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PROJECT NAME:
PROPOSED PLANETS ENERGY FACILITY (PHASE 1 GILIMBERG ENERGY CLUSTER) HYBRID SOLAR PV & BESS FACILITY AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE (up to 200MWac / 150MW-600MWh) IN CAPRICON DISTRICT (POLOKWANE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY) AND WATERBERG (MOGALAKWENA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY) LIMPOPO PROVINCE.

REPORT TITLE:
SITE SENSITIVITY VERITIFCATION REPORT

DATE:
FEBRUARY 2026

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PRACTITIONER:
ABANTU ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES (PTY) LTD

ABANTU ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

APPLICANT:

PLANETS ENERGY FACILITY (PTY) LTD

OFFICE	ADDRESS	CONTACT DETAILS
Gqeberha	41 Avon Place, Overbaakens, Gqeberha, 6070	**Contact Person:** Mr Sive Mlamla (Pr. Sci.Nat, Reg EAP) **Cell:** 078 207 8278 **Fax:** 086 685 9536 **Tel:** 041 582 2648 **Email:** info@abantuenvironmental.co.za **Website:** www.abantuenvironmental.co.za

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

I, Sive Mlamla, in my capacity as an EAP, hereby declare that I –

- Act as an independent consultant
- Do not have any financial interest in the undertaking of the activity, other than remuneration for the work performed
- Have and will not have vested interest in the activity
- Have no, and will not engage in, conflicting interests in the undertaking of the activity
- Undertake to disclose any material information that has or may have the potential to influence the decision of the competent authority or the objectivity of any report, plan, or document
- Will provide the competent authority with access to all information at my disposal regarding the report, whether such information is favourable to the Client or not
- Based on information provided to me by the Client and in addition to information obtained during the course of this study, have presented the results and conclusion within the associated document to the best of my professional ability
- Reserve the right to modify aspects pertaining to the present investigation should additional information become available through on-going research and/or further work in this field
- Undertake to have my work peer reviewed on a regular basis by a competent specialist.

Sive Mlamla (Pr.Sci.Nat, Reg. EAP(EAPASA))
Environmental Assessment Practitioner

DETAILS AND EXPERTISE OF THE EAP

Abantu Environmental Services (Pty) Ltd has been appointed by Planets Energy facility (Pty) Ltd to apply for an environmental authorisation for the proposed development of a Solar PV Facility, with an installed capacity of up to 200MW and a 132 kV transmission line to Borutho substation, located approximately 46km West of Polokwane, stretching over two District Municipalities: Waterberg (Mogalakwena Local Municipality) and Capricorn (Polokwane local municipality) in the Limpopo Province. As per the requirements of the NEMA Regulations and in terms of Regulation 14 of Section 24H Registration Authority Regulations, 2016, as amended, the details and expertise levels of the EAP who prepared the report are provided in **Table 1** below.

Table 1. EAP Details

Environmental Assessment Practitioner:	Mr Sive Mlamla
Expertise:	Sive Mlamla is an environmental scientist with 11 years of experience in scientific research, lecturing and environmental consulting. His key expertise includes environmental impact assessments, environmental compliance auditing, waste planning, proposal & business development, project management, strategic planning, research design & execution, remote sensing & GIS applications for land use/cover change mapping and fluvial geomorphology. **Qualifications** • M.Sc. Geography (Catchment Hydrology) • B.Sc. Honours Environmental Geography • B.Sc. Environmental Sciences (Botany and Geography) **Professional registrations:** • Registered Professional Natural Scientist (Pr.Sci.Nat) - Reg. No. 118495 – SACNASP • Registered Environmental Assessment Practitioner (Reg. EAP (EAPASA)) - Reg. No. 2022/5204 **Training:** • Practical Implementation of Environmental Auditing and Monitoring (2025) • WET-Health Tool & WET-EcoServices for Level 1B and Level 2 assessment (2025) • WET-Health Tool for Level 1A assessment (2025) • Environmental Impact Assessments (2025) • Introduction to Synthetic Aperture Radar and Applications (2024) • Earth Observation Data Analysis with Google Earth Engine (2023) • People Management Skills (2017) • Biodiversity spatial data management, acquisition, and analysis (2018) • Water Use Licence Applications via e-WULAAS (2020) • Remote Sensing (land use/cover classification) and SWAT hydrologic modelling (2017) **Registrations and memberships:** • Member of the South African Wetlands Society Reg. No. S9BPP477 • Member of the Southern African Association of Geomorphologists • Institute of Waste Management of Southern Africa (IWMSA) Reg No. 40120001

As per the requirements of the NEMA Regulations and Regulation 14(6) in the S24H Registration Authority Regulations, 2016, as amended, details of the Candidate EAP who assisted in the compilation of the report under the supervision of the EAP are provided in

Table 2 below.

Table 2: Candidate Environmental Assessment Practitioner details

Candidate Environmental Assessment Practitioner:	Ms Zimkita Dalasile
Expertise:	Junior Environmental Scientist with 4 years' experience in environmental consulting and scientific research. My expertise includes scientific report writing, data analysis, monitoring and conducting environmental compliance audits. **Qualifications** • MSc. Environmental Management with Ecological Water Requirements • Postgraduate Diploma Integrated Water Resource Management • BSc. Environmental and Water Science **Professional registration:** • Candidate Environmental Assessment Practitioner (Cand. EAP (EAPASA)) - Reg. No. 2025/20366 • Candidate Natural Scientist (Cand.Sci.Nat.) - Reg. No. 132501 – SACNASP **Training:** • Introduction Environmental Impact Assessments (2024)

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1. INTRODUCTION

Abantu Environmental Services (Pty) Ltd has been appointed by Planets Energy Facility (Pty) Ltd to apply for an environmental authorisation for the proposed development of a Solar PV Facility over an area of approximately 305 ha, with an installed capacity of up to 200MW and a 132 kV transmission line to Borutho substation, located approximately 46km West of Polokwane, stretching over two District Municipalities: Waterberg (Mogalakwena Local Municipality) and Capricorn (Polokwane local municipality) in the Limpopo Province (**Figure 1**).

