
FRESHWATER COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

Remaining Portion 11 of Farm 219 Vaale Valley, Hartenbos.

Prepared for Sharples Environmental Services

by

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DECLARATION OF SPECIALIST INDEPENDANCE

- I consider myself bound to the rules and ethics of the South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions (SACNASP);
- At the time of conducting the study and compiling this report I did not have any interest, hidden or otherwise, in the proposed development that this study has reference to, except for financial compensation for work done in a professional capacity;
- Work performed for this study was done in an objective manner. Even if this study results in views and findings that are not favourable to the client/applicant, I will not be affected in any manner by the outcome of any environmental process of which this report may form a part, other than being members of the general public;
- I declare that there are no circumstances that may compromise my objectivity in performing this specialist investigation. I do not necessarily object to or endorse any proposed developments, but aim to present facts, findings and recommendations based on relevant professional experience and scientific data;
- I do not have any influence over decisions made by the governing authorities;
- I undertake to disclose 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 a competent authority to such a relevant authority and the applicant;
- I have the necessary qualifications and guidance from professional experts in conducting specialist reports relevant to this application, including knowledge of the relevant Act, regulations and any guidelines that have relevance to the proposed activity;
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- All the particulars furnished by me in this document are true and correct.



Specialist: Dr. James Dabrowski (Ph.D., Pr.Sci.Nat. Water Resources)

Date: 6 September 2022

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1. INTRODUCTION

Confluent Environmental was appointed by Sharples Environmental Services (SES) to undertake a site verification for a residential development on the Remaining Portion 11 of Farm 219 Vaale Valley, near Mossel Bay, Western Cape. The site has been classified as having ‘**Low**’ aquatic biodiversity by the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) screening tool.

The scope of work for this report is guided by the legislative requirements of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) and the National Water Act (NWA).

1.1 National Environmental Management Act

According to the protocols specified in GN 1540 (Procedures for the Assessment and Minimum Criteria for Reporting on Identified Environmental Themes in Terms of Sections 24(5)(A) and (H) and 44 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998, when Applying for Environmental Authorisation), assessment and reporting requirements for aquatic biodiversity are associated with a level of environmental sensitivity identified by the national web-based environmental screening tool (screening tool). An applicant intending to undertake an activity identified in the scope of this protocol on a site identified by the screening tool as being of:

- **Very High** sensitivity for aquatic biodiversity, must submit an Aquatic Biodiversity Specialist Assessment; or
- **Low** sensitivity for aquatic biodiversity, must submit an Aquatic Biodiversity Compliance Statement.

The screening tool classified the site as being of **Low** aquatic biodiversity. According to the protocol, a site sensitivity verification must be undertaken to confirm the sensitivity of the site as indicated by the screening tool:

- Where the information gathered from the site sensitivity verification differs from the screening tool designation of **Low** aquatic biodiversity sensitivity, and it is found to be of a **Very High** sensitivity, an Aquatic Biodiversity Specialist Assessment must be submitted.
- Where the information gathered from the site sensitivity verification differs from the screening tool designation of **Very High** aquatic biodiversity sensitivity, and it is found to be of a **Low** sensitivity, an Aquatic Biodiversity Compliance Statement must be submitted.

1.2 Scope of Work

The objectives of this assessment included the following:

- To undertake a desktop analysis and site inspection to verify the sensitivity of aquatic biodiversity; and
- Compile an Aquatic Biodiversity Compliance Statement or Aquatic Biodiversity Specialist Assessment based on the site verification of the sensitivity of the site.

2. APPROACH

The determination of the site sensitivity relied upon the following approaches:

- Interrogation of available desktop resources including:
 - DWS spatial layers;

- National Freshwater Ecosystem Priority Areas (NFEPA) spatial layers (Nel et al., 2011);
- National Wetland Map 5 and Confidence Map (CSIR, 2018)
- Western Cape Biodiversity and Spatial Plan (WCBSP) for Mossel Bay (CapeNature, 2017).
- A site visit was undertaken, during which time the following activities were undertaken:
 - Identification and classification of watercourses within the footprint of the site according to methods detailed in Ollis et al. (2013);
 - Soil augering to confirm the presence of soil indicators (DWAF, 2005) that may indicate the presence of a wetland (if applicable); and
 - Identification of hydrophilic plant species that may indicate the presence of wetland plant species (if applicable).

