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SITE SENSITIVITY VERIFICATION REPORT

FOR THE

PROPOSED REMOVAL AND REPLACEMENT OF THE EXISTING ROAD AND CULVERT INFRASTRUCTURE LOCATED ALONG DIVISION ROAD (DR) 1791 KM 1.59, STOPPAD ROAD, CROSSING FARMS 591, FARM 586 AND FARM 306 ON PORTION 22 WITTEDRIFT, BITOU LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, GARDEN ROUTE DISTRICT



Applicant:	Western Cape Government Department of Infrastructure: Transport Infrastructure Branch
Environmental Consultant:	Sharples Environmental Services CC Author: Madeleine Knoetze (EAPASA: 2021/3230) Assisted by: Jessica Gossman (Candidate EAPASA: 2022/6154)
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1. Introduction

Sharples Environmental Services cc (SEScC) has been appointed by Hatch Consulting Engineers, on behalf of the Western Cape Department Infrastructure: Transport Infrastructure Directorate (Previously referred to as the Western Cape Department of Road Design, Transport and Infrastructure) to oversee the environmental processes required for the proposed re-establishment of a causeway along Divisional Road (DR) 1791 (Stofpad Road), partially located on Farms 591, Farm 586 and Farm 306 on Portion 22 of the Farm Wittedrift, within the Bitou Local Municipality, Garden Route District Municipality, Western Cape.

Several roads in the Garden Route suffered flood damage during a flood event in November 2021. The proposed project forms part of the strategy toward repairing and upgrading the affected sections of these roads. The proposed development forms part of the overarching project and is aimed toward preventing future damage to the ecological resources and services infrastructure, as well as to mitigate the road safety implications of the existing infrastructure.

The existing causeway sees its starting coordinates at 34° 0'2.76"S 23°19'15.90"E, its end coordinates at 34° 0'2.87"S 23°19'16.50"E and is located within a road reserve with a width of 20 m. In order to effectively re-establish and upgrade the existing causeway, it is required that a bypass be installed north of the existing road, and the bypass will be 4 m in width. Only approximately 2.5 m of the proposed bypass will be located outside of the existing road reserve.

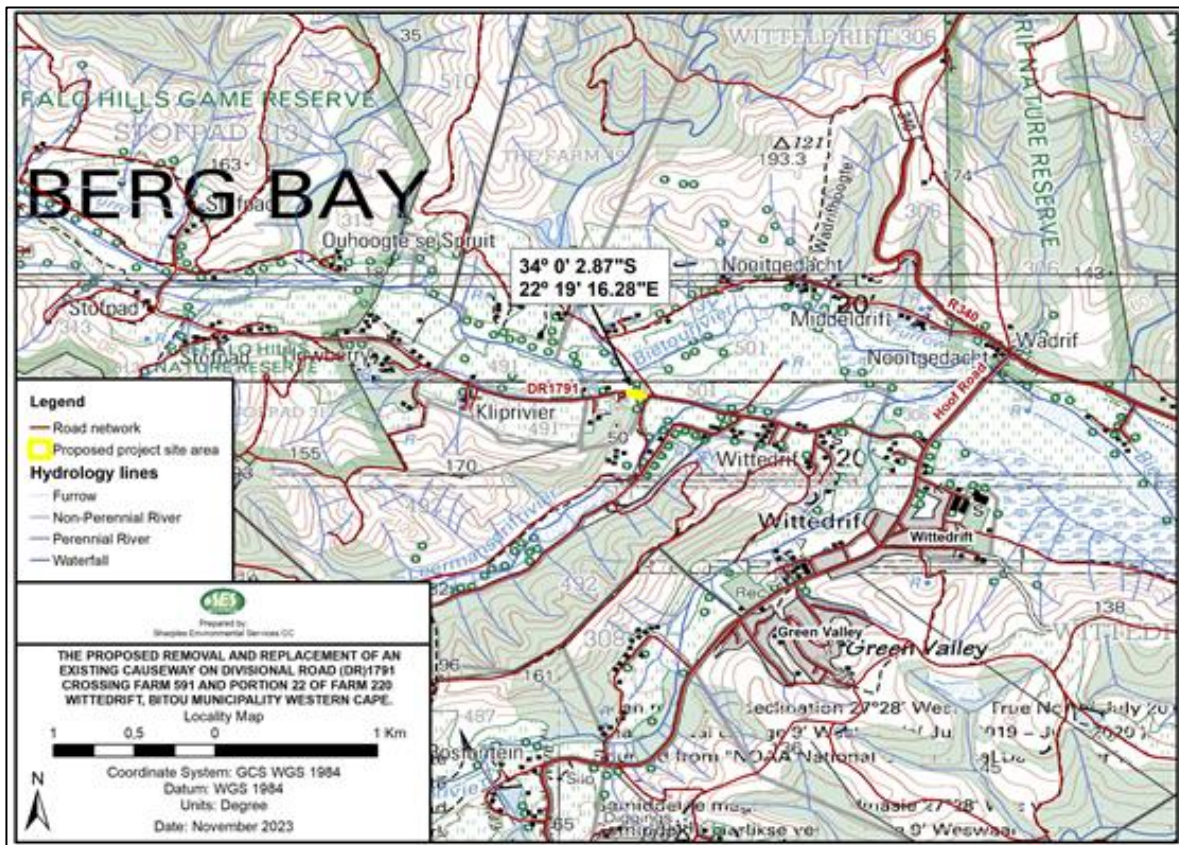


Figure 1: Locality map of the proposed infrastructure works along DR1791, Wittedrift.

2. Project Description

The proposed repair is located along the District Road (DR) 1791 km 1.59 and crosses the Leermansdrift River (a tributary of the Bitou River), northwest of Wittedrift located in the Bitou Local Municipality. The site suffered flood damage, and the causeway needs to be replaced completely as a result. In addition, the causeway is currently too low which can lead to more frequent flooding. The gravel road and causeway are 5 m wide, and the road reserve is 20 m in total.

It is therefore proposed to replace the existing causeway with new and larger openings; that will provide an inlet and outlet apron slab and wing walls; raise the road an estimated 600mm and construct a temporary by-pass road downstream or upstream. The bypass will be 4m wide and 55m long. The information suggests that the bypass extends approximately 2.5m beyond the road reserve and will include a 2-meter working corridor. The total development footprint of the bypass road will be approximately 534 m². Once the construction has been completed the temporary by-pass road will be decommissioned and the repaired road will be in working order.

3. Description of the proposed activity

Table 1: Property Details of Proposed Development Location (The property details in green are within the project construction footprint).

No	Farm Name	Farm/ Erf No	Portion	Latitude	Longitude	Property Type
1	Helderwater	586	0	34°0'30.82S	23°18'44.13E	Farm
2		591	0	33°59'50.1S	23°19'37.99E	Farm
3	Wittedrift	306	0	34°0'10.33S	23°20'45.02E	Farm
4		501	0	34°0'1.5S	23°19'34.86E	Farm Portion
5		591	0	33°59'58.41S	23°19'38.13E	Farm Portion
6		501	0	34°0'6.21S	3°19'29.19E	Farm Portion
7	Wittedrift	306	22	34°0'5.63S	23°19'13.26E	Farm Portion
8		501	1	34°0'18.69S	23°19'9.13E	Farm Portion
9		501	2	33°59'56.61S	23°19'40.74E	Farm Portion
10	Helderwater	586	0	34°0'29.72S	23°18'50.75E	Farm Portion

An Environmental Screening Tool report was produced for the proposed project using the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment's (DFFE) Web-based National Environmental Screening Tool (2025). 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 or will not be undertaken for the proposed development.

4. Findings of the screening tool reports

The National Sector Classification Category selected to produce the Screening Tool Report, dated 28 September 2023, and updated on the 17th of February 2025 and the 7th of March 2025.

Any activities within or close to a watercourse.

4.1. Wind and Solar Developments

There are no wind, or solar developments found within 30 km of the proposed site area.

4.2. Environmental Management Frameworks

No Environmental Management Frameworks for the areas.

4.3. Relevant development incentives, restrictions, exclusions, or prohibitions

Incentive, restriction or prohibition	Implication
Garden Route National Park Buffer	https://screening.environment.gov.za/ScreeningDownloads/DevelopmentZones/grnp_approved_plan.pdf

- South African Conservation Areas

The site is located within the Garden Route Biosphere Reserve (GRBR). The full extent of the GRBR can be seen in Figure 2.