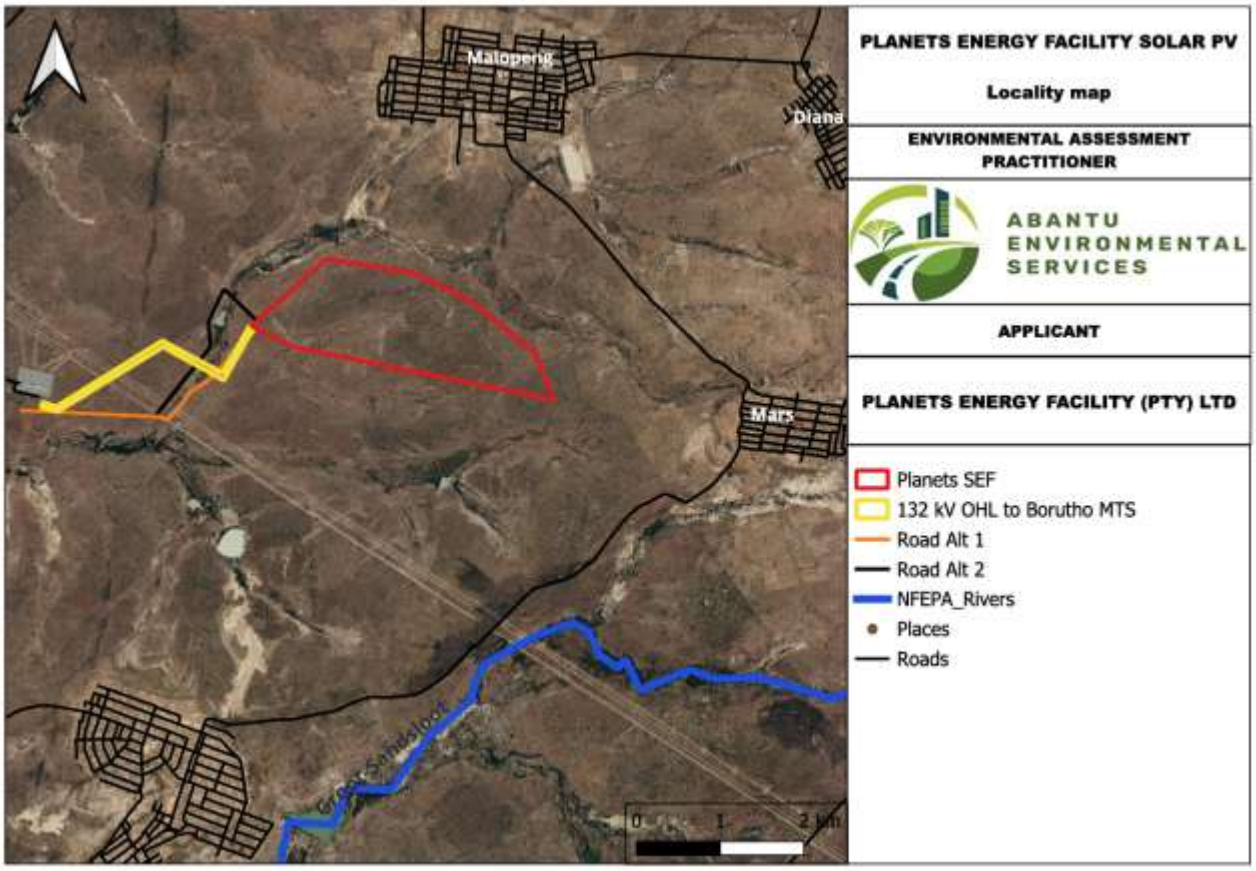

Figure 1. Locality map of the proposed Solar PV facility

The proposed solar facility will comprise of the following key components (**Figure 2**):

- Ground-mounted bifacial solar PV modules installed on single-axis tracking systems
- Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) designed to generate clean electricity using photovoltaic (PV) technology
- Solar field
- Inverters

- Collector Substation
- Operations and maintenance (O&M) building
- Access roads
- Temporary laydown areas
- Grid connection infrastructure:
    - 132 kV transmission line to Eskom Borutho substation

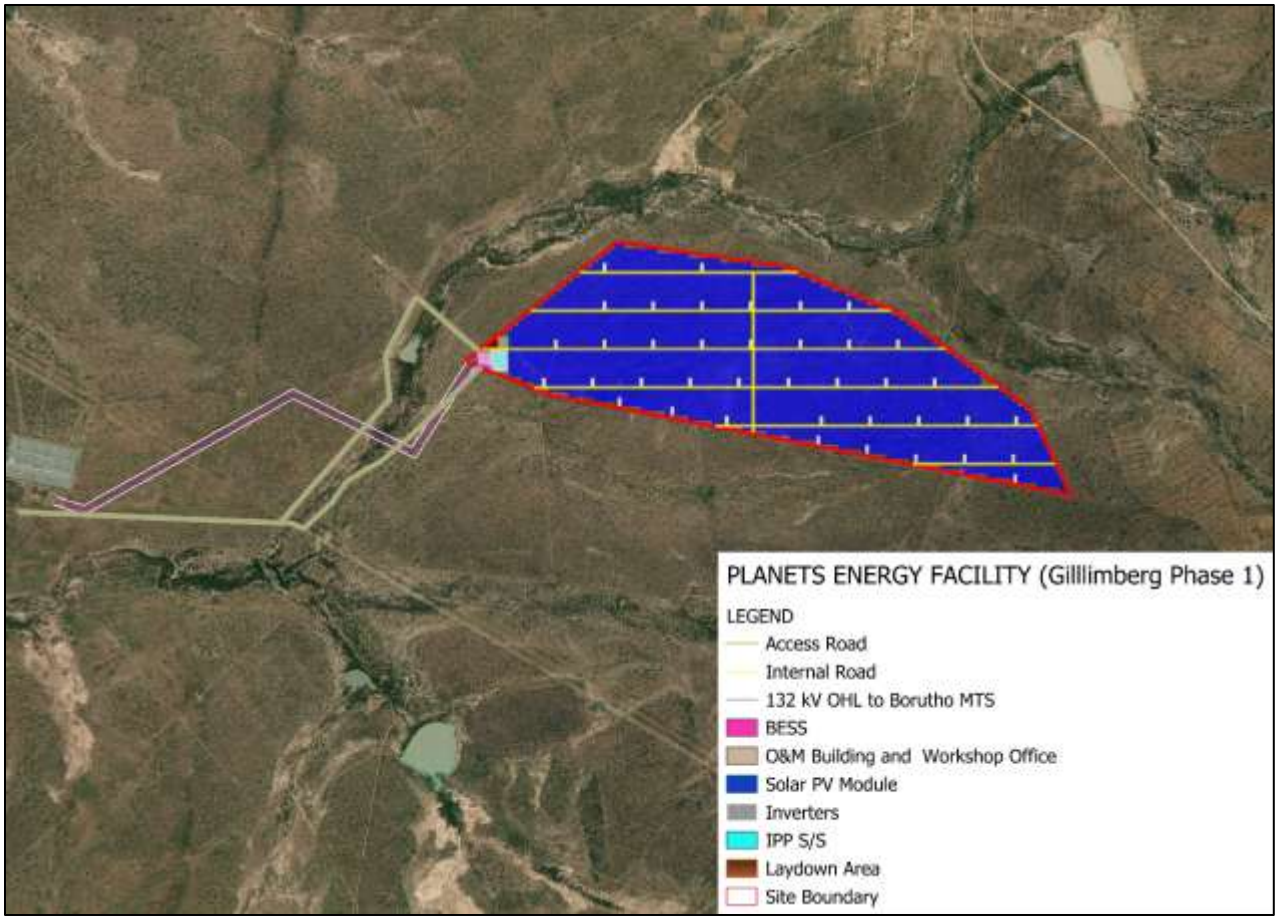

Figure 2. Planets Energy Facility Conceptual Design Layout

2. METHODOLOGY

On 20 March 2020 the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environmental published the general requirements for undertaking site sensitivity verification for environmental themes for activities requiring environmental authorization (Government Gazette No. 43110). In terms of these requirements, prior to commencing with a specialist assessment, the current land use and environmental sensitivity of the site under consideration by the screening tool must be confirmed by undertaking a site sensitivity verification.

