



NICK HELME BOTANICAL SURVEYS

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Pri.Sci.Nat # 400045/08

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SES Environmental Services

ATT: Madeleine Knoetze

Dear Madeleine

Comment on botanical impact of services – Erven 21 & 266 Riversdale

Thank you for asking me to comment on the additional impacts of the off-site services for this development, following on from my botanical assessment dated 1 June 2023. The overall assessed botanical impact of the proposed site development – excluding services addressed here – was Low negative, due to the development being in cultivated lands.

The proposed sewer connection will also be through disturbed land of no botanical conservation value, and hence has **no further botanical impact**.

The overhead powerline will cross about 420m of Moderate to High sensitivity Renosterveld vegetation (south of the N2; see Figure 1), with most of the rest being disturbed and degraded vegetation of Low sensitivity. The Low sensitivity areas are of no significance in terms of placing of poles, but the estimated 8-10 poles that will be needed in these Moderate to High sensitivity sections will of course cause some loss of vegetation and hence have some negative impact. The estimated loss and/or degradation for each pole will be about 3m². The total area of disturbance will thus probably be a maximum of about 30m². This is likely to have a **Low negative** botanical impact at a local scale. The likelihood of these poles impacting on any plant Species of Conservation Concern (SoCC) is deemed Low to Moderate.

The excavations required for the underground electrical connection could cause significant botanical loss and disturbance, but fortunately the indicated route will run through previously disturbed areas (roads and old lands), so that the

expected significance of the disturbance of the vegetation in the actual footprint is **Low negative**. However, it is important to note that the section of underground cabling south of the N2 (and within the N2 servitude) borders on a High sensitivity area (to the south of the servitude) for much of its length that can and should be avoided (this divide is presumably marked by a fence on the ground).

The only required mitigation, assuming the underground electrical route and associated disturbance footprint will be entirely within the N2 road reserve, is to remove all woody invasive alien vegetation from within 20m of the installed service routes, during the construction phase, using appropriate methodology (no soil disturbance; see Martens *et al* 2021).



Figure 1: Map showing the service routes assessed. The two red circles indicate the two sections of Moderate to High botanical sensitivity which will be crossed by the proposed routes (overhead line in this section), with all other areas being Low sensitivity.

Yours sincerely

Nick Helme

Reference:

Martens, C., Deacon, G., Ferreira, D., Auret, W., Dorse, C., Stuart, H., Impson, F., Barnes, G. and C. Molteno. 2021. *A practical guide to managing invasive alien*

plants: A concise handbook for land users in the Cape Floral Region. WWF South Africa, Cape Town, South Africa.