THE PROPOSED VEGETATION CLEARING OF APPROXIMATELY 72 HA (CONSISTING OF THREE AREAS OF APPROXIMATELY 5HA, 42HA AND 25HA) HISTORICALLY PLOUGHED LAND WHERE THE TOPSOIL WAS NOT DISTURBED THE LAST 10 YEARS ON REMAINDER OF FARM SCHALKENBOSCH 229, TULBAGH.

FINAL SCOPING REPORT DEA&DP: REF. NO. 16/3/3/2/B5/14/1011/26
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT
DEA&DP: REF. NO. 16/3/3/2/B5/14/1088/26.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The owners propose to clear vegetation of approximately 72 ha (consisting of three areas of 5ha, 42 ha and 25ha) historically ploughed land where the topsoil was not disturbed the last 10 years on remainder of farm Schalkenbosch 229, Tulbagh. No additional water will be required. No irrigation or netting will be used. No roads, pipelines or other infrastructure is required. Only clearing of indigenous vegetation to reinstate old agricultural lands. The property is zoned Agriculture and is located outside an urban area.

Enviro-EAP is appointed as independent Environmental Assessment Practitioners to undertake the Environmental Impact Assessment Process for the proposed development.

This Environmental Authorization is undertaken in terms of the National Environmental Management Act 107 of 1998 and the EIA regulations 2014 as amended set out in Government Notice (GN R 983, 984 and 985). Listed activities in terms of these regulations have been identified. The nature of the activities to be undertaken requires that a Scoping and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process be undertaken.

Below is a summary of some of the main anticipated impacts related to the proposed development:

- Increased erosion risk and due to the clearing of land for the proposed vegetation clearing leading to increase in storm water flow;
- Biodiversity/ecological impacts on i.e. terrestrial indigenous vegetation and habitat
- Aquatic Biodiversity impacts
- Animal Species impacts
- Social impacts i.e. temporary and permanent job creation;

The EIA will be evaluated by DEA&DP who will either issue an Environmental Authorization (usually with conditions), or alternatively, refuse the application for authorization.

Plant Species and Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact (Keet 2025)

This ecological assessment report details the findings of a botanical survey and ecological evaluation conducted on 10 October 2025 for the farm Schalkenbosch 229, Tulbagh, Western Cape province. The proposed activities specifically involve clearing indigenous vegetation that has established on previously ploughed land so the area can be returned to agricultural use. Three disjunct areas were assessed, named Driehoekkamp, Damkamp, and Agterstekamp.

The desktop data, which classified the area as having Very High Biodiversity Theme Sensitivity, was partially contradicted by on-site observations. Fieldwork confirmed that the area does not contain the mapped Breede Alluvium Fynbos and Breede Shale Fynbos, nor does the current Secondary Renosterveld (which has developed over the historic fields) fully conform to true Breede Shale Renosterveld due to past ploughing and the extremely high dominance of renosterbos. Thus, it also does not qualify as being classified as either CBA1 or CBA2 areas. However, it nonetheless holds ecological value.

The most critical finding is the presence of six Species of Conservation Concern (SCC), three of which are Endangered, predominantly in the eastern sections of Damkamp and Agterstekamp. Notably, a large and valuable population of the Near Threatened *Babiana villosa* was recorded. The presence of these species, along with the area's function as a supporting area for the adjacent Witzenberg Nature Reserve, justifies reclassifying the intact portions of Secondary Renosterveld as Ecological Support Area 1 (ESA1). Consequently, the true Site Ecological Importance (SEI) for the Secondary Renosterveld units, particularly the eastern parts of Damkamp as well as the entire Agterstekamp, is scored as Medium.
The most significant negative direct impacts of the proposed construction activities, primarily involving ploughing, are the complete loss of plant communities and ESA1 areas, and potential loss of SCC. Before mitigation, the significance of these impacts is assessed as High. To address this, the report proposes establishing No-Go areas encompassing the easternmost parts of Agterstekamp and Damkamp where SCC are concentrated, as well as the section overlapping the Witzenberg Nature Reserve. Furthermore, buffer zones around watercourses may require a Water Use Licence. Implementing the No-Go areas would effectively reduce the significance of the loss of SCC from High to Low. However, the residual impact on the loss of plant communities and ESA1 areas remains Medium, indicating that while critical species are protected, the overall ecological impact on Secondary Renosterveld is only partially mitigated. Active management, including the control of invasive alien plant species, is also a necessary mitigation for a Low residual impact. The cumulative impact on provincial and national conservation targets can also be mitigated from Medium-High to Low by preserving the proposed No-Go areas.

Terrestrial Animal Site Sensitivity Verification and Species Specialist Assessment Report (Venter, J.A. 2026)

This Terrestrial Animal Site Sensitivity Verification and Species Specialist Assessment Report evaluates the potential faunal impacts associated with the proposed vegetation clearing on the remainder of Farm Schalkenbosch 229, Tulbagh, Western Cape. The site is situated within a modified agricultural landscape south-east of Tulbagh, where historically ploughed fields, grazing areas and active agricultural lands occur within a broader matrix of fynbos and renosterveld associated with the Witzenberg foothills. The proposed clearing area is approximately 81 ha and consists mainly of historically modified old fields, brush-cut areas, servitude-line vegetation and secondary renosterveld.

The DFFE Screening Tool identified the Animal Species Theme as Medium sensitivity and flagged Sensitive Species 19, Mute Winter Katydid (*Brinckiella aptera*) and Peringuey's Meadow Katydid (*Conocephalus peringueyi*) for assessment. Additional species of conservation concern considered in the assessment include Grey Rhebuck, Leopard, Cape Clawless Otter, Blue Crane, African Darter, Hamerkop and Yellow-billed Egret. Field surveys recorded several faunal species within the development site and surrounding habitats, including Cape Clawless Otter, African Darter, Hamerkop and Yellow-billed Egret.

The main faunal constraint identified in the assessment is the Agterstekamp faunal landscape corridor. This area retains semi-natural secondary renosterveld, drainage-line habitat and a functional linkage with the Witzenberg Nature Reserve within an otherwise transformed agricultural valley. The corridor provides movement, cover and refuge opportunities for fauna and contributes to connectivity between the adjacent protected area, remnant natural vegetation, riparian features and broader foothill / mountain habitats. The faunal landscape connectivity receptor is assessed as having High Site Ecological Importance, and loss or narrowing of this corridor is the most important faunal impact risk associated with the proposed clearing.

A second important receptor is the secondary renosterveld that may provide marginal potential habitat for Sensitive Animal Species 19. The species is Critically Endangered and the site occurs within the broader Tulbagh–Worcester regional context. However, the habitat on site is secondary, historically ploughed, modified, located more on foothill slopes than preferred valley-bottom habitat, and no individuals were recorded during the field survey. The best remaining secondary renosterveld in Agterstekamp and parts of Damkamp is therefore assessed as Medium SEI, while disturbed old fields, cultivated areas, dwellings, gardens and other transformed habitats are assessed as Low SEI for this receptor.

The remaining species-habitat receptors are generally assessed as Low significance in relation to the proposed clearing footprint. Blue Crane and Grey Rhebuck are likely to use the broader agricultural and open habitat mosaic opportunistically. Yellow-billed Egret, African Darter, Hamerkop and Cape Clawless Otter are mainly associated with farm dams, drainage lines, riparian vegetation and wetland-edge features, which can be retained through no-go areas, watercourse buffers and corridor protection. Mute Winter Katydid and Peringuey's Meadow Katydid are considered unlikely to occur within the proposed clearing footprint, and no likely or confirmed habitat receptor was identified for these species.

The overall Site Ecological Importance for the proposed clearing footprint and PAOI is assessed as High, primarily because of the faunal landscape connectivity receptor associated with the Agterstekamp corridor and its linkage with the Witzenberg Nature Reserve. The impact assessment compares a No Clearing option with the Clearing option. The No Clearing option would retain the existing faunal habitat mosaic, while the Clearing option could result in habitat loss, reduced shrubland structure, narrowing of movement habitat and reduced ecological function if not carefully controlled.

The proposed clearing can be supported from a faunal specialist perspective only if the key avoidance and mitigation measures are implemented. The most important requirement is to retain the 100 m critical faunal corridor associated with the Agterstekamp drainage-line system and to avoid clearing, ploughing, soil disturbance or fencing barriers within this corridor. Further requirements include protection of drainage-line and riparian habitat, maintenance of watercourse buffers,

strict footprint control, avoidance or minimisation of clearing in higher-value secondary renosterveld, demarcation of no-go areas, prevention of snaring, hunting and dog-related disturbance, and allowing fauna to move away from active work areas. With these measures in place, the most significant faunal impacts can be avoided or reduced to acceptable levels; without them, residual impacts on faunal landscape connectivity could remain Medium to High.

Freshwater Risk and Impact Assessment (Morton, R., Fortune, F., & Van Zyl, K. 2026)

Delta Ecology was appointed by Enviro EAP to undertake a Freshwater Risk and Impact Assessment for the proposed vegetation clearing on the Remainder of Farm Schalkenbosch 229, located near Tulbagh in the Western Cape. The proposed activity comprises the clearing of indigenous vegetation that has established within historically cultivated agricultural fields to facilitate the return of these areas to agricultural production. The assessment was undertaken in support of the Environmental Authorisation (EA) process following the identification of Very High Aquatic Biodiversity Theme Sensitivity by the National Web-based Environmental Screening Tool.

The assessment confirmed the presence of several non-perennial rivers, associated tributaries, one seep wetland and a highly modified agricultural flow path within or adjacent to the proposed vegetation clearing areas (**Figure 1**). The non-perennial rivers were assessed as being in a largely natural to moderately modified ecological condition (PES Categories B/C), while the seep wetland was assessed as largely natural (PES Category B). These freshwater ecosystems provide important riparian habitat, maintain ecological connectivity within the upper Breede River catchment and contribute to local biodiversity.

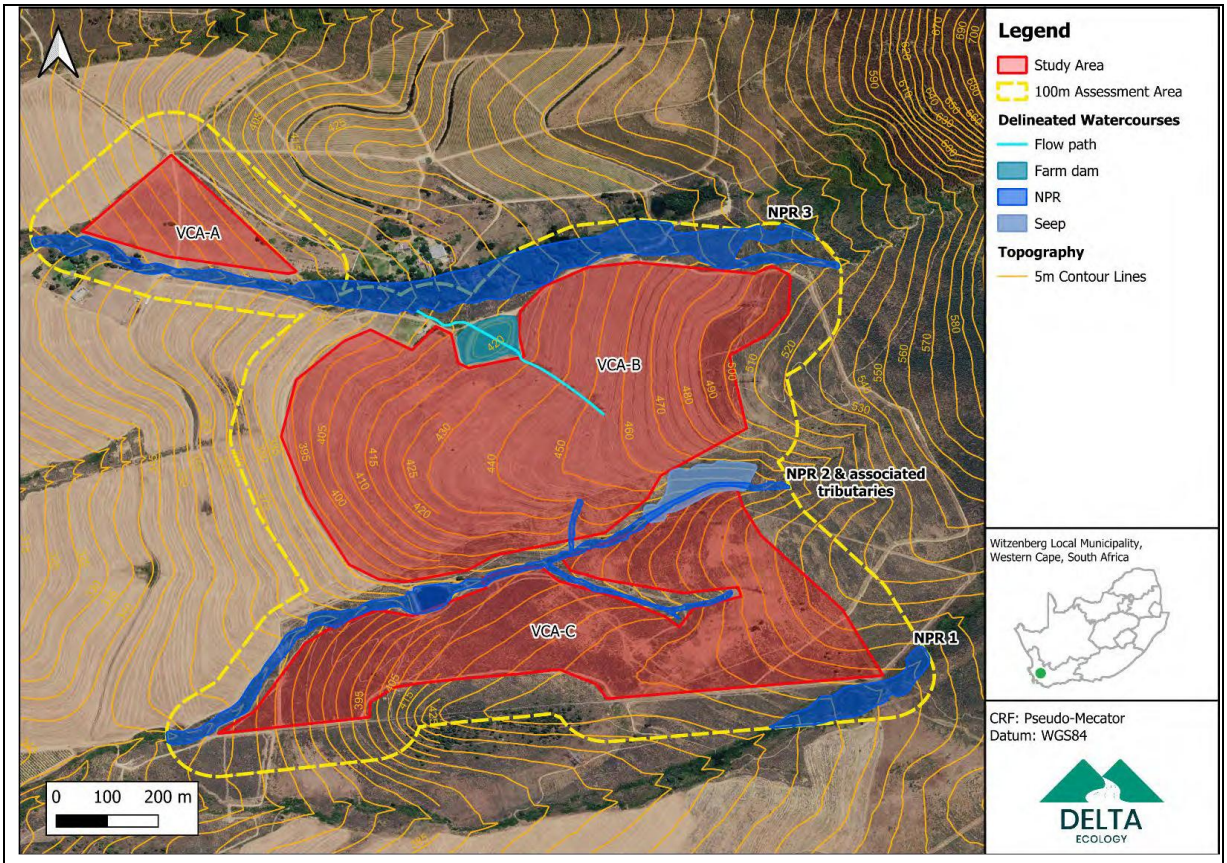

Figure 1: Delineation of the at-risk watercourses.

The agricultural flow path was assessed as PES Category E/F (Critically Modified) and functions primarily as an agricultural drainage feature with negligible remaining aquatic habitat or ecological function. Consequently, from an aquatic biodiversity perspective, avoidance of this feature and the implementation of a freshwater buffer are not considered necessary, provided that vegetation clearing and subsequent agricultural activities do not result in concentrated runoff, erosion or sediment delivery into downstream freshwater ecosystems.

The proposed activity does not include new infrastructure or instream works. The principal freshwater risks are therefore indirect and relate to vegetation clearing in proximity to freshwater ecosystems, including disturbance of riparian habitat, altered surface water runoff, increased erosion and sedimentation, and deterioration of water quality. Four potential impacts were assessed, namely:

- Loss and degradation of freshwater and riparian habitat;
- Alteration of surface water runoff and hydrological processes;
- Increased sediment input and erosion; and
- Water quality impairment.

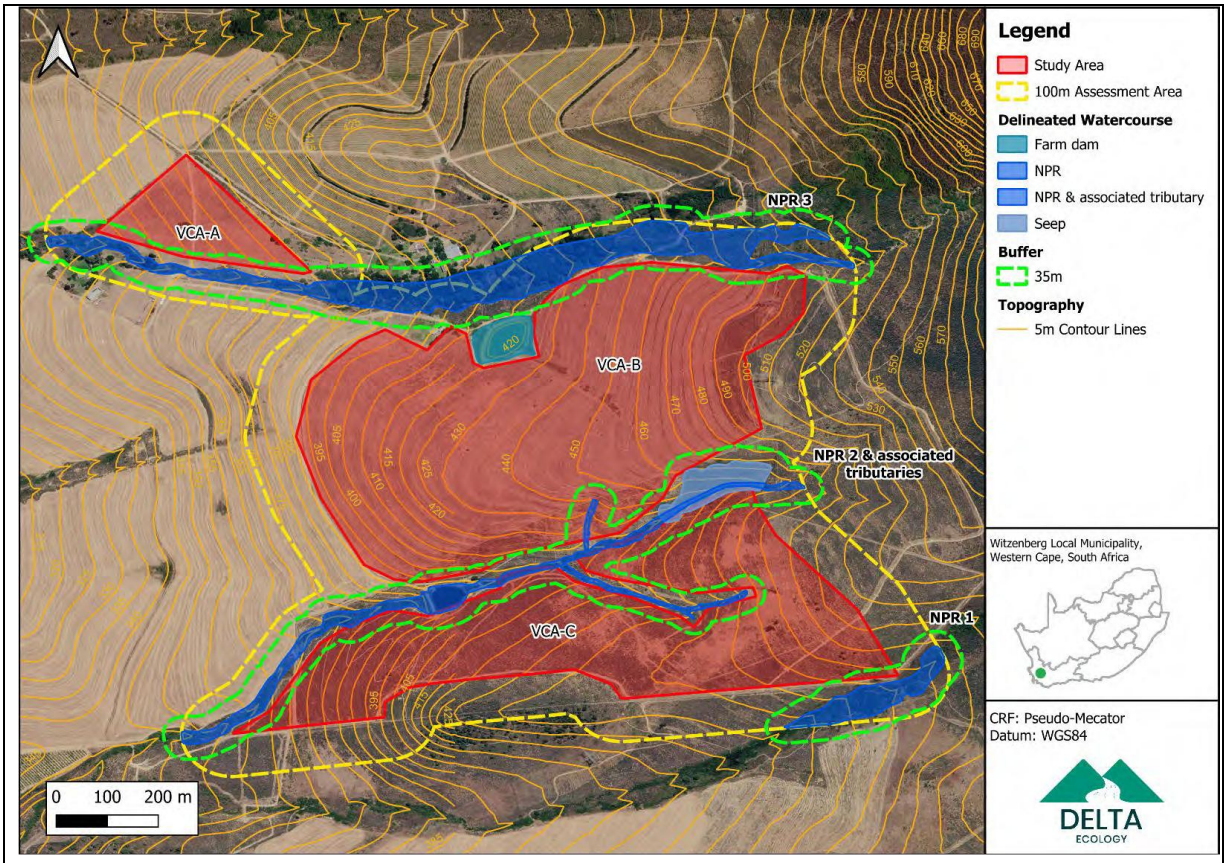

Figure 2: Recommended buffer.

The assessment identified the establishment and maintenance of a 35 m freshwater buffer around all delineated non-perennial rivers and the seep wetland as the primary mitigation measure (**Figure 2**). Additional mitigation includes maintaining existing drainage patterns and contour banks, implementing erosion and sediment control measures, protecting riparian vegetation, applying good agricultural management practices, and preventing contamination of freshwater ecosystems.

Following implementation of the recommended mitigation measures, all identified impacts are expected to reduce to Low significance. The Risk Assessment Matrix (RAM), undertaken in accordance with Government Notice 4167 of 2023, indicates that the anticipated Section 21(c) and (i) water uses fall within the Low Risk category. It is therefore considered that the proposed water uses may be authorised under the applicable General Authorisation (GA), subject to confirmation by the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS).

From an aquatic biodiversity perspective, the proposed vegetation clearing is considered acceptable, provided that the recommended mitigation measures are implemented, the delineated 35 m freshwater buffers are maintained as permanent no-go areas, and good agricultural management practices are followed throughout vegetation clearing and subsequent agricultural activities.

Specific issues to be addressed in the EMPr as per recommendations of key departments/organ of state and I&APs include:

- Detailed construction (vegetation clearing) management requirements;
- Detailed operational management requirements i.e. stormwater, erosion and alien vegetation;
- Waste management (and associated pollution prevention/mitigation);

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

"Activity" means an activity identified in any notice published by the Minister or MEC in terms of section 24D (1) (a) of the Act as a listed activity.
"Alternatives", in relation to a proposed activity, means different means of meeting the general purpose and requirements of the activity, which may include alternatives to property, activity, design, operation or technology.
"Applicant" means a person who has submitted or intends to submit an application.
"Application" means an application for an Environmental Authorization in terms of the EIA regulations 2014, as amended.
"Associated Infrastructure," means any building or infrastructure that is necessary for the functioning of a facility or activity or that is used for an ancillary service or use from the facility.
"Biodiversity" The variety of life occurring in an area, including the number of different species, the genetic wealth within each species, and the natural habitat where they are found.
"Cultural significance" This means aesthetic, architectural, historical, scientific, social, spiritual, linguistic or technological value or significance.
"Cumulative impact" in relation to an activity, means the impact of an activity that in itself may not be significant but may become significant when added to the existing and potential impacts eventuating from similar or diverse activities or undertakings in the area.

“Environmental Impact Assessment” in relation to an application to which scoping must be applied, means the process of collecting, organizing, analysing, interpreting and communicating information that is relevant to the consideration of that application.
“Environment” The environment has been defined as “The external circumstances, conditions and objects that affect the existence and development of an individual, organism or group”. These circumstances include biophysical, social, economic, historical, cultural and political aspects.
“Environmental Assessment Practitioner” Person or company, independent of the applicant (developer), that manages the environmental assessment process of a proposed project on behalf of the applicant.
“Environmental Impact Report” In-depth assessment of impacts associated with a proposed development. This forms the second phase of an Environmental Impact Assessment and follows on from the Scoping Report.
"Environmental Management Programme" means a programme presenting management and mitigation measures in relation to identified or specified activities envisaged in Chapter 5 of the National Environmental Management Act and described in regulation 34.
“Heritage resources” This means any place or object of cultural significance. It also includes archaeological resources.
"Interested and Affected Party" means an interested and affected party contemplated in section 24(4) (d) of the Act, and which in terms of that section includes - (a) Any person, group of persons or organization interested in or affected by an activity; and (b) Any organ of state that may have jurisdiction over any aspect of the activity.
"Public Participation Process" means a process in which potential interested and affected parties are given an opportunity to comment on, or raise issues relevant to, specific matters; *"Registered Interested and Affected Party", in relation to an application, means an interested and affected party whose name is recorded in the register opened for that application in terms of regulation 57.*
“Species of Conservation Concern” All those species included in the categories of endangered, vulnerable or rare, as defined by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources.
"Significant impact" means an impact that by its magnitude, duration, intensity or probability of occurrence may have a notable effect on one or more aspects of the environment.

ABBREVIATIONS

CBA:	Critical Biodiversity Area
DWS:	Department of Water and Sanitation
DFFE:	Department of Forestry, Fisheries and Environment
DEA&DP	Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning
EAP:	Environmental Assessment Practitioner
EMP:	Environmental Management Programme
EIA:	Environmental Impact Assessment
EIR:	Environmental Impact Report
FSR:	Final Scoping Report
HIA:	Heritage Impact Assessment

I&APs: Interested and Affected Parties
IDP: Integrated Development Plan
LUPO Land Use Planning Ordinance (Ordinance 15 of 1985)
MAR: Mean Annual Rainfall
NEMA: National Environmental Management Act No. 107 of 1998
NWA: National Water Act No. 36 of 1998
PPP: Public Participation Process
PHRA: Provincial Heritage Resources Agency
SACNASP: South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions
SANBI: South African National Biodiversity Institute
SDF: Spatial Development Framework
SM: Saldanha Bay Municipality
ToR: Terms of Reference

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared in compliance with the requirements of the following legislation:

- The National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998) ["NEMA"];
- The Environmental Impact Assessment ("EIA") Regulations contained in Government Notice (GN) No. R983, 984 and 985 of 2014 as promulgated in terms of the NEMA ["EIA Regulations"] as amended.

The purpose of these Regulations is to regulate procedures and set criteria as contemplated in Chapter 5 of the Act to enable the submission, processing, consideration and decision-making regarding applications for environmental authorization of activities and matters pertaining thereto.