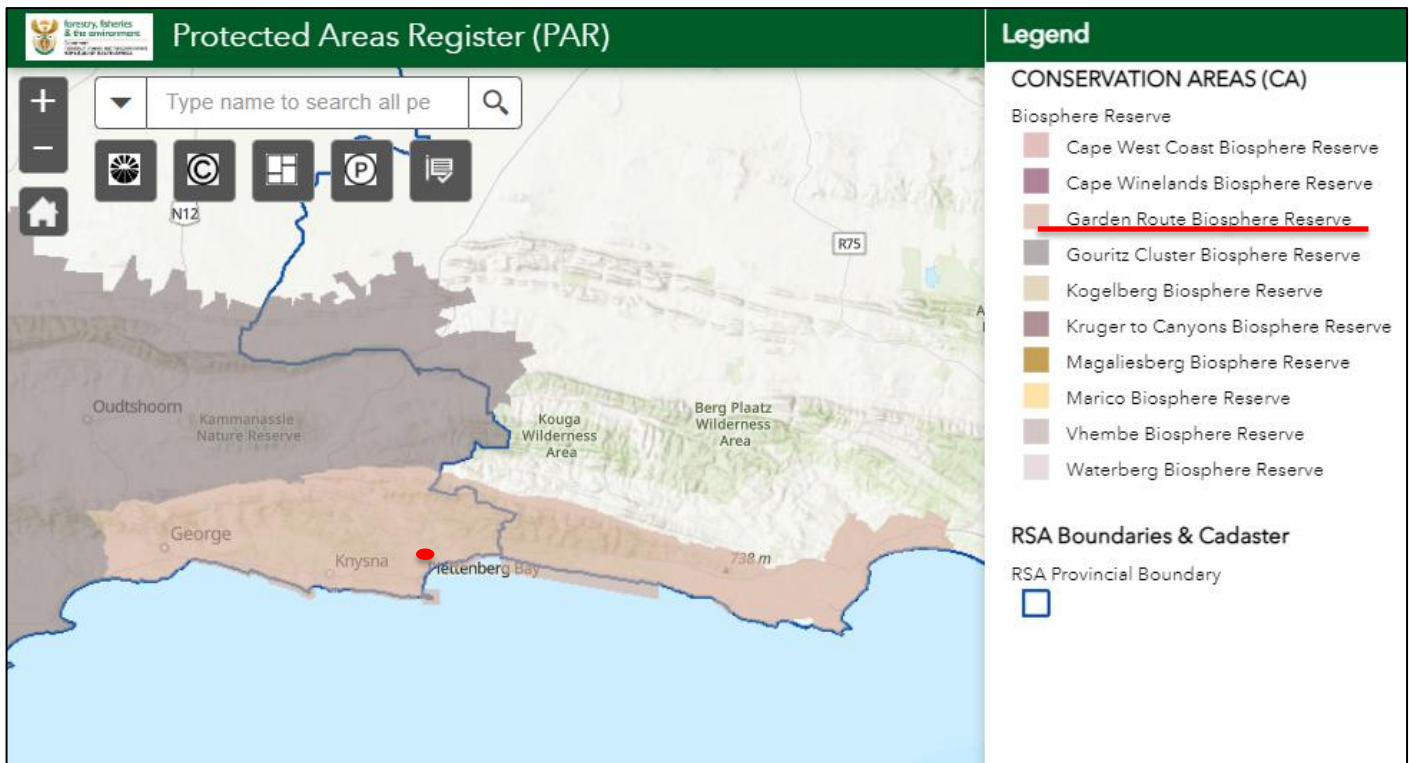


Figure 2: Full Extent of the Garden Route Biosphere Reserve.

4.4. Area Environmental Sensitivity for Division Road 1791

The following summary of the development footprint environmental sensitivities is identified by the screening tool report. The footprint environmental sensitivities for the proposed development footprint as identified by the screening tool 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: Site sensitivity and features for DR1791 km 1.59

Theme	Sensitivity				
	Very High	High	Medium	Low	Features
Agriculture Theme		X			Medium: Land capability; 08. Moderate/ 07. Low-Moderate
Animal Species Theme		X			High: - Aves- <i>Circus ranivorus</i> - Aves- <i>Neotis denhami</i> Medium: - Amphibia-<i>Afraxalus knysnae</i> - Aves-<i>Stephanoaetus coronatus</i> - Mammalia-<i>Chlorotalpa duthieae</i> - Sensitive species 8 - Invertebrate-<i>Aneuryphymus montanus</i>
Aquatic Biodiversity Theme	X				Very high: - SWSA (SW) _Outeniqua - FEPA Subcatchment
Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Theme				X	Low
Civil Aviation (Solar PV) Theme		X			High: Within 8 km of a civil aviation radar.
Defence Theme				X	Low
Palaeontology Theme			X		Medium
Plant Species Theme			X		Medium <i>Ruschia duthiae</i> <i>Leucospermum glabrum</i> <i>Selago burchellii</i> - Sensitive species 419 <i>Acmadenia alternifolia</i> - Sensitive species 763
Terrestrial Biodiversity Theme	X				Very High: - CBA 2: Terrestrial - FEPA Subcatchment - National Protected Area Expansion Strategy (NPAES) - SANParks (Buffer)_Garden Route National Park - SWSA (SW) _Outeniqua - Critically endangered ecosystem - EN_Garden Route Shale Fynbos

4.5. Specialist assessments identified for DR1791 1.59 (Leermansdrift Road)

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 Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) to confirm this list and to motivate in the assessment report, the reason for not including any of the identified specialist study including the provision of photographic evidence of the footprint situation.

Table 3: Screening Tool Recommended Specialist Studies:

(Please note: The items in red will not be assessed by a specialist, the items in green will be assessed by a specialist).

No.	Specialist Assessment	Assessment Protocol
1.	Agriculture Theme	General
2.	Landscape/Visual Impact Assessment	General
3.	Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment	General
4.	Palaeontology Impact Assessment	General
5.	Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact Assessment	Terrestrial
6.	Aquatic Biodiversity Impact Assessment	Aquatic
7.	Noise Impact Assessment	Noise Impact
8.	Traffic Impact Assessment	General
9.	Geotechnical Assessment	General
10.	Socio-Economic Assessment	General
11.	Ambient Air Quality Impact Assessment	General
12.	Plant Species Assessment	Terrestrial Plant Species
13.	Animal Species Assessment	Terrestrial Animal Species

5. Site Verification

The initial site inspection for this report was conducted on August 4, 2022, by Ms. Carla Swanepoel (Candidate EAPASA Registration: 2021/3267). A desktop study, along with additional information and summarised specialist findings, was provided by Jessica Gossman (Candidate EAPASA Registration: 2022/6154) and verified by Madeleine Knoetze (EAPASA Registration: 2021/3230) in December 2023. The findings were re-evaluated by Jessica Gossman and reviewed by Betsy Ditcham (EAPASA Registration: 2020/1480) on February 24, 2025. After thorough analysis, various specialists have been appointed to verify and assess the environmental impacts of the project, aiming to develop a comprehensive understanding of the best plan from an environmental perspective.

5.1. Agriculture Theme

Screening Tool: The report indicates that the land capability is moderate with a medium sensitivity rating 06. Low-Moderate/07. Low-Moderate/08.

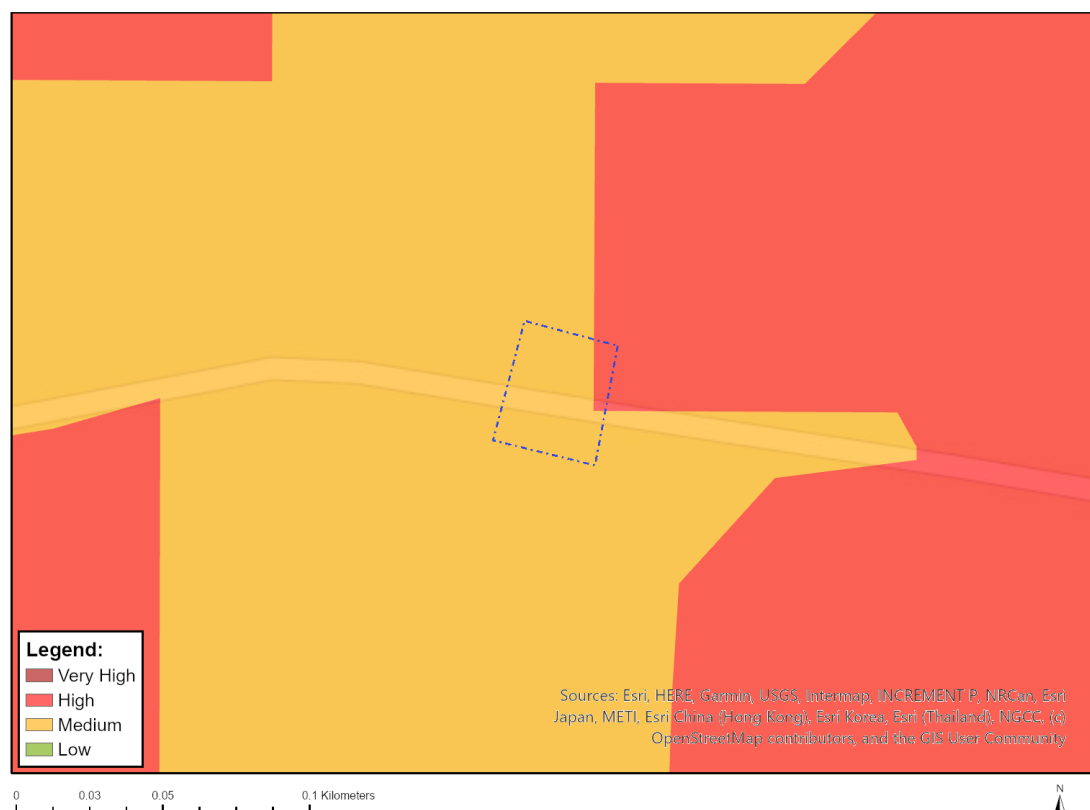


Figure 3. Relative Agricultural Theme Sensitivity Map

Sensitivity	Features(s)
High	Land capability; 07. Low-Moderate/08. Moderate

EAPs observation:

Based on the desktop study of the area, the project is not expected to interfere with agricultural activities. The primary objective is to remove and repair existing culverts and roads, mainly over a watercourse. A temporary by-pass will be implemented, along with an extended construction footprint, to minimise road disruptions during the construction process. This approach will require only a small portion of land to facilitate the by-pass.