In accordance with the Notice of the requirement to submit a report generated by the national web-based environmental screening tool in terms of section 24(5)(h) of the NEMA, 1998 (Act No 107 of 1998) and regulation 16(1)(b)(v) of the EIA regulations, 2014, as amended, a screening tool was generated and identified specific site sensitivities and themes to be assessed for this specific project. The specialist themes in section 2.1 were identified.

2.1 SITE SENSITIVITIES IDENTIFIED (SCREENING TOOL)

This section entails the sensitivities, and the required specialists identified by the screening tool (**Table 3**).

Table 3. Site Sensitivities identified (Screening Tool)

Category	Screening Tool Sensitivity	
	Solar PV Facility	Transmission line
Agriculture Theme	High	High
Animal Species Theme	Medium	Low
Aquatic Biodiversity Theme	Low	Low
Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Theme	Low	Low
Avian Theme	Very High	
Civil Aviation Theme	Low	High
Defense Theme	Low	Medium
Landscape (Solar) Theme	Very High	
Paleontology Theme	Medium	Medium
Plant Species Theme	Low	Medium
RFI Theme	Medium	
Terrestrial Biodiversity Theme	Very High	Very High

Table 4 below provides findings by the EAP and specialists on the sensitives identified by the screening tool based on the site observations.

Table 4. EAP/specialists findings that either Confirms or Disputes the Environmental Sensitivity as Identified by the Screening Tool

Theme	EAP/ specialist Recommended Level of Sensitivity		EAP Motivation
	Solar PV facility	Transmission line	
Agriculture	Medium	Medium	There are no agricultural activities currently taking place within the proposed project area. but only communal grazing and lesser extent impacted by historical agricultural activities.
Animal Species	Medium	Low	According to the terrestrial biodiversity SSVR conducted by The Biodiversity Company (2024) on the same site, the medium sensitive species (*Dasymys robertsii*) that is flagged by the screening tool was disputed as this species is not expected to occur on the bushvelds and open shrubland.
Aquatic Biodiversity	Low	Low	No NFEPA delineated rivers or wetlands within the proposed site. An ephemeral watercourse was observed close to the western boundary of the site. The transmission line intersects this watercourse.
Archaeological and Cultural Heritage	Low as assessed by the specialist	Low as assessed by the specialist	According to Tsimba Archaeological Footprints (2026), there is no sign of sites of heritage potential, graves and historical structures found within the study area and the farm at large.
Civil Aviation	Low	Low	The proposed site is not located in close proximity to any civil radar installations.
Defence	Low	Low	There is no presence of a military or defence site at the proposed development site.
Landscape (Solar) Theme	High		The proposed solar panels will change the landscape, and the site is visible to surrounding settlements.
Paleontology	Low as assessed by the specialist	Low as assessed by the specialist	According to the SAHRIS Paleo Sensitivity Map, the paleontological sensitivity is rated as 'Insignificant/Zero'. According to Silindokuhle Mavuso (2026), no palaeontological sites, fossil occurrences, or fossil-bearing stratigraphic units are known from within the proposed development area or its immediate surroundings.
Plant Species	Low	Low	According to the terrestrial biodiversity SSVR conducted by The Biodiversity Company (2024) on the same site, the medium sensitivity was disputed as no specimens of the medium sensitive plant species (sensitive species 1252) flagged by the screening tool were recorded.
Terrestrial Biodiversity	High	Medium	Most of the vegetation in this site is still intact with minimal disturbance.

2.2 SPECIALIST ASSESSMENTS IDENTIFIED

Based on the above environmental sensitivities, the proposed development footprint, the following list of specialist assessments have been identified for inclusion in the assessment report by the screening tool.

- Geotechnical Assessment
- Plant Species Assessment
- Animal Species Assessment
- Agricultural Impact Assessment
- Landscape/Visual Impact Assessment
- Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment
- Palaeontology Impact Assessment
- Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact Assessment
- Aquatic Biodiversity Impact Assessment
- Avian Impact Assessment
- Civil Aviation Assessment
- RFI Assessment
- Socio-economic Assessment

The specialist studies listed in **Table 5** are required for the selected project area. **Motivation has been included in cases where the recommended specialist study will not be undertaken.**

Table 5. EAP response to specialist assessments identified in the screening tool report.

Specialist Studies Required	Indication of Whether Studies Will Be Conducted or Not (Yes/No)	Motivation for any Studies That Will Not Be Undertaken
Geotechnical Assessment	Yes	A geotechnical assessment will be undertaken and will form part of the engineering studies for both phases
Plant Species Assessment	Yes	The DFFE Screening tool listed the plant species theme for the solar PV facility and transmission route areas as Medium. Therefore, a plant species assessment will be as part of the Terrestrial Biodiversity Assessment
Animal Species Assessment	Yes	The DFFE Screening tool listed the plant species theme for the solar PV facility and transmission route areas as Medium and Low respectively. An animal species assessment will be undertaken as part of the Terrestrial Biodiversity Assessment. .

Specialist Studies Required	Indication of Whether Studies Will Be Conducted or Not (Yes/No)	Motivation for any Studies That Will Not Be Undertaken
Agricultural Assessment	Yes	An agricultural assessment will be undertaken.
Landscape/Visual Impact Assessment	Yes	Given the topography of the area and the change of landscape to accommodate solar panels and the site being visible to surrounding settlements, a visual impact assessment will therefore be required.
Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment	Yes	A specialist study has been conducted by Tsimba Archaeological Footprints (2026).
Palaeontology Impact Assessment	Yes	A specialist study has been conducted by Slindo Mavuso (2026).
Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact Assessment	Yes	The DFFE Screening tool listed the terrestrial biodiversity theme for the site as Very High. The study area falls within both the Central Bushveld Bioregion, within the Savanna Biome both listed as Least Concern. The very high sensitivity may be due to the site falling within CBA 2. Therefore, a terrestrial biodiversity study will be undertaken.
Aquatic Biodiversity Impact Assessment	Yes	The DFFE Screening tool listed the aquatic biodiversity theme for the site as Low. An ephemeral watercourse was observed close to the western boundary of the site. The transmission line intersects this watercourse. Therefore, an Aquatic Biodiversity study will be undertaken as well as a Water Use License application has been submitted to DWS for section c & i.
Avian Impact Assessment	Yes	An Avian Impact Assessment will be undertaken.
Civil Aviation Assessment	No	Comment will be obtained from South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA), confirming if there will be any unacceptable impact on civil aviation installations.
RFI Assessment	No	Comment will be obtained from the South African Weather Service (SAWS) and South African Radio Astronomy Observatory (SARAO).

Therefore, this site sensitivity verification report is compiled to determine whether Specialist Assessments or Compliance Statements for the abovementioned specialist studies are required for the proposed project.

2.3 SITE SENSITIVITY VERIFICATION METHODOLOGY

The site sensitivity verification report compiled by Abantu Environmental Services' Lead EAP

The assessment has been compiled based on:

- A site investigation undertaken on 01 February 2026
- A desktop investigation using biodiversity and land-use mapping tools such as inter alia BGIS and;
- Information recorded in Screening Report, Notice of Intent Report
  Information derived from available specialist assessment reports.