1.1 SCOPE AND CONTENTS OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

Table 1: EIA Scope of Assessment and Content (as required by Appendix 3 of the EIA Regulations, 2014 as amended)

Requirement	Section in Report
(a) details of – (i) the EAP who prepared the report; and (ii) the expertise of the EAP, including a curriculum vitae;	1.2 Appendix H:EAP CV
(b) the location of the activity, including: (i) the 21 digit Surveyor General code of each cadastral land parcel; (ii) where available, the physical address and farm name; and (iii) where the required information in items (i) and (ii) is not available, the coordinates of the boundary of the property or properties;	1.3
(c) a plan which locates the proposed activity or activities applied for as well as the associated structures and infrastructure at an appropriate scale, or, if it is – (i) a linear activity, a description and coordinates of the corridor in which the proposed activity or activities is to be undertaken; (ii) on land where the property has not been defined, the coordinates within which the activity is to be undertaken;	Appendix A: Locality Maps Appendix B: Site Plans
(d) a description of the scope of the proposed activity, including – (i) all listed and specified activities triggered and being applied for; and (ii) a description of the associated structures and infrastructure related to the development;	1.3
(e) a description of the policy and legislative context within which the development is located and an explanation of how the proposed development complies with and responds to the legislation and policy context;	1.4

Requirement	Section in Report
(f) a motivation for the need and desirability for the proposed development, including the need and desirability of the activity in the context of the preferred location;	2
(g) a motivation for the preferred development footprint within the approved site;	3
(h) a full description of the process followed to reach the proposed development footprint within the approved site, including: (i) details of the development footprint alternatives considered; (ii) details of the public participation process undertaken in terms of regulation 41 of the Regulations, including copies of the supporting documents and inputs; (iii) a summary of the issues raised by interested and affected parties, and an indication of the manner in which the issues were incorporated, or the reasons for not including them; (iv) the environmental attributes associated with the development footprint alternatives focusing on the geographical, physical, biological, social, economic, heritage and cultural aspects; (v) the impacts and risks identified including the nature, significance, consequence, extent, duration and probability of the impacts, including the degree to which these impacts – (aa) can be reversed; (bb) may cause irreplaceable loss of resources; and (cc) can be avoided, managed or mitigated; (vi) the methodology used in determining and ranking the nature, significance, consequences, extent, duration and probability of potential environmental impacts and risks; (vii) positive and negative impacts that the proposed activity and alternatives will have on the environment and on the community that may be affected focusing on the geographical, physical, biological, social, economic, heritage and cultural aspects; (viii) the possible mitigation measures that could be applied and level of residual risk; (ix) if no alternative development locations for the activity were investigated, the motivation for not considering such; and (x) a concluding statement indicating the preferred alternative development location within the approved site;	3 4 & Appendix D: Public Participation Process 5 6
(i) a full description of the process undertaken to identify, assess and rank the impacts the activity and associated structures and infrastructure will impose on the preferred location through the life of the activity, including - (i) a description of all environmental issues and risks that were identified during the environmental impact assessment process; and (ii) an assessment of the significance of each issue and risk and an indication of the extent to which the issue and risk could be avoided or addressed by the adoption of mitigation measures;	6
(j) an assessment of each identified potentially significant impact	6

Requirement	Section in Report
and risk, including – (i) cumulative impacts; (ii) the nature, significance and consequences of the impact and risk; (iii) the extent and duration of the impact and risk; (iv) the probability of the impact and risk occurring; (v) the degree to which the impact and risk can be reversed; (vi) the degree to which the impact and risk may cause irreplaceable loss of resources; and (vii) the degree to which the impact and risk can be mitigated;	
(k) where applicable, a summary of the findings and recommendations of any specialist report complying with Appendix 6 to these Regulations and an indication as to how these findings and recommendations have been included in the final assessment report;	7
(l) an environmental impact statement which contains – (i) a summary of the key findings of the environmental impact assessment: (ii) a map at an appropriate scale which superimposes the proposed activity and its associated structures and infrastructure on the environmental sensitivities of the preferred site indicating any areas that should be avoided, including buffers; and (iii) a summary of the positive and negative impacts and risks of the proposed activity and identified alternatives;	3 8 Appendix A: Locality Maps Appendix B: Site Plans
(m) based on the assessment, and where applicable, recommendations from specialist reports, the recording of proposed impact management objectives, and the impact management outcomes for the development for inclusion in the EMPr as well as for inclusion as conditions of authorisation;	7
(n) the final proposed alternatives which respond to the impact management measures, avoidance, and mitigation measures identified through the assessment;	3 8
(o) any aspects which were conditional to the findings of the assessment either by the EAP or specialist which are to be included as conditions of authorisation	9
(p) a description of any assumptions, uncertainties and gaps in knowledge which relate to the assessment and mitigation measures proposed;	9
(q) a reasoned opinion as to whether the proposed activity should or should not be authorised, and if the opinion is that it should be authorised, any conditions that should be made in respect of that authorisation;	9
(r) where the proposed activity does not include operational aspects, the period for which the environmental authorisation is required and the date on which the activity will be concluded and the post construction monitoring requirements finalised;	9
(s) an undertaking under oath or affirmation by the EAP in relation to:	11

Requirement	Section in Report
(i) the correctness of the information provided in the reports; (ii) the inclusion of comments and inputs from stakeholders and I&APs; (iii) the inclusion of inputs and recommendations from the specialist reports where relevant; and (iv) any information provided by the EAP to interested and affected parties and any responses by the EAP to comments or inputs made by interested or affected parties;	
(t) where applicable, details of any financial provisions for the rehabilitation, closure, and ongoing post decommissioning management of negative environmental impacts;	9
(u) an indication of any deviation from the approved scoping report, including the plan of study, including – (i) any deviation from the methodology used in determining the significance of potential environmental impacts and risks; and (ii) a motivation for the deviation;	9
(v) any specific information that may be required by the competent authority; and	4
(w) any other matters required in terms of section 24(4)(a) and (b) of the Act.	4

1.2 ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PRACTITIONER WHO COMPILED THIS REPORT

The role of the Environmental Assessment Practitioner ("EAP") is to manage the application for an Environmental Authorization on behalf of the applicant. The EAP must adhere to all relevant legislation and guidelines, ensuring that the reports contain all the necessary and relevant information required by the competent authority to decide. It is the responsibility of the EAP to perform all work relating to the application in an objective, appropriate and responsible manner. The EAP must comply with Regulation 13 of the EIA Regulations R982 of 2014 as amended, detailing the requirements for an EAP.

Mr Hanekom is a registered Professional Natural Scientist with the South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions ("SACNASP") and a Reg. EAP (EAPASA): 2020/1146 who holds a Masters Technologiae, Nature Conservation ("Vegetation Ecology and Biodiversity Assessment") degree from the Cape Peninsula University of Technology.

He further qualified in Environmental Management Systems ISO 14001:2004, at the Centre for Environmental Management, North-West University, as well as Environmental Management Systems ISO 14001:2004 Audit: Internal Auditors Course to ISO 19011:2003 level, from the Centre for Environmental Management, North-West University qualifying him to audit to ISO/SANS environmental compliance and EMS standards.

Mr Hanekom has been responsible for many environmental impact assessments and several EIA, waste license and atmospheric emission license applications as well as being involved in the implementation of several environmental management

systems.

1.3 PROPOSED ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION AND APPLICABLE ACTIVITIES AS APPLIED FOR

An application for Environmental Authorisation was submitted to the competent authorities in terms of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA), 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998), the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations 2014 (as amended).

The owners propose to clear vegetation of approximately 72 ha (consisting of three areas of 5ha, 42 ha and 25ha) historically ploughed land where the topsoil was not disturbed the last 10 years on remainder of farm Schalkenbosch 229, Tulbagh. No additional water will be required. No irrigation or netting will be used. No roads, pipelines or other infrastructure is required. Only clearing of indigenous vegetation to reinstate old agricultural lands. The property is zoned Agriculture and is located outside an urban area.

Table 2: Listed Activities associated with the proposed development:

Activity No(s):	Provide the relevant **Basic Assessment Activities** as set out in **Listing Notice 1**	Describe the portion of the <u>proposed development</u> to which the applicable listed activity relates.
N/A		
Activity No(s):	Provide the relevant **Basic Assessment Activities** as set out in **Listing Notice 3**	Describe the portion of the proposed development to which the applicable listed activity relates.
Activity 12: The clearance of an area of 300 square metres or more of indigenous vegetation ~~except where such clearance of indigenous vegetation is required for maintenance purposes undertaken in accordance with a maintenance management plan.~~ <u>(i) Western Cape</u> (i) Within any critically endangered or endangered ecosystem listed in terms of section 52 of the NEMBA or prior to the publication of such a list, within an area that has been identified as critically endangered in the National Spatial Biodiversity Assessment 2004; ~~(ii) Within critical biodiversity areas identified in bioregional plans;~~ ~~(iii) Within the littoral active zone or 100 metres inland from high water mark of the sea or an estuarine functional zone, whichever distance is the greater, excluding where such removal will occur behind the development setback line on~~		Approximately 72 ha of Breede Shale fynbos and Breede Shale Renosterveld both with an endangered ecosystem protection status will be cleared.

~~erven in urban areas;~~ ~~(iv) On land, where, at the time of the coming into effect of this Notice or thereafter such land was zoned open space, conservation or had an equivalent zoning; or~~ ~~(v) On land designated for protection or conservation purposes in an Environmental Management Framework adopted in the prescribed manner, or a Spatial Development Framework adopted by the MEC or Minister.~~		
Activity No(s):	Provide the relevant **Scoping and EIR Activities** as set out in **Listing Notice 2**	Describe the portion of the proposed development to which the applicable listed activity relates.
Activity 15: The clearance of an area of 20 hectares or more of indigenous vegetation, excluding where such clearance of indigenous vegetation is required for— (i) the undertaking of a linear activity; or (ii) maintenance purposes undertaken in accordance with a maintenance management plan.		Approximately 72 ha of Breede Shale fynbos and Breede Shale Renosterveld both with an endangered ecosystem protection status will be cleared.

Note:

- Only those activities listed which will be applied for shall be considered for authorisation. The onus is on the Applicant to ensure that all applicable listed activities are included in the application. Environmental Authorisation must be obtained prior to commencement with each applicable listed activity. If a specific listed activity is not included in an Environmental Authorisation, a new application for Environmental Authorisation will have to be submitted.
- The Minister responsible for mineral resources is the Competent Authority to deal with all applications where the listed or specified activity is directly related to-
  (a) prospecting or exploration of a mineral or petroleum resource; or
  (b) extraction and primary processing of a mineral or petroleum resource.

Coordinates of the proposed site(s) for all alternatives: Area 1			
Latitude (S)	33º	18‘	43.66“
Longitude (E)	19º	11‘	39.96“
Coordinates of the proposed site(s) for all alternatives: Area 2			
Latitude (S)	33º	19‘	03.69“
Longitude (E)	19º	12‘	06.77“
Coordinates of the proposed site(s) for all alternatives: Area 3			
Latitude (S)	33º	19‘	12.64“
Longitude (E)	19º	12‘	21.70“

1.4 LEGISLATIVE ASPECTS

Allocation of applicable environmental legislation are listed in Table 3 and the most relevant of these is discussed below

Table 3: Applicable Legislation and/or Policies etc.

List any other legislation that is applicable to the proposed activity or development.		
LEGISLATION	**ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY and how it is relevant to this application**	**TYPE Permit/license/authorisation/comment / relevant consideration**
Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996	General application to individual rights of all on and adjacent to the sites.	Public Participation Process to be conducted
National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998) [NEMA] and relevant regulations	Western Cape Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning	Environmental Authorisation Application
National Environmental Management: Waste Act, 2008 (Act No. 59 of 2008) [NEMWA] and relevant regulations	Department of Environmental Affairs	Waste management requirements.
National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act 10 of 2004 [NEMBA]	Western Cape Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning	N/A
National Water Act, 1998 (Act No. 36 of 1998) [NWA] and relevant regulations	Department of Water Affairs	No activities within water courses or impacting on water features. Only clearing of indigenous vegetation to re-establish old agricultural lands. 32m buffer areas maintained to protect water courses.
Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act, 43 of 1983	National Department of Agriculture, forestry and Fisheries	Clearing of indigenous vegetation to re-establish old agricultural lands. Agriculture erosion protection contours will be used and fixed where necessary to prevent erosion.

[CARA]	Western Cape Department of Agriculture	
National Health Act, 61of 2003 [NHA]		N/A
National Building Regulations and Building Standards Act 103 of 1977 [NBRBSA] and relevant regulations		N/A
National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999 [NHRA]	Heritage Western Cape South African Heritage Resource Agency	NID
National Veld and Forest Fire Act 101 of 1998 [NVFFA]		N/A
Western Cape Noise Control Regulations [P.N. 200/2003]		NA

POLICY/BY-LAW	**ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY and how it is relevant to this application**	**TYPE Permit/license/authorisation/comment / relevant consideration**
Saldanha Bay Municipality Spatial Development Framework	Witzenberg Municipality	Comment
Saldanha Bay Municipality Integrated Development Plan	Witzenberg Municipality	Comment

Protocols

The protocol (Published in Government Notice No. 648 GOVERNMENT GAZETTE 4542110 MAY 2019. Published in Government Notice No. 1150 GOVERNMENT GAZETTE 43855 30 October 2020. Published in Government Notice No. Government Notice No. 320, Government Gazette 43110: 20 March 2020. These

gazettes are also available free online at www.gpwonline.co.za) provides the criteria for the reporting of requirements for the assessment and reporting of impacts as identified in the DEA Screening tool report.
Published in Government Notice No. 320 GOVERNMENT GAZETTE 43110 20 MARCH 2020 GAZETTED FOR IMPLEMENTATION: BIODIVERSITY PROTOCOL FOR THE SPECIALIST ASSESSMENT AND MINIMUM REPORT CONTENT REQUIREMENTS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS ON TERRESTRIAL BIODIVERSITY
Published in Government Notice No. 320 GOVERNMENT GAZETTE 43110 20 MARCH 2020 GAZETTED FOR IMPLEMENTATION: BIODIVERSITY PROTOCOL FOR THE SPECIALIST ASSESSMENT AND MINIMUM REPORT CONTENT REQUIREMENTS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS ON AQUATIC BIODIVERSITY
Published in Government Notice No. 1150 GOVERNMENT GAZETTE 43855 30 OCTOBER 2020 GAZETTED FOR IMPLEMENTATION: PLANT SPECIES PROTOCOL FOR THE SPECIALIST ASSESSMENT AND MINIMUM REPORT CONTENT REQUIREMENTS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS ON PLANT SPECIES
Published in Government Notice No. 1150 GOVERNMENT GAZETTE 43855 30 OCTOBER 2020 GAZETTED FOR IMPLEMENTATION: ANIMAL SPECIES PROTOCOL FOR THE SPECIALIST ASSESSMENT AND MINIMUM REPORT CONTENT REQUIREMENTS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS ON ANIMAL SPECIES

Policies

An environmental policy is derived from the guiding principle whereby an organization first defines the scope of its commitment to the environment. The policy is a public document that communicates the organization's overall approach to managing its interaction with the environment.

Various components of Environmental Management are strongly influenced by the environmental policies in terms of their scope and level of resource allocation. As a rule, objectives and targets are set to achieve compliance with the environmental policy, and overall environmental performance is evaluated against the organization's stated intent reflecting a level of commitment.

Policy must meet the following criteria:

- It must be relevant to the nature of an organization's activities, and the specific environmental aspects associated with those activities;
- It must consider specific local environmental conditions;
- It must consider relevant environmental legislation;
- It must define and formulate the organization's fundamental approach to environmental management; and
- It must set a precedent for communication and liaison with all stakeholders.

Policies considered in the compilation of this document include:

- National Spatial Development Framework;

- Provincial Spatial Development Framework for the Western Cape;
- CapeNature (2024). 2023 Western Cape Biodiversity Spatial Plan and Guidelines. Biodiversity Capabilities.

1.4.3 Guidelines

The following guidelines are applicable to this project, and have been considered in the preparation of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report:

- Guideline on Public Participation;
- Information of Generic Terms of Reference and Project Schedules;
- Circular EADP 0028/2014: One Environmental Management System;
- Guideline for Involving a Heritage Specialist in an EIA Process (2005);
- Guideline for the Review of Specialist Input in the EIA process (June 2005);
- Guideline for Environmental Management Plans (June 2005);
- Guideline on Alternatives (March 2013); and
- Guideline on Need and Desirability (March 2013).
- The National Biodiversity Offset Guideline (23 June 2023)

1.5 APPROACH TO THE PROJECT

As outlined in the Scoping Report, there are three distinct phases in the EIA process, as required in terms of the NEMA, namely the Initial Application, the Scoping Report and the EIA phases. The Initial Application phase entailed the submission of the Application Form, whilst the Scoping Report phase entailed the compilation and submission of the Scoping Report and Plan of Study for EIA. This report covers the EIA phase.

The EIR describes and assesses the range of feasible alternatives identified during the Scoping phase. The EIR also provides an assessment of all possible direct and cumulative environmental impacts. The Draft EMP, which provides management and mitigation measures for all the identified impacts accompany the EIA. The ultimate purpose of the EIR is to provide a basis for informed decision-making, firstly by the applicant with respect to the alternatives they wish to pursue, and secondly by the environmental authority regarding the environmental acceptability of the applicant's preferred option.

The approach to the EIA phase entailed the following:

- Undertaking a further review of relevant literature;
- Appointing various specialists to undertake the specialist studies as identified during the Scoping phase.
- Additional public consultation: This forms an integral component of this investigation and enables Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) to comment on the potential environmental impacts associated with the feasible alternatives.

This Draft EIA Report will be submitted to the registered I&APs and key department to identify additional issues, which they may feel have not been adequately addressed during the Scoping Report. Once the EIA Report has been finalised and

all I&AP comments have been incorporated into the report, the final EIA Report will be submitted to DEA&DP for their review and decision making.

Plan of study as was identified during the Scoping phase for the EIA phase:

- **Alternatives will be further investigated**, in a re-iterative manner, so as to avoid or minimize negative impacts and maximize potential benefits; The entire project team, including the specialist consultants, will be involved in the evaluation of alternatives;

- **Detailed Impact Assessment**:

Statements regarding the potential significance of residual impacts, taking into account proposed mitigation measures will be provided in the EIA;

- **An Environmental Management Programme (EMP)** covering construction, operational and decommissioning phases of the proposed development will be prepared after input from specialists, incorporating recommendations for mitigation, monitoring and evaluation are received. Specific issues to be addressed in the EMPr as per recommendations of key departments/organ of state and I&APs include:
  - Detailed construction (vegetation clearing) management requirements;
  - Detailed operational management requirements i.e. stormwater, erosion and alien vegetation;
  - Waste management (and associated pollution prevention/mitigation);

- **Specialist Assessments**:

Specialist Report Identified	**Reason/s for the Assessment to be Conducted or Not to be Conducted (as provided by the EAP)**
Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment Palaeontology Impact Assessment Impact Assessment, including visual impact on heritage resources.	S38 Notice of Intent to Development submitted via SAHRA website portal.
Terrestrial Biodiversity and Plant Species Specialist (Ecology)	Assessment conducted by Dr Jan-Hendrik Keet
Animal Species Specialist	Assessment conducted by Prof J.A Venter
Aquatic Biodiversity Assessment	Freshwater Risk and Impact Assessment (Morton, R., Fortune, F., & Van Zyl, K. 2026)

SECTION 2: NEED AND DESIRABILITY

2.1 RATIONALE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT

MOTIVATION FOR APPLICATION:

The purpose of this application is to clear approximately 72 ha (consisting of three areas of 5ha, 42 ha and 25ha) historically ploughed land where the topsoil was not disturbed the last 10 years on remainder of farm Schalkenbosch 229, Tulbagh. No additional water will be required. No irrigation intended. No netting will be used. No roads, pipelines or other infrastructure is required. Only clearing of indigenous vegetation to reinstate old agricultural lands. No rezoning or consent of the area is required from Witzenberg Municipality. The whole property is zoned Agriculture 1 and used for agricultural purposes.

The farm is approximately 218ha in size. Approximately 95% of the farm was historically ploughed and cultivated. Of this approximately 50% is still being cultivated and planted with winter rain crops. The clearing of the vegetation will ensure that the agricultural lands become available again to plant grains. Without this agricultural fields not planted for longer than 10 years, the financial viability of the property is compromised. The clearing of the 72ha old lands to put it into agricultural production will ensure the financial viability of the farm.

2.2. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

2.2.1. Integrated Development Plan and Spatial Development Framework

PROVINCIAL POLICY CONTEXT

The **Western Cape Provincial Spatial Development Framework (PSDF)** was approved and published in 2014. The main guiding principle on which the PSDF is based is the need to achieve sustainable development. Development proposals are only seen as being sustainable when they are ecologically justifiable, socially equitable and economically viable, or otherwise referred to as the triple bottom line approach.

The PSDF supports and contributes to the National Development Plan (NDP) of 2012 which strives to eliminate poverty and reduce inequality by creating jobs and livelihoods, transform urban spaces, expand infrastructure, provide capable public services, etc. The proposed housing project will support the NDP initiative by creating a sustainable settlement in a suitable location and improving the infrastructure increasing the availability to more people in the area. The PSDF further supports the OneCape 2040 initiative on the following key transition areas of the OneCape vision:

- Integrated neighbourhoods and upgrading the built environment
- Integrated services planning and provision
- Design and produce settlements that addresses resource scarcity
- Healthy, accessible, liveable, multi-opportunity communities

The proposed development focus on agricultural activities on agricultural zoned land surrounded by existing agricultural activities.

The proposed clearing of indigenous vegetation to reinstate old agricultural lands further comply with the PSDF's spatial agendas, key transitions, themes and resources.

The climate in Witzenberg is known for its hot and dry summer days. Winds are

seasonal and generally north-westerly or south-easterly. The average annual rainfall in Ceres is about 1 088 mm and the average temperature range is 2,4°C to 29,9°C. Located in the picturesque and fertile Breede Valley, Witzenberg is best known for its fruit and wine products. The region is also well-known for producing other agriculture-linked products such as olives and grain, as well as for producing beef and pork products. Horse and cattle stud farms are also found within the municipal area. In 2022, the Witzenberg municipal area boasted 8 fixed primary healthcare clinics and 6 mobile/satellite clinics. Additionally, it houses 1 district hospital, 7 Antiretroviral Treatment (ART) sites, and 16 Tuberculosis (TB) clinics. This signifies a comprehensive healthcare infrastructure within the municipal area, constituting 17.9 per cent of the total healthcare facilities in the Cape Winelands District. The allocation of resources to health facilities underscores the commitment to public health, contributing to the overall well-being of the population. However, a decrease in the number of patients receiving ART treatment raises concerns about sustained viral suppression, emphasizing the importance of continuous care in mitigating the transmission of HIV and managing healthcare costs. Between 2023 and 2025, the total number of employed individuals increased by 3 888, with agriculture, forestry and fishing contributing more than 40.2 per cent of new jobs (1 556 jobs). This growth marked further progress in the journey to pre-COVID levels of economic performance. The positive trends in labour force participation (up by 3.8 percentage points) and labour absorption (4.8 percentage points) point to a decrease in both the economically inactive population and the unemployment rate (which fell by 1.3 percentage points in 2023). An analysis of the spatial tax data that assesses the jobs growth based on the number of establishments in a region shows a different view. This data reveals that Witzenberg only grew by 0.7 per cent of the total FTE in 2023, after being on an upward trajectory in 2022. The recent job losses seem to be the culmination of a loss of land due to excessive fires and flooding, coupled with dilapidated infrastructure and financial constraints. However, Witzenberg recorded just under 41 000 FTE jobs. Notably, the municipal area now has more jobs than in the pre-COVID period[1].