3. DESKTOP SURVEY

The property falls within Primary Catchment K (Kromme) area and falls on the catchment divide of quaternary catchments K10B and K10F (Figure 1). The project area of interest (PAOI) (i.e. the surface area to be developed) falls within K10B. No freshwater features are indicated to occur within the development footprint (Figure 2).

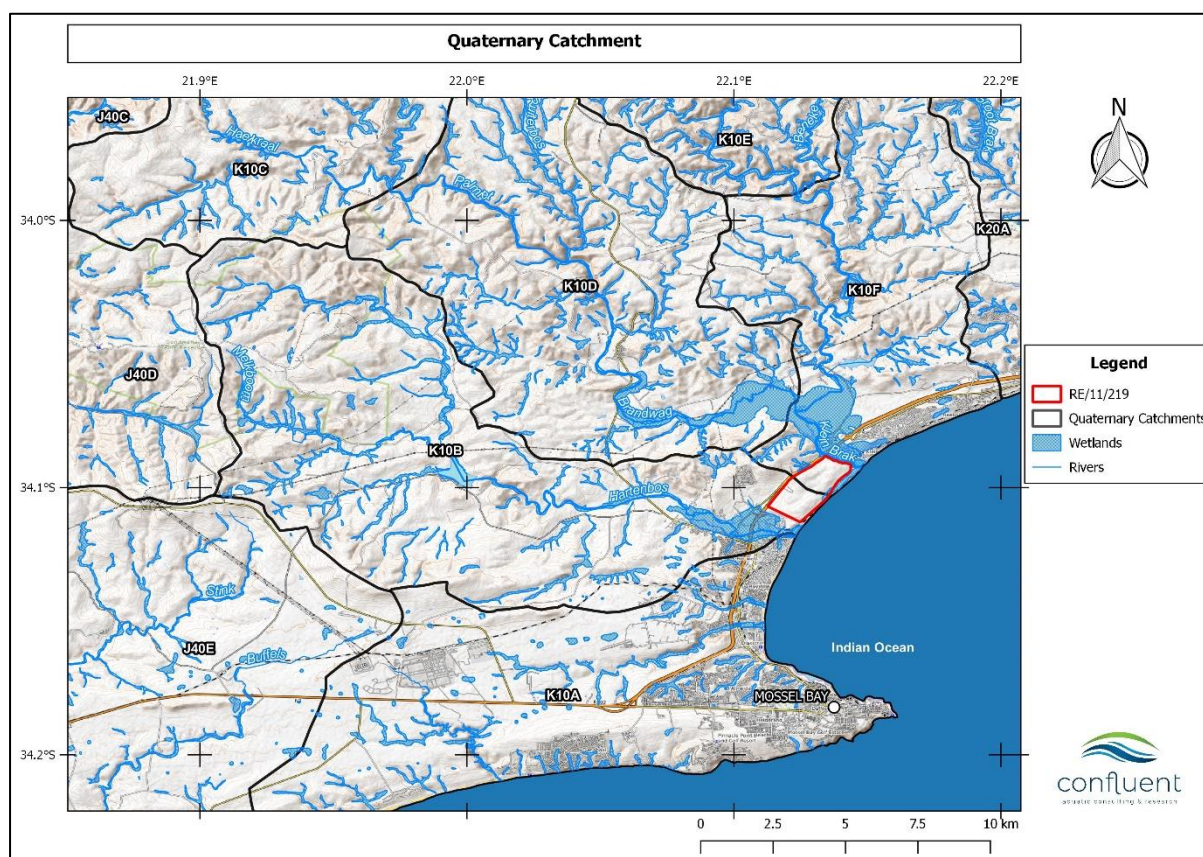


Figure 1: Map indicating the location of the property.

