictions, exclusions, or prohibitions apply to the proposed site, and are indicated in Figure 4 below:

- Strategic Transmission Corridor - Central corridor
- Strategic Gas Pipeline Corridors - Phase 1a & 1b: Saldanha to Ankerlig and Saldanha to Mossel Bay
- South African Conservation Areas

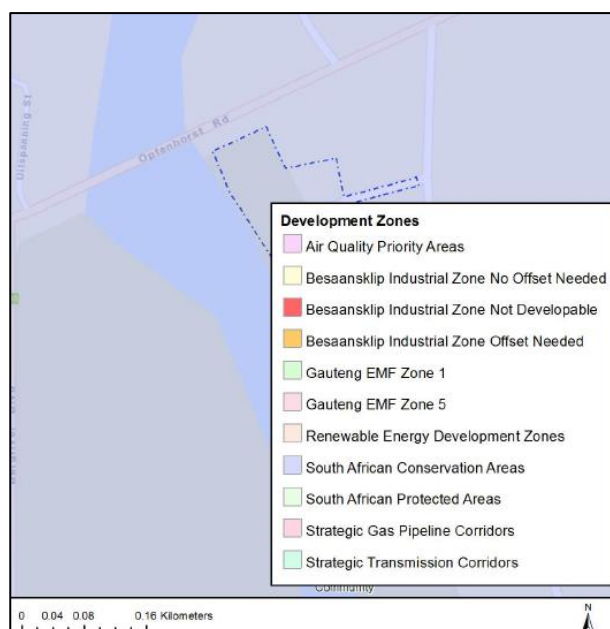


Figure 4: Development incentives, restrictions, exclusions, or prohibitions applicable to the site

2.4. Environmental Sensitivities

The following summary of the development footprint environmental sensitivities is identified by the screening report. Only the highest sensitivity is indicated. **The footprint environmental sensitivities for the proposed development footprint as identified by the screening report, are indicative only and must be verified on site by a suitably qualified person before the specialist assessments identified below can be confirmed.**

Table 2: Summary of the development site environmental sensitivities

Theme	Sensitivity			
	Very High	High	Medium	Low
Agriculture Theme			X	
Animal Species Theme		X		
Aquatic Biodiversity Theme	X			
Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Theme	X			
Civil Aviation Theme		X		
Defence Theme				X
Palaeontology Theme			X	
Plant Species Theme				X
Terrestrial Biodiversity Theme	X			

2.5. Specialist assessments identified

Based on the selected classification, and the environmental sensitivities of the proposed development footprint, the following list of specialist assessments have been identified for inclusion in the assessment report. It is the responsibility of the EAP to confirm this list and to motivate in the assessment report, the reason for not including any of the identified specialist studies as well as provide photographic evidence of the footprint.

Table 3: Summary of specialist assessments identified

No.	Specialist Assessment	Assessment Protocol
1	Agricultural Impact Assessment	Agriculture
2	Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment	General
3	Palaeontology Impact Assessment	General
4	Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact Assessment	Terrestrial Biodiversity
5	Aquatic Biodiversity Impact Assessment	Aquatic Biodiversity
6	Hydrology Assessment	General
7	Noise Impact Assessment	Noise
8	Traffic Impact Assessment	General
9	Geotechnical Assessment	General
10	Socio-Economic Assessment	General

11	Plant Species Assessment	Terrestrial Plant
12	Animal Species Assessment	Terrestrial Animal

3. SITE VERIFICATION

A site inspection was undertaken on the 26th of January 2022 by, by Mr Willan Adonis and Mrs Betsy Ditcham of SES.

3.1. Agriculture

Screening Tool: The report indicates that the Land capability has a **Medium** sensitivity rating, and recommends that an Agricultural Compliance Statement be completed.

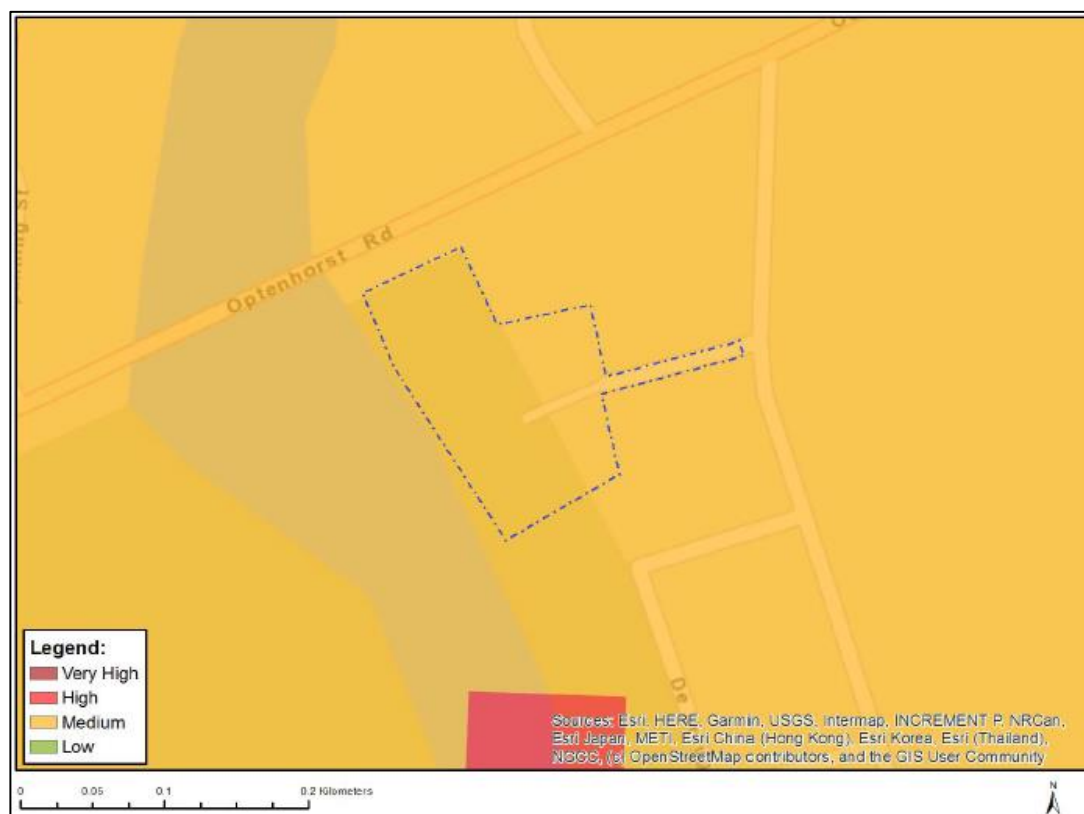


Figure 5: Relative agriculture theme sensitivity map

Sensitivity Features:

Sensitivity	Feature(s)
Medium	Land capability;06. Low-Moderate/07. Low-Moderate/08. Moderate

Observation on Site:

The site is situated in the Paarl Industrial Area, and significantly transformed by existing infrastructure and extensive hardened surfaces. As shown in Figure 6, the site is surrounded by other warehouses and businesses to the north, east and south. To the west is the Berg River, and Erf 5058. Therefore, the potential for the site to be used for crop growth or animal rearing is not possible, nor is it zoned for this purpose (Figure 7).