Conclusions:

According to the Screening tool, it is recommended that an Agricultural Impact Assessment be conducted. However, based on the EAP observation of the proposed theme, the area can be considered as a negligible concern. And a further assessment in terms of the Agricultural sensitivity of the site will not be undertaken. However, the Provincial Department of Agriculture will be included as an Interested and Affected Party (I&AP) during public participation.

5.2. Faunal Species

The screening tool report rated this theme as medium to high sensitivity and listed sensitive animal species which may possibly be on the area of the site. An avifauna species specialist has been appointed to undertake an avifaunal assessment/ compliance statement and a terrestrial biodiversity assessment specialist was appointed to determine the sensitivity of the site from a faunal perspective.

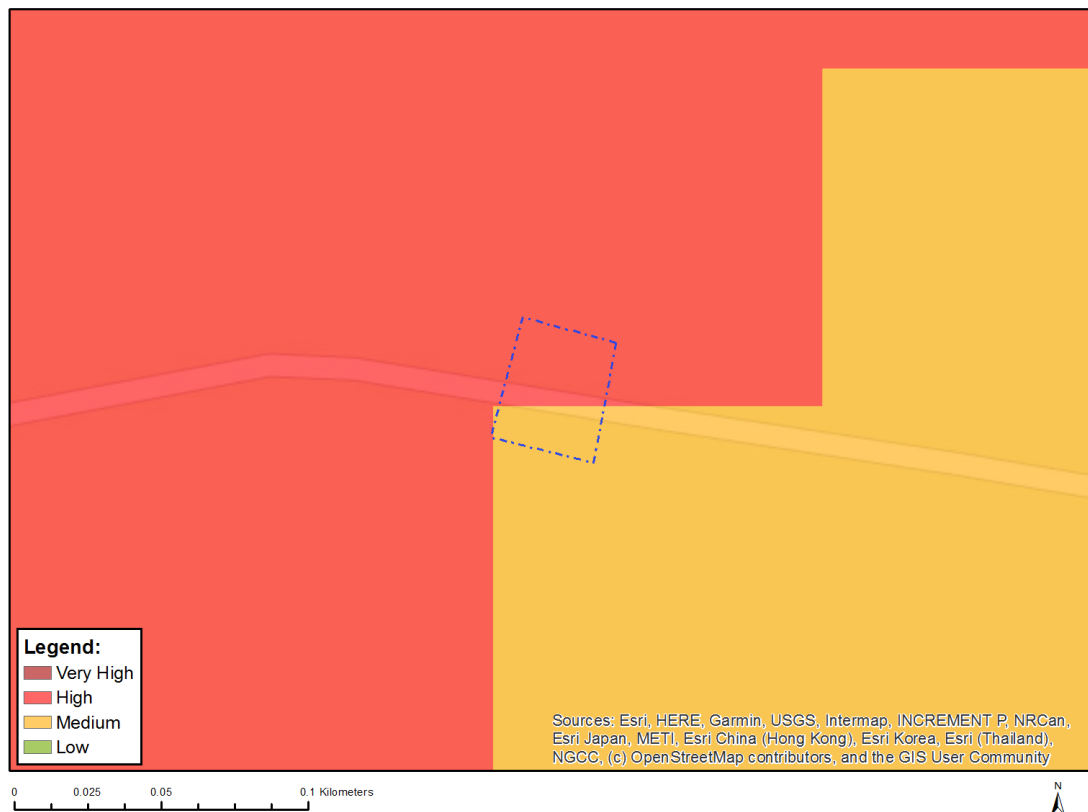


Figure 4. Relative Animal Theme Sensitivity Map

Table 4. Animals species found in accordance with the DFFE Screening Tool findings (2025)

Sensitivity	Feature(s)	Common Name	IUCN	Habitat preference	iNaturalist	Likelihood of occurrence (Specialist)
High	Aves-Circus ranivorus	African Marsh Harrier	Endangered	Permanent wetlands (roosting) and fynbos (hunting).	No data found within the project footprint.	Low
High	Aves-Neotis denhami	Denham's Bustard	Vulnerable	Grassland and shrubland, dried marshes and farmlands.		Very Low
Medium	Amphibia-Arixalus knysnae	Knysna Spiny Reed Frog	Endangered	Temperate forests, freshwater marshes and arable land.		No data
Medium	Aves-Stephanoaetus coronatus	Crowned Eagle	Vulnerable	Forest		Low
Medium	Mammalia-Chlorotalpa duthieae	Duthie's golden Mole	Vulnerable	Southern Afrotemperate Forests		No data
Medium	Sensitive species 8	-	Least Concern	Forest		No data
Medium	Invertebrate-Aneuryphymus montanus	Yellow-winged Agile Grasshopper	Vulnerable	Fynbos		No data

EAPs observation:

Based on the desktop study of the area an avifaunal specialist will need to conduct an assessment to verify the species on site. The screening tool map identifies the Northern area as having a high animal species rating that may be impacted on as opposed to the southern area of the site having a medium animal sensitivity rating. In addition, iNaturalist data does not show any recorded faunal/ avi-faunal data in the area. The specialist did not note any Species of Conservation Concern on-site during the site inspection.

Specialist findings

MORA Ecological Services (Pty) Ltd (Mokgatla Molepo & Megan Smith) was appointed to undertake the site sensitivity verification, Compliance statement for the avi-faunal species present within the proposed development. The specialist conducted their field study on the 29th of October 2023 and compiled their report on the 13th of November 2023. Before the specialist went on site, the specialist confirmed highly sensitive species that can occur on site and the likelihood of the species occurring are *Stephanoaetus coronatus*, *Neotis denhami* and the *Circus ranivorus*. However, after conducting the site inspection, the specialist confirmed that the likelihood of the species being on the site is regarded as low to very low in likelihood.

In addition, the site visit verified the specialist findings to be zero (0) mammals, zero (0) amphibian species and thirteen (13) Avian species. The specialist has further confirmed there was no presence of the Species of Conservation Concern (SCC).

Conclusions: Based on the area already being disturbed it is predicted that the likelihood of avifaunal species being impacted on are regarded as being very low. There were no sensitive bird species that was found in the screening tool and no habitat species within the development footprint to be sensitive. The specialists confirmed that an Animal Species Compliance Statement will be required for the proposed site. Furthermore, CapeNature will also be included as an I&AP during public participation.

5.3. Aquatic Biodiversity

Based on the screening tool, the area is regarded as having a very high sensitivity, and the nature of the site being over a watercourse. An aquatic specialist was appointed to undertake an Aquatic Impact Assessment.

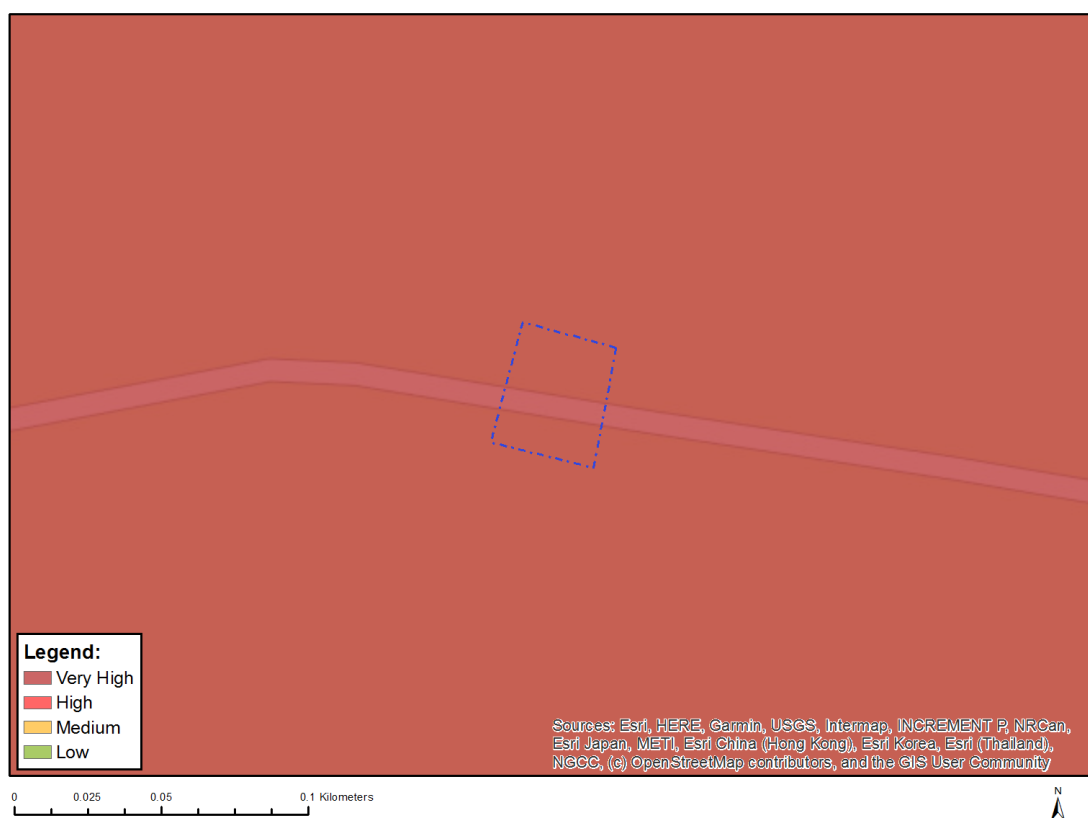


Figure 5. Relative Aquatic Biodiversity Theme Sensitivity Map

Sensitivity rating	Feature(s) for DR1791
Very High	FEPA Subcatchment
Very High	SWSA (SW) _Outeniqua

