



# environment, forestry & fisheries

Department:  
Environment, Forestry and Fisheries  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Private Bag X 447· PRETORIA ·0001· Environment House ·473 Steve Biko Road, Arcadia· PRETORIA

DEA Reference: 14/12/16/3/3/1/2153

Enquiries: Ms Bathandwa Ncube

Telephone: 012 399 9368 E-mail: [BNcube@environment.gov.za](mailto:BNcube@environment.gov.za)

Mr Cornelius Janse van Rensburg  
Ventura Renewable Energy (Pty) Ltd  
P.O. Box 73  
**SOMERSET MALL**  
Western Cape  
7137

Cellphone Number : 082 631 7496  
Email Address : [weyers@kerenenergy.com](mailto:weyers@kerenenergy.com)

## PER EMAIL / MAIL

Dear Mr Janse van Rensburg

### **APPLICATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORISATION IN TERMS OF THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT ACT, ACT NO. 107 OF 1998, AS AMENDED: FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE 100MW VISSERSPAN SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC FACILITY PROJECT 1 ON VISSERSPAN FARM NO. 40, NEAR DEALESVILLE, TOKOLOGO LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, FREE STATE PROVINCE**

With reference to the above application, please be advised that the Department has decided to grant authorisation. The Environmental Authorisation (EA) and reasons for the decision are attached herewith.

In terms of Regulation 4(2) of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014, as amended (the EIA Regulations), you are instructed to notify all registered interested and affected parties, in writing and within 14 (fourteen) days of the date of the decision as well as the provisions regarding the submission of appeals that are contained in the Regulations.

In terms of the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, Act No. 3 of 2000, you are entitled to the right to fair, lawful and reasonable administrative action; and to written reasons for administrative action that affects you negatively. Further your attention is drawn to the provisions of the Protection of Personal Information Act, Act No. 4 of 2013 which stipulate that the Department should conduct itself in a responsible manner when collecting, processing, storing and sharing an individual or another entity's personal information by holding the Department accountable should the Department abuse or compromise your personal information in any way.

Your attention is drawn to Chapter 2 of National Environmental Management Act, Act No. 107 of 1998 National Appeal Regulations published under Government Notice R993 in Government Gazette No. 38303 dated 08 December 2014 (National Appeal Regulations, 2014), which prescribes the appeal procedure to be followed. Kindly include a copy of this document (National Appeal Regulations, 2014) with the letter of notification to interested and affected parties in this matter.

Should any person wish to lodge an appeal against this decision, he/she must submit the appeal to the appeal administrator, and a copy of the appeal to the applicant, any registered interested and affected party, and any organ of state with interest in the matter within 20 days from the date that the notification of the decision was

sent to the registered interested and affected parties by the applicant; or the date that the notification of the decision was sent to the applicant by the Department, whichever is applicable.

**Appeals must be submitted in writing in the prescribed form to:**

The Director: Appeals and Legal Review of this Department at the below mentioned addresses.

By email: [appeals@environment.gov.za](mailto:appeals@environment.gov.za);

By hand: Environment House  
473 Steve Biko  
Arcadia  
Pretoria  
0083; or

By post: Private Bag X447  
Pretoria  
0001

Please note that in terms of Section 43(7) of the National Environmental Management Act, Act No. 107 of 1998, as amended, the lodging of an appeal will suspend the environmental authorisation or any provision or condition attached thereto. In the instance where an appeal is lodged, you may not commence with the activity until such time that the appeal is finalised.

To obtain the prescribed appeal form and for guidance on the submission of appeals, please visit the Department's website at [https://www.environment.gov.za/documents/forms#legal\\_authorisations](https://www.environment.gov.za/documents/forms#legal_authorisations) or request a copy of the documents at [appeals@environment.gov.za](mailto:appeals@environment.gov.za).