Figure 6: Locality Map.



Figure 7: Land use zoning for the Erf 19134, Paarl

Should the sensitivity change: Yes

New sensitivity rating: Low

Conclusion: The industrial land-use zoning, the existing industrial activities, the transformation of surfaces, and the surrounding development significantly limits the potential for the site to be utilised for agricultural activity. Although agricultural chemicals will be stored within the expanded facility, this does not require an agricultural investigation. Therefore, no agricultural assessment will be undertaken as this theme is considered to be not applicable/negligible. The Department of Agriculture will be included as an I&AP should any relevant legislation be applicable*.

3.2. Animal Species

Screening Tool: The report indicates that the animal sensitivity rating of the site is **High** and recommends an Animal Species Assessment be conducted.

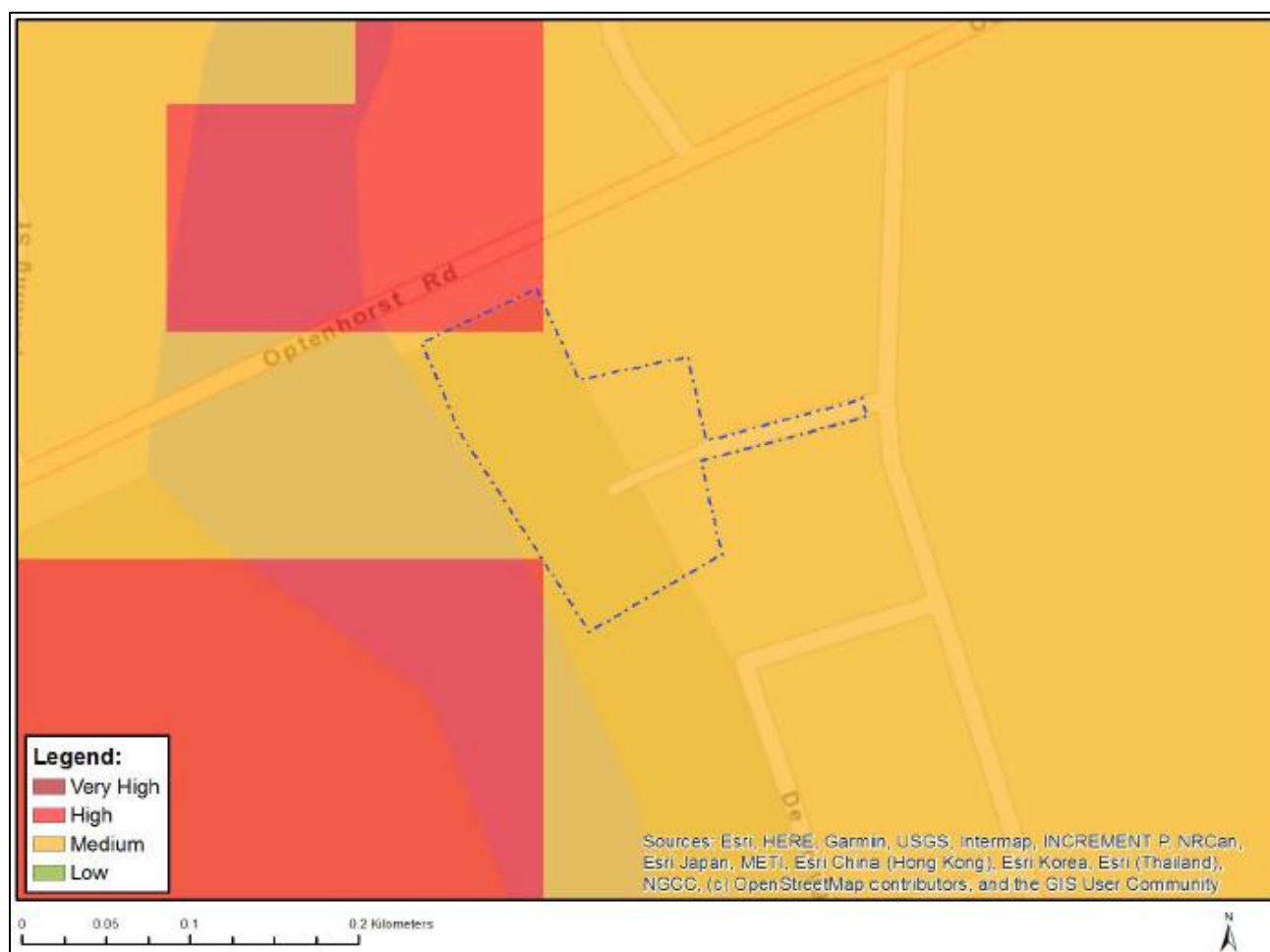


Figure 8: Relative animal species theme sensitivity map

Sensitivity Features:

Sensitivity	Feature(s)
High	Aves-Circus ranivorus
Medium	Invertebrate-Conocephalus peringueyi
Medium	Invertebrate-Brinckiella aptera

Medium	Invertebrate-Aneuryphymus montanus
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The following descriptions provide insight into the habitat and distribution of the relevant faunal species, indicated by the DFFE screening tool report.

• **High - Aves-Circus ranivorus**

- Common Name: African Marsh Harrier.
- IUCN Status: Endangered.
- Habitat: African Marsh Harriers thrive in wetland environments. The African Marsh Harrier preys on small mammals, birds, lizards, frogs, and large insects (BirdLife, n.d.).
- Distribution: Distributed across southern Africa in areas with more than 300 millimetres in annual precipitation. In South Africa its habitat can be found in the Western Cape and along eastern South Africa.