2.4 DESKTOP AND IN-SITU SITE ANALYSIS

2.4.1 CLIMATE

The Limpopo province is characterized by hot summers with an average maximum temperature of 27^{0} C. Winters in the province are mild with an average minimum temperature of 18^{0}C. High rainfall variability makes the region prone to drought and floods. The majority of the rainfall is accumulated during the austral summer months, ranging from 200 to 1600mm. The dominant climate type is semi-arid, followed by humid subtropical climates and arid (Moumakwe, 2024). Polokwane, the capital city of the province is situated roughly in the center of the province. Polokwane experiences an arid climate typified by a rainy season during summer and a distinct dry period in winter. The yearly average rainfall stands at 495 mm, with December or, less frequently, January being the wettest month, while July records the lowest precipitation levels (Polokwane Local Municipality SDF, 2024).

2.4.2 TOPOGRAPHY AND HYDROLOGY

The area is characterized by gently sloping terrain and minimal steep slopes (**Error! Reference source not found.**). Elevation ranges from 1231 m to 1292 m, with an average slope of 2.4%.

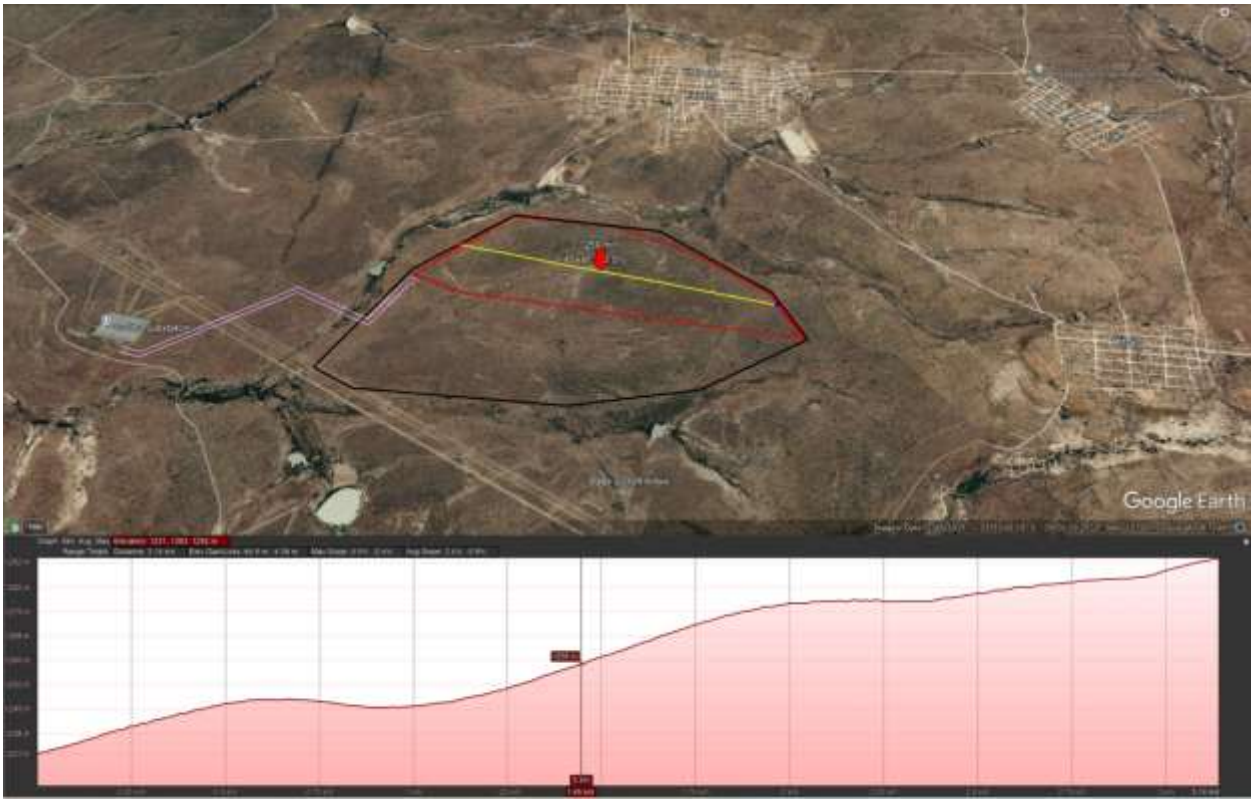

Figure 3. Topography of the proposed development site.

The study area is situated within quaternary catchment A61G, located within the Limpopo-Olifants Water Management Area. An ephemeral watercourse (see ***Figure 5***) was observed in close proximity to the project area, and the proposed transmission route intersects the aquatic feature. In addition, an artificial wetland (see **Error! Reference source not found.**) was observed within the proposed project area, specifically within the solar facility footprint.

Figure 4. Conditions within the proposed Solar PV development area

Figure 5 below shows the conditions of the ephemeral conditions observed during the site visit.

Figure 5. Conditions of the ephemeral stream

2.4.3 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

The proposed area is underlain by the Goudplaats–Hout River Gneiss Suite, which comprises light to dark grey migmatitic tonalite, trondhjemite, granodiorite, monzodiorite, and leucogneiss. The gneisses range from massive to layered, are leucocratic to dark grey, and vary in grain size from fine-grained to pegmatoidal (Dippenaar and Rooy, 2014). The Goudplaats Gneiss is dark grey, fine-grained, and predominantly deformed by ductile processes, reflecting an older and more intensely metamorphosed component of the suite. In contrast, the Hout River Gneiss is pinkish-grey, pegmatoidal, and highly fractured and weathered, representing a younger and more brittle unit (Tshipala, 2018).