Yours faithfully



**Mr Sabelo Malaza**  
**Chief Director: Integrated Environmental Authorisations**  
**Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries**

Date: 05/11/2020

|     |   |                                    |  |
|-----|---|------------------------------------|--|
| cc: | EnviroAfrica CC<br>Economic, Small Business Development,<br>Tourism and Environmental Affairs | Vivienne Thomson<br>Grace Mkhosana | Email: <a href="mailto:vivienne@enviroafrica.co.za">vivienne@enviroafrica.co.za</a><br>Email: <a href="mailto:mkhosana@destea.fs.gov.za">mkhosana@destea.fs.gov.za</a> |
|-----|---|------------------------------------|--|





## environment, forestry & fisheries

Department:  
Environment, Forestry and Fisheries  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

# Environmental Authorisation

In terms of Regulation 25 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014, as amended

The construction of the 100MW Visserspan solar photovoltaic facility project 1 near Dealesville.

### Lejweleputswa District Municipality

|                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Authorisation register number:</b> | <i>14/12/16/3/3/1/2153</i>  |
| <b>Last amended:</b>                  | <i>First issue</i>  |
| <b>Holder of authorisation:</b>       | <i>Ventura Renewable Energy (Pty) Ltd</i>   |
| <b>Location of activity:</b>          | <i>Visserspan Farm No.40<br/>Tokologo Local Municipality<br/>Lejweleputswa District Municipality<br/>Free State Province.</i> |

This authorisation does not negate the holder of the authorisation's responsibility to comply with any other statutory requirements that may be applicable to the undertaking of the activity.

## Decision

The Department is satisfied, on the basis of information available to it and subject to compliance with the conditions of this Environmental Authorisation, that the applicant should be authorised to undertake the activities specified below.

Non-compliance with a condition of this Environmental Authorisation may result in criminal prosecution or other actions provided for in the National Environmental Management Act, Act No. 107 of 1998, as amended and the EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended.

Details regarding the basis on which the Department reached this decision are set out in Annexure 1.

## Activities authorised

By virtue of the powers conferred on it by the National Environmental Management Act, Act No. 107 of 1998, as amended and the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014, as amended, the Department hereby authorises –

### **VENTURA RENEWABLE ENERGY (PTY) LTD**

(hereafter referred to as the **holder of the authorisation**)

with the following contact details –

Mr. Cornelius Weyers Janse van Rensburg

Ventura Renewable Energy (Pty) Ltd

P.O. Box 73

**SOMERSET MALL**

Western Cape

7137

Cellphone Number : (082) 631 7496

Email Address : [weyers@kerenenergy.com](mailto:weyers@kerenenergy.com)

to undertake the following activities (hereafter referred to as "the activity") indicated in Listing Notice 1, Listing Notice 2 and Listing Notice 3 of the EIA Regulations, 2014 as amended:

| Activity number   | Activity description   |
|---|--|
| <p><u>Listing Notice 1, Item 14:</u><br/><i>The development and related operation of facilities or infrastructure, for the storage, or for the storage and handling, of a dangerous good, where such storage occurs in containers with a combined capacity of 80 cubic metres or more but not exceeding 500 cubic metres.</i></p>   | <p>The development may require battery storage facilities.</p>   |
| <p><u>Listing Notice 2, Item 1:</u><br/><i>The development of facilities or infrastructure for the generation of electricity from a renewable resource where the electricity output is 20 megawatts or more</i></p>   | <p>The proposed development is for the development of solar PV facility in REDZ 5 which will generate not more than 100MW for supply to the national grid.</p> |
| <p><u>Listing Notice 2, Item 15:</u><br/><i>The clearance of an area of 20 hectares or more of indigenous vegetation</i></p>  | <p>The development footprint will need to be cleared for construction of the PV facility.</p>  |
| <p><u>Listing Notice 3, Item 2(b)(ii)(dd):</u><br/><i>The development of reservoirs, excluding dams, with a capacity of more than 250 cubic metres.</i><br/><i>b. Free State,</i><br/><i>ii. Outside urban areas:</i><br/><i>(dd) Critical biodiversity areas as identified in systematic biodiversity plans adopted by the competent authority or in bioregional plans</i></p> | <p>Water storage on site may be needed for cleaning and ablutions.</p>   |
| <p><u>Listing Notice 3, Item 4(b)(i)(ee):</u><br/><i>The development of a road wider than 4 metres with a reserve less than 13.5 metres.</i><br/><i>b. Free State</i><br/><i>i. Outside urban areas:</i><br/><i>(ee) Critical biodiversity areas as identified in systematic biodiversity plans adopted by the competent authority or in bioregional plans</i></p>              | <p>The proposed development will require internal access roads.</p>  |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b><u>Listing Notice 3, Item 10(b)(i)(ee):</u></b><br/> <i>The development and related operation of facilities or infrastructure for the storage, or storage and handling of a dangerous good where such storage occurs in containers with a combined capacity of 30 but not exceeding 80 cubic metres.</i></p> <p><b>b. Free State</b></p> <p><b>i. Outside urban areas:</b><br/> <b>(ee) Critical biodiversity areas as identified in systematic biodiversity plans adopted by the competent authority or in bioregional plans</b></p> | <p>The development may require battery storage facilities</p>              |
| <p><b><u>Listing Notice 3, Item 12(b)(ii)(iv):</u></b><br/> <i>The clearance of an area of 300 square metres or more of indigenous vegetation</i></p> <p><b>b. Free State</b></p> <p><b>ii. Within critical biodiversity areas identified in bioregional plans;</b><br/> <b>iv. Areas within a watercourse or wetland; or within 100 metres from the edge of a watercourse or wetland.</b></p>  | <p>The development footprint will need to be cleared for construction.</p> |

as described in the Basic Assessment Report (BAR) dated September 2020 at:

**SG 21 Code**

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

| Point            | Latitude      | Longitude     |
|------------------|---------------|---------------|
| <b>A (north)</b> | 28°34'52.68"S | 25°43'20.55"E |
| <b>B</b>         | 28°34'55.82"S | 25°43'45.50"E |
| <b>C (east)</b>  | 28°35'51.41"S | 25°43'31.89"E |
| <b>D</b>         | 28°36'22.63"S | 25°43'28.08"E |
| <b>E (south)</b> | 28°36'44.37"S | 25°43'32.92"E |
| <b>F</b>         | 28°36'36.18"S | 25°43'18.15"E |
| <b>G</b>         | 28°35'57.70"S | 25°43'7.06"E  |

|                        |               |               |
|------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| H (west)               | 28°35'53.80"S | 25°42'57.48"E |
| Project 1 centre point | 28°35'33.46"S | 25°43'21.04"E |

- for the development of the 100MW Visserspan solar photovoltaic facility project 1 on Visserspan Farm No. 40, near Dealesville, Tokologo Local Municipality, Free-State Province, hereafter referred to as "the property".

The facility will comprise the following:

- fenced construction staging area;
- a maintenance shed(s);
- On-site inverter-transformer stations on concrete pads;
- a switch panel for connection to the power grid;
- 6 x12m battery storage banks/containers adjacent to the inverter-transformer stations; and
- Site office buildings with ablutions.

Technical details of the PV facility:

| Component  | Description/ Dimensions  |
|--|--|
| Location of the site   | Visserspan Farm No. 40, approximately 10km northwest of Dealesville and 68km northwest of Bloemfontein, in the Free State Province |
| Site access  | The site can be accessed from the R64, using existing secondary roads viz. the 31999.  |
| Export capacity  | Up to 100MW  |
| Surface area to be covered (including associated infrastructure such as roads) | Approximately 218ha  |
| Area of PV Array   | Approx. 170m <sup>2</sup> covered by actual PV panels (excluding internal roads)   |
| Height of PV panels  | 3m when at full tilt (upper level); 500mm above ground (lower level).  |
| Number of inverters required   | <800 units   |
| Area occupied by inverter / transformer stations / battery storage banks       | <1Ha   |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Area occupied by both permanent and construction laydown areas | Permanent: <1ha<br>Construction: <20ha                           |
| Area occupied by buildings                                     | <1.5Ha   |
| Length of internal roads                                       | <10km  |
| Width of internal roads  | Between 4m to 6m wide internal roads but <8m wide internal roads |
| Proximity to grid connection                                   | ~7km to Eskom's Perseus substation                               |
| Height of fencing  | ~2.4m  |
| Type of fencing  | Galvanised wire or palisade fence                                |
| Solar plant technology type                                    | Crystalline Solar PV   |
| Solar plant structure orientation                              | North facing   |

## Conditions of this Environmental Authorisation

### Scope of authorisation

1. The development of the 100MW Visserspan solar photovoltaic facility project 1 on Visserspan Farm No. 40, near Dealesville, Tokologo Local Municipality, Free-State Province is approved as per the geographic coordinates cited in the table above.
2. Authorisation of the activity is subject to the conditions contained in this Environmental Authorisation, which form part of the Environmental Authorisation and are binding on the holder of the authorisation.
3. The holder of the authorisation is responsible for ensuring compliance with the conditions contained in this Environmental Authorisation. This includes any person acting on the holder's behalf, including but not limited to, an agent, servant, contractor, sub-contractor, employee, consultant or person rendering a service to the holder of the authorisation.
4. The activities authorised may only be carried out at the property as described above.
5. Any changes to, or deviations from, the project description set out in this Environmental Authorisation must be approved, in writing, by the Department before such changes or deviations may be effected. In assessing whether to grant such approval or not, the Department may request such information as it deems necessary to evaluate the significance and impacts of such changes or deviations and it may be necessary for the holder of the authorisation to apply for further Environmental Authorisation in terms of the regulations.



6. The holder of an Environmental Authorisation must apply for an amendment of the Environmental Authorisation with the Competent Authority for any alienation, transfer or change of ownership rights in the property on which the activity is to take place.
7. This activity must commence within a period of **ten (10) years** from the date of issue of this Environmental Authorisation. If commencement of the activity does not occur within that period, the authorisation lapses and a new application for Environmental Authorisation must be made in order for the activity to be undertaken.
8. Construction must be completed within **five (05) years** of the commencement of the activity on site.
9. Commencement with one activity listed in terms of this Environmental Authorisation constitutes commencement of all authorised activities.

#### **Notification of authorisation and right to appeal**

10. The holder of the authorisation must notify every registered interested and affected party, in writing and within 14 (fourteen) calendar days of the date of this Environmental Authorisation, of the decision to authorise the activity.
11. The notification referred to must –
  - 11.1. specify the date on which the authorisation was issued;
  - 11.2. inform the interested and affected party of the appeal procedure provided for in the National Appeal Regulations, 2014;
  - 11.3. advise the interested and affected party that a copy of the authorisation will be furnished on request; and
  - 11.4. give the reasons of the Competent Authority for the decision.

#### **Commencement of the activity**

12. The authorised activity shall not commence until the period for the submission of appeals has lapsed as per the National Appeal Regulations, 2014, and no appeal has been lodged against the decision. In terms of Section 43(7), an appeal under Section 43 of the National Environmental Management Act, Act No. 107 of 1998, as amended will suspend the Environmental Authorisation or any provision or condition attached thereto. In the instance where an appeal is lodged you may not commence with the activity until such time that the appeal has been finalised.