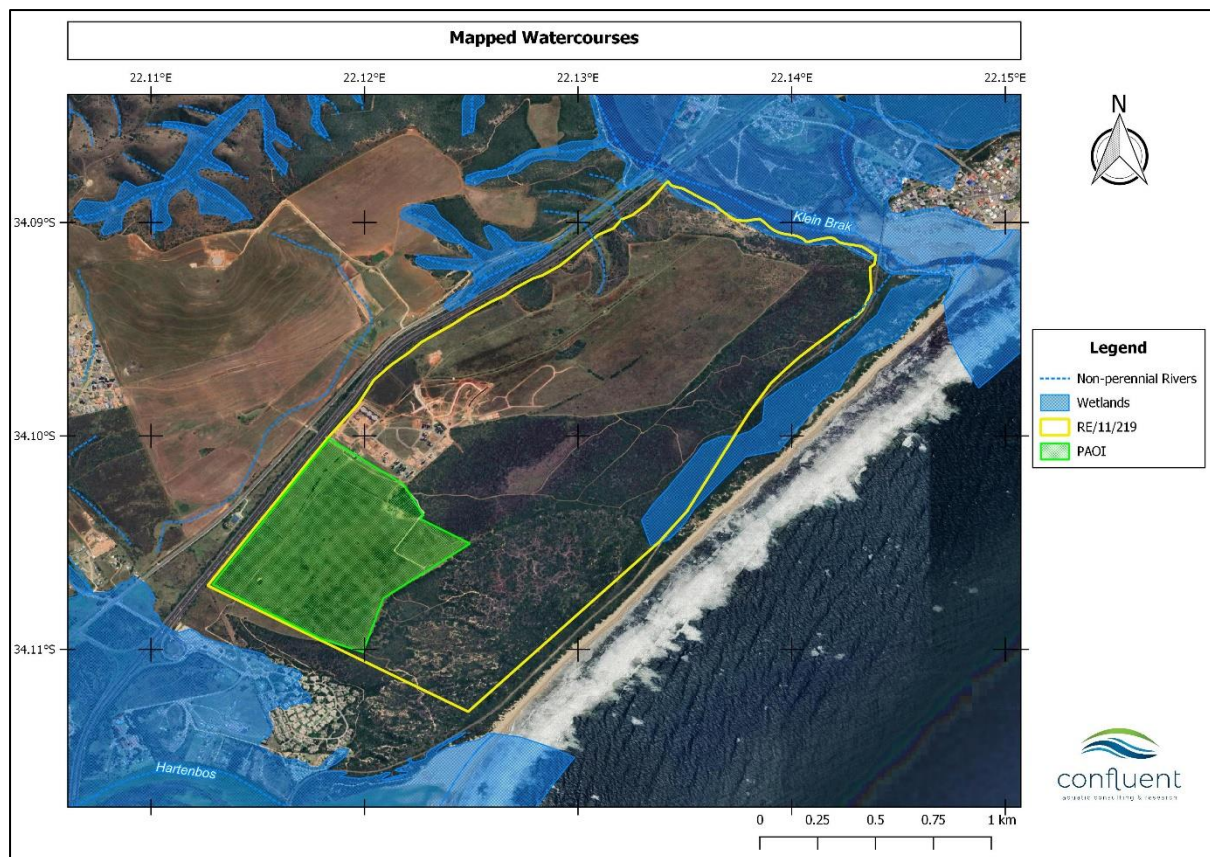


Figure 2: Location of the property and the development footprint in relation to mapped freshwater features.

4. SITE VISIT

The PAOI was traversed by vehicle and by foot on the 26th of August 2022. No freshwater features were identified within the development footprint (Figure 3).



Figure 3: View to the north (A), south (B), east (C) and west (D)

5. AQUATIC BIODIVERSITY COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

Based on the results of the desktop review and the site survey, the sensitivity of aquatic biodiversity on Remaining Portion 11 of Farm 219 Vaale Valley can be confirmed as **Low** and a comprehensive specialist assessment is therefore not required.

6. REFERENCES

- CapeNature (2017). *2017 WCBSP Mossel Bay [Vector] 2017*. Available from the Biodiversity GIS website, downloaded on 26 March 2019
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