The local economy of the Witzenberg municipal area is driven by the agriculture, forestry and fishing sector (17.3 per cent), the wholesale and retail trade, catering and accommodation sector (16.9 per cent), the finance and business services sector (15.4 per cent) and the manufacturing sector (14.2 per cent). Combined, these sectors contribute more than R5.0 billion to the economy.

Approximately 72ha of agricultural lands to plant grains were not ploughed for 10 years. Without these agricultural fields not panted for longer than 10 years, the financial viability of the property is compromised.

1. Is the activity permitted in terms of the property's land use rights	YES	~~NO~~	Please explain
Agricultural activities on agricultural zoned land surrounded by existing agricultural activities			

2. Is the activity in line with the following?			
(a) Provincial Spatial Development Framework	YES	~~NO~~	Please

[1] Witzenberg Municipality Review Integrated Development Plan 2025-2026

(PSDF)			explain
Agricultural activities on agricultural zoned land surrounded by existing agricultural activities			
(b) Urban edge / Edge of Built environment for the area	~~YES~~	NO	Please explain
Agricultural activities on agricultural zoned land surrounded by existing agricultural activities			
(c) Integrated Development Plan and Spatial Development Framework of the Local Municipality (e.g. will the approval of this application compromise the integrity of the existing approved and credible municipal IDP and SDF?).	~~YES~~	NO	Please explain
Agricultural activities on agricultural zoned land surrounded by existing agricultural activities			
(d) Approved Structure Plan of the Municipality	YES	~~NO~~	Please explain
Agricultural activities on agricultural zoned land surrounded by existing agricultural activities			
(e) An Environmental Management Framework (EMF) adopted by the Department	YES	~~NO~~	Please explain
Agricultural activities on agricultural zoned land surrounded by existing agricultural activities			
(f) Any other Plans (e.g. Guide Plan)	YES	~~NO~~	Please explain
Agricultural activities on agricultural zoned land surrounded by existing agricultural activities			

3. Is the land use considered within the timeframe intended by the existing approved Spatial Development Framework (SDF) agreed to by the relevant environmental authority	YES	~~NO~~	Please explain
Agricultural activities on agricultural zoned land surrounded by existing agricultural activities			

4. Should development, or if applicable, expansion of the town/area concerned in terms of this land use (associated with the activity being applied for) occurred here?	YES	~~NO~~	Please explain
Agricultural activities on agricultural zoned land surrounded by existing agricultural activities			

5. Do the community/area need the activity and the associated land use concerned	YES	~~NO~~	Please explain
Agricultural activities on agricultural zoned land surrounded by existing agricultural activities			

6. Is the necessary services with adequate capacity available?	YES	~~NO~~	Please explain
Activity does not require services			

7. Is this development provided for in the infrastructure planning of the municipality, and if not what will the implication be on the infrastructure planning of the municipality (priority and placement of services and opportunity costs)?	YES	~~NO~~	Please explain
Activity does not require services			

8. Is this project part of a national programme to address an issue of national concern or importance?	~~YES~~	NO	Please explain
Agricultural activities on agricultural owned property.			

9. Does location factors favour this land use (associated with the activity applied for) at this place?	YES	~~NO~~	Please explain
Agricultural activities on agricultural zoned land surrounded by existing agricultural activities			

10. How does the activity or the land use associated with the activity applied for, impact on sensitive natural and cultural areas (built and rural/natural environment)?	YES	NO	Please explain
Taking in consideration and the fact that the areas were previously ploughed and the expected low species diversity and poor vegetation structure, the impact of the clearing of the areas on ecological and biodiversity is assessed to be low. Appropriate buffers, ecological connectivity and exclusion of areas that constrain Species of Conservation Concern are excluded from the proposed vegetation clearing areas. It is further recommended that no further vegetation be cleared on the property.			

11. How does the development impact on people's health and wellbeing (e.g. in terms of noise, odours, visual character and sense of place, etc.)?	~~YES~~	NO	Please explain
It does not impact on peoples health and wellbeing. Previously plough areas will be reinstated as agricultural lands.			
12. Does the proposed activity or the land use associated with the activity applied for, result in unacceptable opportunity costs?	~~YES~~	NO	Please explain
Previously plough areas will be reinstated as agricultural lands. The land owner will carry this costs, but increasing and reinstating the agricultural lands on site will improve the financial viability of the property.			

13. What are the cumulative impacts (positive and negative) of the land use associated with the activity applied for?	YES	NO	Please explain
On indigenous vegetation it was low. On restoring agricultural viability on the property, it was positive.			

14. Is the development the best practicable environmental option for this land/site?	YES	~~NO~~	Please explain
On indigenous vegetation it was low. On restoring agricultural viability on the property, it was positive.			

15. What are the benefits to society in general and to the local communities?	Please explain
No real benefits to the local community except for job securing on the farm.	

16. Any other need and desirability considerations related to the activity?	Please explain
NO	

17. Please describe how the general objectives of Integrated Environmental Management as set out in section 23 of NEMA were taken into account:
The general objectives of Integrated Environmental Management were taken into account by considering all the potential negative and positive impacts of the proposed project on both the biophysical and socio-economic environments. In order to avoid potentially significant impacts, specialist inputs were obtained in relation to terrestrial and aquatic ecology. The public and authorities will be given adequate opportunity to comment on the proposed project and to participate in the Assessment Process.
18. Please describe how the **principles of environmental management** as set out in section 2 of NEMA were taken into account:
All decisions during the assessment by all involved for the activity promote the integration of the principles of environmental management set out in section 2 to minimize and mitigate any significant effect on the environment. Specialists involved in the assessment of the activity are independent and ensure that the effects of the activities on the environment receive adequate consideration before recommendations and actions are taken for inclusion in the EA conditions. Adequate and appropriate opportunity for public participation will be provided and included in Appendix as per the guidelines and regulations in decisions that may affect the environment. The consideration of environmental attributes in management and decision making which may have a significant effect on the environment was ensured. The modes of environmental management best suited to ensuring that a particular activity is pursued in accordance with the principles of environmental management set out in section 2 were identified and employed.

SECTION 3: ALTERNATIVES ASSESSED AND OUTCOMES RELATING TO THE PREFFERED ALTERNATIVE/S

Regulation 21(3) of EIA Regulations, 2014 as amended requires that the Scoping Report include a description of any feasible and reasonable alternatives that have been identified. Regulation 1 of EIA Regulations, 2014 as amended defines alternatives as follows:

"alternatives", in relation to a proposed activity, means different means of meeting the general purpose and requirements of the activity, which may include alternatives

to the—
(a) property on which or location where the activity is proposed to be undertaken,
(b) type of activity to be undertaken,
(c) design or layout of the activity,
(d) technology to be used in the activity, or
(e) operational aspects of the activity,
and includes the option of not implementing the activity.

The alternatives considered for this project are described below.

3.1. PROPERTY AND LOCATION/SITE ALTERNATIVES

DETAILS OF ALTERNATIVES
LOCATION / SITE / PROPERTY ALTERNATIVE

Three areas of approximately 72 ha (5ha, 51 ha and 37ha) were identified on the remainder of farm Schalkenbosch 229, Tulbagh.

3.2. ACTIVITY ALTERNATIVES

The only activity alternative is to clear historically ploughed land where the topsoil was not disturbed the last 10 years on remainder of farm Schalkenbosch 229, Tulbagh in order to reinstate the old agricultural lands for ploughing and cultivation purposes. No additional water will be required. No irrigation intended. No netting will be used. No roads, pipelines or other infrastructure is required. Only clearing of indigenous vegetation to reinstate old agricultural lands.

3.3. Design or layout alternatives

Two layout alternatives will be assessed.
The alternative layout is to clear approximately 93 ha (consisting of three areas of 5ha, 51 ha and 37ha) historically ploughed land where the topsoil was not disturbed the last 10 years on remainder of farm Schalkenbosch 229, Tulbagh in order to reinstate the old agricultural lands for ploughing and cultivation purposes. No additional water will be required. No irrigation intended. No netting will be used. No roads, pipelines or other infrastructure is required. Only clearing of indigenous vegetation to reinstate old agricultural lands.

Figure 3: Alternative clearing area

The preferred layout is to clear approximately 72 ha (consisting of three areas of 5ha, 42 ha and 25ha) historically ploughed land where the topsoil was not disturbed the last 10 years on remainder of farm Schalkenbosch 229, Tulbagh. No additional water will be required. No irrigation intended. No netting will be used. No roads, pipelines or other infrastructure is required. Only clearing of indigenous vegetation to reinstate old agricultural lands. The property is zoned Agriculture and is located outside an urban area. The preferred alternative accommodate and exclude no go areas as identified in the specialist reports.

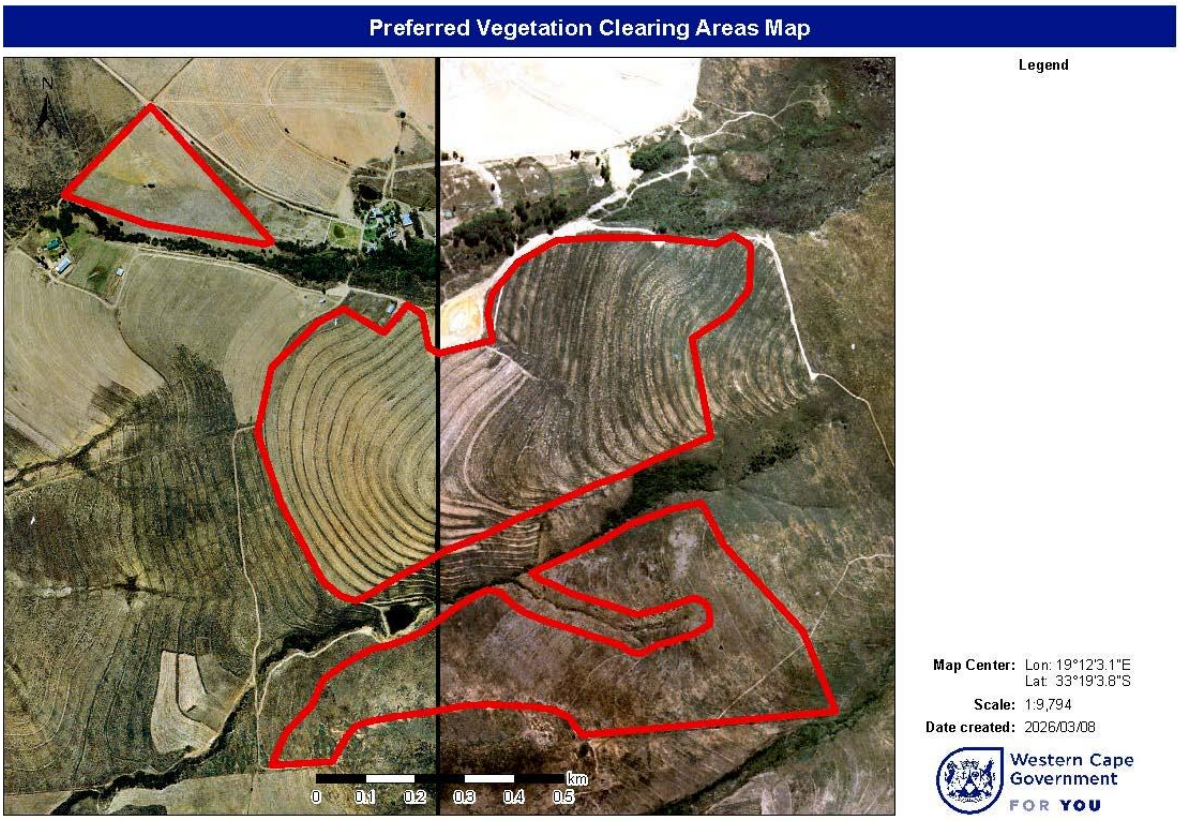


Figure 4: Preferred vegetation clearing map

Reason Why The Preferred clearing areas is Preferred.

The most important requirement is to retain the 100 m critical faunal corridor associated with the Agterstekamp drainage-line system and to avoid clearing, ploughing, soil disturbance or fencing barriers within this corridor.

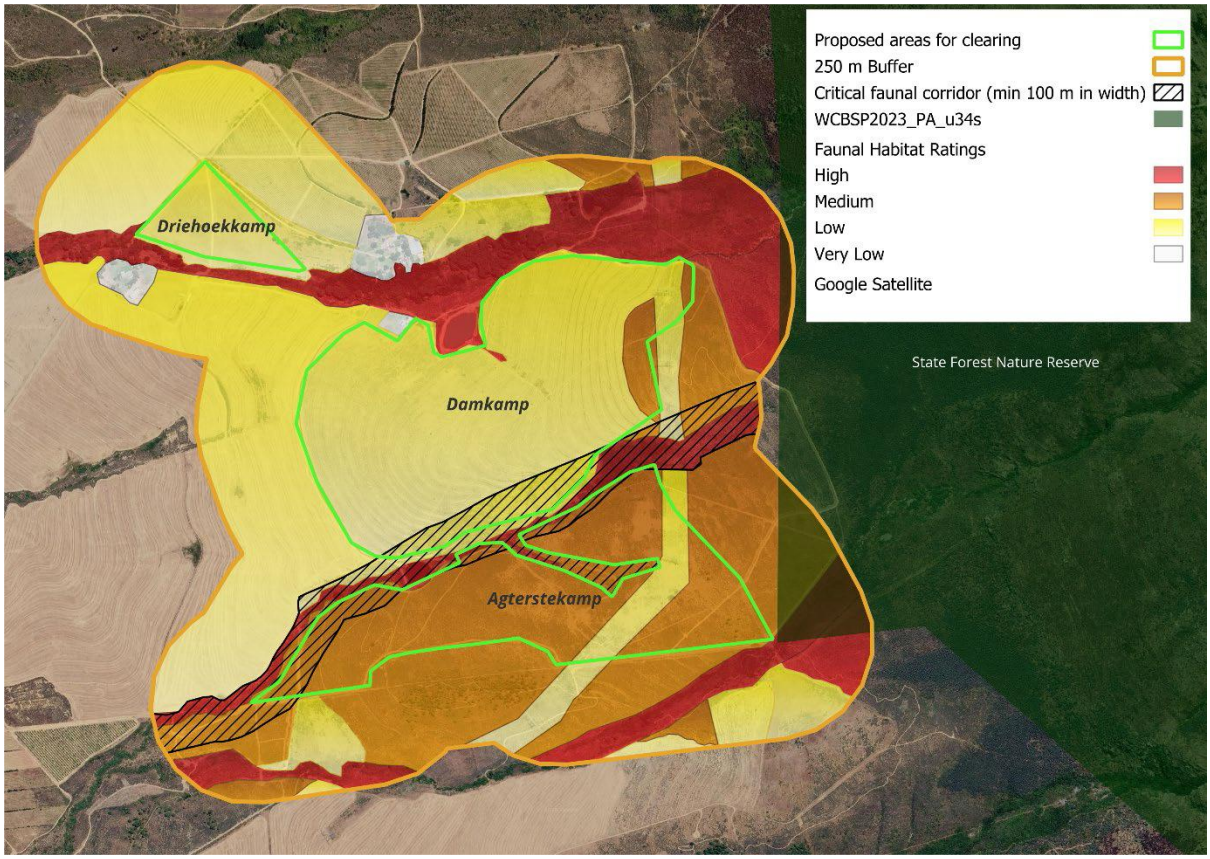


Figure 5: Alternative clearing area

No-Go areas encompassing the easternmost parts of Agterstekamp and Damkamp where SCC are concentrated, as well as the section overlapping the Witzenberg Nature Reserve. Implementing the No-Go areas would effectively reduce the significance of the loss of SCC from High to Low.

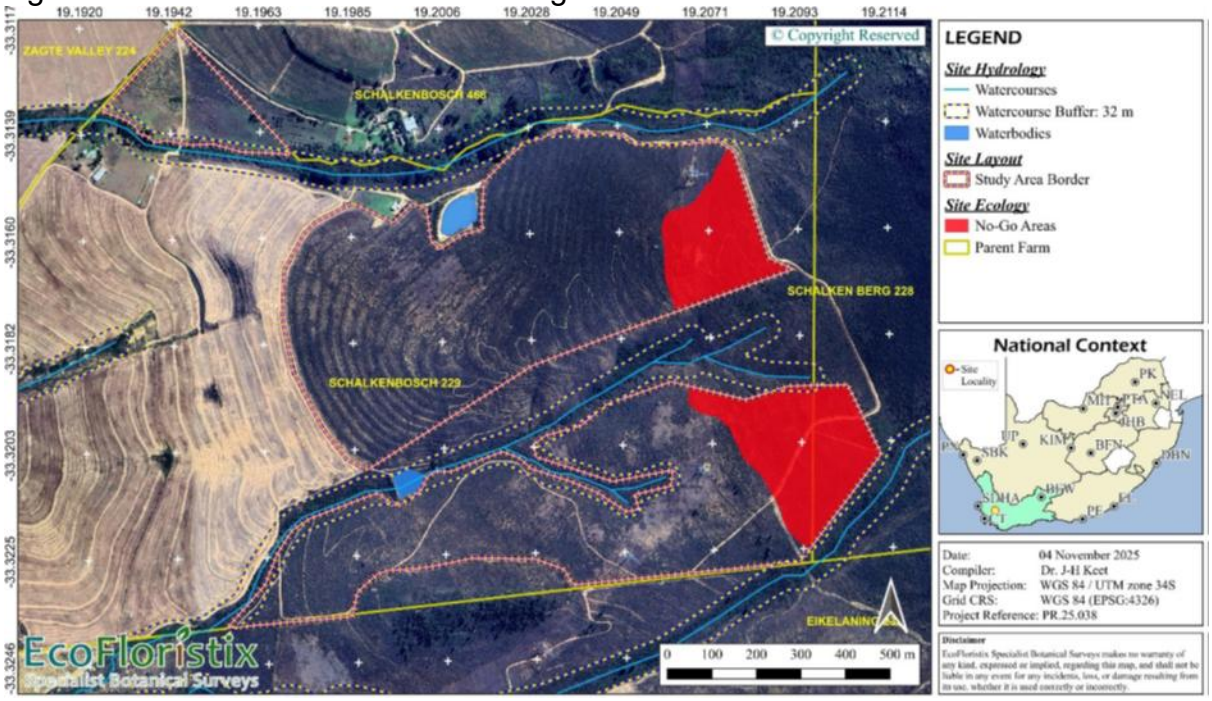


Figure 6: Alternative clearing area

From an aquatic biodiversity perspective, the delineated 35 m freshwater buffers were maintained as permanent no-go areas, and good agricultural management practices are followed throughout vegetation clearing and subsequent agricultural activities

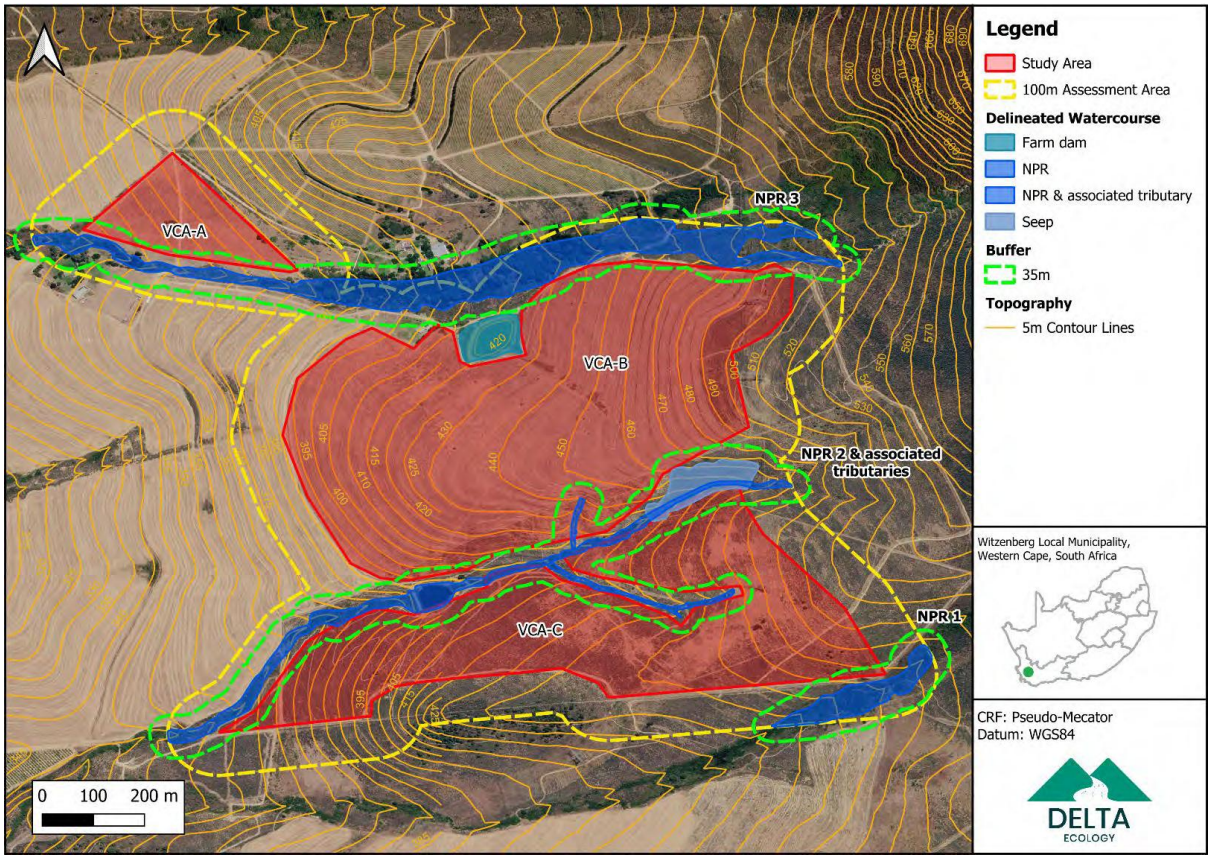


Figure 7: Alternative clearing area

Environmental Opportunities and Constraints associated with the site to be taken in consideration when the specialist assess the proposed clear areas.