## **Management of the activity**

13. A copy of the final site layout map must be made available for comments by registered Interested and Affected Parties and the holder of this environmental authorisation must consider such comments. Once amended, the final development layout map must be submitted to the Department for written approval prior to commencement of the activity. All available biodiversity information must be used in the finalisation of the layout map. Existing infrastructure must be used as far as possible e.g. roads. The layout map must indicate the following:
  - 13.1. The preferred technology/technology mix and its respective locations for the battery storage facilities;
  - 13.2. All associated infrastructure; and
  - 13.3. All sensitive features e.g. Critical Biodiversity Areas, Ecological Support Areas, heritage sites, wetlands, pans and drainage channels that will be affected by the facility and its associated infrastructure;
14. The Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) submitted as part of the BAR is not approved and must be amended to include measures as dictated by the final site layout map and micro-siting, and the provisions of this environmental authorisation. The EMPr must be made available for comments by registered Interested and Affected Parties and the holder of this environmental authorisation must consider such comments. Once amended, the final EMPr must be submitted to the Department for written approval prior to commencement of the activity. Once approved the EMPr must be implemented and adhered to.
15. The EMPr amendment must include the following:
  - 15.1. The requirements and conditions of this Environmental Authorisation
  - 15.2. Risk Impact Assessment for the battery storage facilities;
  - 15.3. The specific risk and management plans which are applicable to the impacts associated to the preferred technology/technology mix;
  - 15.4. Chance Finds Procedures must be developed for the project to ensure that standard protocols and steps are followed should any heritage and/or fossil resources be uncovered during all phases of the project. These procedures should outline the steps and reporting structure to be followed in the instance that heritage resources are found;
  - 15.5. All recommendations and mitigation measures recorded in the BAR and the specialist studies conducted;
  - 15.6. The final preferred layout map;

- 15.7. An environmental sensitivity map indicating environmental sensitivity areas and features identified during the assessment process.

### **Frequency and process of updating the EMPr**

16. The EMPr must be updated where the findings of the environmental audit reports, contemplated in Condition 23 below, indicate insufficient mitigation of environmental impacts associated with the undertaking of the activity, or insufficient levels of compliance with the environmental authorisation or EMPr.
17. The updated EMPr must contain recommendations to rectify the shortcomings identified in the environmental audit report.
18. The updated EMPr must be submitted to the Department for approval together with the environmental audit report, as per Regulation 34 of the EIA Regulations, 2014 as amended. The updated EMPr must have been subjected to a public participation process, which process has been agreed to by the Department, prior to submission of the updated EMPr to the Department for approval.
19. In assessing whether to grant approval of an EMPr which has been updated as a result of an audit, the Department will consider the processes prescribed in Regulation 35 of the EIA Regulations, 2014 as amended. Prior to approving an amended EMPr, the Department may request such amendments to the EMPr as it deems appropriate to ensure that the EMPr sufficiently provides for avoidance, management and mitigation of environmental impacts associated with the undertaking of the activity.
20. The holder of the authorisation must apply for an amendment of an EMPr, if such amendment is required before an audit is required. The amendment process is prescribed in Regulation 37 of the EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended. The holder of the authorisation must request comments on the proposed amendments to the impact management outcomes of the EMPr or amendments to the closure objectives of the closure plan from potentially interested and affected parties, including the competent authority, by using any of the methods provided for in the Act for a period of at least 30 days.

### **Monitoring**

21. The holder of the authorisation must appoint an experienced Environmental Control Officer (ECO) for the construction phase of the development that will have the responsibility to ensure that the mitigation/rehabilitation measures and recommendations referred to in this environmental authorisation are implemented and to ensure compliance with the provisions of the approved EMPr.

21.1. The ECO must be appointed before commencement of any authorised activities.

- 21.2. Once appointed, the name and contact details of the ECO must be submitted to the *Director: Compliance Monitoring* of the Department.
- 21.3. The ECO must keep record of all activities on site, problems identified, transgressions noted and a task schedule of tasks undertaken by the ECO.
- 21.4. The ECO must remain employed until all rehabilitation measures, as required for implementation due to construction damage, are completed and the site is ready for operation.