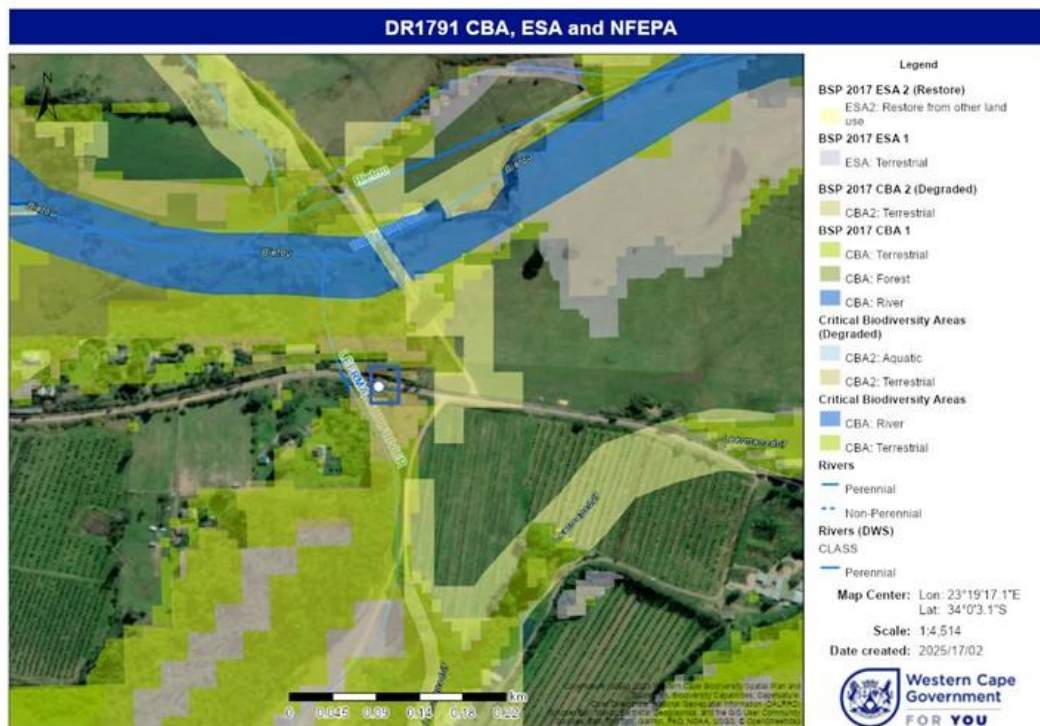


Figure 6. Aquatic biodiversity map, Western Cape Biodiversity Spatial Plan 2017, (Cape Farm Mapper, 2025).

EAPs observation:

Based on the desktop study of the site the construction will take place within the watercourse of the perennial Leermansdrift River (a tributary of the Bitou River watercourse, that is mapped as a critical biodiversity area). It is required that an aquatic assessment be undertaken based on the desktop study as well as the screening tool findings as the site sensitivity is classified as being very high as the sensitivity falls within the Freshwater Ecosystem Priority Area(s) as well as the Outeniqua Strategic Water Source Area(s).

The proposed repair and replacement project would require a Water Use License (WUL) in terms of Chapter 4 and Section 21 (c) and (i) of the National Water Act (NWA; Act No. 36 of 1998) and this must be secured before the commencement of construction.

Specialist findings:

Debbie Fordham of Upstream Consulting was appointed on the 29th of November 2023 to verify the EAPs desktop findings.

The specialist verified that the site location does not fall within the Strategic Water Source Areas, and that two watercourses have been identified within the 500 meter study area radius. The hydro-geomorphic units are HGM16 – Leermansdrift River that is channelled valley bottom wetland and HGM17- Bietou River, that is regarded as a floodplain wetland system. The specialist noted that Leermansdrift River will be impacted on directly and the Bietou River will be impacted on indirectly. And concluded that the site will need a full impact assessment.

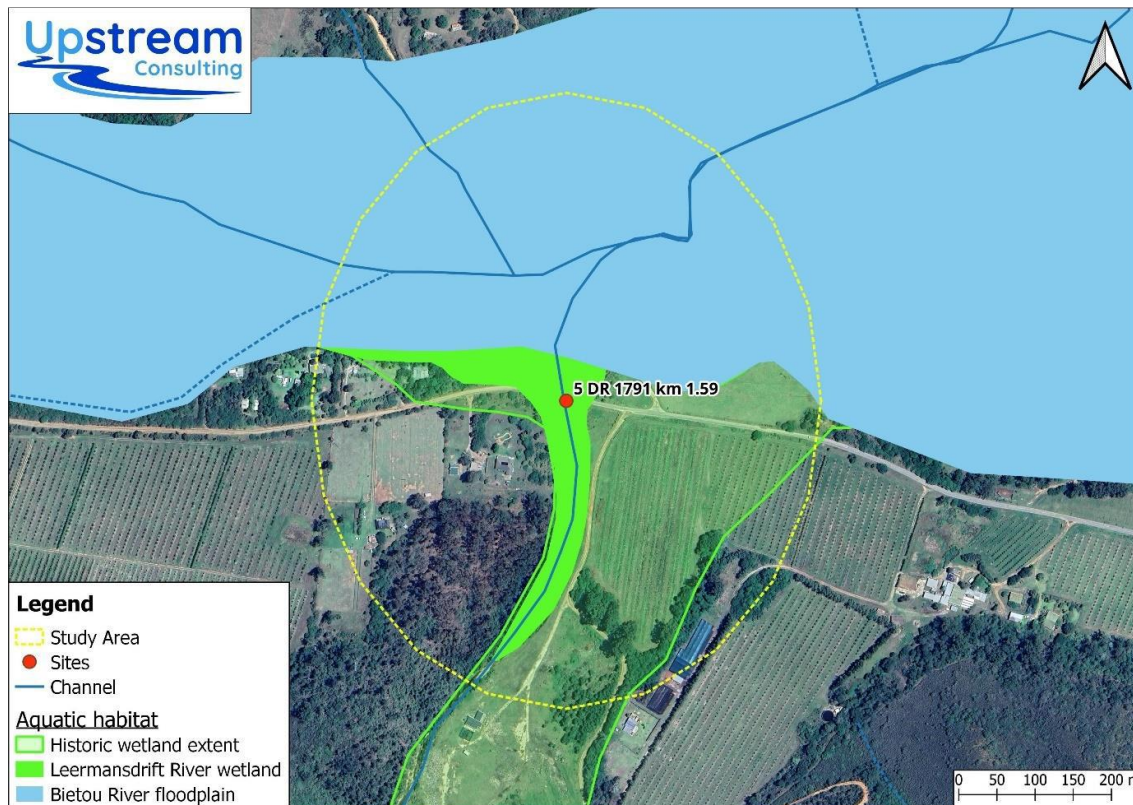


Figure 7. The delineated aquatic habitat within the 500m radius

Conclusion: A specialist will be appointed to conduct an Aquatic Biodiversity Impact Assessment for the proposed development. Additionally, the Breede-Olifants Catchment Management Agency (BOCMA) will also be included as a Stakeholder during public participation process.

5.4. Archaeological and Cultural Heritage

The Environmental Screening Tool Report suggest that the Archaeological and Cultural heritage theme has a Low sensitivity, however the screening tool suggests that an archaeological assessment to be conducted. The proposed repairs and riverbank reinstatement will be undertaken on existing footprints and previously disturbed areas, additionally the proposed activities do not trigger Section 38 of the National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act No. 25 of 1999).

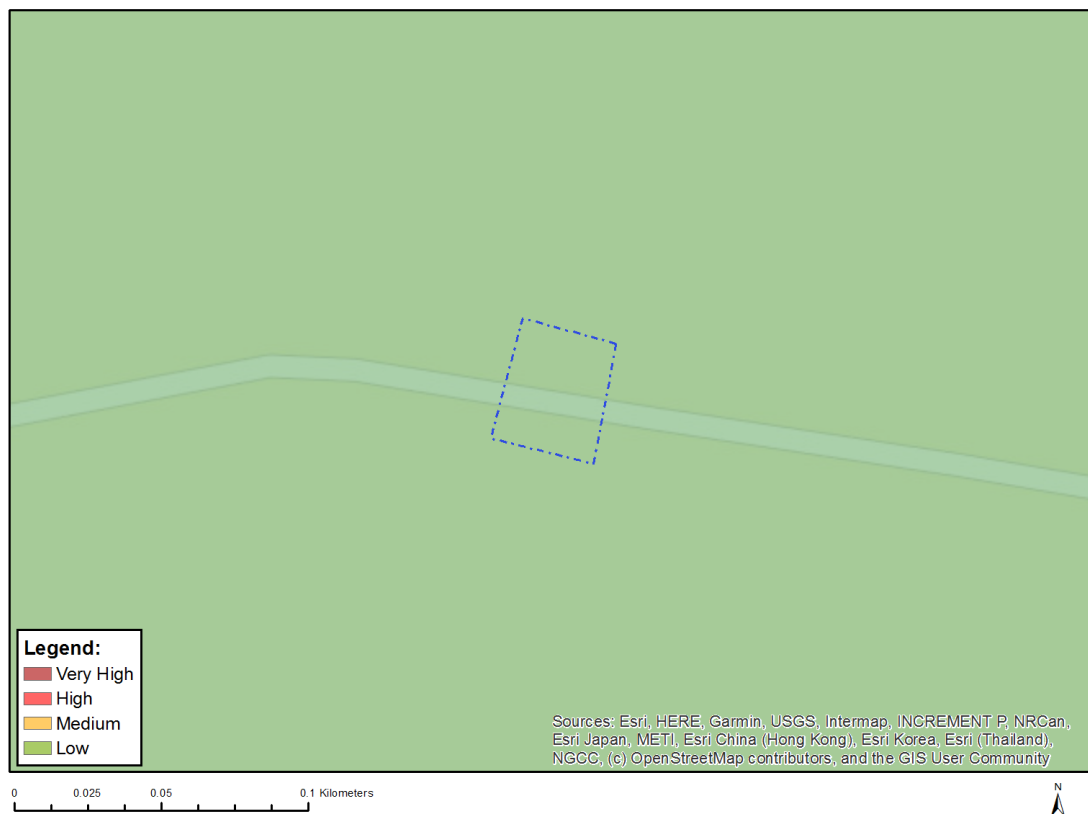


Figure 8. Relative Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Theme Sensitivity Map

Sensitivity	Features(s)
Low	Low Sensitivity

EAPs observation:

Based on the desktop study and on the age of the existing structure a specialist has been appointed and confirmed that the site requires a Notice of intent to develop from the competent authority - Heritage Western Cape (HWC).