Location

The property belong to the applicant and due to its location on existing old ploughed and cultivated lands with constructed agricultural contour structures to control erosion the proposed clearing of the three areas is perfectly located.

Species of Conservation Concern

Species of conservation concern were recorded and excluded from the proposed clearing areas.

3.4. Technology alternatives

No feasible or reasonable technology alternatives applicable. The application is to clear vegetation to re-establish the old agricultural lands.

3.5. OPERATIONAL ALTERNATIVES

No feasible or reasonable operational alternatives applicable. The application is to clear vegetation to re-establish the old agricultural lands.

3.6. THE OPTION OF NOT IMPLEMENTING THE ACTIVITY (THE NO-GO OPTION)

The No-Go option will result in the site remaining as it is presently. The vegetation will not be cleared in order to cultivate the areas.

3.7. No-DEVELOPMENT alternative

The No-Go option will result in the site remaining as it is presently. The vegetation will not be cleared in order to cultivate the areas.

SECTION 4: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Public participation is an integral part of the environmental assessment process, and affords potentially interested and affected parties (I&APs) an opportunity to participate in the EIA process, or to comment on any aspect of the development proposals. The public participation process undertaken for this project complies with the requirements of the EIA Regulations. The description of the public participation process as included below itemizes the steps and actions undertaken to date and as appropriate at this stage of the project.

The public participation process for the project initiation and Scoping Report phase was outlined in detail in the Scoping Report and is summarised below for reference. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a detailed overview of the public participation envisaged for the EIA phase.

4.2 SCOPING PHASE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

4.2.1 Identification and registration of key departments and other I&APs

Liaison with the relevant authorities plays a crucial role in the successful completion of any environmental assessment process. In addition to the DEA&DP, the key departments such as the provincial departments having jurisdiction in respect of any aspect of the project, the local municipality and municipal councillor as well as other potentially affected I&APs, including adjacent property owners and dwellers, were identified.

The parties listed in the table below were identified as key departments and registered I&APs to date as per the requirements of the Regulation 42 of R982 of 2014 as amended. A list with complete details of the key department and registered I&APs is kept and will be updated as the project progresses. Refer to Appendix D for further evidence and details on the public participation process followed to date and still to be followed.

Table 5: Key Departments & Registered I&AP's (Further details in Appendix D)

STAKEHOLDER

- DEA&DP: Development Management
- CapeNature
- DEA&DP: Pollution & Chemicals Management
- DEA&DP: Waste Management
- Department of Agriculture, Western Cape
- Heritage Western Cape
- Cape Winelands District Municipality
- Department of Water and Sanitation
- Witzenberg Municipality
- ESKOM

4.2.2 Notification of I&APs

Potential I&AP's were notified about the project in the following manner (proof thereof is available under Appendix D):

- Fixing notice boards at the boundary of the property;
- Placing an advertisement in the local newspaper; and
- Written notifications were sent to potential I&APs inviting them to register and give comments on the proposed development.

4.2.3 Public Meetings and Workshops

No public meetings and/or workshops have been held nor requested thus far.

4.2.4 Availability of the Scoping Report

Both the pre-application scoping report and draft scoping report were made available for a 30-day commenting period to all key departments and registered I&APs.

Copies of the pre-application and draft scoping reports were also made available on our website at www.enviro-eap.co.za

Proof of postage/delivery is available under Appendix D.

4.2.5 Comments and Reponses during the Scoping Phase and EIR Phases

All comments received were responded to during the draft and final scoping phases. During the draft EIR phase the comments as received were further addressed and all comments and responses are tabulated in Comments and Response Report Tables as available under Appendix D. The revised draft EIR was made available for a 30-day commenting period to all key departments and registered I&APs. All comments and responses are tabulated in Comments and Response Report Tables as available under Appendix D.

4.3 A SUMMARY OF THE ISSUES RAISED BY INTERESTED AND AFFECTED PARTIES, AND AN INDICATION OF THE MANNER IN WHICH THE ISSUES

WERE INCORPORATED, OR THE REASONS FOR NOT INCLUDING THEM

Refer to Appendix D for summaries of all comments received, response/s thereto and indication of how the issues/comments were addressed.

4.4 AVAILABILITY OF THE EIR

The draft EIR was made available to the registered I&AP's and Key Departments for a 30-day period to comment on the findings of the report. Proof of the Public Participation Process conducted during the EIR phase is included in the final EIR.

Proof of the Public Participation Process conducted during the EIR phase will be included in the Final EIR. Once all comments have been received, the EIR will be finalised taking into account the comments received and thereafter submitted to the DEA&DP for a final decision.

4.5 DECISION AND APPEAL PERIOD

Once the DEA&DP have reviewed the Final EIR and are satisfied that it contains sufficient information to make an informed decision, the DEA&DP will use the information contained within the Final EIR to determine the environmental acceptability of the proponent's preferred options. A decision on the applications and associated reports will be made by the DEA&DP based on the findings of the Final EIR.

Following the issuing of the decision, all key department and registered I&APS will be notified and afforded the opportunity to appeal the decision in terms of the NEMA.

4.6 SUMMARY OF ISSUES RAISED BY I&APS THUS FAR

Refer Appendix D: Public Participation Process for summaries of all comments received and response/s provided during the Scoping Phase. Proof of all comments received is also available under Appendix D.

4.7 SPECIFIC INFORMATION THAT MAY BE REQUIRED BY THE COMPETENT AUTHORITY

Refer to Appendix D: Public Participation Process for summaries of all comments received and response/s provided. Proof of all comments received is also available under Appendix D.

4.8 ANY OTHER MATTERS REQUIRED IN TERMS OF SECTION 24(4)(A) AND (B) OF THE ACT

None at this stage.

SECTION 5: ENVIRONMENTAL ATTRIBUTES OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT SITE AS ASSESSED

The information for this section is mainly based on the specialist studies undertaken for this project. These studies are attached under Appendix E.

5.1 GEOGRAPHICAL, GEOLOGICAL AND PHYSICAL ASPECTS

Broad Soils Classification (ENPAT)
Soil Type: Glenrosa and/or Mispah forms (other soils may occur), lime rare or absent in the entire landscape
Geology: Phyllite shale, schist and greywacke of the Porterville Formation, Malmesbury Group, partly covered by talus gravel.
Soil Clay & Depth
Symbol: EA
Class: Soils with limited pedological development
Description: Soils with minimal development, usually shallow on hard or weathering rock, with or without intermittent diverse soils. Lime rare or absent in the landscape
Depth: >= 450 mm and < 750 mm
Clay: >= 15% and < 35%
Soil Types
Symbol: EA
Class: Soils with limited pedological development
Description: Soils with minimal development, usually shallow on hard or weathering rock, with or without intermittent diverse soils. Lime rare or absent in the landscape
Depth: >= 450 mm and < 750 mm
Clay: >= 15% and < 35%
Land Types
Land Type: Fa191
Description: Lime rare or absent in the entire landscape
Class: GLENROSA AND/OR MISPAH FORMS (other soils may occur)
Area (Ha): 6634.128
Soil Erodibility
Erodibility: High
Erodibility Factor: 0.53
Source: CapeFarmMapper dated 1 August 2025

Agriculture potential
Agriculture Enterprises: Fruit and grain
Cultivated Fields (2021) Category: Rainfed Annual Crop Cultivation / Planted Pastures
Land Capability (DAFF 2016)
Land Capability (1-15): 07. Low-Moderate
Soil Capability (1-9): 04. Low-Moderate
Terrain Capability (1-9): 06. Moderate-High
Climate Capability (1-9): 06. Moderate-High
Grazing Capacity (2018)
Ha/Large Stock Unit: 108

Dryland Potential Index
Potential: Very High
Source: CapeFarmMapper dated 1 August 2025

5.2 BIOLOGICAL AND ECOLOGICAL ASPECTS

Plant Species and Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact (Keet 2025)

This ecological assessment report details the findings of a botanical survey and ecological evaluation conducted on 10 October 2025 for the farm Schalkenbosch 229, Tulbagh, Western Cape province. The proposed activities specifically involve clearing indigenous vegetation that has established on previously ploughed land so the area can be returned to agricultural use. Three disjunct areas were assessed, named Driehoekkamp, Damkamp, and Agterstekamp.

The desktop data, which classified the area as having Very High Biodiversity Theme Sensitivity, was partially contradicted by on-site observations. Fieldwork confirmed that the area does not contain the mapped Breede Alluvium Fynbos and Breede Shale Fynbos, nor does the current Secondary Renosterveld (which has developed over the historic fields) fully conform to true Breede Shale Renosterveld due to past ploughing and the extremely high dominance of renosterbos. Thus, it also does not qualify as being classified as either CBA1 or CBA2 areas. However, it nonetheless holds ecological value.

The most critical finding is the presence of six Species of Conservation Concern (SCC), three of which are Endangered, predominantly in the eastern sections of Damkamp and Agterstekamp. Notably, a large and valuable population of the Near Threatened *Babiana villosa* was recorded. The presence of these species, along with the area's function as a supporting area for the adjacent Witzenberg Nature Reserve, justifies reclassifying the intact portions of Secondary Renosterveld as Ecological Support Area 1 (ESA1). Consequently, the true Site Ecological Importance (SEI) for the Secondary Renosterveld units, particularly the eastern parts of Damkamp as well as the entire Agterstekamp, is scored as Medium.
The most significant negative direct impacts of the proposed construction activities, primarily involving ploughing, are the complete loss of plant communities and ESA1 areas, and potential loss of SCC. Before mitigation, the significance of these impacts is assessed as High. To address this, the report proposes establishing No-Go areas encompassing the easternmost parts of Agterstekamp and Damkamp where SCC are concentrated, as well as the section overlapping the Witzenberg Nature Reserve. Furthermore, buffer zones around watercourses may require a Water Use Licence. Implementing the No-Go areas would effectively reduce the significance of the loss of SCC from High to Low. However, the residual impact on the loss of plant communities and ESA1 areas remains Medium, indicating that while critical species are protected, the overall ecological impact on Secondary Renosterveld is only partially mitigated. Active management, including the control of invasive alien plant species, is also a necessary mitigation for a Low residual impact. The cumulative impact on provincial and national conservation targets can also be mitigated from Medium-High to Low by preserving the proposed No-Go areas.

Terrestrial Animal Site Sensitivity Verification and Species Specialist Assessment Report (Venter, J.A. 2026)

This Terrestrial Animal Site Sensitivity Verification and Species Specialist Assessment Report evaluates the potential faunal impacts associated with the proposed vegetation clearing on the remainder of Farm Schalkenbosch 229, Tulbagh, Western Cape. The site is situated within a modified agricultural landscape south-east of Tulbagh, where historically ploughed fields, grazing areas and active agricultural lands occur within a broader matrix of fynbos and renosterveld associated with the Witzenberg foothills. The proposed clearing area is approximately 81 ha and consists mainly of historically modified old fields, brush-cut areas, servitude-line vegetation and secondary renosterveld.

The DFFE Screening Tool identified the Animal Species Theme as Medium sensitivity and flagged Sensitive Species 19, Mute Winter Katydid (*Brinckiella aptera*) and Peringuey's Meadow Katydid (*Conocephalus peringueyi*) for assessment. Additional species of conservation concern considered in the assessment include Grey Rhebuck, Leopard, Cape Clawless Otter, Blue Crane, African Darter, Hamerkop and Yellow-billed Egret. Field surveys recorded several faunal species within the development site and surrounding habitats, including Cape Clawless Otter, African Darter, Hamerkop and Yellow-billed Egret.

The main faunal constraint identified in the assessment is the Agterstekamp faunal landscape corridor. This area retains semi-natural secondary renosterveld, drainage-line habitat and a functional linkage with the Witzenberg Nature Reserve within an otherwise transformed agricultural valley. The corridor provides movement, cover and refuge opportunities for fauna and contributes to connectivity between the adjacent protected area, remnant natural vegetation, riparian features and broader foothill / mountain habitats. The faunal landscape connectivity receptor is assessed as having High Site Ecological Importance, and loss or narrowing of this corridor is the most important faunal impact risk associated with the proposed clearing.

A second important receptor is the secondary renosterveld that may provide marginal potential habitat for Sensitive Animal Species 19. The species is Critically Endangered and the site occurs within the broader Tulbagh–Worcester regional context. However, the habitat on site is secondary, historically ploughed, modified, located more on foothill slopes than preferred valley-bottom habitat, and no individuals were recorded during the field survey. The best remaining secondary renosterveld in Agterstekamp and parts of Damkamp is therefore assessed as Medium SEI, while disturbed old fields, cultivated areas, dwellings, gardens and other transformed habitats are assessed as Low SEI for this receptor.

The remaining species-habitat receptors are generally assessed as Low significance in relation to the proposed clearing footprint. Blue Crane and Grey Rhebuck are likely to use the broader agricultural and open habitat mosaic opportunistically. Yellow-billed Egret, African Darter, Hamerkop and Cape Clawless Otter are mainly associated with farm dams, drainage lines, riparian vegetation and

wetland-edge features, which can be retained through no-go areas, watercourse buffers and corridor protection. Mute Winter Katydid and Peringuey's Meadow Katydid are considered unlikely to occur within the proposed clearing footprint, and no likely or confirmed habitat receptor was identified for these species.

The overall Site Ecological Importance for the proposed clearing footprint and PAOI is assessed as High, primarily because of the faunal landscape connectivity receptor associated with the Agterstekamp corridor and its linkage with the Witzenberg Nature Reserve. The impact assessment compares a No Clearing option with the Clearing option. The No Clearing option would retain the existing faunal habitat mosaic, while the Clearing option could result in habitat loss, reduced shrubland structure, narrowing of movement habitat and reduced ecological function if not carefully controlled.

The proposed clearing can be supported from a faunal specialist perspective only if the key avoidance and mitigation measures are implemented. The most important requirement is to retain the 100 m critical faunal corridor associated with the Agterstekamp drainage-line system and to avoid clearing, ploughing, soil disturbance or fencing barriers within this corridor. Further requirements include protection of drainage-line and riparian habitat, maintenance of watercourse buffers, strict footprint control, avoidance or minimisation of clearing in higher-value secondary renosterveld, demarcation of no-go areas, prevention of snaring, hunting and dog-related disturbance, and allowing fauna to move away from active work areas. With these measures in place, the most significant faunal impacts can be avoided or reduced to acceptable levels; without them, residual impacts on faunal landscape connectivity could remain Medium to High.

Freshwater Risk and Impact Assessment (Morton, R., Fortune, F., & Van Zyl, K. 2026)

Delta Ecology was appointed by Enviro EAP to undertake a Freshwater Risk and Impact Assessment for the proposed vegetation clearing on the Remainder of Farm Schalkenbosch 229, located near Tulbagh in the Western Cape. The proposed activity comprises the clearing of indigenous vegetation that has established within historically cultivated agricultural fields to facilitate the return of these areas to agricultural production. The assessment was undertaken in support of the Environmental Authorisation (EA) process following the identification of Very High Aquatic Biodiversity Theme Sensitivity by the National Web-based Environmental Screening Tool.

The assessment confirmed the presence of several non-perennial rivers, associated tributaries, one seep wetland and a highly modified agricultural flow path within or adjacent to the proposed vegetation clearing areas. The non-perennial rivers were assessed as being in a largely natural to moderately modified ecological condition (PES Categories B/C), while the seep wetland was assessed as largely natural (PES Category B). These freshwater ecosystems provide important riparian habitat, maintain ecological connectivity within the upper Breede River catchment and

contribute to local biodiversity.

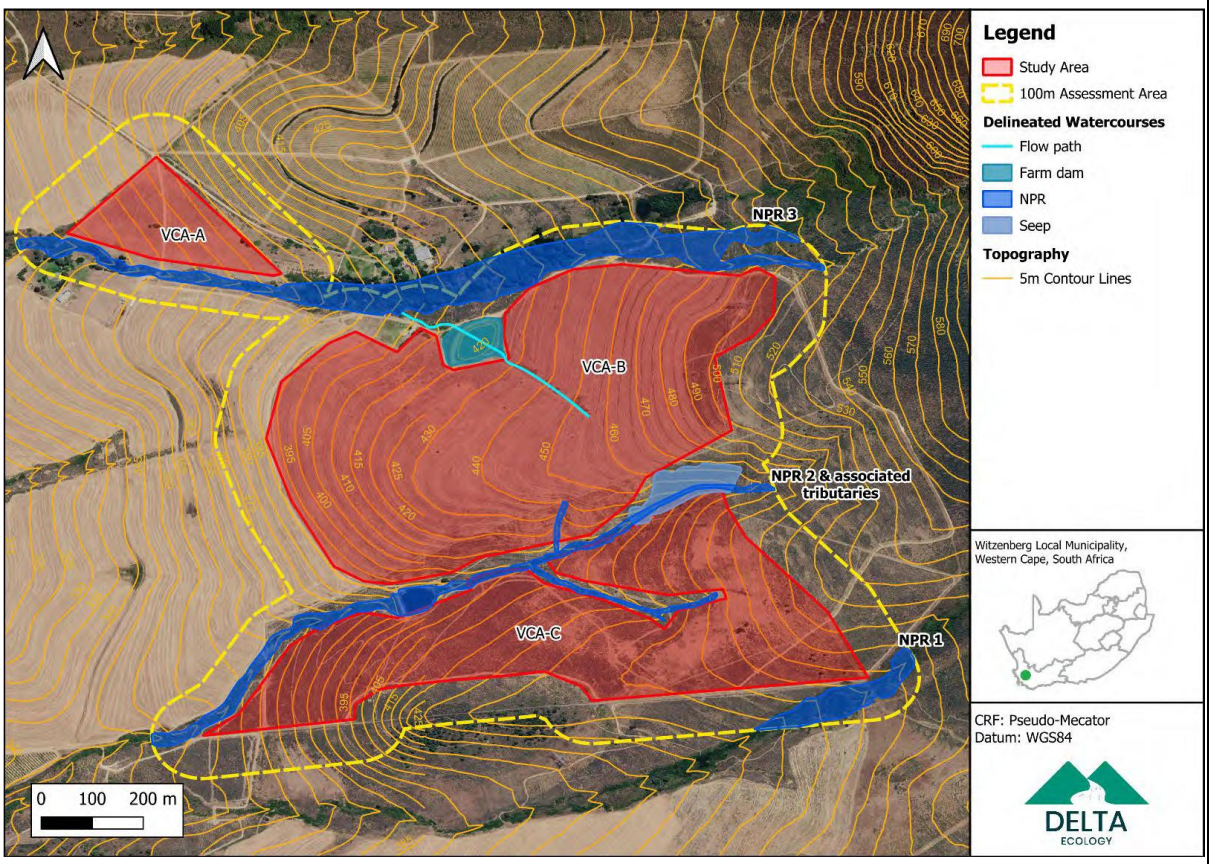


Figure 8: Delineation of the at-risk watercourses.

The agricultural flow path was assessed as PES Category E/F (Critically Modified) and functions primarily as an agricultural drainage feature with negligible remaining aquatic habitat or ecological function. Consequently, from an aquatic biodiversity perspective, avoidance of this feature and the implementation of a freshwater buffer are not considered necessary, provided that vegetation clearing and subsequent agricultural activities do not result in concentrated runoff, erosion or sediment delivery into downstream freshwater ecosystems.

The proposed activity does not include new infrastructure or instream works. The principal freshwater risks are therefore indirect and relate to vegetation clearing in proximity to freshwater ecosystems, including disturbance of riparian habitat, altered surface water runoff, increased erosion and sedimentation, and deterioration of water quality. Four potential impacts were assessed, namely:

- Loss and degradation of freshwater and riparian habitat;
- Alteration of surface water runoff and hydrological processes;
- Increased sediment input and erosion; and
- Water quality impairment.

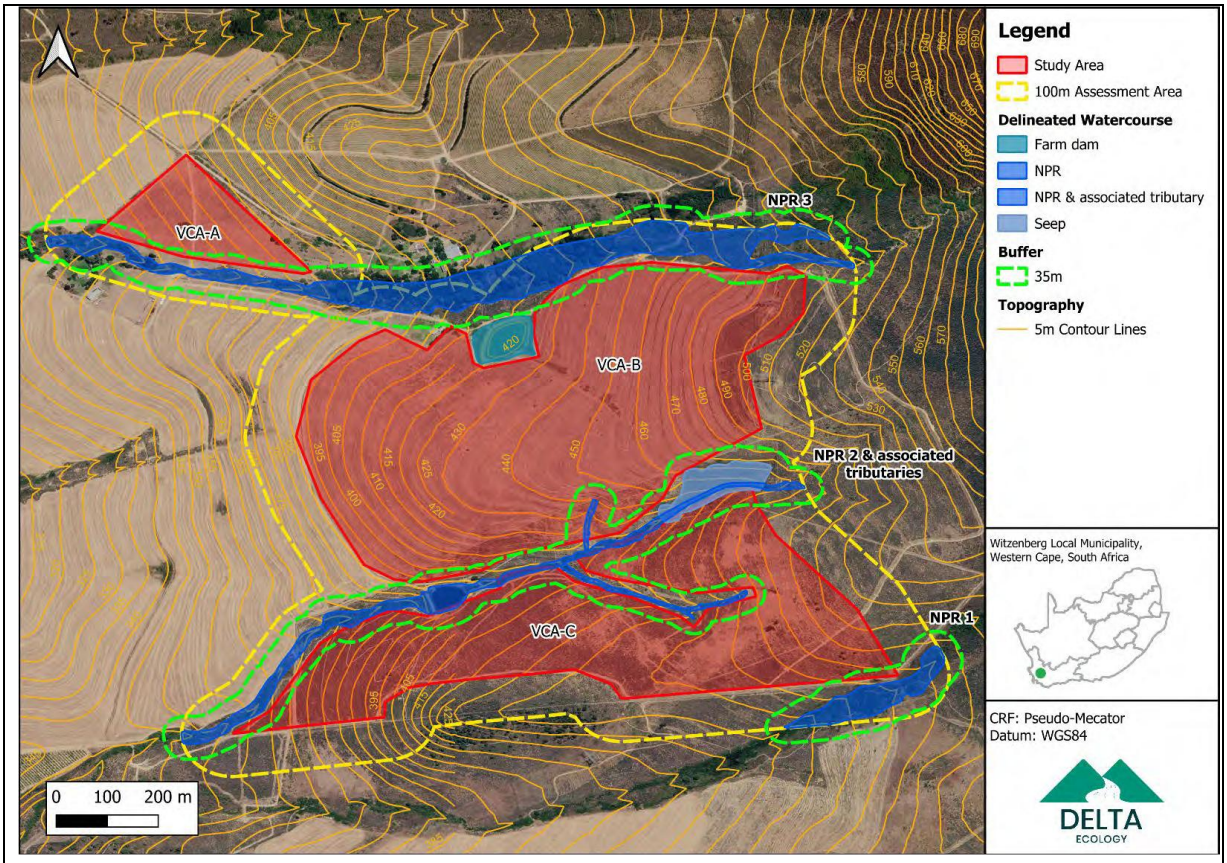


Figure 9: Recommended buffer.