### **Recording and reporting to the Department**

22. All documentation e.g. audit/monitoring/compliance reports and notifications, required to be submitted to the Department in terms of this environmental authorisation, must be submitted to the *Director: Compliance Monitoring* of the Department.
23. The holder of the environmental authorisation must, for the period during which the environmental authorisation and EMPr remain valid, ensure that project compliance with the conditions of the environmental authorisation and the EMPr are audited, and that the audit reports are submitted to the *Director: Compliance Monitoring* of the Department.
24. The frequency of auditing and of submission of the environmental audit reports must be as per the frequency indicated in the EMPr, taking into account the processes for such auditing as prescribed in Regulation 34 of the EIA Regulations, 2014 as amended.
25. The holder of the authorisation must, in addition, submit environmental audit reports to the Department within 30 days of completion of the construction phase (i.e. within 30 days of site handover) and a final environmental audit report within 30 days of completion of rehabilitation activities.
26. The environmental audit reports must be compiled in accordance with Appendix 7 of the EIA Regulations, 2014 as amended and must indicate the date of the audit, the name of the auditor and the outcome of the audit in terms of compliance with the environmental authorisation conditions as well as the requirements of the approved EMPr.
27. Records relating to monitoring and auditing must be kept on site and made available for inspection to any relevant and competent authority in respect of this development.

### **Notification to authorities**

28. A written notification of commencement must be given to the Department no later than fourteen (14) days prior to the commencement of the activity. Commencement for the purposes of this condition includes site

preparation. The notice must include a date on which it is anticipated that the activity will commence, as well as a reference number.

### **Operation of the activity**

29. A written notification of operation must be given to the Department no later than fourteen (14) days prior to the commencement of the activity operational phase.

### **Site closure and decommissioning**

30. Should the activity ever cease or become redundant, the holder of the authorisation must undertake the required actions as prescribed by legislation at the time and comply with all relevant legal requirements administered by any relevant and Competent Authority at that time.

### **Specific conditions**

#### Conditions for Non-operational aspects

31. The holder of the EA must decide on the preferred technology or technology mixture for battery storage facilities and inform this Department prior to commencement of construction.
32. The biological corridors (grassland corridors) must be created to minimise the potential negative impact of the proposed development on the Vaal-Vet Sandy Grassland. This must be done by an ecological specialist prior construction phase of the proposed development.
33. No activity must occur within 32m of any water course (whether ephemeral or not) or within the delineated edge of the watercourse.
34. Should any objects of archaeological or palaeontological remains be found during construction activities, work must immediately stop in that area and the Environmental Control Officer (ECO) must be informed.
35. The ECO must inform the South African Heritage Recourse Agency (SAHRA) and contact an archaeologist and/or palaeontologist, depending on the nature of the find, to assess the importance and rescue them if necessary (with the relevant SAHRA permit). No work may be resumed in this area without the permission from the ECO and SAHRA.
36. If the newly discovered heritage resource is considered significant, a Phase 2 assessment may be required. A permit from the responsible heritage authority will be needed.
37. An integrated waste management approach must be implemented that is based on waste minimisation and must incorporate reduction, recycling, re-use and disposal where appropriate. Any solid waste must be

disposed of at a landfill licensed in terms of Section 20 (b) of the National Environment Management Waste Act, 2008 (Act No.59 of 2008).

### General

38. A copy of this Environmental Authorisation, the audit and compliance monitoring reports, and the approved EMPr, must be made available for inspection and copying-

38.1. at the site of the authorised activity;

38.2. to anyone on request; and

38.3. where the holder of the Environmental Authorisation has a website, on such publicly accessible website.

39. National government, provincial government, local authorities or committees appointed in terms of the conditions of this authorisation or any other public authority shall not be held responsible for any damages or losses suffered by the holder of the authorisation or his/her successor in title in any instance where construction or operation subsequent to construction be temporarily or permanently stopped for reasons of non-compliance by the holder of the authorisation with the conditions of authorisation as set out in this document or any other subsequent document emanating from these conditions of authorisation.