• **Medium - Invertebrate-Conocephalus peringueyi**

- Common Name: Peringuey's Meadow Katydid (grasshopper)
- IUCN Status: Vulnerable.
- Habitat: Peringuey's Meadow Katydid is only known to inhabit mountains in the Fynbos biome (IUCN Red List, 2013b).
- Distribution: Peringuey's Meadow Katydid is known only from the mountains of the southwestern Cape of the Western Cape. Its extent of occurrence is approximately 5 065 km² (IUCN Red List, 2013b).

• **Medium - Invertebrate-Brinckiella aptera**

- Common Name: Mute Winter Katydid (grasshopper)
- IUCN Status: Vulnerable.
- Habitat: This species is endemic to the Fynbos and Succulent Karoo biomes. It probably feeds on flowers and leaves of a very narrow range of host plants and occurs primarily on low, herbaceous shrubs. This species feeds and stridulates at night but can be found basking in the daytime on sunny days during the winter and early spring, from August until October, a time when very few insects are active (SANBI, 2012)
- Distribution: The Mute Winter Katydid is endemic to the Northern and Western Cape Provinces of South Africa.

• **Medium - Invertebrate-Aneuryphymus montanus**

- Common Name: Yellow-winged Agile Grasshopper.
- IUCN Status: Vulnerable.
- Habitat: The species is associated with fynbos vegetation, where it has been collected "amongst partly burnt stands of evergreen Sclerophyll in rocky foothills" (SANBI, 2012). It prefers south-facing cool slopes.
- Distribution: This species is found in the Northern, Western and Eastern Cape region of South Africa (SANBI, 2012). Its estimated extent of occurrence is 170 000 km².

Observation on Site:

The site verification inspection revealed that the proposed site has been significantly transformed, and is surrounded by development, there are a few trees on site, but the ground cover is predominantly cleared of vegetation, and contains extensive hardened surfaces (see Figure 9 to Figure 13).

Therefore, the site does not host wetland habitat that is appropriate for the African Marsh Harrier, and it does not have fynbos vegetation that could host the indicated grasshopper species.



Figure 9: Aerial photograph illustrating transformation (existing buildings and hardened surfaces) on site, indicates positions A and B for Figure 10 to Figure 13.



Figure 10: Photograph at Position A, facing north-eastern portion of Erf 19134



Figure 11: Photograph at Position A, facing south-eastern portion of Erf 19134



Figure 12: Photograph at Position B, facing north-western portion of Erf 19134



Figure 13: Photograph at Position B, facing south-western portion of Erf 19134

Should the sensitivity change: Yes

New sensitivity rating: Low

Conclusion: The current infrastructure on site, consisting mainly of buildings and hardened surfaces, do not support the habitat or breeding grounds conducive to supporting the flagged species. Based on this conclusion and the urban industrial transformation of the surrounding area, no animal species investigation will be undertaken, as this theme is considered to be not applicable/negligible.

An Aquatic Specialist was appointed to undertake a site visit and confirmed the transformation of the site and confirmed that no aquatic features were identified within the site. *

CapeNature will be included as an I&AP and will be provided an opportunity to comment during public participation.

3.3. Aquatic Biodiversity

Screening Tool: The report indicates that the site's Aquatic Biodiversity is of **Very High** sensitivity and that an Aquatic Biodiversity Impact Assessment should be completed.



Figure 14: Relative aquatic biodiversity theme sensitivity map

Sensitivity Features:

Sensitivity	Feature(s)
Very High	Rivers

Very High	Strategic water source area
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Observation on Site:

As per CapeFarmMapper (accessed April 11, 2022), Figure 15, there are no natural watercourses present on site. The closest watercourse is the Berg River located outside the western boundary of the site (see Figure 15). As illustrated in Figure 16, the proposed site (Erf 19134) is not immediately adjacent to the Berg River, the property immediately adjacent to the river is Erf 5058. The watercourse buffers in Figure 15 indicate that the proposed site is located beyond 32 m of the watercourse, but within 500 m of wetland and watercourse features. As indicated in Figure 15, a perennial, non-perennial and an unchanneled valley-bottom wetland is within 500m radius of the site.