The assessment identified the establishment and maintenance of a 35 m freshwater buffer around all delineated non-perennial rivers and the seep wetland as the primary mitigation measure. Additional mitigation includes maintaining existing drainage patterns and contour banks, implementing erosion and sediment control measures, protecting riparian vegetation, applying good agricultural management practices, and preventing contamination of freshwater ecosystems.

Following implementation of the recommended mitigation measures, all identified impacts are expected to reduce to Low significance. The Risk Assessment Matrix (RAM), undertaken in accordance with Government Notice 4167 of 2023, indicates that the anticipated Section 21(c) and (i) water uses fall within the Low Risk category. It is therefore considered that the proposed water uses may be authorised under the applicable General Authorisation (GA), subject to confirmation by the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS).

From an aquatic biodiversity perspective, the proposed vegetation clearing is considered acceptable, provided that the recommended mitigation measures are implemented, the delineated 35 m freshwater buffers are maintained as permanent no-go areas, and good agricultural management practices are followed throughout vegetation clearing and subsequent agricultural activities.

5.3 SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ASPECTS

What is the expected capital value of the project on completion?	Unknown	
What is the expected yearly income or contribution to the economy that will be generated by or as a result of the project?	Unknown	
Will the project contribute to service infrastructure?	~~YES~~	NO
Is the project a public amenity?	~~YES~~	NO
How many new employment opportunities will be created during the development phase?	Will only secure the employment of existing staff on the property	
What is the expected value of the employment opportunities during the development phase?	Unknown	
How many permanent new employment opportunities will be created during the operational phase of the project?	Will only secure the employment of existing staff on the property	
What is the expected current value of the employment opportunities during the first 10 years?	Unknown	

5.4 HERITAGE AND CULTURAL ASPECTS

Historical Overview The owners propose to clear vegetation of approximately 72 ha (consisting of three areas of 5ha, 42 ha and 25ha) historically ploughed land where the topsoil was not disturbed the last 10 years on remainder of farm Schalkenbosch 229, Tulbagh. Because the topsoil was not disturbed the last 10 years, the vegetation on site is classified as indigenous vegetation and therefore the application is to clear the sites of the indigenous vegetation in poor ecological condition to reinstate the agricultural lands to allow for cultivation to be practice on the sites again. No additional water will be required. No irrigation intended. No netting will be used. No roads, pipelines or other infrastructure is required. Only clearing of indigenous vegetation to reinstate old agricultural lands. The property is zoned Agriculture and is located outside an urban area. Because the areas were previously ploughed and the topsoil disturbed, with agricultural engineering contours constructed, that is still in place, no further studies or HIA is recommended given that the terrain had previously been ploughed under agricultural fields, the palaeosensitivity of the underlying geology was insignificant to low, and no significant heritage buildings are located in close proximity to the study site. The landuse will not change and the sites are located inside an agricultural landscape.

SECTION 6: IMPACT ASSESSMENT

This impact assessment aims to assess the balance between conservation and respect for the natural environmental attributes of the general area and the socio-economic need for sustainable employment opportunities and capital. The outcome of the assessment will be used to determine the viability of the project.

Based on the EAP's assessment, issues raised by I&AP's and the project team, specialist studies were undertaken to provide baseline information to address the concerns and assess the impacts of the proposed development on the environment. The specialists are provided with set criteria for undertaking their assessments, to allow for comparative assessment of all issues, based on the requirements of the EIA Regulations.

The information from the specialist studies has been used by the planning team to inform the current development proposals. The preferred alternative (as indicated in Section 3) were discussed with the applicant and finalised accordingly.

6.1 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

Below is the assessment methodology utilized in determining the significance of the construction, operational and decommission impacts of the proposed activities, and where applicable the possible alternatives, on the biophysical and socio-economic environment. The methodology is broadly consistent to that described in DEA&DP's Guideline Document on the EIA Regulations (1998).

For each impact, the significance is determined by various factors. Significance is described prior to mitigation as well as with the most effective mitigation measure(s) in place. The mitigation described in the document (also see Appendix F for the Draft Environmental Management Programme) represents the full range of plausible and pragmatic measures *but does not necessarily imply that they all should or will be implemented*. The decision as to which mitigation measures to implement lies with the applicant and ultimately with the DEA&DP.

To facilitate informed decision-making, EIAs must endeavour to come to terms with the significance of the potential environmental impacts associated with particular development activities. Despite the attempts at providing a completely objective and impartial assessment of the environmental implications of development activities, EIA processes can never completely escape the subjectivity inherent in attempting to define significance. Recognising this, potential subjectivity in the current process is addressed as follows:

- Be clear about the difficulty of being completely objective in the determination of significance;
- Develop an explicit methodology for assigning significance to impacts and outlining this methodology in detail. Having an explicit methodology not only forces the assessor to come to terms with the various facets contributing toward determination of significance, thereby avoiding arbitrary assignment, but also provides the reader of the EIR with a clear summary of how the assessor derived the assigned significance; and
- Wherever possible, differentiating between the likely significance of potential environmental impacts as experienced by the various affected parties.

Although these measures may not totally eliminate subjectivity, they do provide an explicit context within which to review the assessment of impacts.

Table 6: Assessment criteria for the evaluation of impacts

Criteria	Description		
Nature	a description of what causes the effect, what will be affected, and how it will be affected.		
	Type	**Score**	**Description**
Extent (E)	None (No)	1	Footprint
	Site (S)	2	On site or within 100 m of the site
	Local (L)	3	Within a 20 km radius of the centre of the site
	Regional (R)	4	Beyond a 20 km radius of the site
	National (Na)	5	Crossing provincial boundaries or on a national / land wide scale
Duration (D)	Short term (S)	1	0 – 1 years
	Short to medium (S-M)	2	2 – 5 years
	Medium term (M)	3	5 – 15 years
	Long term (L)	4	> 15 years
	Permanent(P)	5	Will not cease
Magnitude (M)	Small (S)	0	will have no effect on the environment
	Minor (Mi)	2	will not result in an impact on processes
	Low (L)	4	will cause a slight impact on processes
	Moderate (Mo)	6	processes continuing but in a modified way
	High (H)	8	processes are altered to the extent that they temporarily cease
	Very high (VH)	10	results in complete destruction of patterns and permanent cessation of processes.
Probability (P) the likelihood of the impact actually occurring. Probability is estimated on a scale, and a score assigned	Very improbable (VP)	1	probably will not happen
	Improbable (I)	2	some possibility, but low likelihood
	Probable (P)	3	distinct possibility
	Highly probable (HP)	4	most likely
	Definite (D)	5	impact will occur regardless of any prevention measures
Significance (S)	Determined through a synthesis of the characteristics described above: **S = (E+D+M) x P** Significance can be assessed as low, medium or high		
Low: < 30 points:	The impact would not have a direct influence on the decision to develop in the area		
Medium: 30 – 60 points:	The impact could influence the decision to develop in the area unless it is effectively mitigated		

Criteria	Description		
High: < 60 points:	The impact must have an influence on the decision process to develop in the area		
No significance	When no impact will occur or the impact will not affect the environment		
Status	Positive (+)		Negative (-)
The degree to which the impact can be reversed	Completely reversible (R)	90-100%	The impact can be mostly to completely reversed with the implementation of the correct mitigation and rehabilitation measures.
	Partly reversible (PR)	6-89%	The impact can be partly reversed providing that mitigation measures as stipulated in the EMP are implemented and rehabilitation measures are undertaken
	Irreversible (IR)	0-5%	The impact cannot be reversed, regardless of the mitigation or rehabilitation measures taking place
The degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources	Resource will not be lost (R)	1	The resource will not be lost or destroyed provided that mitigation and rehabilitation measures as stipulated in the EMP are implemented
	Resource may be partly destroyed (PR)	2	Partial loss or destruction of the resources will occur even though all management and mitigation measures as stipulated in the EMP are implemented
	Resource cannot be replaced (IR)	3	The resource cannot be replaced no matter which management or mitigation measures are implemented.
The degree to which the impact can be mitigated	Completely mitigatible (CM)	1	The impact can be completely mitigated providing that all management and mitigation measures as stipulated in the EMP are implemented
	Partly mitigatible (PM)	2	The impact cannot be completely mitigated even though all management and mitigation measures as stipulated in the EMP are implemented. Implementation of these measures will provide a measure of mitigatibility
	Un-mitigatible (UM)	3	The impact cannot be mitigated no matter which management or mitigation measures are implemented.

6.2 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Below is a description of the potential impacts of the project on the geographical, physical, biological, social, economic, heritage and cultural aspects environment. Each aspect is discussed in terms of the construction, operational and decommissioning phases. It is not anticipated that the planning and design phase will have any impacts on the environment and as such, this phase is not discussed below. As mentioned, the post operational activities have not yet been fully

determined. Detailed decommissioning impacts will be determined closer to the end of life of the project under the relevant regulations of the day. The alternatives considered, as part of the impact assessment is the layout alternatives and the No-Go/No-development Alternative.

(A) IMPACTS THAT MAY RESULT FROM THE CONSTRUCTION PHASE (VEGETATION CLEARING)

6.2.1 POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON GEOGRAPHICAL AND PHYSICAL ASPECTS

SOIL EROSION AND DUST

Preferred Alternative:	**Geographical and Physical Impacts**
PLANNING, DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Soil erosion and dust**
Nature of impact:	**Soil erosion can occur due to wind (wind erosion cause dust pollution); and due to overland storm water flow should rains fall during vegetation clearing. Due to the sloping nature of the terrain, and the existing agricultural engineered contours it is unlikely that long term impacted erosion can occur.**
Extent and duration of impact:	**Extent 1 & Duration 5 (permanent)**
Consequence of impact or risk:	**Clearing and excavation activities can result in erosion and dust.**
Magnitude	**Medium**
Probability of occurrence:	**Some possibility, but low likelihood**
Degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources:	**Resource may be partly destroyed (PR)**
Degree to which the impact can be reversed:	**Completely reversible (R)**
Indirect impacts:	**Disturbance to surface area can result in erosion and dust generation**
Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:	**Exposing soil may lead to erosion and dust generation if not mitigated.**
Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Medium**
Degree to which the impact can be avoided:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be managed:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:	**Completely mitigatable (CM)**
Proposed mitigation:	• **Access to roads and other areas must be controlled to avoid disturbance of areas outside the**

	clearing footprint. • **Monitor cleared areas frequently for signs of erosion and if signs of erosion are detected implement repair and preventative measures immediately.** • **Do not clear during high wind conditions** • **Rehabilitate or stabilise eroded areas immediately to prevent increase in erosion.** • **Maintain and manage agricultural engineered and constructed contour infrastructure already in place.** • **Maintain 35m buffer areas**
Residual impacts:	**It is not anticipated that the impact will be high if the mitigation measures are adhered to.**
Cumulative impact post mitigation:	**It is not anticipated that the impact will be high if the mitigation measures are adhered to.**
Significance rating of impact after mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Low**
OPERATIONAL PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Soil erosion and dust**
Nature of impact:	**Soil erosion can occur due to wind (wind erosion cause dust pollution); and due to overland storm water flow should rains fall during cultivation. Due to the sloping nature of the terrain, and the existing agricultural engineered contours it is unlikely that long term impacted erosion can occur.**
Extent and duration of impact:	**Extent 1 & Duration 5 (permanent)**
Consequence of impact or risk:	**Clearing and excavation activities can result in erosion and dust.**
Magnitude	**Medium**
Probability of occurrence:	**Some possibility, but low likelihood**
Degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources:	**Resource may be partly destroyed (PR)**
Degree to which the impact can be reversed:	**Completely reversible (R)**
Indirect impacts:	**Disturbance to surface area can result in erosion and dust generation**
Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:	**Exposing soil may lead to erosion and dust generation if not mitigated.**

Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Medium**
Degree to which the impact can be avoided:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be managed:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:	**Completely mitigatable (CM)**
Proposed mitigation:	• **Access to roads and other areas must be controlled to avoid disturbance of areas outside the clearing footprint.** • **Monitor cleared areas frequently for signs of erosion and if signs of erosion are detected implement repair and preventative measures immediately.** • **Do not cultivate during high wind conditions** • **Rehabilitate or stabilise eroded areas immediately to prevent increase in erosion.** • **Maintain and manage agricultural engineered and constructed contour infrastructure already in place.** • **Maintain 35m buffer areas**
Residual impacts:	**It is not anticipated that the impact will be high if the mitigation measures are adhered to.**
Cumulative impact post mitigation:	**It is not anticipated that the impact will be high if the mitigation measures are adhered to.**
Significance rating of impact after mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Low**
DECOMMISSIONING AND CLOSURE PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Similar to impacts associated with clearing and operational phases.**

Alternative:	**Geographical and Physical Impacts**
PLANNING, DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Soil erosion and dust**
Nature of impact:	**Soil erosion can occur due to wind (wind erosion cause dust pollution); and due to overland storm water flow should rains fall during vegetation**

	clearing. Due to the sloping nature of the terrain, and the existing agricultural engineered contours it is unlikely that long term impacted erosion can occur.
Extent and duration of impact:	**Extent 1 & Duration 5 (permanent)**
Consequence of impact or risk:	**Clearing and excavation activities can result in erosion and dust.**
Magnitude	**Medium**
Probability of occurrence:	**Some possibility, but low likelihood**
Degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources:	**Resource may be partly destroyed (PR)**
Degree to which the impact can be reversed:	**Completely reversible (R)**
Indirect impacts:	**Disturbance to surface area can result in erosion and dust generation**
Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:	**Exposing soil may lead to erosion and dust generation if not mitigated.**
Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Medium**
Degree to which the impact can be avoided:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be managed:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:	**Completely mitigatable (CM)**
Proposed mitigation:	• **Access to roads and other areas must be controlled to avoid disturbance of areas outside the clearing footprint.** • **Monitor cleared areas frequently for signs of erosion and if signs of erosion are detected implement repair and preventative measures immediately.** • **Do not clear during high wind conditions** • **Rehabilitate or stabilise eroded areas immediately to prevent increase in erosion.** • **Maintain and manage agricultural engineered and constructed contour infrastructure already in place.**
Residual impacts:	**It is not anticipated that the impact will be high if the mitigation measures are adhered to.**
Cumulative impact post mitigation:	**It is not anticipated that the impact will**

	be high if the mitigation measures are adhered to.
Significance rating of impact after mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Low**
OPERATIONAL PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Soil erosion and dust**
Nature of impact:	**Soil erosion can occur due to wind (wind erosion cause dust pollution); and due to overland storm water flow should rains fall during cultivation. Due to the sloping nature of the terrain, and the existing agricultural engineered contours it is unlikely that long term impacted erosion can occur.**
Extent and duration of impact:	**Extent 1 & Duration 5 (permanent)**
Consequence of impact or risk:	**Clearing and excavation activities can result in erosion and dust.**
Magnitude	**Medium**
Probability of occurrence:	**Some possibility, but low likelihood**
Degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources:	**Resource may be partly destroyed (PR)**
Degree to which the impact can be reversed:	**Completely reversible (R)**
Indirect impacts:	**Disturbance to surface area can result in erosion and dust generation**
Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:	**Exposing soil may lead to erosion and dust generation if not mitigated.**
Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Medium**
Degree to which the impact can be avoided:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be managed:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:	**Completely mitigatable (CM)**
Proposed mitigation:	• **Access to roads and other areas must be controlled to avoid disturbance of areas outside the clearing footprint.** • **Monitor cleared areas frequently for signs of erosion and if signs of erosion are detected implement repair and preventative measures immediately.**

	• **Do not cultivate during high wind conditions** • **Rehabilitate or stabilise eroded areas immediately to prevent increase in erosion.** • **Maintain and manage agricultural engineered and constructed contour infrastructure already in place.** • **Maintain 35m buffer areas**
Residual impacts:	**It is not anticipated that the impact will be high if the mitigation measures are adhered to.**
Cumulative impact post mitigation:	**It is not anticipated that the impact will be high if the mitigation measures are adhered to.**
Significance rating of impact after mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Low**
DECOMMISSIONING AND CLOSURE PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Similar to impacts associated with clearing and operational phases.**

WATER POLLUTION

Preferred Alternative:	**Geographical and Physical Impacts**
PLANNING, DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Impact of vegetation clearing activities on surface and underground water pollution.**
Nature of impact:	**Clearing of vegetation could result in the pollution of surface water and eventually result in ground water pollution. Storm water contamination will result in surface water pollution. Activities such as excavation and clearing of vegetation and or diesel and oil spills could impact surface and ground water quality.**
Extent and duration of impact:	**Extent 3 (Within a 20 km radius of the centre of the site) & Duration 2 (2-5 years)**
Consequence of impact or risk:	**Possible pollution of surface and ground water.**
Magnitude	**Medium**
Probability of occurrence:	**Most likely**
Degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources:	**Partly destroyed (PR)**

Degree to which the impact can be reversed:	**Partly reversible 6-89% (PR)**
Indirect impacts:	**Pollution of water resources.**
Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:	**Diesel and oil spills affecting ground and surface water quality.**
Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Medium**
Degree to which the impact can be avoided:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be managed:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:	**Partly mitigatable (PM)**
Proposed mitigation:	**Maintain vehicles to prevent oil or diesel spills.** **Only emergency repairs be done on clearing areas. Other repairs and services must be done in the farm yard on hard services.** **Clean-up of any spills must be contained and cleaned up immediately.**
Residual impacts:	**It is not anticipated that the impact will be high if the mitigation measures are adhered to.**
Cumulative impact post mitigation:	**Diesel and oil spills affecting ground and surface water quality.**
Significance rating of impact after mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Low**
OPERATIONAL PHASE.	
Potential impact and risk:	**Impact of cultivation activities on surface and underground water pollution.**
Nature of impact:	**Cultivation could result in the pollution of surface water and eventually result in ground water pollution. Storm water contamination will result in surface water pollution.**
Extent and duration of impact:	**Extent 3 (Within a 20 km radius of the centre of the site) & Duration 2 (2-5 years)**
Consequence of impact or risk:	**Possible pollution of surface and ground water.**
Magnitude	**Medium**
Probability of occurrence:	**Most likely**
Degree to which the impact may	**Partly destroyed (PR)**

cause irreplaceable loss of resources:	
Degree to which the impact can be reversed:	**Partly reversible 6-89% (PR)**
Indirect impacts:	**Pollution of water resources.**
Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:	**Diesel and oil spills affecting ground and surface water quality.**
Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Medium**
Degree to which the impact can be avoided:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be managed:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:	**Partly mitigatable (PM)**
Proposed mitigation:	**Maintain vehicles to prevent oil or diesel spills.** **Only emergency repairs be done on clearing areas. Other repairs and services must be done in the farm yard on hard services.** **Clean-up of any spills must be contained and cleaned up immediately.**
Residual impacts:	**It is not anticipated that the impact will be high if the mitigation measures are adhered to.**
Cumulative impact post mitigation:	**Diesel and oil spills affecting ground and surface water quality.**
Significance rating of impact after mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Low**
DECOMMISSIONING AND CLOSURE PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Similar to impacts associated with construction phase.**

Alternative:	**Geographical and Physical Impacts**
PLANNING, DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Impact of vegetation clearing activities on surface and underground water pollution.**
Nature of impact:	**Clearing of vegetation could result in the pollution of surface water and eventually result in ground water pollution. Storm water contamination will result in surface water pollution.**

	Activities such as excavation and clearing of vegetation and or diesel and oil spills could impact surface and ground water quality.
Extent and duration of impact:	**Extent 3 (Within a 20 km radius of the centre of the site) & Duration 2 (2-5 years)**
Consequence of impact or risk:	**Possible pollution of surface and ground water.**
Magnitude	**Medium**
Probability of occurrence:	**Most likely**
Degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources:	**Partly destroyed (PR)**
Degree to which the impact can be reversed:	**Partly reversible 6-89% (PR)**
Indirect impacts:	**Pollution of water resources.**
Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:	**Diesel and oil spills affecting ground and surface water quality.**
Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Medium**
Degree to which the impact can be avoided:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be managed:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:	**Partly mitigatable (PM)**
Proposed mitigation:	**Maintain vehicles to prevent oil or diesel spills.** **Only emergency repairs be done on clearing areas. Other repairs and services must be done in the farm yard on hard services.** **Clean-up of any spills must be contained and cleaned up immediately.**
Residual impacts:	**It is not anticipated that the impact will be high if the mitigation measures are adhered to.**
Cumulative impact post mitigation:	**Diesel and oil spills affecting ground and surface water quality.**
Significance rating of impact after mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Low**
OPERATIONAL PHASE.	
Potential impact and risk:	**Impact of cultivation activities on surface and underground water**

	pollution.
Nature of impact:	**Cultivation could result in the pollution of surface water and eventually result in ground water pollution. Storm water contamination will result in surface water pollution.**
Extent and duration of impact:	**Extent 3 (Within a 20 km radius of the centre of the site) & Duration 2 (2-5 years)**
Consequence of impact or risk:	**Possible pollution of surface and ground water.**
Magnitude	**Medium**
Probability of occurrence:	**Most likely**
Degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources:	**Partly destroyed (PR)**
Degree to which the impact can be reversed:	**Partly reversible 6-89% (PR)**
Indirect impacts:	**Pollution of water resources.**
Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:	**Diesel and oil spills affecting ground and surface water quality.**
Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Medium**
Degree to which the impact can be avoided:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be managed:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:	**Partly mitigatable (PM)**
Proposed mitigation:	**Maintain vehicles to prevent oil or diesel spills.** **Only emergency repairs be done on clearing areas. Other repairs and services must be done in the farm yard on hard services.** **Clean-up of any spills must be contained and cleaned up immediately.**
Residual impacts:	**It is not anticipated that the impact will be high if the mitigation measures are adhered to.**
Cumulative impact post mitigation:	**Diesel and oil spills affecting ground and surface water quality.**
Significance rating of impact after mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Low**
DECOMMISSIONING AND CLOSURE PHASE	

Potential impact and risk:	**Similar to impacts associated with construction phase.**

WASTE IMPACTS

Preferred Alternative:	
PLANNING, DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Waste Impacts**
Nature of impact:	**General waste will be generated during the vegetation clearing consisting of cleared vegetation which may impact on the area.**
Extent and duration of impact:	**Extent 2 (On site or within 100 m of the site) & Duration 2**
Consequence of impact or risk:	**Pollution and nuisance.**
Magnitude:	**Low**
Probability of occurrence:	**Low**
Degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources:	**Resource will not be lost (R)**
Degree to which the impact can be reversed:	**Reversible**
Indirect impacts:	**Smoke and fire risk.**
Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:	**Smoke and fire risk.**
Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Low**
Degree to which the impact can be avoided:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be managed:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:	**High**
Proposed mitigation:	**All waste generated on site shall be collected and disposed of at a registered landfill facility;** **All safe disposal certificates and waste manifests from service providers to be kept and maintained;** **Any cleared vegetation may not be burned and must be stockpiled and compost or spread over the cleared area and cultivated into the soil.**
Residual impacts:	**None**
Cumulative impact post mitigation:	**None**
Significance rating of impact after mitigation	**Low**