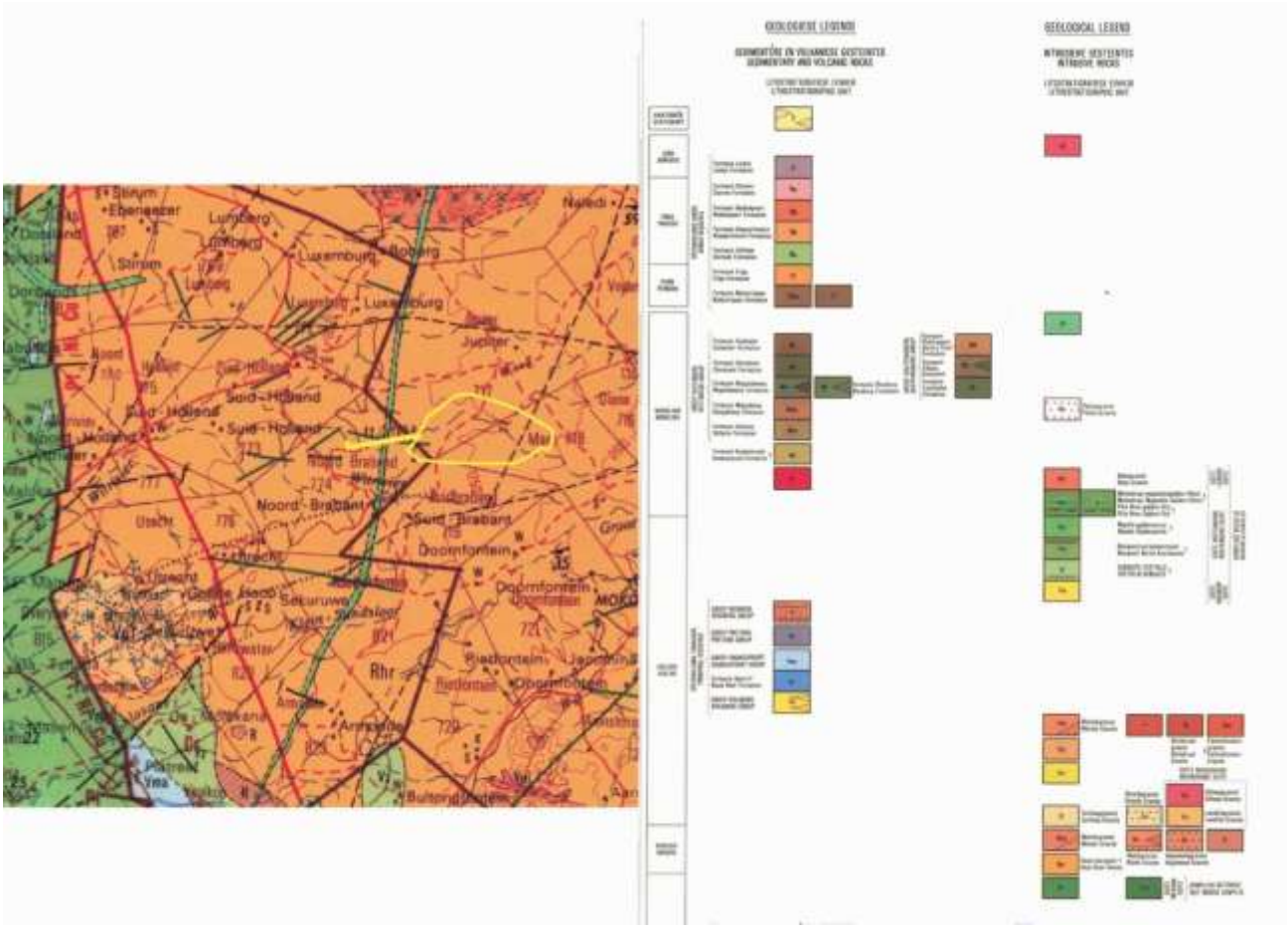

Figure 6. Geological map (Mavuso, 2026)

2.4.4 ECOLOGY & BIODIVERSITY

2.4.4.1 TERRESTRIAL

According to the National South African Vegetation Map (2018), the study area falls within both the Central Bushveld Bioregion, within the Savanna Biome. The vegetation types that occur in this area include the Polokwane Plateau Bushveld and Makhado Sweet Bushveld. The proposed Solar PV facility site is largely located within the Polokwane Plateau Bushveld, while most of the associated transmission line passes through the Makhado Sweet Bushveld, with a small portion intersecting the Polokwane Plateau Bushveld. The vegetation types are described below:

(a) Polokwane Plateau Bushveld

This vegetation type occurs on the higher plains around Polokwane, north of the Strydpoort Mountains and south of the Makhado Sweet Bushveld. Vegetation and landscape features include moderately undulating plains with short open tree layer with well-developed grass layers to grass plains with occasional trees at higher altitudes (Mucina and Rutherford, 2006). This habitat is characterised by open savannah dominated by Red Grass (*Themeda triandra*) and scattered Umbrella Thorn (*Acacia/Vachellia tortilis*) and Silky thorn (*Acacia/Vachellia rehmanniana*) trees. Much of this habitat has been altered due to agricultural activities and the most pristine examples can be found in and around the Polokwane Nature Reserve (Limpopo Birding Routes, n.d.). The conservation status for this vegetation type is classified as **Least Concern (LC)**.

(b) Makhado Sweet Bushveld

The vegetation occurs on plains and slopes of the Soutspanberg, east of the Waterberg and surrounding the Blouberg and Lerataupje Mountains, and north of the Polokwane Plateau and west of the escarpment, extending south to Mokopane and north to Vivo in the Limpopo Province. The landscape is characterised by slightly to moderately undulating plains, with altitude ranging from 850- 1200 m. The vegetation is described as short stubby bushveld with a poorly developed grass layer (Biodiversity Africa, 2025). The conservation status for this vegetation type is classified as **Vulnerable (VU)**.

According to Limpopo Conservation Plan (2013), the proposed development footprint falls within Critical Biodiversity Areas (CBA) 2.

Figure 7. Vegetation conditions at the proposed site

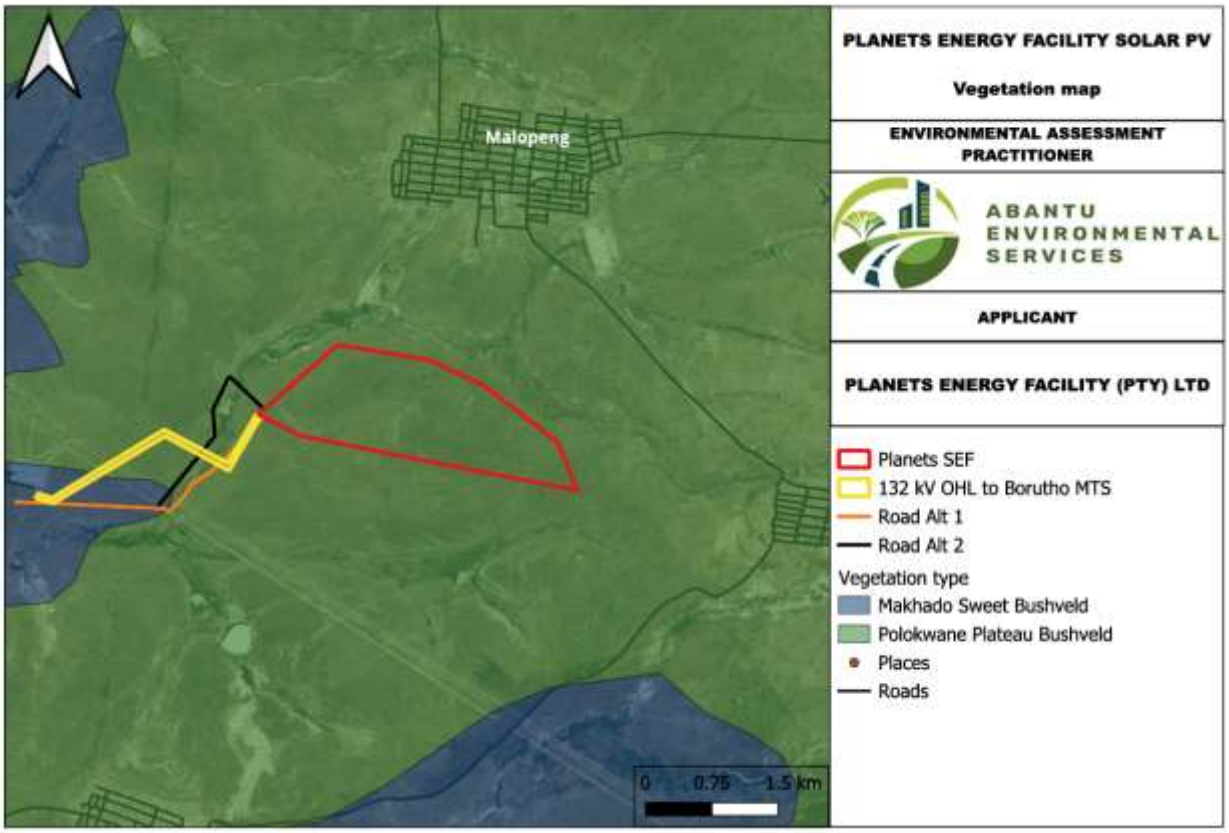

Figure 8. Vegetation map

2.4.5 AQUATIC BIODIVERSITY

According to the national web-based environmental screening tool, the aquatic biodiversity sensitivity of the site is rated as Low. However, an ephemeral watercourse was observed in close proximity to the project area, and the proposed transmission route intersects this watercourse.