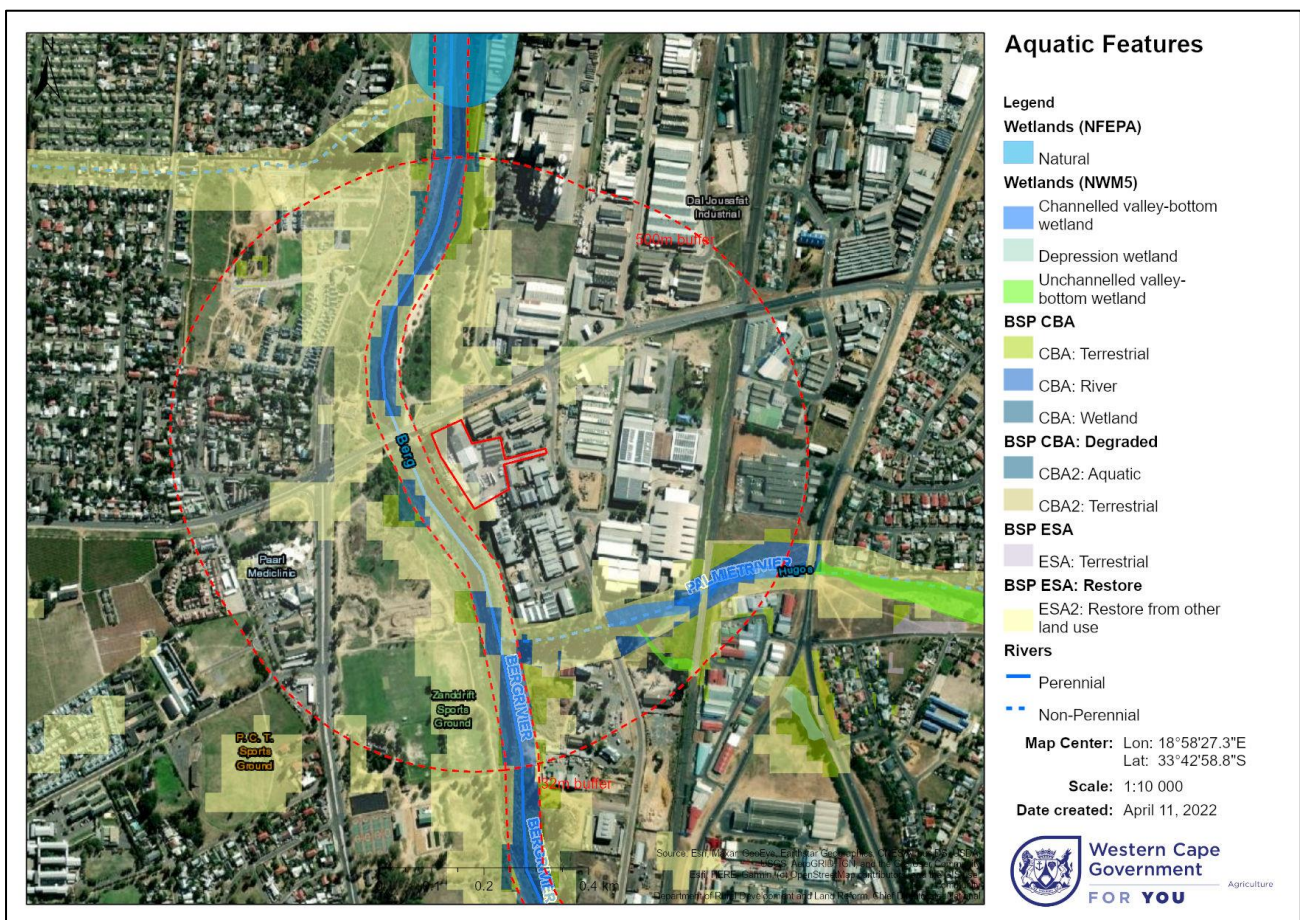


Figure 15: Critical Biodiversity Areas, Ecological Support Areas, and aquatic features on and surrounding Erf 19134, Paarl.

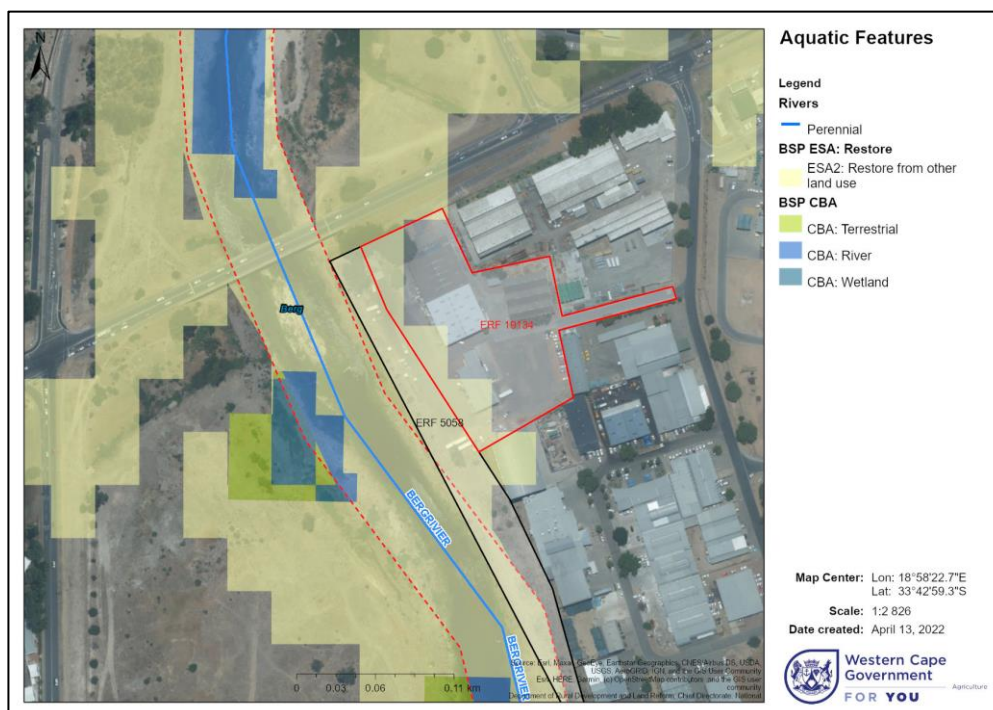


Figure 16: Critical Biodiversity Areas, Ecological Support Areas, and aquatic features on and surrounding Erf 19134, Paarl.

According to CapeFarmMapper (accessed April 11, 2022) the site contains an Ecological Support Area (ESA)2, along the western boundary of the site, based on the aquatic feature (the Berg River). ESA 2 is defined as areas that are not essential for meeting biodiversity targets, but that play an important role in supporting the functioning of Protected Areas and Critical Biodiversity Areas and are often vital for delivering ecosystem services.

Following the site inspection, and photographs depicting the transformation of the mapped ESA2 area on site (Figure 17, Figure 18 & Figure 19), it is clear that there are no natural areas remaining on the site. Therefore, the ESA2 polygon is potentially erroneously overlapping the proposed site. Figure 17 indicates the area mapped as ESA2 to the west of the proposed site (Erf 19134) and the fence-line of Erf 5058 which abuts the Berg River. The impermeable fence-line of Erf 5058 limits any interaction between the riverine area beyond the fence-line and the transformed area on Erf 19134. All construction activity will remain within Erf 19134 and will not encroach onto Erf 5058.



Figure 17: Photograph of the fence-line on Erf 5058, west of the proposed site on Erf 19134.



Figure 18: Photograph of north-western corner of the site, indicated as an ESA.



Figure 19: Photograph of south-western corner of the site, indicated as an ESA.

Should the sensitivity change: Yes

New sensitivity rating: Low

Conclusion:

An Aquatic Specialist was appointed to undertake a site visit and confirmed the transformation of the site and confirmed that no aquatic features were identified within the site.

The specialist advised that the study area may potentially be subject to Government Notice 509 as published in the Government Gazette 40229 of 2016 as it relates to the National Water Act, 1998 (Act No. 36 of 1998) in accordance with GN509 of 2016 as it relates to the National Water Act, 1998 (Act No. 36 of 1998), a regulated area of a watercourse in terms of water uses as listed in Section 21 (c) and 21(i). *

As such, it is recommended that the proponent consult with the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) as the custodian of water resources in South Africa, to determine the relevant authorisation process that should be followed in terms of the requirements of the National Water Act 1998 (Act No. 36 of 1998). However, it must be noted that if the control measures as listed in the compliance statement are implemented, the proposed expansion activities are expected to pose a low-risk significance to the Berg River and it is the opinion of the freshwater ecologist that registration by means of confirmation of General Authorization is possible. The Berg River is considered a watercourse of aquatic biodiversity importance, however due to the nature of the proposed operation, the study area can be considered of low aquatic biodiversity sensitivity with the condition that the proposed expansive activities remain strictly outside the 32 m ZoR in accordance with the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998). *

The specialist advised that the compliance statement be submitted to the relevant competent authority for consideration as part of the EA process.*

This was issued to DWS by the EAP on the 19th of July 2022.*

The DWS, in respect of the Berg River Catchment, will be included as an I&AP and will be provided with an opportunity to comment on the BAR and advise on the way forward in terms of a Water Use Application. *

3.4. Hydrology

The **Screening Tool** indicated that a Hydrology Assessment must be completed.