(e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	
OPERATIONAL PHASE. Not applicable	
Potential impact and risk:	**Waste Impacts**
Nature of impact:	**General waste and used chemical and herbicide containers will be generated during cultivation.**
Extent and duration of impact:	**Extent 2 (On site or within 100 m of the site) & Duration 2**
Consequence of impact or risk:	**Pollution and nuisance.**
Magnitude:	**Low**
Probability of occurrence:	**Low**
Degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources:	**Resource will not be lost (R)**
Degree to which the impact can be reversed:	**Reversible**
Indirect impacts:	**Chemical spills into the environment**
Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:	**Chemical spills into the environment**
Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Low**
Degree to which the impact can be avoided:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be managed:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:	**High**
Proposed mitigation:	**All chemical and herbicide containers must be stored in chemical store in farmyard and collected by suppliers and reused.** **Equipment must be serviced on farmyard and drip trays used and all hazardous materials must collected and recycled.** **Proof of collection of all waste generated must be kept on file on form.**
Residual impacts:	**None**
Cumulative impact post mitigation:	**None**
Significance rating of impact after mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Low**
DECOMMISSIONING AND CLOSURE PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Similar to impacts associated with construction phase.**

Alternative:	
PLANNING, DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Waste Impacts**
Nature of impact:	**General waste will be generated during the vegetation clearing consisting of cleared vegetation which may impact on the area.**
Extent and duration of impact:	**Extent 2 (On site or within 100 m of the site) & Duration 2**
Consequence of impact or risk:	**Pollution and nuisance.**
Magnitude:	**Low**
Probability of occurrence:	**Low**
Degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources:	**Resource will not be lost (R)**
Degree to which the impact can be reversed:	**Reversible**
Indirect impacts:	**Smoke and fire risk.**
Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:	**Smoke and fire risk.**
Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Low**
Degree to which the impact can be avoided:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be managed:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:	**High**
Proposed mitigation:	**All waste generated on site shall be collected and disposed of at a registered landfill facility;** **All safe disposal certificates and waste manifests from service providers to be kept and maintained;** **Any cleared vegetation may not be burned and must be stockpiled and compost or spread over the cleared area and cultivated into the soil.**
Residual impacts:	**None**
Cumulative impact post mitigation:	**None**
Significance rating of impact after mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Low**
OPERATIONAL PHASE. Not applicable	
Potential impact and risk:	**Waste Impacts**

Nature of impact:	**General waste and used chemical and herbicide containers will be generated during cultivation.**
Extent and duration of impact:	**Extent 2 (On site or within 100 m of the site) & Duration 2**
Consequence of impact or risk:	**Pollution and nuisance.**
Magnitude:	**Low**
Probability of occurrence:	**Low**
Degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources:	**Resource will not be lost (R)**
Degree to which the impact can be reversed:	**Reversible**
Indirect impacts:	**Chemical spills into the environment**
Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:	**Chemical spills into the environment**
Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Low**
Degree to which the impact can be avoided:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be managed:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:	**High**
Proposed mitigation:	**All chemical and herbicide containers must be stored in chemical store in farmyard and collected by suppliers and reused.** **Equipment must be serviced on farmyard and drip trays used and all hazardous materials must collected and recycled.** **Proof of collection of all waste generated must be kept on file on form.**
Residual impacts:	**None**
Cumulative impact post mitigation:	**None**
Significance rating of impact after mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Low**
DECOMMISSIONING AND CLOSURE PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Similar to impacts associated with construction phase.**

NOISE

Preferred alternative	**Socio-Economic Impacts**

PLANNING, DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Impact of noise on surrounding environment.**
Nature of impact:	**Environmental noise pollution. Nuisance impacts could relate to the increase noise and disturbance associated with the proposed development, e.g. noise, traffic etc.** **Clearing activities on the sites, and vehicles moving to and from the sites would cause an increase in noise in the area, which may impact negatively upon the adjoining landowners.**
Extent and duration of impact:	**Extent 2 (On site or within 100 m of the site) & Duration 1 (0 – 1 years)**
Magnitude	**Low**
Consequence of impact or risk:	**Nuisance**
Probability of occurrence:	**Distinct possibly**
Degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources:	**Resource will not be lost**
Degree to which the impact can be reversed:	**Completely reversible - This will not be a long-term impact nor will it have an impact on the natural processes. It is thus 100% reversible. It will be the same or similar noise impacts related to the existing agricultural activities on the farm and surrounding areas**
Indirect impacts:	**Nuisance**
Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:	**Nuisance**
Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Low**
Degree to which the impact can be avoided:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be managed:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:	**Completely mitigatable (CM)**
Proposed mitigation:	• **All noise and sounds generated by plant or machinery must adhere to SABS 0103 specifications for the maximum permissible noise levels.** • **No sound amplification equipment such as sirens, loud hailers or hooters may be used on site, after**

	normal working hours, except in emergencies.
Residual impacts:	**Nuisance**
Cumulative impact post mitigation:	**Nuisance**
Significance rating of impact after mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Low**
OPERATIONAL PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Impact of noise on surrounding environment.**
Nature of impact:	**Environmental noise pollution. Nuisance impacts could relate to the increase noise and disturbance associated with the proposed development, e.g. noise, traffic etc.** **Farming activities on the sites, and vehicles moving to and from the sites would cause an increase in noise in the area, which may impact negatively upon the adjoining landowners.**
Extent and duration of impact:	**Extent 2 (On site or within 100 m of the site) & Duration 1 (0 – 1 years)**
Magnitude	**Low**
Consequence of impact or risk:	**Nuisance**
Probability of occurrence:	**Distinct possibly**
Degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources:	**Resource will not be lost**
Degree to which the impact can be reversed:	**Completely reversible - This will not be a long-term impact nor will it have an impact on the natural processes. It is thus 100% reversible. It will be the same or similar noise impacts related to the existing agricultural activities on the farm and surrounding areas**
Indirect impacts:	**Nuisance**
Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:	**Nuisance**
Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Low**
Degree to which the impact can be avoided:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be managed:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be	**Completely mitigatable (CM)**

mitigated:	
Proposed mitigation:	• **All noise and sounds generated by plant or machinery must adhere to SABS 0103 specifications for the maximum permissible noise levels.** • **No sound amplification equipment such as sirens, loud hailers or hooters may be used on site, after normal working hours, except in emergencies.**
Residual impacts:	**Nuisance**
Cumulative impact post mitigation:	**Nuisance**
Significance rating of impact after mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Low**
DECOMMISSIONING AND CLOSURE PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Similar to impacts associated with construction phase.**

Alternative	**Socio-Economic Impacts**
PLANNING, DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Impact of noise on surrounding environment.**
Nature of impact:	**Environmental noise pollution. Nuisance impacts could relate to the increase noise and disturbance associated with the proposed development, e.g. noise, traffic etc.** **Clearing activities on the sites, and vehicles moving to and from the sites would cause an increase in noise in the area, which may impact negatively upon the adjoining landowners.**
Extent and duration of impact:	**Extent 2 (On site or within 100 m of the site) & Duration 1 (0 – 1 years)**
Magnitude	**Low**
Consequence of impact or risk:	**Nuisance**
Probability of occurrence:	**Distinct possibly**
Degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources:	**Resource will not be lost**
Degree to which the impact can be reversed:	**Completely reversible - This will not be a long-term impact nor will it have an impact on the natural processes. It is thus 100% reversible. It will be the same or similar noise impacts related to the existing agricultural activities on**

	the farm and surrounding areas
Indirect impacts:	**Nuisance**
Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:	**Nuisance**
Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Low**
Degree to which the impact can be avoided:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be managed:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:	**Completely mitigatable (CM)**
Proposed mitigation:	• **All noise and sounds generated by plant or machinery must adhere to SABS 0103 specifications for the maximum permissible noise levels.** • **No sound amplification equipment such as sirens, loud hailers or hooters may be used on site, after normal working hours, except in emergencies.**
Residual impacts:	**Nuisance**
Cumulative impact post mitigation:	**Nuisance**
Significance rating of impact after mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Low**
OPERATIONAL PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Impact of noise on surrounding environment.**
Nature of impact:	**Environmental noise pollution. Nuisance impacts could relate to the increase noise and disturbance associated with the proposed development, e.g. noise, traffic etc.** **Farming activities on the sites, and vehicles moving to and from the sites would cause an increase in noise in the area, which may impact negatively upon the adjoining landowners.**
Extent and duration of impact:	**Extent 2 (On site or within 100 m of the site) & Duration 1 (0 – 1 years)**
Magnitude	**Low**
Consequence of impact or risk:	**Nuisance**
Probability of occurrence:	**Distinct possibly**
Degree to which the impact may	**Resource will not be lost**

cause irreplaceable loss of resources:	
Degree to which the impact can be reversed:	**Completely reversible - This will not be a long-term impact nor will it have an impact on the natural processes. It is thus 100% reversible. It will be the same or similar noise impacts related to the existing agricultural activities on the farm and surrounding areas**
Indirect impacts:	**Nuisance**
Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:	**Nuisance**
Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Low**
Degree to which the impact can be avoided:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be managed:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:	**Completely mitigatable (CM)**
Proposed mitigation:	• **All noise and sounds generated by plant or machinery must adhere to SABS 0103 specifications for the maximum permissible noise levels.** • **No sound amplification equipment such as sirens, loud hailers or hooters may be used on site, after normal working hours, except in emergencies.**
Residual impacts:	**Nuisance**
Cumulative impact post mitigation:	**Nuisance**
Significance rating of impact after mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Low**
DECOMMISSIONING AND CLOSURE PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Similar to impacts associated with construction phase.**

JOB CREATION IMPACT

Preferred Alternative:	**Socio-Economic Impacts**
PLANNING, DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Job creation or maintaining**
Nature of impact:	**Secure of jobs**
Extent and duration of impact:	**Extent 3 & Duration 2 (2-5 years)**
Consequence of impact or risk:	**People not having work and income.**

Magnitude	**High**
Probability of occurrence:	**Most likely**
Degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources:	**Permanent**
Degree to which the impact can be reversed:	**Permanent**
Indirect impacts:	**Job security and economic viability of the farm.**
Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:	**Positive impact. Help to sustain current jobs.**
Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Positive impact. Help to sustain current jobs.**
Degree to which the impact can be avoided:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be managed:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:	**Low**
Proposed mitigation:	**None**
Residual impacts:	**Positive impact. Help to sustain current jobs.**
Cumulative impact post mitigation:	**Positive impact. Help to sustain current jobs.**
Significance rating of impact after mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Positive impact. Help to sustain current jobs.**
OPERATIONAL PHASE. Not applicable	
Potential impact and risk:	**Job creation or maintaining**
Nature of impact:	**Secure of jobs**
Extent and duration of impact:	**Permanent**
Consequence of impact or risk:	**People not having work and income.**
Magnitude	**High**
Probability of occurrence:	**Most likely**
Degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources:	**Permanent**
Degree to which the impact can be reversed:	**Permanent**
Indirect impacts:	**Job security and economic viability of the farm.**
Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:	**Positive impact. Help to sustain current jobs.**
Significance rating of impact prior	**Positive impact. Help to sustain**

to mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**current jobs.**
Degree to which the impact can be avoided:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be managed:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:	**Low**
Proposed mitigation:	**None**
Residual impacts:	**Positive impact. Help to sustain current jobs.**
Cumulative impact post mitigation:	**Positive impact. Help to sustain current jobs.**
Significance rating of impact after mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Positive impact. Help to sustain current jobs.**
DECOMMISSIONING AND CLOSURE PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Similar to construction phase.**

Alternative:	**Socio-Economic Impacts**
PLANNING, DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Job creation or maintaining**
Nature of impact:	**Secure of jobs**
Extent and duration of impact:	**Extent 3 & Duration 2 (2-5 years)**
Consequence of impact or risk:	**People not having work and income.**
Magnitude	**High**
Probability of occurrence:	**Most likely**
Degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources:	**Permanent**
Degree to which the impact can be reversed:	**Permanent**
Indirect impacts:	**Job security and economic viability of the farm.**
Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:	**Positive impact. Help to sustain current jobs.**
Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Positive impact. Help to sustain current jobs.**
Degree to which the impact can be avoided:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be managed:	**High**

Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:	**Low**
Proposed mitigation:	**None**
Residual impacts:	**Positive impact. Help to sustain current jobs.**
Cumulative impact post mitigation:	**Positive impact. Help to sustain current jobs.**
Significance rating of impact after mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Positive impact. Help to sustain current jobs.**
OPERATIONAL PHASE. Not applicable	
Potential impact and risk:	**Job creation or maintaining**
Nature of impact:	**Secure of jobs**
Extent and duration of impact:	**Permanent**
Consequence of impact or risk:	**People not having work and income.**
Magnitude	**High**
Probability of occurrence:	**Most likely**
Degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources:	**Permanent**
Degree to which the impact can be reversed:	**Permanent**
Indirect impacts:	**Job security and economic viability of the farm.**
Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:	**Positive impact. Help to sustain current jobs.**
Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Positive impact. Help to sustain current jobs.**
Degree to which the impact can be avoided:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be managed:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:	**Low**
Proposed mitigation:	**None**
Residual impacts:	**Positive impact. Help to sustain current jobs.**
Cumulative impact post mitigation:	**Positive impact. Help to sustain current jobs.**
Significance rating of impact after mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Positive impact. Help to sustain current jobs.**

DECOMMISSIONING AND CLOSURE PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Similar to construction phase.**

PLANT SPECIES AND TERRESTRIAL BIODIVERSITY IMPACT

Preferred Alternative	**Plant Species and Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact**
PLANNING, DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Plant Species and Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact**
Nature of impact:	**Discussion:** **The ecological assessment report details the findings of a botanical survey and ecological evaluation conducted on 10 October 2025 for the farm Schalkenbosch 229, Tulbagh, Western Cape province. The proposed activities specifically involve clearing indigenous vegetation that has established on previously ploughed land so the area can be returned to agricultural use. Three disjunct areas were assessed, named Driehoekkamp, Damkamp, and Agterstekamp.** **The desktop data, which classified the area as having Very High Biodiversity Theme Sensitivity, was partially contradicted by on-site observations. Fieldwork confirmed that the area does not contain the mapped Breede Alluvium Fynbos and Breede Shale Fynbos, nor does the current Secondary Renosterveld (which has developed over the historic fields) fully conform to true Breede Shale Renosterveld due to past ploughing and the extremely high dominance of renosterbos. Thus, it also does not qualify as being classified as either CBA1 or CBA2 areas. However, it nonetheless holds ecological value.** **The most critical finding is the presence of six Species of Conservation Concern (SCC), three of which are Endangered, predominantly in the eastern sections of Damkamp and Agterstekamp. Notably, a large and valuable population of the Near Threatened *Babiana villosa* was recorded. The presence of these species, along with the area's function as a supporting area for the adjacent Witzenberg Nature Reserve, justifies reclassifying the intact portions of Secondary Renosterveld as Ecological Support Area 1 (ESA1). Consequently, the true Site Ecological Importance (SEI) for the Secondary Renosterveld units, particularly the eastern parts of Damkamp as well as the entire Agterstekamp, is scored as Medium.**

	The most significant negative direct impacts of the proposed construction activities, primarily involving ploughing, are the complete loss of plant communities and ESA1 areas, and potential loss of SCC. Before mitigation, the significance of these impacts is assessed as High. To address this, the report proposes establishing No-Go areas encompassing the easternmost parts of Agterstekamp and Damkamp where SCC are concentrated, as well as the section overlapping the Witzenberg Nature Reserve.
Extent and duration of impact:	**Footprint and permanent**
Magnitude:	**High**
Consequence of impact or risk:	**Loss or impacts on indigenous vegetation**
Probability of occurrence:	**Definitive**
Degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources:	**Partly**
Degree to which the impact can be reversed:	**Partly**
Indirect impacts:	**Disturbance to surface area can result in impacts on indigenous vegetation**
Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:	**Habitat fragmentation, loss of ecological connectivity and erosion**
Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be avoided:	**Low**
Degree to which the impact can be managed:	**Low**
Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:	**Medium**
Proposed mitigation:	**Establishing No-Go areas encompassing the easternmost parts of Agterstekamp and Damkamp where SCC are concentrated, as well as the section overlapping the Witzenberg Nature Reserve**
Residual impacts:	**It is not anticipated that the impact will be high.**
Cumulative impact post mitigation:	**Implementing the No-Go areas would effectively reduce the significance of the loss of SCC from High to Low. However, the residual impact on the loss of plant communities and ESA1 areas remains Medium, indicating that while critical species are protected, the overall ecological impact on Secondary Renosterveld is only partially mitigated.**

	Active management, including the control of invasive alien plant species, is also a necessary mitigation for a Low residual impact. The cumulative impact on provincial and national conservation targets can also be mitigated from Medium-High to Low by preserving the proposed No-Go areas.
Significance rating of impact after mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Implementing the No-Go areas would effectively reduce the significance of the loss of SCC from High to Low. However, the residual impact on the loss of plant communities and ESA1 areas remains Medium, indicating that while critical species are protected, the overall ecological impact on Secondary Renosterveld is only partially mitigated. Active management, including the control of invasive alien plant species, is also a necessary mitigation for a Low residual impact. The cumulative impact on provincial and national conservation targets can also be mitigated from Medium-High to Low by preserving the proposed No-Go areas.**
OPERATIONAL PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Impact on terrestrial biodiversity**
Nature of impact:	**None. Area cleared.**
Extent and duration of impact:	**None. Area cleared.**
Magnitude:	**None. Area cleared.**
Consequence of impact or risk:	**None. Area cleared.**
Probability of occurrence:	**None. Area cleared.**
Degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources:	**None. Area cleared.**
Degree to which the impact can be reversed:	**None. Area cleared.**
Indirect impacts:	**None. Area cleared.**
Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:	**None. Area cleared.**
Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**None. Area cleared.**
Degree to which the impact can be avoided:	**None. Area cleared.**
Degree to which the impact can be managed:	**None. Area cleared.**
Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:	**None. Area cleared.**

Proposed mitigation:	**None. Area cleared.**
Residual impacts:	**None. Area cleared.**
Cumulative impact post mitigation:	**None. Area cleared.**
Significance rating of impact after mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**None. Area cleared.**
DECOMMISSIONING AND CLOSURE PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Impact on indigenous vegetation**
Nature of impact:	**Similar to that in the development phase.**

Alternative	**Plant Species and Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact**
PLANNING, DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Plant Species and Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact**
Nature of impact:	**Discussion:** **The ecological assessment report details the findings of a botanical survey and ecological evaluation conducted on 10 October 2025 for the farm Schalkenbosch 229, Tulbagh, Western Cape province. The proposed activities specifically involve clearing indigenous vegetation that has established on previously ploughed land so the area can be returned to agricultural use. Three disjunct areas were assessed, named Driehoekkamp, Damkamp, and Agterstekamp.** **The desktop data, which classified the area as having Very High Biodiversity Theme Sensitivity, was partially contradicted by on-site observations. Fieldwork confirmed that the area does not contain the mapped Breede Alluvium Fynbos and Breede Shale Fynbos, nor does the current Secondary Renosterveld (which has developed over the historic fields) fully conform to true Breede Shale Renosterveld due to past ploughing and the extremely high dominance of renosterbos. Thus, it also does not qualify as being classified as either CBA1 or CBA2 areas. However, it nonetheless holds ecological value.** **The most critical finding is the presence of six Species of Conservation Concern (SCC), three of which are Endangered, predominantly in the eastern sections of Damkamp and Agterstekamp. Notably, a large and valuable population of the Near Threatened *Babiana villosa* was recorded. The presence of these species, along with the area's function as a supporting area for the**

	adjacent Witzenberg Nature Reserve, justifies reclassifying the intact portions of Secondary Renosterveld as Ecological Support Area 1 (ESA1). Consequently, the true Site Ecological Importance (SEI) for the Secondary Renosterveld units, particularly the eastern parts of Damkamp as well as the entire Agterstekamp, is scored as Medium. **The most significant negative direct impacts of the proposed construction activities, primarily involving ploughing, are the complete loss of plant communities and ESA1 areas, and potential loss of SCC. Before mitigation, the significance of these impacts is assessed as High. To address this, the report proposes establishing No-Go areas encompassing the easternmost parts of Agterstekamp and Damkamp where SCC are concentrated, as well as the section overlapping the Witzenberg Nature Reserve.**
Extent and duration of impact:	**Footprint and permanent**
Magnitude:	**High**
Consequence of impact or risk:	**Loss or impacts on indigenous vegetation**
Probability of occurrence:	**Definitive**
Degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be reversed:	**Cannot be reversed**
Indirect impacts:	**Disturbance to surface area can result in impacts on indigenous vegetation**
Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:	**Habitat fragmentation, loss of ecological connectivity and erosion**
Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be avoided:	**Low**
Degree to which the impact can be managed:	**Low**
Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:	**Medium**
Proposed mitigation:	**None**
Residual impacts:	**It is not anticipated that the impact will be high.**
Cumulative impact post mitigation:	**The significance of the loss of SCC from will be high.**
Significance rating of impact	**High**

after mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	
OPERATIONAL PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Impact on terrestrial biodiversity**
Nature of impact:	**None. Area cleared.**
Extent and duration of impact:	**None. Area cleared.**
Magnitude:	**None. Area cleared.**
Consequence of impact or risk:	**None. Area cleared.**
Probability of occurrence:	**None. Area cleared.**
Degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources:	**None. Area cleared.**
Degree to which the impact can be reversed:	**None. Area cleared.**
Indirect impacts:	**None. Area cleared.**
Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:	**None. Area cleared.**
Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**None. Area cleared.**
Degree to which the impact can be avoided:	**None. Area cleared.**
Degree to which the impact can be managed:	**None. Area cleared.**
Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:	**None. Area cleared.**
Proposed mitigation:	**None. Area cleared.**
Residual impacts:	**None. Area cleared.**
Cumulative impact post mitigation:	**None. Area cleared.**
Significance rating of impact after mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**None. Area cleared.**
DECOMMISSIONING AND CLOSURE PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Impact on indigenous vegetation**
Nature of impact:	**Similar to that in the development phase.**