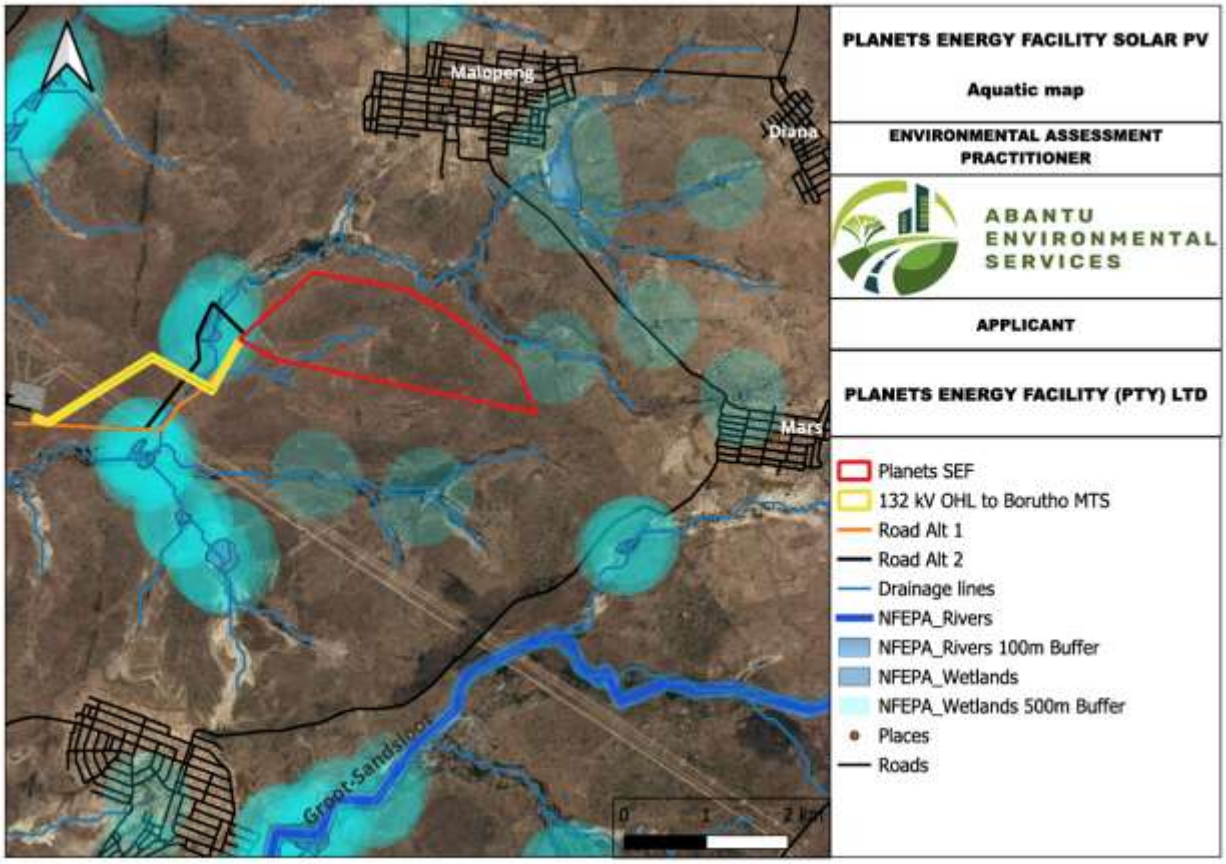

Figure 9. Aquatic map

2.4.6 FAUNA

The DFFE Screening tool listed the animal species theme for the Solar PV footprint as medium with the *Mammalia-Dasymys robertsii* listed as a potential animal species that can occur on site. The transmission line route is rated as having low sensitivity.

2.4.7 ARCHAEOLOGY AND HERITAGE RESOURCES

According to the National Web-based Screening Tool the proposed area is rated as Low sensitivity. During the site visit no heritage resources were found within the Solar PV facility footprint and within the route of the proposed transmission line. According to Tsimba Archaeological Footprints (2026), there are no signs of heritage potential, graves and historical structures found within the study area and the farm at large. According to the paleo sensitivity map as seen on ***Figure 10*** below the sensitivity on palaeontological resources within the proposed area is rated as 'Insignificant/Zero', as such no palaeontological studies are required. However, the screening tool rates the palaeo sensitivity as medium for the area, therefore a Palaeontological study was conducted.