Observation on Site:

The mean annual precipitation for the site is 882 mm, which is considerably greater than the 469.9 mm average precipitation recorded for South Africa's as a whole. The mean annual run-off for the site is 223.92 mm. As per CapeFarmMapper (accessed April 11, 2022), the site is mainly flat (see Figure 20), draining in a western direction, toward the Berg River. As illustrated in Figure 20, while most of the site has a surface water flow accumulation of below 10, the north-western portion of the site associated with the aquatic ESA has a flow accumulation of 161.

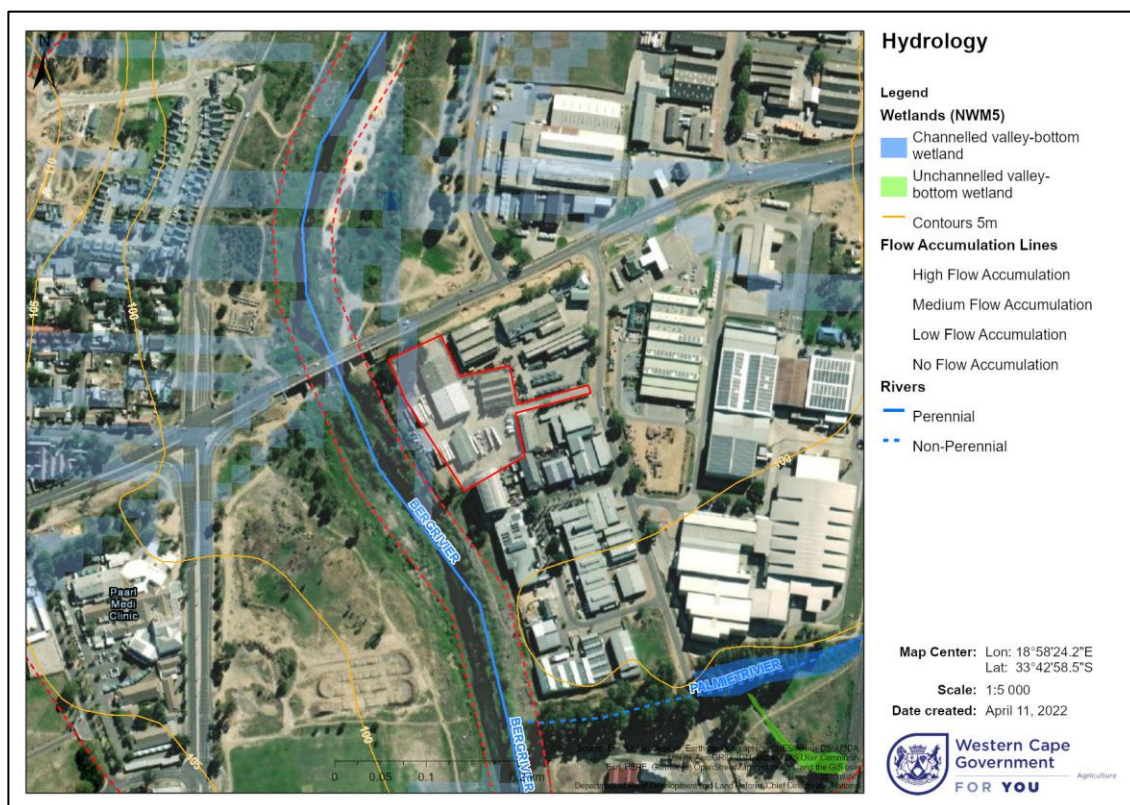


Figure 20: Hydrological characteristics of the proposed site

The depth to groundwater is 8.6 metres below ground level. As per CapeFarmMapper (accessed April 11, 2022), the aquifer yield is between 0.1 to 0.5 litres per second, and it has a high susceptibility to contamination.

Conclusion: An Aquatic Specialist was appointed to undertake a site visit and confirmed the transformation of the site and confirmed that no aquatic features were identified within the site.

The specialist advised that the study area may potentially be subject to Government Notice 509 as published in the Government Gazette 40229 of 2016 as it relates to the National Water Act, 1998 (Act No. 36 of 1998) in accordance with GN509 of 2016 as it relates to the National Water Act, 1998 (Act No. 36 of 1998), a regulated area of a watercourse in terms of water uses as listed in Section 21 (c) and 21(i). *

As such, it is recommended that the proponent consult with the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) as the custodian of water resources in South Africa, to determine the relevant authorisation process that should be followed in terms of the requirements of the National Water Act 1998 (Act No. 36 of 1998). However, it must be noted that if the control measures as listed in the compliance statement are implemented, the proposed expansion activities are expected to pose a low-risk significance to the Berg River and it is the opinion of the freshwater ecologist that registration by means of confirmation of General Authorization is possible. The Berg River is considered a watercourse of aquatic biodiversity importance, however due to the nature of the proposed operation, the study area can be considered of low aquatic biodiversity sensitivity with the condition that the proposed expansive activities remain strictly outside the 32 m ZoR in accordance with the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998). *

The specialist advised that the compliance statement be submitted to the relevant competent authority for consideration as part of the EA process.*

This was issued to DWS by the EAP on the 19th of July 2022.*

The DWS, in respect of the Berg River Catchment, will be included as an I&AP and will be provided with an opportunity to comment on the BAR and advise on the way forward in terms of a Water Use Application. *

3.5. Archaeological and Cultural Heritage

Screening Tool: The report indicates the site's Archaeological and Cultural Heritage are of a **Very High** sensitivity, and that an Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment be conducted.

Sensitivity Features:

Sensitivity	Feature(s)
Very High	Within 5km of a Grade I Heritage site
Very High	Within 2km of a Grade II Heritage site

Observation on Site: The proposed expansion of the existing warehouse facilities on Erf 19134 will maintain the character and industrial use of the site, as permitted in the Drakenstein Land-use Zoning By-law (2018).