Specialist findings:

Dr Peter Nillsen of Point of Human Origins - It was confirmed by the appointed Heritage Consultant that the proposed activities do not trigger Section 38 of the National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act No. 25 of 1999). Therefore, the Heritage consultant confirmed that it was not required to submit a Notice of Intent to Develop (NID) to the HWC. It was requested by the project engineer that the specialist provide a statement for inclusion into the BAR and supporting documents for all the sites. In addition, it may be required that to verify if a demolition permit may be required in accordance with Section 34 of the National Heritage Resource Act (NHRA).

Conclusion: Based on the findings of the specialist, a NID will not be required to be completed for the proposed project. However, a statement will be obtained from the specialist regarding the Heritage Sensitivity. Furthermore, Heritage Western Cape (HWC) will be included as an Interested and Affected party of the project during all public participation processes.

5.5. Civil Aviation

The Environmental Screening Tool Report indicates that the civil aviation theme is of high sensitivity, as the site is within the 8 km of the Bosrivier Airstrip Airport (ZA-0188) with the airstrip being 5.4 km's within the south-western direction from the proposed construction site. The construction project will not obstruct the flight path.

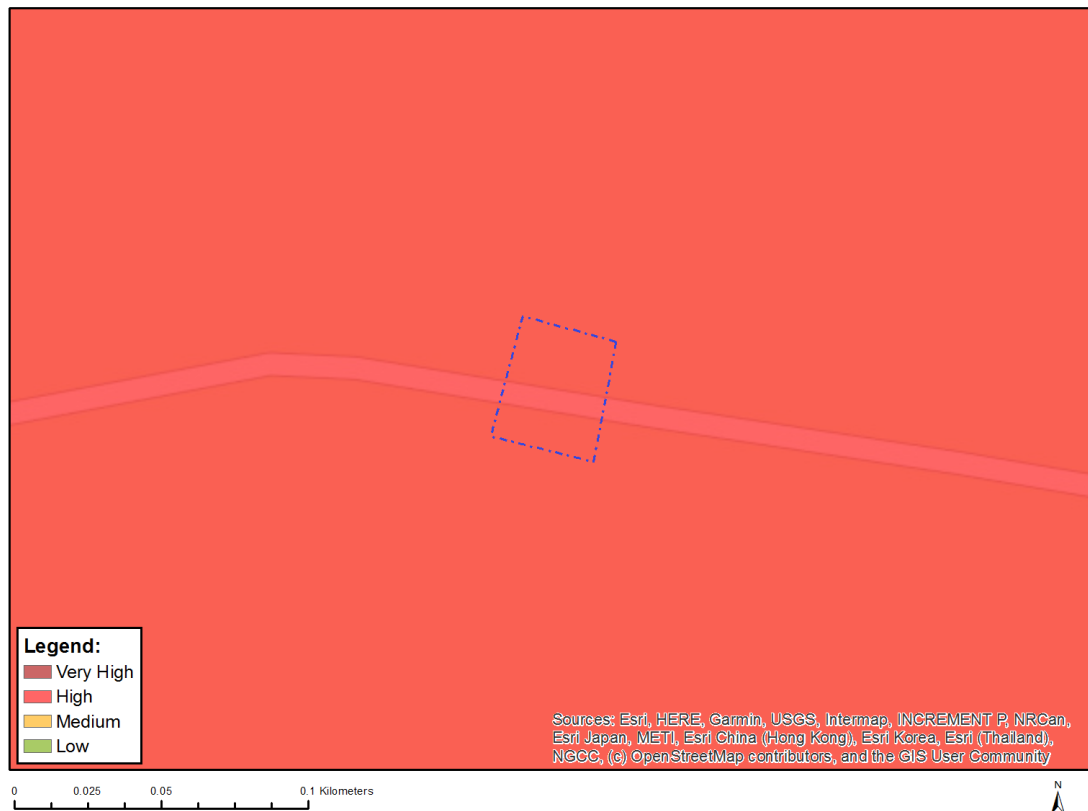


Figure 9. Civil Aviation Theme Sensitivity Map

Sensitivity	Feature
High	Within 8km of other civil aviation aerodrome

EAPs observation and Conclusion: A dedicated civil aviation assessment will not be conducted as the proposed development is not expected to impact on the flight path of the airport/ airstrip. The South African Civil Aviation Authority will be included as I&AP's. No further actions to be taken.

5.6. Defence

The Screening Tool suggest that the defence theme is of Low Sensitivity. No further action is required regarding this theme.

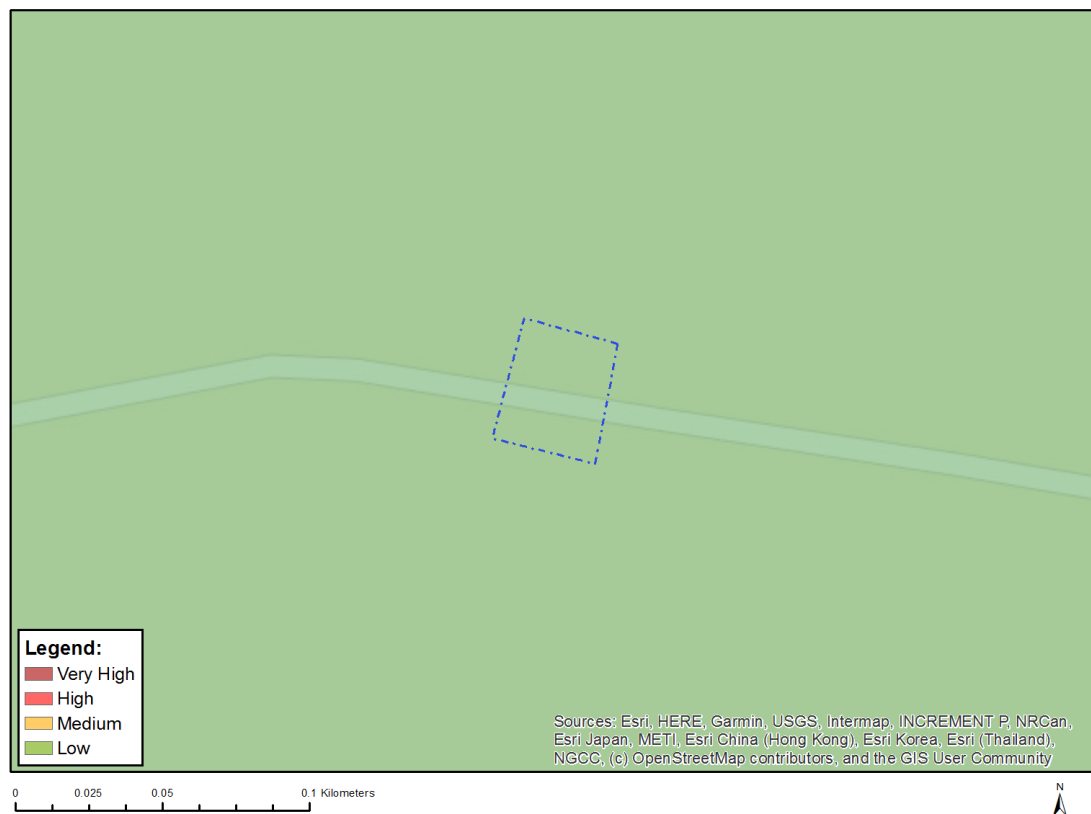


Figure 10. Defence Theme Sensitivity Map

Sensitivity	Feature
Low	Low Sensitivity

EAP observation and conclusion: No impacts on existing Defence areas were noted on the sites, as such. Due to the evidence provided, it is proposed that the project be considered from a defence perspective as the EAP recommends that the sensitivity from the Screening Tool be maintained at low sensitivity.

5.7. Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact Assessment

The Screening Tool suggests that the Terrestrial Biodiversity theme is of a Very High sensitivity and that a Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact Assessment should be conducted.