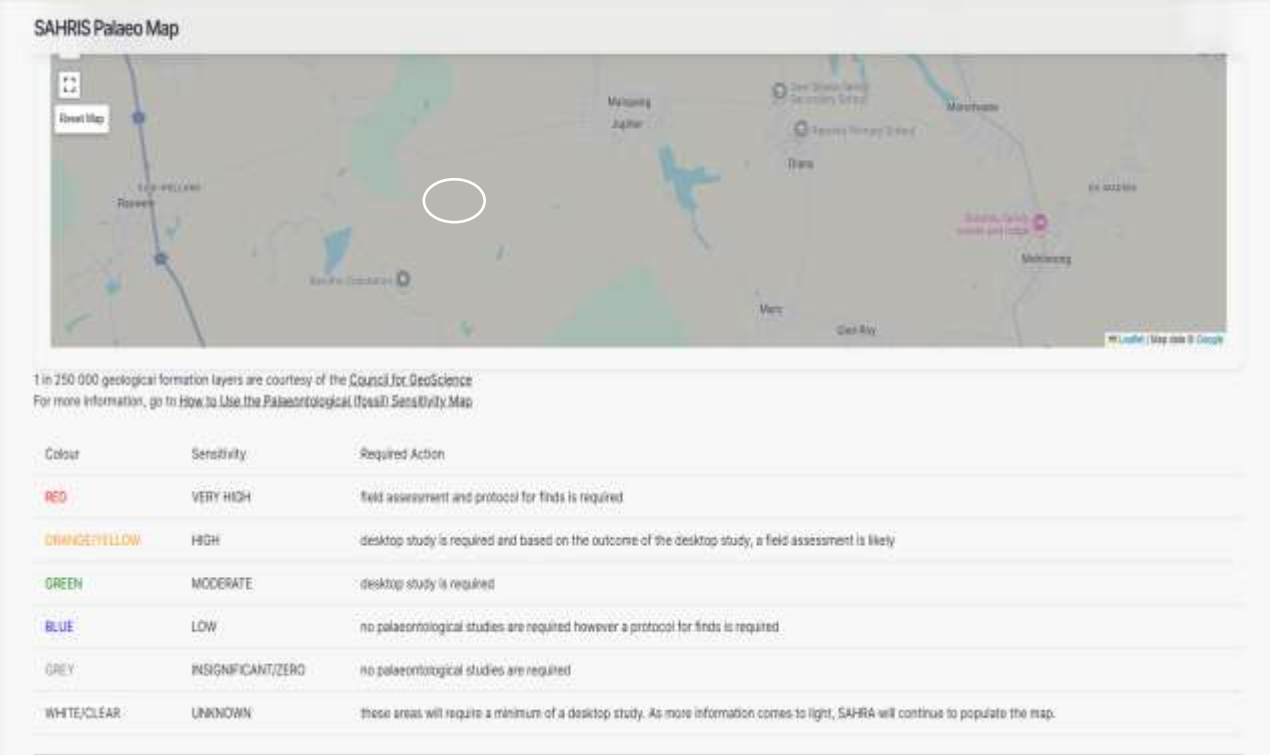

Figure 10. SAHRIS Palaeo map

2.4.8 RENEWABLE ENERGY ZONES

On 16 February 2018, Minister Edna Molewa published Government Notice No. 114 in Government Gazette No. 41445 which identified 8 renewable energy development zones (REDZ) important for the development of large-scale wind and solar photovoltaic facilities. The Government Notice included procedure to be followed when applying for environmental authorisation for large scale wind and solar photovoltaic energy facilities when occurring in these REDZs. On 26 February 2021, Minister Barbara Dallas Creecy, published Government Notice No. 142, 144 and 145 in Government Gazette No. 44191 which identified 3 additional REDZs for implementation as well as the procedures to be followed when applying for environmental authorisation for electricity transmission or distribution infrastructure or large-scale wind and solar photovoltaic energy facilities in these REDZs. The REDZs were identified through the undertaking of 2 Strategic Environmental Assessments, the first being finalised in 2015 and the second being finalised in 2019.

According to the available dataset, the project area does not overlap with a REDZ.

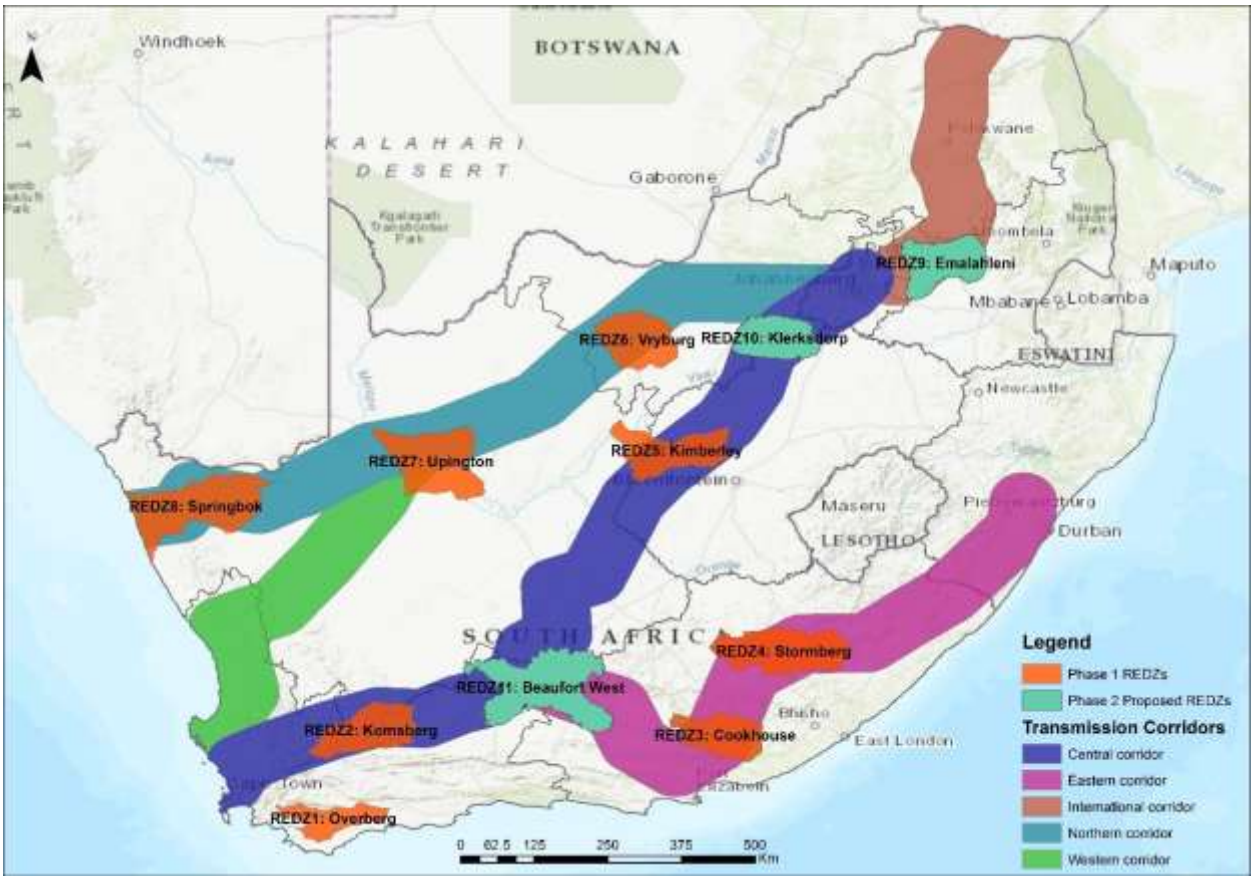

Figure 11. Renewable Development Zones

2.4.9 STRATEGIC TRANSMISSION CORRIDORS

On the 16 February 2018 minister Edna Molewa published Government Notice No. 113 in Government Gazette No. 41445 which identified 5 strategic transmission corridors important for the planning of electricity transmission and distribution infrastructure as well as procedure to be followed when applying for environmental authorisation for electricity transmission and distribution expansion when occurring in these corridors. On 29 April 2021, Minister Barbara Dallas Creecy published Government Notice No. 383 in Government Gazette No. 44504, which expanded the eastern and western transmission corridors and gave notice of the applicability of the application procedures identified in Government Notice No. 113, to these expanded corridors.

The project area falls within the International Strategic Transmission Corridor (see ***Figure 12***).