Date of Environmental Authorisation: 05/11/2020



Mr Sabelo Malaza

Chief Director, Integrated Environmental Authorisations

Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries

## Annexure 1: Reasons for Decision

### 1. Information considered in making the decision

In reaching its decision, the Department took, *inter alia*, the following into consideration -

- a) The listed activities as applied for in the amended application form received on 11 September 2020.
- b) The information contained in the BAR dated September 2020.
- c) The comments received from Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) included in the BAR dated September 2020;
- d) Mitigation measures as proposed in the BAR and the EMPr.
- e) The information contained in the specialist studies contained within the appendices of the BAR dated September 2020 and as appears below:

| Title  | Prepared by  | Date           |
|--|--|----------------|
| Botanical Impact Assessment (East and West)      | Bergwind Botanical Surveys & Tours                   | July 2020      |
| Freshwater Impact Assessment                     | WATSAN Africa  | January 2020   |
| Soil, Land Use and Agricultural potential survey | J.H. van der Waals                                   | August 2020    |
| Socio-Economic impact assessment                 | Environmental Management & Communication Consultancy | August 2020    |
| Archaeological Impact Assessment                 | ACRM   | January 2020   |
| Palaeontological Impact Assessment               | John E. Almond PhD (Cantab.)                         | January 2020   |
| Visual Impact Assessment                         | S.C. Lategan   | February 2020  |
| EMPr   | EnviroAfrica CC                                      | September 2020 |

## **2. Key factors considered in making the decision**

All information presented to the Department was taken into account in the Department's consideration of the application. A summary of the issues which, in the Department's view, were of the most significance is set out below.

- a) The findings of all the specialist studies conducted and their recommended mitigation measures.
- b) Comments from the Department's Biodiversity Conservation Directorate dated 24 August 2020.
- c) The letter from the Botanical Specialist dated 25 August 2020 written in response to comments from this Department's Directorate: Biodiversity Conservation dated 24 August 2020, attached as Appendix G6a of the BAR dated September 2020.
- d) The letter from the Environmental Assessment Practitioner dated 11 September 2020 written in response to comments from Directorate: Biodiversity Conservation dated 24 August 2020, attached as Appendix G6c of the BAR dated September 2020.
- e) The need for the proposed project stems from the provision of electricity to the national grid.
- f) The BAR dated September 2020 identified all legislation and guidelines that have been considered in the preparation of the BAR.
- g) The location of the proposed solar PV energy facility within a REDZ 5.
- h) The methodology used in assessing the potential impacts identified in the BAR dated September 2020 and the specialist studies have been adequately indicated.
- i) A sufficient public participation process was undertaken and the applicant has satisfied the minimum requirements as prescribed in the EIA Regulations, 2014 as amended for public involvement.

## **3. Findings**

After consideration of the information and factors listed above, the Department made the following findings -

- a) The identification and assessment of impacts are detailed in the BAR dated September 2020 and sufficient assessment of the key identified issues and impacts have been completed.
- b) The procedure followed for impact assessment is adequate for the decision-making process.
- c) The information contained in the BAR dated September 2020 is deemed to be accurate and credible.
- d) The proposed mitigation of impacts identified and assessed adequately curtails the identified impacts.
- e) EMPr measures for the pre-construction, construction and rehabilitation phases of the development were proposed and included in the BAR and will be implemented to manage the identified environmental impacts during the construction phase.



In view of the above, the Department is satisfied that, subject to compliance with the conditions contained in the environmental authorisation, the authorised activities will not conflict with the general objectives of integrated environmental management laid down in Chapter 5 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 and that any potentially detrimental environmental impacts resulting from the authorised activities can be mitigated to acceptable levels. The environmental authorisation is accordingly granted.

## Annexure 2: Locality Plan