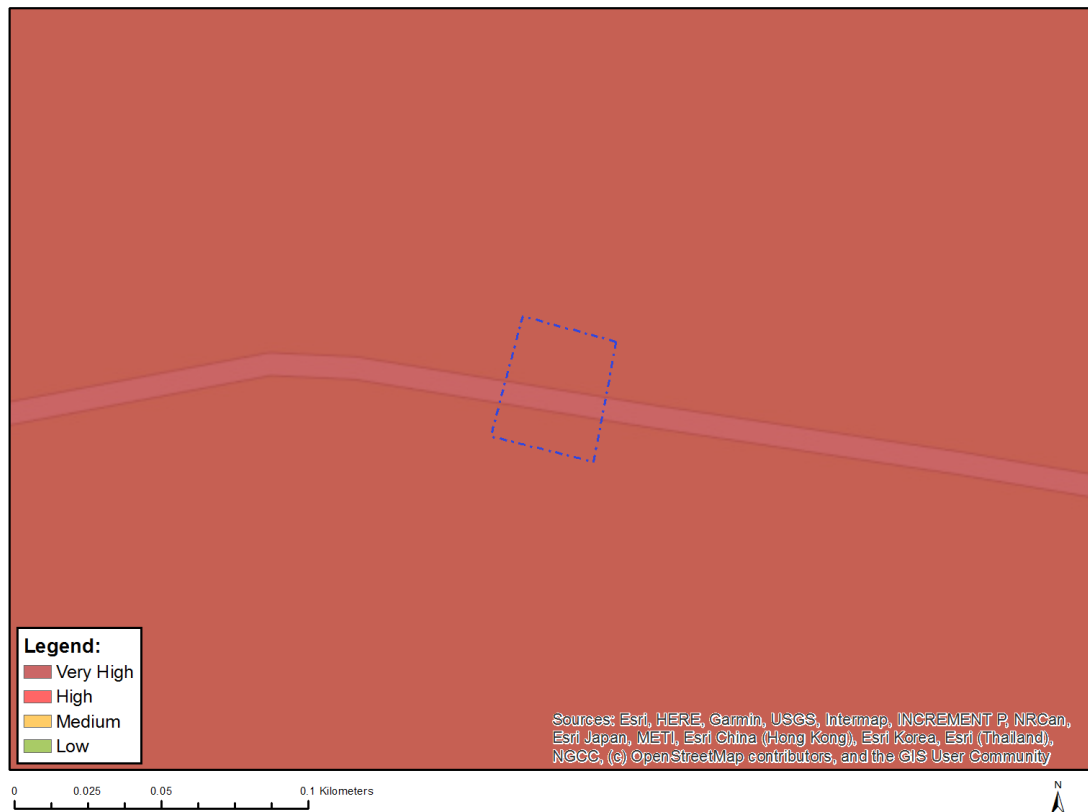


Figure 11. Terrestrial Biodiversity Theme Sensitivity Map

Sensitivity	Feature(s)
Very High	CBA 2: Terrestrial
Very High	FEPA Subcatchment
Very High	National Protected Area Expansion Strategy (NPAES)
Very High	SANParks (Buffer)_Garden Route National Park
Very High	SWSA (SW) _Outeniqua
Very High	Garden Route NP
Verh High	EN_Garden Route Shale Fynbos

EAPs Observation:

The site is located within an area with an Ecological Threat Status of Endangered see Figure 13 and is mapped as terrestrial Critical Biodiversity Area 2 (CBA2) as well as ESA2 as seen on Figure 12. This site's vegetation type is Garden Route Shale Fynbos and has an Ecosystem Threat Status of Endangered. This site is located within a National Protected Area Expansion Strategy (NPAES) area and within the Garden Route National Park buffer area.

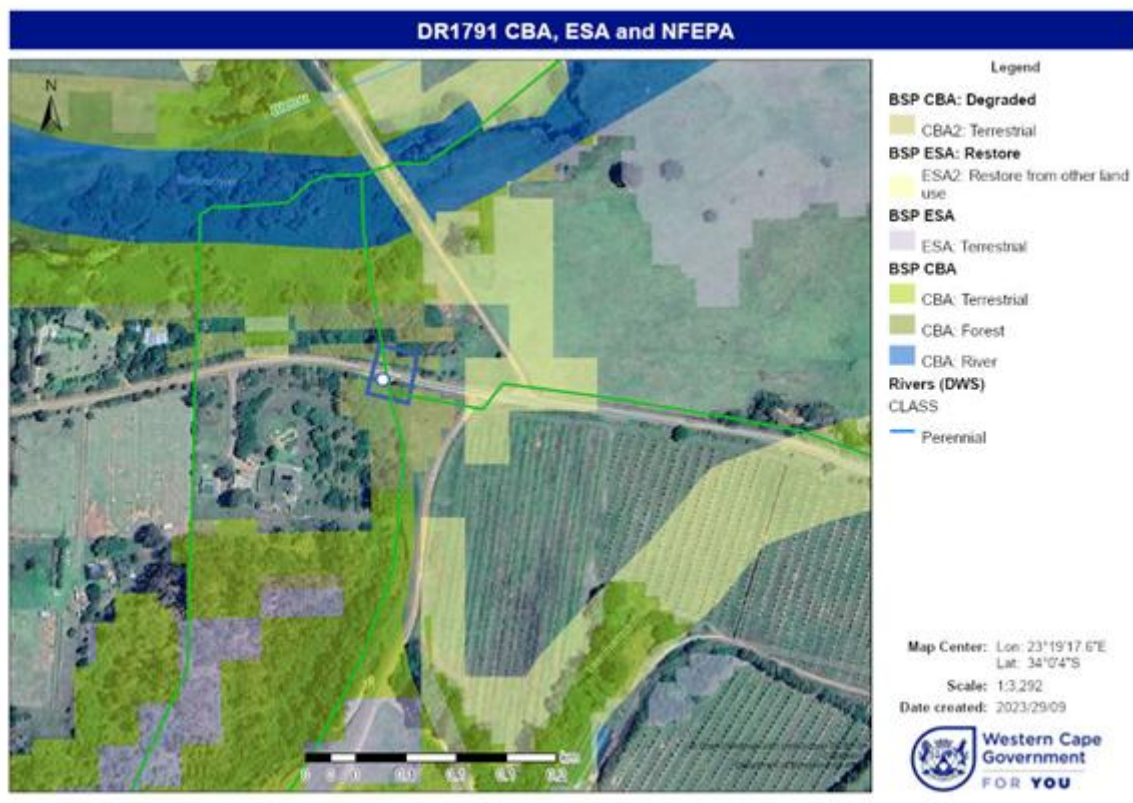


Figure 12. Critical Biodiversity Areas and rivers ,Western Cape Biodiversity Spatial Plan (2017).

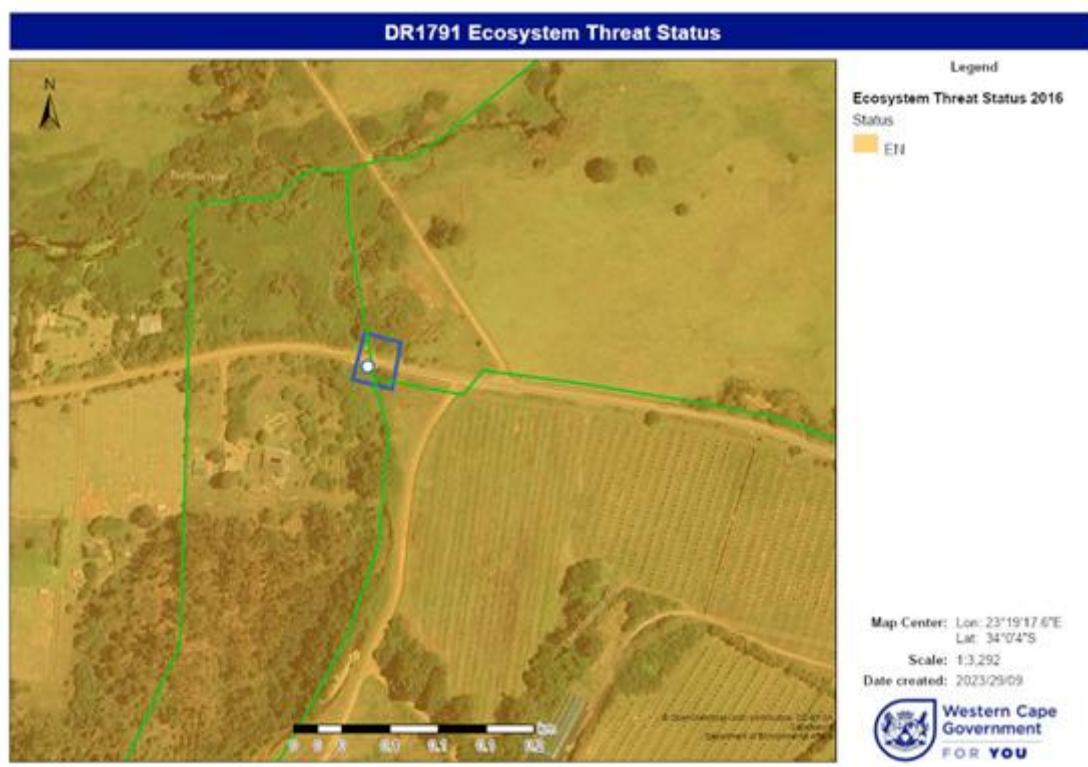


Figure 13. Ecological Threat Status of the proposed development site (WCBSP, 2017).