Should the sensitivity change: Yes

New sensitivity rating: Low

Conclusion: The proposed expansion does not constitute the undertaking of any of the categories of development set out in Section 38(1) of the National Heritage Resources Act.

Heritage Western Cape will be included as an I&AP and provided with an opportunity to provide comment during the public participation process.

3.6. Palaeontology

The **Screening Tool** indicates the site's Palaeontological sensitivity is **Medium**, and that a Palaeontology Impact Assessment must be completed.

Observations on site: According to the South African Heritage Resources Information System (SAHRIS) Palaeontology Sensitivity Map (Accessed April 11, 2022), the proposed site has a Moderate Palaeontology Sensitivity (see Figure 21). Accordingly, SAHRIS advises that a desktop study is required. Owing to the existing hardened surfaces that characterise the near entirety of the site area, it is highly unlikely that the proposed development will negatively impact features of palaeontological sensitivity.

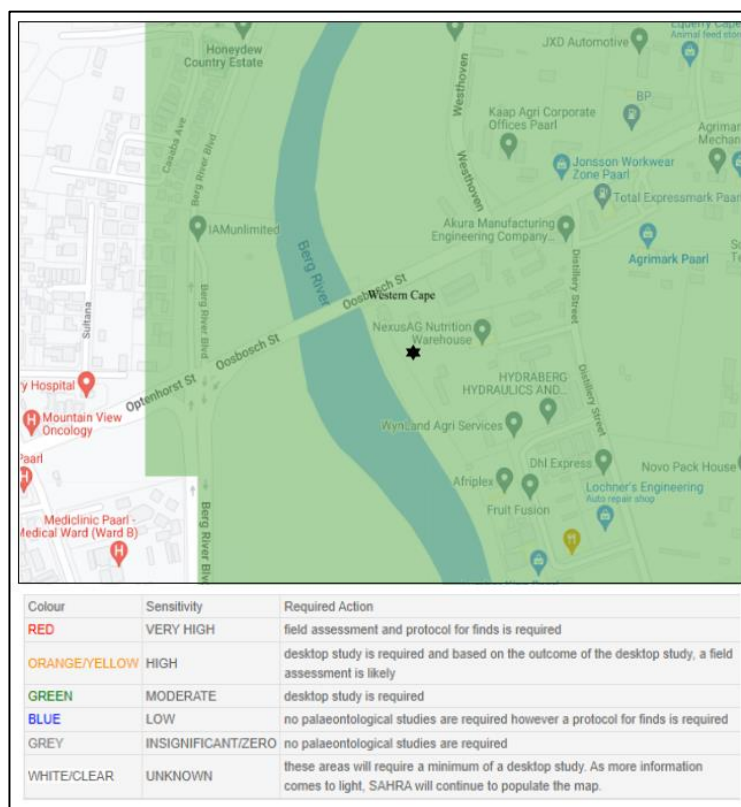


Figure 21: SAHRIS Palaeontology Sensitivity Map.

Should the sensitivity change: Yes

New sensitivity rating: Low

Conclusion: The proposed expansion does not constitute the undertaking of any of the categories of development set out in Section 38(1) of the National Heritage Resources Act.

Heritage Western Cape will be included as an I&AP and provided with an opportunity to provide comment during the public participation process.

3.7. Civil Aviation

Screening Tool: The report indicates that the site's Civil Aviation theme is of **High** sensitivity.

Sensitivity Features:

Sensitivity	Feature(s)
High	Within 8 km of other civil aviation aerodrome

Observations on site:

The site is located approximately 5km's west of the Paarl Landing Field, the closest aerodrome. However, the site and adjacent properties to the north-east, east, and south are zoned and used for industrial purposes. According to the layout plan (Figure 2 and

Figure 3), the site contains three existing warehouses and an existing house.

As per the Drakenstein Zoning Scheme By-law, 2018, the maximum permissible building height (including roof) of 21 metres applies to properties zoned for Industrial use. The proposed structures will not exceed the permissible heights provided in Drakenstein Zoning Scheme By-law (2018).

Should the sensitivity change: Yes

New sensitivity rating: Low

Conclusion: The proposed development will contribute to the sustainability of the agricultural enterprise in the area, and it aligns with the Drakenstein Zoning Scheme By-law (2018). No specialist input will be sought. The South African Civil Aviation Authority will be included as an I&AP and will be provided with an opportunity to comment on the BAR.

3.8. Defence

Screening Tool: Low sensitivity – no other information provided. No action required by the EAP in terms of the Defence Theme.

3.9. Noise

The **Screening Tool** indicated that a Noise Impact Assessment must be completed – no Noise Sensitivity rating is provided.

Conclusion:

The site based in the urban industrial area of Paarl. Typical noises within these types of areas, are expected from this proposal and is permissible in terms of the Drakenstein Zoning Scheme By-law (2018). Construction noise impacts will be temporary and addressed in the BAR. Therefore, no specialist investigation is required to address this theme.

3.10. Traffic

The **Screening Tool** indicated that a Traffic Impact Assessment must be conducted.

Observations on site:

Access to Erf 19134, Paarl, is obtained off Distillery Street (Figure 22) which links the site with Oosbosch Street, which provides westward access to Provincial Road R45.



Figure 22: Access to the proposed site from Distillery Street (Google Maps, 2022).

Conclusion:

The applicant will provide further detail on the traffic impacts in the BAR, based on the available information, the Department of Transport and the Drakenstein Local Municipality will be provided with an opportunity to comment, and if there if advised, further investigation will be undertaken.

3.11. Geotechnical

The **Screening Tool** indicated that a Geotechnical Assessment must be conducted.

Conclusion:

A geotechnical assessment was undertaken by Leon Croukamp (Pr.Sci.Nat) of GeoCroukamp, on November 2016, and is appended to the engineering report by MPro Consulting Engineers, as per the BAR (Appendix L). The specialist advised that the proposed development should be approved.*

3.12. Plant Species

Screening Tool: The report indicates that the site's Plant Species theme is of **Low** sensitivity, and that a Terrestrial Plant Species Compliance Statement be completed.



Figure 23: Relative plant species theme sensitivity map

Observations on site:

According to the National Vegetation Map 2018 (CapeFarmMapper, accessed April 11, 2022), the dominant indigenous vegetation type for the site is mapped as Swartland Alluvium Fynbos which has an ecological threat status of Endangered (DEA, 2011; SANBI, 2012). However, the site is zoned as Industrial Zone, and it has been used for industrial purposes for many years prior to the proposed expansion. As indicated in Figure 25, Figure 26 and Figure 27, there are a few landscaping trees on site, but the ground cover is predominantly cleared of vegetation, and contains extensive hardened surfaces.