TERRESTRIAL ANIMAL SITE SENSITIVITY VERIFICATION AND SPECIES IMPACTS

Preferred alternative	**Terrestrial Animal Site Sensitivity Verification and Species Specialist Assessment Report**
PLANNING, DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Terrestrial Animal Site Sensitivity Verification and Species Specialist Assessment Report**
Nature of impact:	**Discussion:** **This Terrestrial Animal Site Sensitivity Verification and Species Specialist Assessment Report evaluates the potential faunal impacts associated with the proposed vegetation clearing on the remainder of Farm Schalkenbosch 229, Tulbagh, Western Cape. The site is situated within a modified agricultural landscape south-east of Tulbagh, where historically ploughed fields, grazing areas and active agricultural lands occur within a broader matrix of fynbos and renosterveld associated with the Witzenberg foothills. The proposed clearing area is approximately 81 ha and consists mainly of historically modified old fields, brush-cut areas, servitude-line vegetation and secondary renosterveld.** **The DFFE Screening Tool identified the Animal Species Theme as Medium sensitivity and flagged Sensitive Species 19, Mute Winter Katydid (Brinckiella aptera) and Peringuey's Meadow Katydid (Conocephalus peringueyi) for assessment. Additional species of conservation concern considered in the assessment include Grey Rhebuck, Leopard, Cape Clawless Otter, Blue Crane, African Darter, Hamerkop and Yellow-billed Egret. Field surveys recorded several faunal species within the development site and surrounding habitats, including Cape Clawless Otter, African Darter, Hamerkop and Yellow-billed Egret.** **The main faunal constraint identified in the assessment is the Agterstekamp faunal landscape corridor. This area retains semi-natural secondary renosterveld, drainage-line habitat and a functional linkage with the Witzenberg Nature Reserve within an otherwise transformed agricultural valley. The corridor provides movement, cover and refuge opportunities for fauna and contributes to**

	connectivity between the adjacent protected area, remnant natural vegetation, riparian features and broader foothill / mountain habitats. The faunal landscape connectivity receptor is assessed as having High Site Ecological Importance, and loss or narrowing of this corridor is the most important faunal impact risk associated with the proposed clearing. **A second important receptor is the secondary renosterveld that may provide marginal potential habitat for Sensitive Animal Species 19. The species is Critically Endangered and the site occurs within the broader Tulbagh–Worcester regional context. However, the habitat on site is secondary, historically ploughed, modified, located more on foothill slopes than preferred valley-bottom habitat, and no individuals were recorded during the field survey. The best remaining secondary renosterveld in Agterstekamp and parts of Damkamp is therefore assessed as Medium SEI, while disturbed old fields, cultivated areas, dwellings, gardens and other transformed habitats are assessed as Low SEI for this receptor.** **The remaining species-habitat receptors are generally assessed as Low significance in relation to the proposed clearing footprint. Blue Crane and Grey Rhebuck are likely to use the broader agricultural and open habitat mosaic opportunistically. Yellow-billed Egret, African Darter, Hamerkop and Cape Clawless Otter are mainly associated with farm dams, drainage lines, riparian vegetation and wetland-edge features, which can be retained through no-go areas, watercourse buffers and corridor protection. Mute Winter Katydid and Peringuey's Meadow Katydid are considered unlikely to occur within the proposed clearing footprint, and no likely or confirmed habitat receptor was identified for these species.** **The overall Site Ecological Importance for the proposed clearing footprint and PAOI is assessed as High, primarily because of the faunal landscape connectivity receptor associated with the Agterstekamp corridor and its linkage with the Witzenberg Nature Reserve. The impact assessment compares a No Clearing**

	option with the Clearing option. The No Clearing option would retain the existing faunal habitat mosaic, while the Clearing option could result in habitat loss, reduced shrubland structure, narrowing of movement habitat and reduced ecological function if not carefully controlled.
Extent and duration of impact:	**Extent (footprint) & Duration Permanent**
Magnitude:	**Medium SEI, while disturbed old fields, cultivated areas, dwellings, gardens and other transformed habitats are assessed as Low SEI for this receptor**
Consequence of impact or risk:	**Loss or impacts on indigenous vegetation and animal species**
Probability of occurrence:	**Probably**
Degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources:	**Permanent**
Degree to which the impact can be reversed:	**Permanent**
Indirect impacts:	**Disturbance to surface area can result in impacts on indigenous vegetation and animal species**
Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:	**Habitat fragmentation, loss of ecological connectivity and erosion**
Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Medium to high**
Degree to which the impact can be avoided:	**Medium**
Degree to which the impact can be managed:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:	**Medium**
Proposed mitigation:	**The most important requirement is to retain the 100 m critical faunal corridor associated with the Agterstekamp drainage-line system and to avoid clearing, ploughing, soil disturbance or fencing barriers within this corridor. Further requirements include protection of drainage-line and riparian habitat, maintenance of watercourse buffers, strict footprint control, avoidance or minimisation of clearing in higher-value secondary renosterveld, demarcation of no-go areas, prevention of snaring, hunting and dog-related disturbance, and allowing fauna to move away from active work areas.**
Residual impacts:	**It is not anticipated that the impact will be high.**

Cumulative impact post mitigation:	**It is not anticipated that the impact will be high.**
Significance rating of impact after mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Acceptable levels**
OPERATIONAL PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Impact on animal species**
Nature of impact:	**None. Area will be developed**
Extent and duration of impact:	**None. Area will be developed**
Magnitude:	**None. Area will be developed**
Consequence of impact or risk:	**None. Area will be developed**
Probability of occurrence:	**None. Area will be developed**
Degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources:	**None. Area will be developed**
Degree to which the impact can be reversed:	**None. Area will be developed**
Indirect impacts:	**None. Area will be developed**
Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:	**None. Area will be developed**
Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**None. Area will be developed**
Degree to which the impact can be avoided:	**None. Area will be developed**
Degree to which the impact can be managed:	**None. Area will be developed**
Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:	**None. Area will be developed**
Proposed mitigation:	**None. Area will be developed**
Residual impacts:	**None. Area will be developed**
Cumulative impact post mitigation:	**None. Area will be developed**
Significance rating of impact after mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**None. Area will be developed**
DECOMMISSIONING AND CLOSURE PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Impact on indigenous vegetation and animal species**
Nature of impact:	**Similar to that in the development phase.**

Alternative	Terrestrial Animal Site Sensitivity Verification and Species Specialist Assessment Report
PLANNING, DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Terrestrial Animal Site Sensitivity Verification and Species Specialist Assessment Report**
Nature of impact:	**Discussion:** **This Terrestrial Animal Site Sensitivity Verification and Species Specialist Assessment Report evaluates the potential faunal impacts associated with the proposed vegetation clearing on the remainder of Farm Schalkenbosch 229, Tulbagh, Western Cape. The site is situated within a modified agricultural landscape south-east of Tulbagh, where historically ploughed fields, grazing areas and active agricultural lands occur within a broader matrix of fynbos and renosterveld associated with the Witzenberg foothills. The proposed clearing area is approximately 81 ha and consists mainly of historically modified old fields, brush-cut areas, servitude-line vegetation and secondary renosterveld.** **The DFFE Screening Tool identified the Animal Species Theme as Medium sensitivity and flagged Sensitive Species 19, Mute Winter Katydid (Brinckiella aptera) and Peringuey's Meadow Katydid (Conocephalus peringueyi) for assessment. Additional species of conservation concern considered in the assessment include Grey Rhebuck, Leopard, Cape Clawless Otter, Blue Crane, African Darter, Hamerkop and Yellow-billed Egret. Field surveys recorded several faunal species within the development site and surrounding habitats, including Cape Clawless Otter, African Darter, Hamerkop and Yellow-billed Egret.** **The main faunal constraint identified in the assessment is the Agterstekamp faunal landscape corridor. This area retains semi-natural secondary renosterveld, drainage-line habitat and a functional linkage with the Witzenberg Nature Reserve within an otherwise transformed agricultural valley. The corridor provides movement, cover and refuge opportunities for fauna and contributes to connectivity between the adjacent protected area, remnant natural vegetation, riparian**

	features and broader foothill / mountain habitats. The faunal landscape connectivity receptor is assessed as having High Site Ecological Importance, and loss or narrowing of this corridor is the most important faunal impact risk associated with the proposed clearing. **A second important receptor is the secondary renosterveld that may provide marginal potential habitat for Sensitive Animal Species 19. The species is Critically Endangered and the site occurs within the broader Tulbagh–Worcester regional context. However, the habitat on site is secondary, historically ploughed, modified, located more on foothill slopes than preferred valley-bottom habitat, and no individuals were recorded during the field survey. The best remaining secondary renosterveld in Agterstekamp and parts of Damkamp is therefore assessed as Medium SEI, while disturbed old fields, cultivated areas, dwellings, gardens and other transformed habitats are assessed as Low SEI for this receptor.** **The remaining species-habitat receptors are generally assessed as Low significance in relation to the proposed clearing footprint. Blue Crane and Grey Rhebuck are likely to use the broader agricultural and open habitat mosaic opportunistically. Yellow-billed Egret, African Darter, Hamerkop and Cape Clawless Otter are mainly associated with farm dams, drainage lines, riparian vegetation and wetland-edge features, which can be retained through no-go areas, watercourse buffers and corridor protection. Mute Winter Katydid and Peringuey's Meadow Katydid are considered unlikely to occur within the proposed clearing footprint, and no likely or confirmed habitat receptor was identified for these species.** **The overall Site Ecological Importance for the proposed clearing footprint and PAOI is assessed as High, primarily because of the faunal landscape connectivity receptor associated with the Agterstekamp corridor and its linkage with the Witzenberg Nature Reserve. The impact assessment compares a No Clearing option with the Clearing option. The No Clearing option would retain the existing faunal habitat**

	mosaic, while the Clearing option could result in habitat loss, reduced shrubland structure, narrowing of movement habitat and reduced ecological function if not carefully controlled.
Extent and duration of impact:	**Extent (footprint) & Duration Permanent**
Magnitude:	**Medium SEI, while disturbed old fields, cultivated areas, dwellings, gardens and other transformed habitats are assessed as Low SEI for this receptor**
Consequence of impact or risk:	**Loss or impacts on indigenous vegetation and animal species**
Probability of occurrence:	**Probably**
Degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources:	**Permanent**
Degree to which the impact can be reversed:	**Permanent**
Indirect impacts:	**Disturbance to surface area can result in impacts on indigenous vegetation and animal species**
Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:	**Habitat fragmentation, loss of ecological connectivity and erosion**
Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Medium to high**
Degree to which the impact can be avoided:	**Medium**
Degree to which the impact can be managed:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:	**Medium**
Proposed mitigation:	**No mitigation**
Residual impacts:	**It is not anticipated that the impact will be high.**
Cumulative impact post mitigation:	**It is not anticipated that the impact will be high.**
Significance rating of impact after mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Medium to high**
OPERATIONAL PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Impact on animal species**
Nature of impact:	**None. Area will be developed**
Extent and duration of impact:	**None. Area will be developed**
Magnitude:	**None. Area will be developed**

Consequence of impact or risk:	**None. Area will be developed**
Probability of occurrence:	**None. Area will be developed**
Degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources:	**None. Area will be developed**
Degree to which the impact can be reversed:	**None. Area will be developed**
Indirect impacts:	**None. Area will be developed**
Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:	**None. Area will be developed**
Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**None. Area will be developed**
Degree to which the impact can be avoided:	**None. Area will be developed**
Degree to which the impact can be managed:	**None. Area will be developed**
Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:	**None. Area will be developed**
Proposed mitigation:	**None. Area will be developed**
Residual impacts:	**None. Area will be developed**
Cumulative impact post mitigation:	**None. Area will be developed**
Significance rating of impact after mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**None. Area will be developed**
DECOMMISSIONING AND CLOSURE PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Impact on indigenous vegetation and animal species**
Nature of impact:	**Similar to that in the development phase.**

FRESHWATER RISK AND IMPACT

Preferred alternative	**Freshwater Risk and Impact**
PLANNING, DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Freshwater Risk and Impact**
Nature of impact:	**Discussion:** **Delta Ecology was appointed by Enviro EAP to undertake a Freshwater Risk and Impact Assessment for the proposed vegetation clearing on the Remainder of Farm Schalkenbosch 229, located near Tulbagh in the Western Cape. The proposed activity comprises the clearing of indigenous vegetation that has established**

	within historically cultivated agricultural fields to facilitate the return of these areas to agricultural production. The assessment was undertaken in support of the Environmental Authorisation (EA) process following the identification of Very High Aquatic Biodiversity Theme Sensitivity by the National Web-based Environmental Screening Tool. **The assessment confirmed the presence of several non-perennial rivers, associated tributaries, one seep wetland and a highly modified agricultural flow path within or adjacent to the proposed vegetation clearing areas. The non-perennial rivers were assessed as being in a largely natural to moderately modified ecological condition (PES Categories B/C), while the seep wetland was assessed as largely natural (PES Category B). These freshwater ecosystems provide important riparian habitat, maintain ecological connectivity within the upper Breede River catchment and contribute to local biodiversity.** **The agricultural flow path was assessed as PES Category E/F (Critically Modified) and functions primarily as an agricultural drainage feature with negligible remaining aquatic habitat or ecological function. Consequently, from an aquatic biodiversity perspective, avoidance of this feature and the implementation of a freshwater buffer are not considered necessary, provided that vegetation clearing and subsequent agricultural activities do not result in concentrated runoff, erosion or sediment delivery into downstream freshwater ecosystems.** **The proposed activity does not include new infrastructure or instream works. The principal freshwater risks are therefore indirect and relate to vegetation clearing in proximity to freshwater ecosystems, including disturbance of riparian habitat, altered surface water runoff, increased erosion and sedimentation, and deterioration of water quality. Four potential impacts were assessed, namely:** • **Loss and degradation of freshwater and riparian habitat;** • **Alteration of surface water runoff and**

	hydrological processes; • **Increased sediment input and erosion; and** • **Water quality impairment.**
Extent and duration of impact:	**Extent (footprint) & Duration Permanent**
Magnitude:	**The Risk Assessment Matrix (RAM), undertaken in accordance with Government Notice 4167 of 2023, indicates that the anticipated Section 21(c) and (i) water uses fall within the Low Risk category. It is therefore considered that the proposed water uses may be authorised under the applicable General Authorisation (GA), subject to confirmation by the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS).**
Consequence of impact or risk:	**Vegetation clearing in proximity to freshwater ecosystems**
Probability of occurrence:	**Probably**
Degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources:	**Permanent**
Degree to which the impact can be reversed:	**High**
Indirect impacts:	**Vegetation clearing in proximity to freshwater ecosystems**
Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:	**Vegetation clearing in proximity to freshwater ecosystems**
Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Medium to high**
Degree to which the impact can be avoided:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be managed:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:	**High**
Proposed mitigation:	**From an aquatic biodiversity perspective, the proposed vegetation clearing is considered acceptable, provided that the recommended mitigation measures are implemented, the delineated 35 m freshwater buffers are maintained as permanent no-go areas, and good agricultural management practices are followed throughout vegetation clearing and subsequent agricultural activities.**
Residual impacts:	**It is not anticipated that the impact will be high.**
Cumulative impact post mitigation:	**It is not anticipated that the impact will be high.**

Significance rating of impact after mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Low**
OPERATIONAL PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Freshwater Risk and Impact**
Nature of impact:	**Discussion:** **Delta Ecology was appointed by Enviro EAP to undertake a Freshwater Risk and Impact Assessment for the proposed vegetation clearing on the Remainder of Farm Schalkenbosch 229, located near Tulbagh in the Western Cape. The proposed activity comprises the clearing of indigenous vegetation that has established within historically cultivated agricultural fields to facilitate the return of these areas to agricultural production. The assessment was undertaken in support of the Environmental Authorisation (EA) process following the identification of Very High Aquatic Biodiversity Theme Sensitivity by the National Web-based Environmental Screening Tool.** **The assessment confirmed the presence of several non-perennial rivers, associated tributaries, one seep wetland and a highly modified agricultural flow path within or adjacent to the proposed vegetation clearing areas. The non-perennial rivers were assessed as being in a largely natural to moderately modified ecological condition (PES Categories B/C), while the seep wetland was assessed as largely natural (PES Category B). These freshwater ecosystems provide important riparian habitat, maintain ecological connectivity within the upper Breede River catchment and contribute to local biodiversity.** **The agricultural flow path was assessed as PES Category E/F (Critically Modified) and functions primarily as an agricultural drainage feature with negligible remaining aquatic habitat or ecological function. Consequently, from an aquatic biodiversity perspective, avoidance of this feature and the implementation of a freshwater buffer are not considered necessary, provided that vegetation clearing and subsequent agricultural activities do not result in**

	concentrated runoff, erosion or sediment delivery into downstream freshwater ecosystems. **The proposed activity does not include new infrastructure or instream works. The principal freshwater risks are therefore indirect and relate to vegetation clearing in proximity to freshwater ecosystems, including disturbance of riparian habitat, altered surface water runoff, increased erosion and sedimentation, and deterioration of water quality. Four potential impacts were assessed, namely:** • **Loss and degradation of freshwater and riparian habitat;** • **Alteration of surface water runoff and hydrological processes;** • **Increased sediment input and erosion; and** • **Water quality impairment.**
Extent and duration of impact:	**Extent (footprint) & Duration Permanent**
Magnitude:	**The Risk Assessment Matrix (RAM), undertaken in accordance with Government Notice 4167 of 2023, indicates that the anticipated Section 21(c) and (i) water uses fall within the Low Risk category. It is therefore considered that the proposed water uses may be authorised under the applicable General Authorisation (GA), subject to confirmation by the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS).**
Consequence of impact or risk:	**Vegetation clearing in proximity to freshwater ecosystems**
Probability of occurrence:	**Probably**
Degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources:	**Permanent**
Degree to which the impact can be reversed:	**High**
Indirect impacts:	**Vegetation clearing in proximity to freshwater ecosystems**
Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:	**Vegetation clearing in proximity to freshwater ecosystems**
Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Medium to high**
Degree to which the impact can be avoided:	**High**

Degree to which the impact can be managed:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:	**High**
Proposed mitigation:	**From an aquatic biodiversity perspective, the proposed vegetation clearing is considered acceptable, provided that the recommended mitigation measures are implemented, the delineated 35 m freshwater buffers are maintained as permanent no-go areas, and good agricultural management practices are followed throughout vegetation clearing and subsequent agricultural activities.**
Residual impacts:	**It is not anticipated that the impact will be high.**
Cumulative impact post mitigation:	**It is not anticipated that the impact will be high.**
Significance rating of impact after mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Low**
DECOMMISSIONING AND CLOSURE PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Freshwater Risk and Impact**
Nature of impact:	**Similar to that in the development phase.**

Alternative	**Freshwater Risk and Impact**
PLANNING, DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Freshwater Risk and Impact**
Nature of impact:	**Discussion:** **Delta Ecology was appointed by Enviro EAP to undertake a Freshwater Risk and Impact Assessment for the proposed vegetation clearing on the Remainder of Farm Schalkenbosch 229, located near Tulbagh in the Western Cape. The proposed activity comprises the clearing of indigenous vegetation that has established within historically cultivated agricultural fields to facilitate the return of these areas to agricultural production. The assessment was undertaken in support of the Environmental Authorisation (EA) process following the identification of Very High Aquatic Biodiversity Theme Sensitivity by the National Web-based Environmental Screening Tool.** **The assessment confirmed the presence of several non-perennial rivers, associated tributaries, one seep wetland and a highly modified agricultural flow path within or adjacent**

	to the proposed vegetation clearing areas. The non-perennial rivers were assessed as being in a largely natural to moderately modified ecological condition (PES Categories B/C), while the seep wetland was assessed as largely natural (PES Category B). These freshwater ecosystems provide important riparian habitat, maintain ecological connectivity within the upper Breede River catchment and contribute to local biodiversity. **The agricultural flow path was assessed as PES Category E/F (Critically Modified) and functions primarily as an agricultural drainage feature with negligible remaining aquatic habitat or ecological function. Consequently, from an aquatic biodiversity perspective, avoidance of this feature and the implementation of a freshwater buffer are not considered necessary, provided that vegetation clearing and subsequent agricultural activities do not result in concentrated runoff, erosion or sediment delivery into downstream freshwater ecosystems.** **The proposed activity does not include new infrastructure or instream works. The principal freshwater risks are therefore indirect and relate to vegetation clearing in proximity to freshwater ecosystems, including disturbance of riparian habitat, altered surface water runoff, increased erosion and sedimentation, and deterioration of water quality. Four potential impacts were assessed, namely:** • **Loss and degradation of freshwater and riparian habitat;** • **Alteration of surface water runoff and hydrological processes;** • **Increased sediment input and erosion; and** • **Water quality impairment.**
Extent and duration of impact:	**Extent (footprint) & Duration Permanent**
Magnitude:	**The Risk Assessment Matrix (RAM), undertaken in accordance with Government Notice 4167 of 2023, indicates that the anticipated Section 21(c) and (i) water uses fall within the Low Risk category. It is therefore considered that the proposed water uses may be authorised under the applicable General Authorisation (GA), subject to confirmation by the Department of**

	Water and Sanitation (DWS).
Consequence of impact or risk:	**Vegetation clearing in proximity to freshwater ecosystems**
Probability of occurrence:	**Definitive**
Degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources:	**Permanent**
Degree to which the impact can be reversed:	**High**
Indirect impacts:	**Vegetation clearing in proximity to freshwater ecosystems**
Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:	**Vegetation clearing in proximity to freshwater ecosystems**
Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Medium to high**
Degree to which the impact can be avoided:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be managed:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:	**High**
Proposed mitigation:	**None**
Residual impacts:	**Vegetation clearing in proximity to freshwater ecosystems**
Cumulative impact post mitigation:	**Vegetation clearing in proximity to freshwater ecosystems**
Significance rating of impact after mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Medium to high**
OPERATIONAL PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Freshwater Risk and Impact**
Nature of impact:	**Discussion:** **Delta Ecology was appointed by Enviro EAP to undertake a Freshwater Risk and Impact Assessment for the proposed vegetation clearing on the Remainder of Farm Schalkenbosch 229, located near Tulbagh in the Western Cape. The proposed activity comprises the clearing of indigenous vegetation that has established within historically cultivated agricultural fields to facilitate the return of these areas to agricultural production. The assessment was undertaken in support of the Environmental Authorisation (EA)**

	process following the identification of Very High Aquatic Biodiversity Theme Sensitivity by the National Web-based Environmental Screening Tool. **The assessment confirmed the presence of several non-perennial rivers, associated tributaries, one seep wetland and a highly modified agricultural flow path within or adjacent to the proposed vegetation clearing areas. The non-perennial rivers were assessed as being in a largely natural to moderately modified ecological condition (PES Categories B/C), while the seep wetland was assessed as largely natural (PES Category B). These freshwater ecosystems provide important riparian habitat, maintain ecological connectivity within the upper Breede River catchment and contribute to local biodiversity.** **The agricultural flow path was assessed as PES Category E/F (Critically Modified) and functions primarily as an agricultural drainage feature with negligible remaining aquatic habitat or ecological function. Consequently, from an aquatic biodiversity perspective, avoidance of this feature and the implementation of a freshwater buffer are not considered necessary, provided that vegetation clearing and subsequent agricultural activities do not result in concentrated runoff, erosion or sediment delivery into downstream freshwater ecosystems.** **The proposed activity does not include new infrastructure or instream works. The principal freshwater risks are therefore indirect and relate to vegetation clearing in proximity to freshwater ecosystems, including disturbance of riparian habitat, altered surface water runoff, increased erosion and sedimentation, and deterioration of water quality. Four potential impacts were assessed, namely:** • **Loss and degradation of freshwater and riparian habitat;** • **Alteration of surface water runoff and hydrological processes;** • **Increased sediment input and erosion; and** • **Water quality impairment.**
Extent and duration of	**Extent (footprint) & Duration Permanent**

impact:	
Magnitude:	**The Risk Assessment Matrix (RAM), undertaken in accordance with Government Notice 4167 of 2023, indicates that the anticipated Section 21(c) and (i) water uses fall within the Low Risk category. It is therefore considered that the proposed water uses may be authorised under the applicable General Authorisation (GA), subject to confirmation by the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS).**
Consequence of impact or risk:	**Vegetation clearing in proximity to freshwater ecosystems**
Probability of occurrence:	**Definitely**
Degree to which the impact may cause irreplaceable loss of resources:	**Permanent**
Degree to which the impact can be reversed:	**Low**
Indirect impacts:	**Vegetation clearing in proximity to freshwater ecosystems**
Cumulative impact prior to mitigation:	**Vegetation clearing in proximity to freshwater ecosystems**
Significance rating of impact prior to mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**Medium to high**
Degree to which the impact can be avoided:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be managed:	**High**
Degree to which the impact can be mitigated:	**High**
Proposed mitigation:	**None**
Residual impacts:	**Vegetation clearing in proximity to freshwater ecosystems**
Cumulative impact post mitigation:	**Vegetation clearing in proximity to freshwater ecosystems**
Significance rating of impact after mitigation (e.g. Low, Medium, Medium-High, High, or Very-High)	**High**
DECOMMISSIONING AND CLOSURE PHASE	
Potential impact and risk:	**Freshwater Risk and Impact**
Nature of impact:	**Similar to that in the development phase.**

(D) IMPACTS THAT MAY RESULT FROM THE NO DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVE

The No-Go option will result in the site remaining as it is presently, areas that does not contain the mapped Breede Alluvium Fynbos and Breede Shale Fynbos, nor does the current Secondary Renosterveld (which has developed over the historic fields) fully conform to true Breede Shale Renosterveld due to past ploughing and the extremely high dominance of renosterbos. Thus, it also does not qualify as being classified as either CBA1 or CBA2 areas. However, it nonetheless holds ecological value.