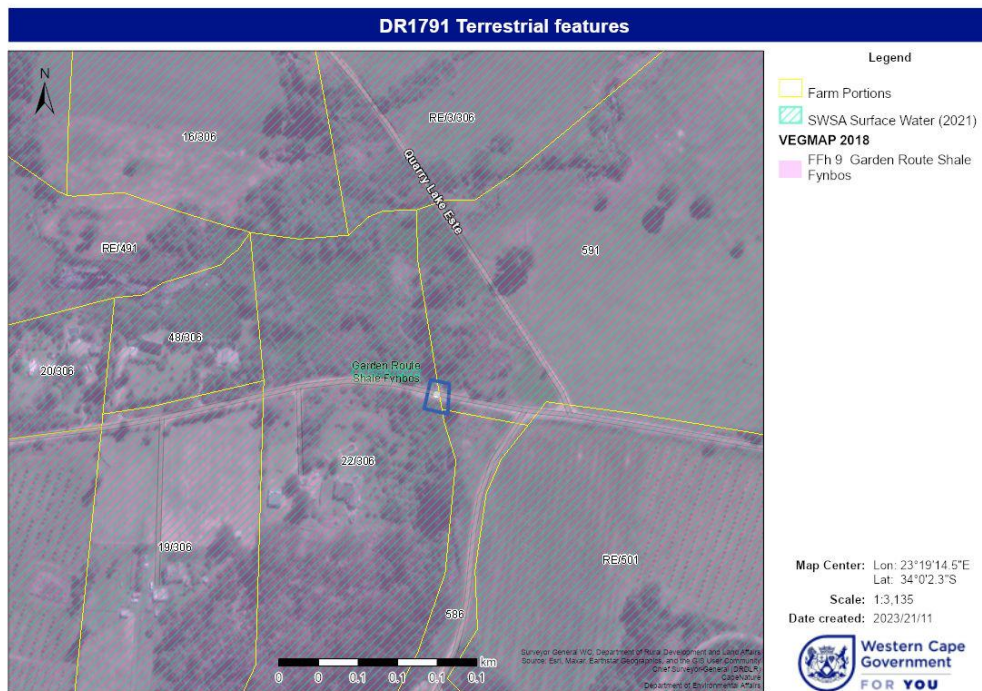


Figure 14. Ecosystem present within the proposed development footprint (NBA, 2021).

Specialist findings:

Enviro Works (Megan Smith & Nicolene Cloete) was appointed to undertake the site sensitivity verification, Compliance statement for the Terrestrial Biodiversity present within the proposed development. The specialist conducted their field report on the 30th of October 2023 and compiled their report on the 15th of November 2023.

During the investigation, the specialist has regarded the site to be of low terrestrial sensitivity as opposed to the screening tool regarding the area as being very high. The specialist concluded that based on the area already being degraded and the ecological state already been disturbed in the area, and that its unlikely to affect the Garden Route Biosphere Reserve (GRBR). The site is highly vegetated by alien invasive species and therefore will minimally impact on the GRBR and its ecological state. The specialist also concluded the compliance statement that the construction site footprint has a low value of Ecological Importance (SEI).

Conclusion: Based on the nature of the site and the surroundings a Terrestrial Biodiversity and Plant Species Specialist will be appointed to conduct a compliance assessment for the proposed upgrade. Additionally, CapeNature will be included as a Stakeholder as part of the Public Participation Processes.

5.8. Visual Impact Assessment

EAP's Observation and Conclusion:

The Environmental Screening Tool Report indicates that a Visual Impact Assessment should be undertaken. It is disputed as the proposed activities are to repair existing infrastructure. Therefore after rehabilitation, the conditions on the site will revert back to its visual setting prior to the flood damage. It is therefore concluded that no further action is required.

5.9. Palaeontology Impact Assessment

The Screening Tool suggests that the Paleontology theme is of a medium sensitivity and that a Paleontology Impact Assessment should be conducted.

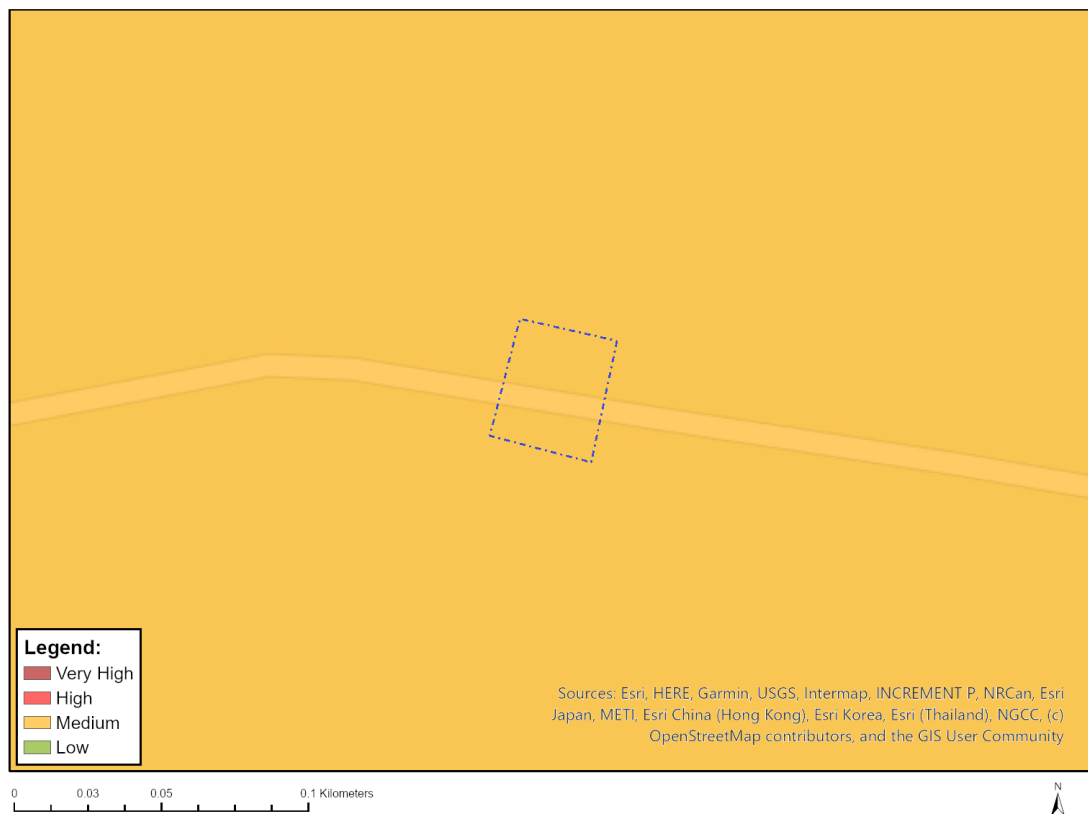


Figure 15. Paleontological Theme Sensitivity Map

Sensitivity	Feature(s)
Medium	Features with a Medium paleontological sensitivity

The proposed repairs and riverbank reinstatement will be undertaken on existing footprints and previously disturbed areas, additionally the proposed activities do not trigger Section 38 of the National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act No. 25 of 1999).



Figure 16. SAHRIS PalaeoSensitivity Map for the proposed removal and repair project

Table 5. SAHRIS PalaeoSensitivity Map key (highlighting the relevant sensitivity)

Colour	Sensitivity	Required Action
RED	VERY HIGH	field assessment and protocol for finds is required
ORANGE/YELLOW	HIGH	desktop study is required and based on the outcome of the desktop study, a field assessment is likely
GREEN	MODERATE	desktop study is required
BLUE	LOW	no palaeontological studies are required however a protocol for finds is required
GREY	INSIGNIFICANT/ZERO	no palaeontological studies are required
WHITE/CLEAR	UNKNOWN	these areas will require a minimum of a desktop study. As more information comes to light, SAHRA will continue to populate the map.

EAPs Observation and Conclusion:

Based on desktop observation and sourced images from the South African Heritage Resources Information System (SAHRIS,2023), the site appears to have no features of palaeontological significance and regarding the nature of the already disturbed area is to replace and repair existing infrastructure, the likelihood of interacting with fossils can be considered low. However, should remains be found, further information and procedures will be included in the Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) to minimise risk and disturbance. Heritage Western Cape will be included as a Stakeholder as part of the Public Participation Processes.

5.10. Socio-economic

EAP's Observation and Conclusion:

It is not expected that this environmental process related to the proposed upgrades will have a detrimental effect on the socioeconomics of the area as it is anticipated that the project (upon completion) will greatly benefit road users and the ecology in the area. The proposal is to repair flood damage to existing infrastructure and riverbanks. The socio-economic

aspects of the proposal are thus known and straight forward in nature and as such an assessment will not be undertaken. No further action will be undertaken.

5.11. Plant Species

The Screening Tool suggests that the Plant Species theme is of medium sensitivity and that a botanical Assessment should be conducted.