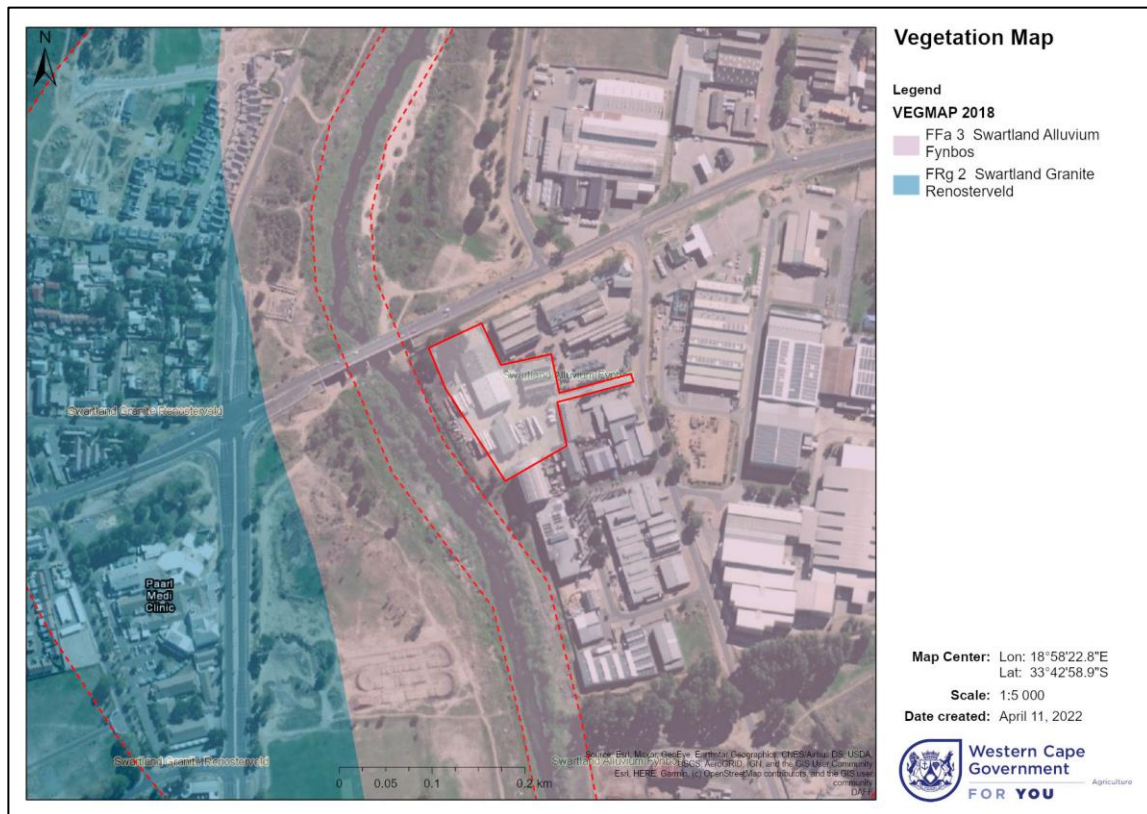


Figure 24: Vegetation map



Figure 25: Photograph of south-eastern portion of the site.



Figure 26: Photograph of north-western portion of the site.



Figure 27: Photograph of south-western portion of the site.

Should the sensitivity change: Yes

New sensitivity rating: Low

Conclusion: The proposed expansion will occur on a site that is already transformed with infrastructure and services, hardened surfaces (concrete) and compacted ground with gravel surfaces, due to continuous movement over time. No plant species investigation will be undertaken.

The Aquatic Specialist has confirmed that there are no aquatic features on the site and has confirmed the significant transformation of the site. *

3.13. Terrestrial Biodiversity

Screening Tool: The report indicates that the site's Terrestrial Biodiversity theme is of **Very High** sensitivity and recommends a Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact Assessment be conducted.

Sensitivity Features:

Sensitivity	Feature(s)
Very High	Ecological support area 2
Very High	Vulnerable ecosystem
Very High	Strategic Water Source Areas

Observations on site:

According to CapeFarmMapper (Accessed April 11, 2022) there are no terrestrial CBAs or ESAs present on the proposed site (see Figure 28), only an aquatic ESA2 which is addressed in Section 3.3.

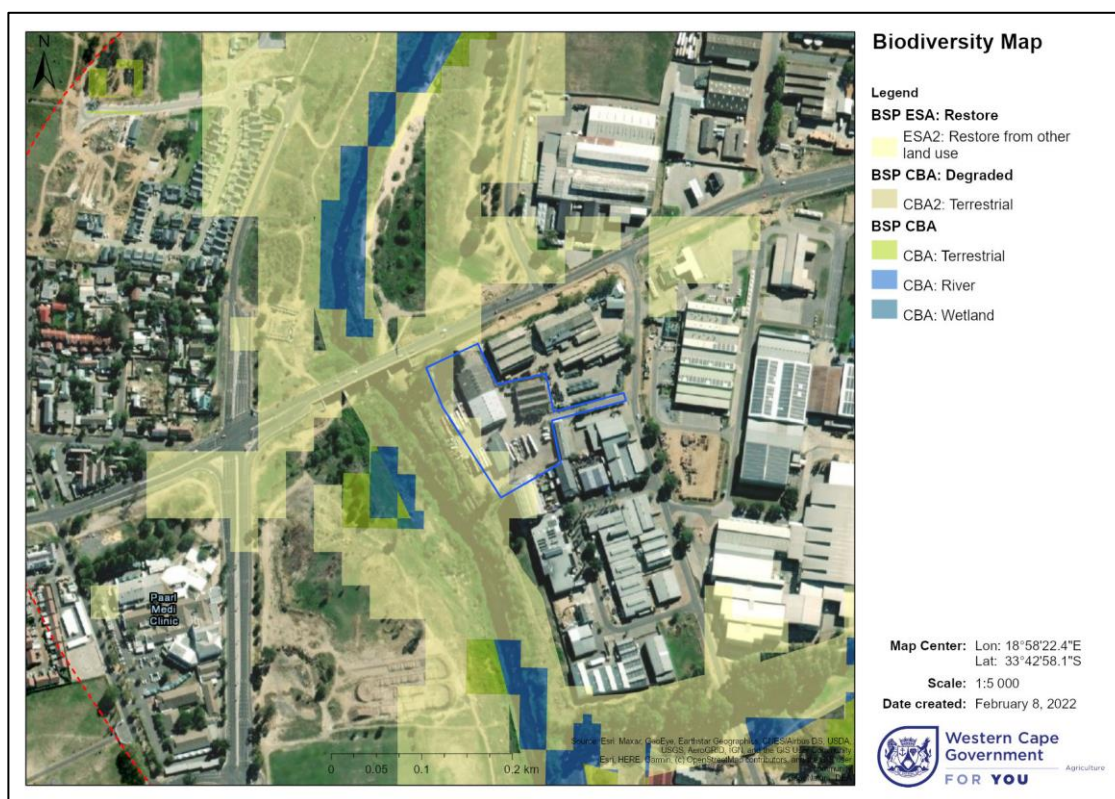


Figure 28: Biodiversity Map.