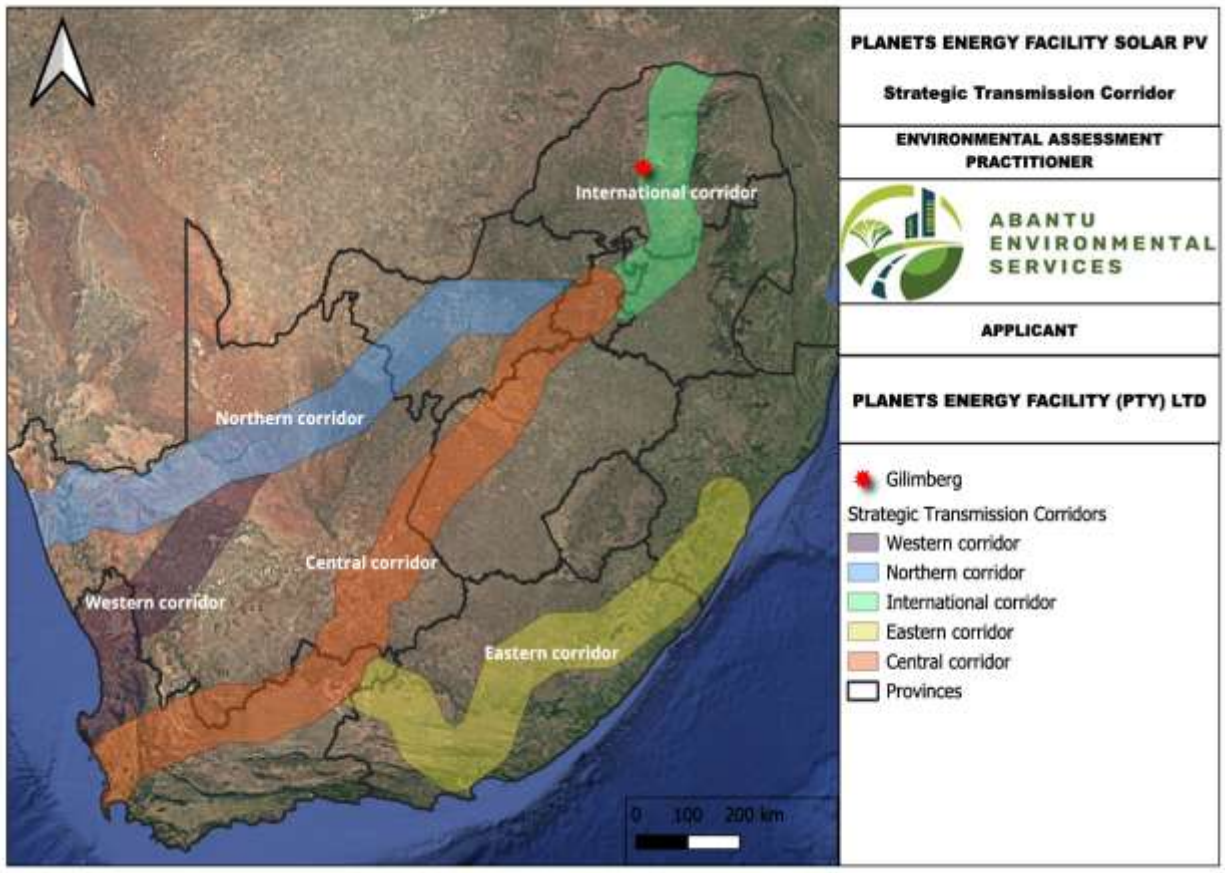

Figure 12. Strategic Transmission Corridors

2.4.10 SOCIO-ECONOMIC ATTRIBUTES

2.4.10.1District municipalities within the study area

The proposed project stretches over two District Municipalities: Waterberg (Mogalakwena Local Municipality) and Capricorn (Polokwane Local Municipality) in the Limpopo Province.

(a) Waterberg District Municipality

The Waterberg District Municipality is a Category C municipality located in the southwestern part of the Province. The district is strategically located in sharing its borders with Capricorn District Municipality in the north and Sekhukhune District Municipality in the east. The municipality is the biggest district in the province, making up just more than a third of its geographical area. The largely rural district is made-up of five local municipalities, namely; Bela-Bela, Lephalale, Modimolle-Mookgopong, Mogalakwena, and Thabazimbi.

(b) Capricorn District Municipality

Capricorn District Municipality is situated in the centre of the Limpopo Province, sharing its borders with four district municipalities namely; Vhembe to the north-east, Mopani to the east, Sekhukhune to the south and Waterberg to the west. The district is situated at the core of economic development in the Limpopo Province and includes the capital of the province, the City of Polokwane. The district is made up of four local municipalities, namely; Blouberg, Lepelle-Nkumpi, Molemole and Polokwane.

2.4.10.2 Local municipalities within the study area

The proposed project stretches over two local Municipalities: Mogalakwena Local Municipality and Polokwane Local Municipality.

(a) Mogalakwena Local Municipality

The Mogalakwena Local Municipality covers an area of approximately 6,166 square kilometers, which is equivalent to 616,600 hectares. and constitutes 12% of the total Waterberg District area (Mogalakwena Local Municipality IDP, 2025). According to Census (2022), the municipality has a total population of 378 198 and 109 294 households with an estimated population growth rate of 2.1% in 2022. In terms of educational attainment, 11.2% have no formal schooling, 8.4% completed/have some primary education, 35,8% have some form of secondary education, 31.7% have completed matric, 8.7% have some form of higher education, and 8.7% have no form of schooling. The total number of economically active people in the municipality is 78 647 with an unemployment rate of 40.2%. The unemployment rate of Mogalakwena is almost double that of the other municipalities in the district.

The economy of Mogalakwena municipality is primarily driven by general government services (20,01%), wholesale and retail trade (18,71%), and business services (16,17%). The primary economic sector contributes 12,36% of the municipal economy of which 2.82% is attributed to agriculture and 9.54% to mining (Mogalakwena Local Municipality IDP, 2025).

(b) Polokwane Local Municipality

In 2016, a portion of the former Aganang local municipal area was incorporated into the City of Polokwane. The land area of Polokwane expanded from around 374 000 hectares to approximately 505 000 hectares. City of Polokwane is the economic hub of Limpopo Province and is strategically located to be the administrative and economic capital of the province.

According to Census (2022), the municipality has a total population of 843 459 and 249 443 households. Between 2013 and 2023, the average annual population growth rate was approximately 1.44%. Educational attainment levels have improved over time, with the proportion of residents without formal schooling decreasing from 7.7% in 2011 to 6.6% in 2022. The number of individuals with matric qualifications increased significantly over the same period.

The municipality is made up of various industries and includes agriculture, mining, manufacturing, electricity, construction, trade, transport, finance and community services. The sector that contributed the largest in the municipality in 2023 is the community services accounting for 42.55% of the total gross value added, with the electricity sector contributing the least with a contribution of 0.87% of the total GVA.

3. CONCLUSION

An environmental scoping site visit was undertaken on 01 February 2026. The purpose of the site visit was to gather enough information to develop a complete, comprehensive understanding of the receiving environment of the site and inform the project's environmental impact assessment process. This preliminary assessment forms the basis against which the EIA will be conducted. From the site verification conducted, it is apparent that the site and the broader receiving environment is delicate. The verification of the identified sensitivities and recommended specialist concludes that full specialist studies must be commissioned to inform the environmental impact assessment due to high and very high sensitivity as verified on site. Identified specialists are:

- Plant Species Assessment
- Animal Species Assessment
- Agricultural Impact Assessment
- Landscape/Visual Impact Assessment
- Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment
- Palaeontology Impact Assessment
- Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact Assessment
- Aquatic Biodiversity Impact Assessment
- Avian Impact Assessment
- Socio-economic Impact Assessment

4. REFERENCES

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