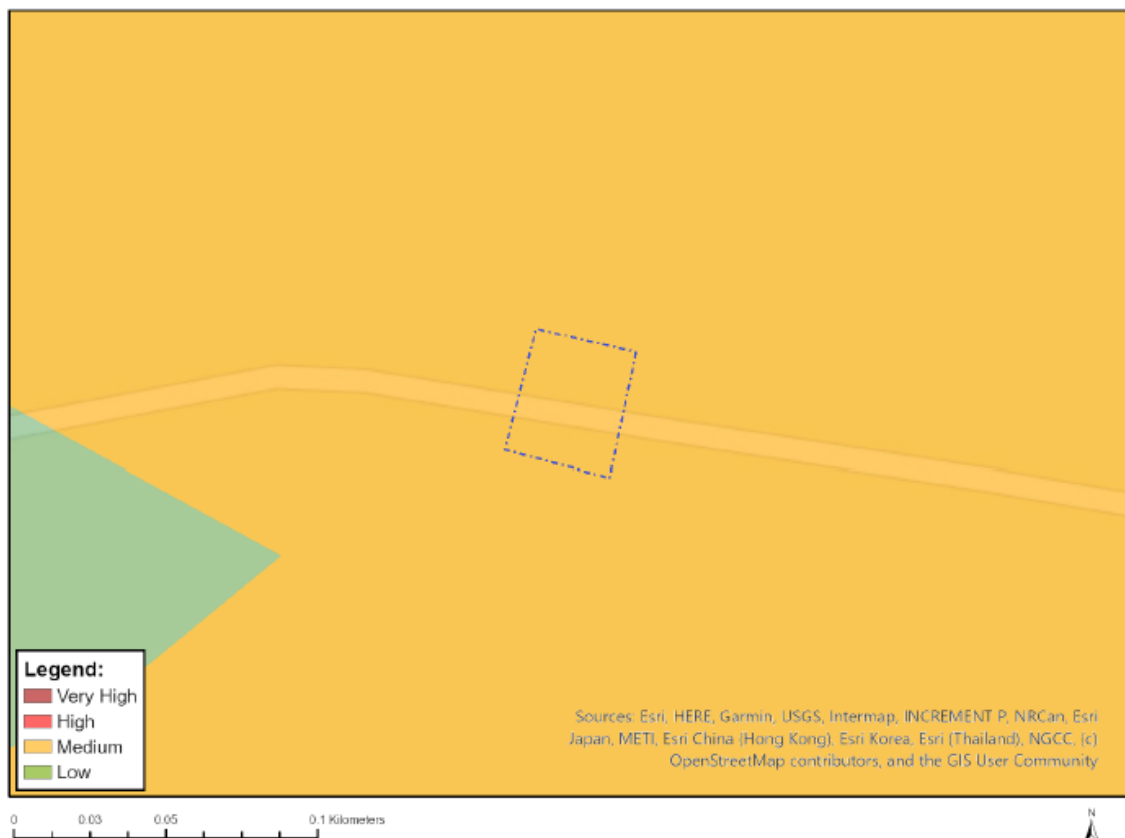


Figure 17. Plant species Theme Sensitivity Map

Sensitivity	Feature(s)
Medium	Features with a Medium plant sensitivity

Sensitivity	Feature(s)	Red List Status	Habitat	Likelihood of occurrence (Specialist)
Medium	<i>Ruschia duthiae</i>	Vulnerable	Garden Route Shale Fynbos, Knysna Sand Fynbos, Gentle north-facing sandstone or shale slopes with grassy fynbos.	Not Identified during the site inspection by the specialist.
Medium	<i>Leucospermum glabrum</i>	Endangered	Garden Route Shale Fynbos, Garden Route Granite Fynbos. Wet south slopes in sandstone fynbos.	
Medium	<i>Selago burchellii</i>	Vulnerable	Garden Route Shale Fynbos, Southern Cape Dune Fynbos, Knysna Sand Fynbos. Coastal slopes and flats.	
Medium	<i>Sensitive species 419</i>	Vulnerable	Garden Route Shale Fynbos, Knysna Sand Fynbos. Damp sandstone slopes in coastal fynbos.	
Medium	<i>Acmadenia alternifolia</i>	Vulnerable	South Outeniqua Sandstone Fynbos, Garden Route Shale Fynbos, Goukamma Dune Thicket. Plants grow on slopes in exposed positions in coastal headlands and inland..	
Medium	<i>Sensitive species 763</i>	Vulnerable	Garden Route Shale Fynbos, Eastern Coastal Shale Band Vegetation, Mossel Bay Shale Renosterveld, Southern Afrotemperate Forest, South Outeniqua Sandstone Fynbos. species is rare in dry coastal renosterveld and grassy places in coastal forest on sand to sandy loams, and on rocky outcrops.	

EAPs Observations:

During The EAP site inspection, the proposed site location is surrounded by very dense vegetation, particularly with a high presence of alien species. It is necessary for a specialist to conduct an assessment within the study area to verify the findings of the Screening Tool and to determine whether there are any species of conservation concern present at the site.

Specialist findings:

Enviro Works (Megan Smith & Nicolene Cloete) was appointed to undertake the site sensitivity verification, Compliance statement for the Plant Species theme present within the proposed development. The specialist conducted their field study on the 30th of October 2023 and compiled their report on the 15th of November 2023.

During the investigation the specialist has regarded the site to be of low plant sensitivity as opposed to the screening tool regarding the area as being a medium sensitivity. The site is highly degraded and disturbed. Based on the iNaturalist data, there is only one citing of *Trifolium Repens* and was further identified by the specialist on-site. The specialist recorded (30) plant species on site, each of them are rated as 'least concern' or 'not evaluated' in accordance with the Red List Status. No Species of Conservation Concern was found on site.

Conclusion: Based on the findings of the EAP and the appointed specialist, a plant species compliance statement will be compiled for the proposed project. Additionally, Cape Nature will be included as an I&AP as part of any future PPP process.

5.12. Noise

EAP's Observation and Conclusion:

It is not expected that this environmental process related to the proposed upgrades will have a detrimental effect on the noise levels within the area as it is anticipated that the project (upon completion) will greatly benefit road users and the ecology in the area. The proposal is to repair flood damage to existing infrastructure and riverbanks. The noise aspects of the proposal are thus negligible and temporary in nature, and as such an assessment will not be undertaken. No further action will be undertaken.

5.13. Traffic

EAP's Observation and Conclusion:

It is not expected that this environmental process related to the proposed upgrades will have a detrimental effect on traffic management within the area as it is anticipated that the project (upon completion) will greatly benefit road users and the ecology in the area. The proposal is to repair flood damage to existing infrastructure and riverbanks. A temporary by-pass will be constructed to avoid road closures. The proposal is thus negligible and temporary in nature, and as such an assessment will not be undertaken. No further action will be undertaken.

5.14. Geotechnical

EAP's Observation and Conclusion:

For this current environmental process, a geotechnical assessment is not anticipated to be required as the planned construction should not have significant geological impacts due to the surface level nature of the project. Additionally, the screening tool did not identify any geologically or geotechnically relevant sensitive features. Due to the lack of relevant sensitive features and the nature of the proposed development, a Geotechnical Assessment will not be undertaken.

6. Summary of the applicable specialist studies

The following specialist assessments were proposed by the National Environmental Screening Tool for the proposed project:

Specialist assessment	Applicability	Assessment Protocol
Agriculture Impact Assessment	No	https://screening.environment.gov.za/ScreeningDownloads/AssessmentProtocols/Gazetted_General_Agriculture_Assessment_Protocols.pdf
Landscape/Visual Impact Assessment	No	https://screening.environment.gov.za/ScreeningDownloads/AssessmentProtocols/Gazetted_General_Requirement_Assessment_Protocols.pdf
Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment	No, a Statement will be obtained from the specialist regarding the site sensitivity.	https://screening.environment.gov.za/ScreeningDownloads/AssessmentProtocols/Gazetted_General_Requirement_Assessment_Protocols.pdf
Palaeontology Impact Assessment		https://screening.environment.gov.za/ScreeningDownloads/AssessmentProtocols/Gazetted_General_Requirement_Assessment_Protocols.pdf
Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact Assessment	Yes	https://screening.environment.gov.za/ScreeningDownloads/AssessmentProtocols/Gazetted_Terrestrial_Biodiversity_Assessment_Protocols.pdf
Aquatic Biodiversity Impact Assessment	Yes	https://screening.environment.gov.za/ScreeningDownloads/AssessmentProtocols/Gazetted_Aquatic_Biodiversity_Assessment_Protocols.pdf
Noise Impact Assessment	No	https://screening.environment.gov.za/ScreeningDownloads/AssessmentProtocols/Gazetted_Noise_Impacts_Assessment_Protocol.pdf
Traffic Impact Assessment	No	https://screening.environment.gov.za/ScreeningDownloads/AssessmentProtocols/Gazetted_General_Requirement_Assessment_Protocols.pdf
Geotechnical Assessment	No	https://screening.environment.gov.za/ScreeningDownloads/AssessmentProtocols/Gazetted_General_Requirement_Assessment_Protocols.pdf
Socio-Economic Assessment	No	https://screening.environment.gov.za/ScreeningDownloads/AssessmentProtocols/Gazetted_General_Requirement_Assessment_Protocols.pdf
Ambient Air Quality Impact Assessment	No	https://screening.environment.gov.za/ScreeningDownloads/AssessmentProtocols/Gazetted_General_Requirement_Assessment_Protocols.pdf
Plant Species Assessment	Yes (as part of Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact Assessment)	https://screening.environment.gov.za/ScreeningDownloads/AssessmentProtocols/Gazetted_Plant_Species_Assessment_Protocols.pdf
Animal Species Assessment	Yes	https://screening.environment.gov.za/ScreeningDownloads/AssessmentProtocols/Gazetted_Animal_Species_Assessment_Protocols.pdf

7. Conclusion

From the findings of this report, SES proposes to only undertake the following assessments:

Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact Assessment/ Compliance Statement
Aquatic Biodiversity Impact Assessment
Plant Species Assessment/ Compliance Statement
Animal Species Assessment/ Compliance Statement
Heritage Compliance Statement

The relevant specialist assessments will be undertaken and will contribute to the environmental assessment.

All assessments will be undertaken in line with the protocols as promulgated for the respective themes. The requirements of the protocols have been incorporated into the Terms of References of the various specialists.