The dominant vegetation type that is mapped on site, namely, Swartland Alluvium Fynbos, has an ecological threat status of Endangered (DEA, 2011; SANBI, 2012). However, the site has been used for industrial warehousing for many years prior to the proposed development, and therefore contains existing disturbance and extensive transformation, with the site being predominantly cleared of vegetation (see Section 3.2 and Section 0).

Should the sensitivity change: Yes

New sensitivity rating: Low

Conclusion: No specialist terrestrial biodiversity investigation will be undertaken.

CapeNature will be included as an I&AP to provide comment.

3.14. **Socio-Economic**

The **Screening Tool** indicated that a Socio-economic Impact Assessment must be completed.

Conclusion:

The national Department of Environmental Affairs (2017) and the Western Cape Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning's (2011) environmental impact assessment Guidelines on Need and Desirability provide a strong base for the proposed development. It is important to understand how the proposed development falls within the strategic context in order to fully recognise the need and desirability. In the South African strategic context, developmental needs (community needs) must firstly be determined through the planning processes (IDP, SDF and EMF). The need may be at the local, regional, or national level. Therefore, the Need and Desirability Guidelines state that a proposed development must be aligned with the current planning framework of the credible SDF.

The proposed development aligns with the Western Cape PSDF (2014) Strategic Objective 1 and Guiding Principle 3 which seeks to promote spatial efficiency. Spatial efficiency requires prioritising densification within the urban edge. The proposed development will expand existing structures on the Erf 19134, thereby increasing densification and spatial efficiency within the urban edge. Accordingly, the proposed facility aligns with the Implementation Plan of the PSDF for the Cape Winelands (2014) and with Drakenstein Municipal SDF's Objective 2 which promotes urban infill, compact and integrated settlements that remains limited to within the urban edge of the municipality to divert urban growth pressures away from agricultural land.

The proposed expansion of the Nexus^{AG} warehousing facilities on ER 19134, will allow it to discontinue warehousing at other locations, and channel all storage of goods to one central location. Thereby reducing excessive expenditure on other premises, allowing the organisation relief and continuation given the changing economic climate, and rising fuel prices straining logistics industry.

Therefore, the proposed development aligns with the vision and key thematic area of the Drakenstein MSDP (2022) which seeks to promote the thriving agricultural economy as a priority for the municipality. It views agriculture as the economic base of the municipality and seeks to promote Drakenstein as a regional agri-processing hub through "strengthening its position within the regional distribution network." The proposed development aligns with the strategic objectives of the Drakenstein Integrated Economic Growth Strategy (2019) which seeks to "facilitate the promotion and development of priority sectors: agriculture... and logistics" and to "facilitate the creation of jobs." The development will contribute to positioning Drakenstein municipality as a regional agricultural logistics hub in the Western Cape. In addition, the proposed expansion will provide temporary employment opportunities during the construction phase, and long-term employment during operational.

This expansion will allow Nexus to reduce their number of warehouses, and resource expenditure, and utilize their existing resources and infrastructure efficiently, allowing them to continue and thrive in the changing economic climate, and continue to contribute to and support the local economy.

Therefore, a specialist Socio-economic assessment will not be undertaken, however the BAR will be aligned with the Guideline for Need and Desirability and the Principles of Sustainability as per Section 2, Chapter 1 of NEMA.

4. SUMMARY OF SPECIALIST STUDIES' APPLICABLE

12 specialist studies were recommended:

Table 4: Applicability of suggested specialist assessments

No.	Suggest Specialist Assessment	Applicability to the proposal
1	Agricultural Compliance Statement	No
2	Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment	No
3	Palaeontology Impact Assessment	No
4	Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact Assessment	No
5	Aquatic Biodiversity Impact Assessment	Yes
6	Hydrology Assessment	Input provided in Aquatic Assessment
7	Noise Impact Assessment	No
8	Traffic Impact Assessment	No
9	Geotechnical Assessment	No
10	Socio-Economic Assessment	No
11	Plant Species Compliance Statement	No
12	Animal Species Assessment	No

The following specialist studies **will be included** in the assessment process:

- Aquatic Compliance Statement (confirmed by specialist).*

The following technical studies **will be included** in the assessment process:

- Engineering Services/Structural (not appointed by the EAP). *
- Geotechnical Services (not appointed by the EAP).*

Owing to the industrial land-use zoning, the existing industrial activities, the extensive transformation of surfaces to hardened surfaces, and the surrounding industrial development, the following specialist studies will **not** be included in the assessment process:

- Agricultural Compliance Statement
- Animal Species Assessment
- Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment
- Palaeontology Impact Assessment

- Noise Impact Assessment
- Traffic Impact Assessment
- Plant Species Compliance Statement
- Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact Assessment

Further to the above, the following technical studies will **not** be included in the assessment process:

- Socio-Economic Assessment
 - This expansion will allow Nexus^{AG} to reduce their number of warehouses, and resource expenditure, and utilize their existing resources and infrastructure efficiently, allowing them to continue and thrive in the changing economic climate, and continue to contribute realising the spatial vision and economic objectives in the Drakenstein Municipality as provided in the Municipal SDF (2022), the Implementation Plan of the PSDF for the Cape Winelands (2014), and the Drakenstein Integrated Economic Growth Strategy (2019).

5. **CONCLUSION**

From the findings of this report, SES proposes that the below recommended specialist inputs, will be sufficient to address the site sensitivities:

- Aquatic Impact Assessment

Following consultation with the competent authorities, additional assessments may be advised and undertaken. The aforementioned relevant specialist assessments will be undertaken and will contribute to the Basic Assessment Report.

6. REFERENCES

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