SECTION 7: SPECIALIST ASSESSMENTS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Plant Species and Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact (Keet 2025)
This ecological assessment report details the findings of a botanical survey and ecological evaluation conducted on 10 October 2025 for the farm Schalkenbosch 229, Tulbagh, Western Cape province. The proposed activities specifically involve clearing indigenous vegetation that has established on previously ploughed land so the area can be returned to agricultural use. Three disjunct areas were assessed, named Driehoekkamp, Damkamp, and Agterstekamp.

The desktop data, which classified the area as having Very High Biodiversity Theme Sensitivity, was partially contradicted by on-site observations. Fieldwork confirmed that the area does not contain the mapped Breede Alluvium Fynbos and Breede Shale Fynbos, nor does the current Secondary Renosterveld (which has developed over the historic fields) fully conform to true Breede Shale Renosterveld due to past ploughing and the extremely high dominance of renosterbos. Thus, it also does not qualify as being classified as either CBA1 or CBA2 areas. However, it nonetheless holds ecological value.

The most critical finding is the presence of six Species of Conservation Concern (SCC), three of which are Endangered, predominantly in the eastern sections of Damkamp and Agterstekamp. Notably, a large and valuable population of the Near Threatened Babiana villosa was recorded. The presence of these species, along with the area's function as a supporting area for the adjacent Witzenberg Nature Reserve, justifies reclassifying the intact portions of Secondary Renosterveld as Ecological Support Area 1 (ESA1). Consequently, the true Site Ecological Importance (SEI) for the Secondary Renosterveld units, particularly the eastern parts of Damkamp as well as the entire Agterstekamp, is scored as Medium.

The most significant negative direct impacts of the proposed construction activities, primarily involving ploughing, are the complete loss of plant communities and ESA1 areas, and potential loss of SCC. Before mitigation, the significance of these impacts is assessed as High. To address this, the report proposes establishing No-Go areas encompassing the easternmost parts of Agterstekamp and Damkamp where SCC are concentrated, as well as the section overlapping the Witzenberg Nature Reserve. Furthermore, buffer zones around watercourses may require a Water Use Licence. Implementing the No-Go areas would effectively reduce the

significance of the loss of SCC from High to Low. However, the residual impact on the loss of plant communities and ESA1 areas remains Medium, indicating that while critical species are protected, the overall ecological impact on Secondary Renosterveld is only partially mitigated. Active management, including the control of invasive alien plant species, is also a necessary mitigation for a Low residual impact. The cumulative impact on provincial and national conservation targets can also be mitigated from Medium-High to Low by preserving the proposed No-Go areas.

Terrestrial Animal Site Sensitivity Verification and Species Specialist Assessment Report (Venter, J.A. 2026)

This Terrestrial Animal Site Sensitivity Verification and Species Specialist Assessment Report evaluates the potential faunal impacts associated with the proposed vegetation clearing on the remainder of Farm Schalkenbosch 229, Tulbagh, Western Cape. The site is situated within a modified agricultural landscape south-east of Tulbagh, where historically ploughed fields, grazing areas and active agricultural lands occur within a broader matrix of fynbos and renosterveld associated with the Witzenberg foothills. The proposed clearing area is approximately 81 ha and consists mainly of historically modified old fields, brush-cut areas, servitude-line vegetation and secondary renosterveld.

The DFFE Screening Tool identified the Animal Species Theme as Medium sensitivity and flagged Sensitive Species 19, Mute Winter Katydid (Brinckiella aptera) and Peringuey's Meadow Katydid (Conocephalus peringueyi) for assessment. Additional species of conservation concern considered in the assessment include Grey Rhebuck, Leopard, Cape Clawless Otter, Blue Crane, African Darter, Hamerkop and Yellow-billed Egret. Field surveys recorded several faunal species within the development site and surrounding habitats, including Cape Clawless Otter, African Darter, Hamerkop and Yellow-billed Egret.

The main faunal constraint identified in the assessment is the Agterstekamp faunal landscape corridor. This area retains semi-natural secondary renosterveld, drainage-line habitat and a functional linkage with the Witzenberg Nature Reserve within an otherwise transformed agricultural valley. The corridor provides movement, cover and refuge opportunities for fauna and contributes to connectivity between the adjacent protected area, remnant natural vegetation, riparian features and broader foothill / mountain habitats. The faunal landscape connectivity receptor is assessed as having High Site Ecological Importance, and loss or narrowing of this corridor is the most important faunal impact risk associated with the proposed clearing.

A second important receptor is the secondary renosterveld that may provide marginal potential habitat for Sensitive Animal Species 19. The species is Critically Endangered and the site occurs within the broader Tulbagh–Worcester regional context. However, the habitat on site is secondary, historically ploughed, modified, located more on foothill slopes than preferred valley-bottom habitat, and no individuals were recorded during the field survey. The best remaining secondary renosterveld in Agterstekamp and parts of Damkamp is therefore assessed as Medium SEI, while disturbed old fields, cultivated areas, dwellings, gardens and

other transformed habitats are assessed as Low SEI for this receptor.

The remaining species-habitat receptors are generally assessed as Low significance in relation to the proposed clearing footprint. Blue Crane and Grey Rhebuck are likely to use the broader agricultural and open habitat mosaic opportunistically. Yellow-billed Egret, African Darter, Hamerkop and Cape Clawless Otter are mainly associated with farm dams, drainage lines, riparian vegetation and wetland-edge features, which can be retained through no-go areas, watercourse buffers and corridor protection. Mute Winter Katydid and Peringuey's Meadow Katydid are considered unlikely to occur within the proposed clearing footprint, and no likely or confirmed habitat receptor was identified for these species.

The overall Site Ecological Importance for the proposed clearing footprint and PAOI is assessed as High, primarily because of the faunal landscape connectivity receptor associated with the Agterstekamp corridor and its linkage with the Witzenberg Nature Reserve. The impact assessment compares a No Clearing option with the Clearing option. The No Clearing option would retain the existing faunal habitat mosaic, while the Clearing option could result in habitat loss, reduced shrubland structure, narrowing of movement habitat and reduced ecological function if not carefully controlled.

The proposed clearing can be supported from a faunal specialist perspective only if the key avoidance and mitigation measures are implemented. The most important requirement is to retain the 100 m critical faunal corridor associated with the Agterstekamp drainage-line system and to avoid clearing, ploughing, soil disturbance or fencing barriers within this corridor. Further requirements include protection of drainage-line and riparian habitat, maintenance of watercourse buffers, strict footprint control, avoidance or minimisation of clearing in higher-value secondary renosterveld, demarcation of no-go areas, prevention of snaring, hunting and dog-related disturbance, and allowing fauna to move away from active work areas. With these measures in place, the most significant faunal impacts can be avoided or reduced to acceptable levels; without them, residual impacts on faunal landscape connectivity could remain Medium to High.

Freshwater Risk and Impact Assessment (Morton, R., Fortune, F., & Van Zyl, K. 2026)

Delta Ecology was appointed by Enviro EAP to undertake a Freshwater Risk and Impact Assessment for the proposed vegetation clearing on the Remainder of Farm Schalkenbosch 229, located near Tulbagh in the Western Cape. The proposed activity comprises the clearing of indigenous vegetation that has established within historically cultivated agricultural fields to facilitate the return of these areas to agricultural production. The assessment was undertaken in support of the Environmental Authorisation (EA) process following the identification of Very High Aquatic Biodiversity Theme Sensitivity by the National Web-based Environmental Screening Tool.

The assessment confirmed the presence of several non-perennial rivers, associated tributaries, one seep wetland and a highly modified agricultural flow path within or adjacent to the proposed vegetation clearing areas. The non-perennial rivers were assessed as being in a largely natural to moderately modified

ecological condition (PES Categories B/C), while the seep wetland was assessed as largely natural (PES Category B). These freshwater ecosystems provide important riparian habitat, maintain ecological connectivity within the upper Breede River catchment and contribute to local biodiversity.

The agricultural flow path was assessed as PES Category E/F (Critically Modified) and functions primarily as an agricultural drainage feature with negligible remaining aquatic habitat or ecological function. Consequently, from an aquatic biodiversity perspective, avoidance of this feature and the implementation of a freshwater buffer are not considered necessary, provided that vegetation clearing and subsequent agricultural activities do not result in concentrated runoff, erosion or sediment delivery into downstream freshwater ecosystems.

The proposed activity does not include new infrastructure or instream works. The principal freshwater risks are therefore indirect and relate to vegetation clearing in proximity to freshwater ecosystems, including disturbance of riparian habitat, altered surface water runoff, increased erosion and sedimentation, and deterioration of water quality. Four potential impacts were assessed, namely:

- Loss and degradation of freshwater and riparian habitat;
- Alteration of surface water runoff and hydrological processes;
- Increased sediment input and erosion; and
- Water quality impairment.

The assessment identified the establishment and maintenance of a 35 m freshwater buffer around all delineated non-perennial rivers and the seep wetland as the primary mitigation measure. Additional mitigation includes maintaining existing drainage patterns and contour banks, implementing erosion and sediment control measures, protecting riparian vegetation, applying good agricultural management practices, and preventing contamination of freshwater ecosystems.

Following implementation of the recommended mitigation measures, all identified impacts are expected to reduce to Low significance. The Risk Assessment Matrix (RAM), undertaken in accordance with Government Notice 4167 of 2023, indicates that the anticipated Section 21(c) and (i) water uses fall within the Low Risk category. It is therefore considered that the proposed water uses may be authorised under the applicable General Authorisation (GA), subject to confirmation by the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS).

From an aquatic biodiversity perspective, the proposed vegetation clearing is considered acceptable, provided that the recommended mitigation measures are implemented, the delineated 35 m freshwater buffers are maintained as permanent no-go areas, and good agricultural management practices are followed throughout vegetation clearing and subsequent agricultural activities.

SECTION 8: SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND STATEMENT

NO-DEVELOPMENT OPTION:

The No-Go option will result in the site remaining as it is presently, areas that does

not contain the mapped Breede Alluvium Fynbos and Breede Shale Fynbos, nor does the current Secondary Renosterveld (which has developed over the historic fields) fully conform to true Breede Shale Renosterveld due to past ploughing and the extremely high dominance of renosterbos. Thus, it also does not qualify as being classified as either CBA1 or CBA2 areas. However, it nonetheless holds ecological value.

PREFERRED CLEARING ALTERNATIVE – ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT:

The most important requirement is to retain the 100 m critical faunal corridor associated with the Agterstekamp drainage-line system and to avoid clearing, ploughing, soil disturbance or fencing barriers within this corridor.

No-Go areas encompassing the easternmost parts of Agterstekamp and Damkamp where SCC are concentrated, as well as the section overlapping the Witzenberg Nature Reserve. Implementing the No-Go areas would effectively reduce the significance of the loss of SCC from High to Low.

From an aquatic biodiversity perspective, the delineated 35 m freshwater buffers were maintained as permanent no-go areas, and good agricultural management practices are followed throughout vegetation clearing and subsequent agricultural activities

SECTION 9: RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS TO BE INCLUDED AS CONDITIONS OF THE AUTHORISATION, ASSUMPTIONS AND LIMITATIONS

9.1 DESCRIBE THE ABILITY OF THE APPLICANT TO IMPLEMENT THE MANAGEMENT, MITIGATION AND MONITORING MEASURES

The applicant is ultimately responsible for the implementation of the EA and EMP and the financial cost related thereto. In accordance with the requirements of the EA and EMP, the applicant must ensure that any person acting on their behalf complies with the conditions / specifications contained in this EA, EMP and any other relevant permits/licences/legislation etc. related to the activities. In addition, an Environmental Control Officer must be appointed to review, monitor and report on compliance with the relevant requirements. Thus, if the applicant intends to commence with the proposed and authorised activities he/she must ensure that he/she is able to implement the required management, mitigation and monitoring measures throughout the lifespan of the project.

9.2 PROVIDE THE DETAILS OF ANY FINANCIAL PROVISIONS FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF NEGATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS, REHABILITATION AND CLOSURE OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Unknown at this stage. Mitigation for negative environmental impacts, rehabilitation and closure requirements will be determined throughout the lifespan of the proposed development depending on whether or not and what will be required. The holder of the authorisation is however ultimately responsible to ensure that any required mitigation and rehabilitation measures are implemented which may be required due to the proposed development.

9.3 DESCRIBE ANY ASSUMPTIONS, LIMITATIONS, UNCERTAINTIES, DEVIATIONS AND GAPS IN KNOWLEDGE WHICH RELATE TO THE ASSESMMENT AND IMPACT MANAGEMENT, MITIGATION AND MONITORING MEASURES PROPOSED

EAP is only knowledgeable about the potential environmental and ecosystems aspects as assessed in this report.

In undertaking this investigation and compiling the Scoping Report and EIR, the following were assumed:

- The information provided by the client, engineers and specialists is accurate and unbiased;
- The scope of this investigation is to assess the direct and cumulative environmental impacts associated with the development; and
- Should the proposed project be authorised, the applicant will incorporate the recommendations and mitigation measures outlined in the EIR, the EMP and the EA into the detailed design and construction contract specifications and operational management system for the proposed project.

The EAP is not aware of any deviations from the approved scoping report at this stage.

9.4 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EAP AND SPECIALISTS

(a) In my view as the appointed EAP, the information contained in this report and the documentation attached hereto is sufficient to make a decision in respect of the listed activity(ies) applied for. Provide reasons for your opinion	YES	~~NO~~
The Draft EIA report must still be submitted to all registered I&APs and key departments for comments before all relevant comments can be obtained and addressed for the decision-making authority to take into consideration during the final decision-making process.		
(b) If the documentation attached hereto is sufficient to make a decision, please indicate below whether, in your opinion, the listed activity(ies) should or should not be authorised:		
Listed activity(ies) should be authorised:	YES	~~NO~~
Provide reasons for your opinion		
NA		
(c) Provide a description of any aspects that were conditional to the findings of the assessment by the EAP and Specialists which are to be included as conditions of authorisation.		
It is recommended that the following recommendations be included as conditions of the authorisation:		

• Retain the 100 m critical faunal corridor associated with the Agterstekamp drainage-line system and to avoid clearing, ploughing, soil disturbance or fencing barriers within this corridor. • Retain No-Go areas encompassing the easternmost parts of Agterstekamp and Damkamp where SCC are concentrated, as well as the section overlapping the Witzenberg Nature Reserve as per the preferred clearing area. • The delineated 35 m freshwater buffers must be maintained as permanent no-go areas, and good agricultural management practices are followed throughout vegetation clearing and subsequent agricultural activities	
(d) Please indicate the recommended periods in terms of the following periods that should be specified in the environmental authorisation:	
i. the period within which commencement must occur;	Within 5 years of obtaining Environmental Authorisation
ii. the period for which the environmental authorisation is granted and the date on which the development proposal will have been concluded, where the environmental authorisation does not include operational aspects;	Ongoing maintenance of infrastructure and implementation of EMP until decommissioning.
iii. the period for which the portion of the environmental authorisation that deals with non-operational aspects is granted; and	Within 10 years of obtaining Environmental Authorisation
iv. the period for which the portion of the environmental authorisation that deals with operational aspects is granted.	Ongoing maintenance of infrastructure and implementation of EMP until decommissioning.

SECTION 10: APPENDICES

APPENDIX		Confirm that Appendix is attached
Appendix A:	Locality map	Y
Appendix B:	Site development plan(s) Vegetation Clearing Areas Map	Y
Appendix C:	Photographs	Y
Appendix D:	Public Participation Process	Y
Appendix E:	Specialist Reports	Y
Appendix F:	Environmental Management Programme	Y
Appendix G:	Heritage Western Cape RoD	Y

References

Keet, J-H (2025) Plant Species and Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact assessment for vegetation clearing on farm Schalkenbosch 229, Tulbagh, Western Cape. Report prepared for Enviro EAP. Final Report, Version 1.0. Reference: PR.25.038.

Morton, R., Fortune, F., & Van Zyl, K. 2026. Freshwater Risk & Impact Assessment, Farm Schalkenbosch 229, Tulbagh V1.0. Delta Ecology. RSA.

Venter, J.A. 2026. Terrestrial Animal Site Sensitivity Verification and Species Specialist Assessment Report: Proposed vegetation clearing on the remainder of Farm Schalkenbosch 229, Tulbagh, Western Cape. Technical Report prepared for Enviro EAP (Pty) Ltd, L'Agulhas by Wildlife Conservation Decision Support, Western Cape, ZA.

SECTION 11: DECLARATIONS

DECLARATION OF THE APPLICANT

Note: Duplicate this section where there is more than one Applicant.

I.....**Andre Lund**....., ID number **72 04 22 5251 082** ~~in my personal capacity or~~ duly authorised thereto hereby declare/affirm that all the information submitted or to be submitted as part of this application form is true and correct, and that:

- I am fully aware of my responsibilities in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998) ("NEMA"), the Environmental Impact Assessment ("EIA") Regulations, and any relevant Specific Environmental Management Act and that failure to comply with these requirements may constitute an offence in terms of relevant environmental legislation;
- I am aware of my general duty of care in terms of Section 28 of the NEMA;

- I am aware that it is an offence in terms of Section 24F of the NEMA should I commence with a listed activity prior to obtaining an Environmental Authorisation;

- I appointed the Environmental Assessment Practitioner ("EAP") (if not exempted from this requirement) which:
  - meets all the requirements in terms of Regulation 13 of the NEMA EIA Regulations; or
  - meets all the requirements other than the requirement to be independent in terms of Regulation 13 of the NEMA EIA Regulations, but a review EAP has been appointed who does meet all the requirements of Regulation 13 of the NEMA EIA Regulations;

- I will provide the EAP and any specialist, where applicable, and the Competent Authority with access to all information at my disposal that is relevant to the application;

- I will be responsible for the costs incurred in complying with the NEMA EIA Regulations and other environmental legislation including but not limited to –
  - costs incurred for the appointment of the EAP or any legitimately person contracted by the EAP;
  - costs in respect of any fee prescribed by the Minister or MEC in respect of the NEMA EIA Regulations;
  - Legitimate costs in respect of specialist(s) reviews; and
  - the provision of security to ensure compliance with applicable management and mitigation measures;

- I am responsible for complying with conditions that may be attached to any decision(s) issued by the Competent Authority, hereby indemnify, the government of the Republic, the Competent Authority and all its officers, agents and employees, from any liability arising out of the content of any report, any procedure or any action for which I or the EAP is responsible in terms of the NEMA EIA Regulations and any Specific Environmental Management Act.

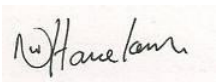
Note: If acting in a representative capacity, a certified copy of the resolution or power of attorney must be attached.

Signature of the Applicant:	Date: 18/09/2026
Name of company (if applicable):	

DECLARATION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PRACTITIONER ("EAP")

I **Nicolaas Willem Hanekom**, EAPASA Registration number **2020/1146** as the appointed EAP hereby declare/affirm the correctness of the:

- Information provided in this BAR and any other documents/reports submitted in support of this BAR;
- The inclusion of comments and inputs from stakeholders and I&APs;
- The inclusion of inputs and recommendations from the specialist reports where relevant; and
- Any information provided by the EAP to interested and affected parties and any responses by the EAP to comments or inputs made by interested and affected parties, and that:
- In terms of the general requirement to be independent:
    - other than fair remuneration for work performed in terms of this application, have no business, financial, personal or other interest in the activity or application and that there are no circumstances that may compromise my objectivity; or
- In terms of the remainder of the general requirements for an EAP, am fully aware of and meet all of the requirements and that failure to comply with any the requirements may result in disqualification;
- I have disclosed, to the Applicant, the specialist (if any), the Competent Authority and registered interested and affected parties, all material information that have or may have the potential to influence the decision of the Competent Authority or the objectivity of any report, plan or document prepared or to be prepared as part of this application;
- I have ensured that information containing all relevant facts in respect of the application was distributed or was made available to registered interested and affected parties and that participation will be facilitated in such a manner that all interested and affected parties were provided with a reasonable opportunity to participate and to provide comments;
- I have ensured that the comments of all interested and affected parties were considered, recorded, responded to and submitted to the Competent Authority in respect of this application;
- I have ensured the inclusion of inputs and recommendations from the specialist reports in respect of the application, where relevant;
- I have kept a register of all interested and affected parties that participated in the public participation process; and
- I am aware that a false declaration is an offence in terms of Regulation 48 of the NEMA EIA Regulations;



18 September 2026

Signature of the EAP: Date:

Enviro-EAP (Pty) Ltd

Name of company (if applicable):

TAKE NOTE THAT THE DIFFERENT SPECIALIST DECLARATIONS ARE INCLUDED IN THE SPECIALIST REPORTS.