

The proposed development and related operation of an aboveground Cableway on Erf 1466, Erf 1467 and the Remainder of Erf 23, Franschoek

Franschoek Skytram

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The Franschoek Cableway Company (Pty) Ltd

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SITE SENSITIVITY VERIFICATION REPORT

In terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998), as amended and the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014 (as amended).



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1. INTRODUCTION

Doug Jeffery Environmental Consultants Pty (Ltd) have been appointed by The Franschhoek Cableway Company (Pty) Ltd, as the Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) to facilitate the environmental assessment process in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998) (as amended) (NEMA) and the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations, 2014 (as amended) for the proposed Franschhoek Skytram and associated infrastructure on Erf 1466, Erf 1467 and the Remainder of Erf 23, Franschhoek.

The proposed development will consist of three project components; the Lower Station and the Upper Station with the aerial cableway will span over Mont Martre farm (Erf 1467, Franschhoek).

The proposed Lower Station will be located on Haute Cabrière (Erf 1466, Franschhoek) and an Upper Station located below Middagkrans Peak within the Mont Rochelle Nature Reserve (Remainder of Erf 23, Franschhoek). Refer to **Figure 1** for the **Locality Map** of the proposed development.



Figure 1: Location of the proposed Franschhoek Skytram.

This Site Sensitivity Verification Report (SSVR) forms part of the EIA process undertaken for the above-mentioned project. The Basic Assessment process aims to seek Environmental Authorisation from the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and Environmental (DFFE) for the proposed development.

DFFE promulgated regulations for the compulsory submission of a report based on the National Web-based Environmental Screening Tool when undertaking and applying for Environmental Authorisation (GN960 of 2019). On 20 March 2020, Procedures for the Assessment and Minimum Criteria for Reporting on Identified Environmental Themes in terms of Section 24 (5) (a) and (h) and 44 of the National Environmental Management Act (Act No. 107 of 1998) were published. These procedures prescribe the requirements for undertaking Site Sensitivity Verification Report as well as describe the requirements for specialist input per environmental 'theme' in the National Web-based Environmental Screening Tool.

According to the above-mentioned notice, the SSVR must be recorded in the form of a report and must address the following:

- Confirms or disputes the current use of the land and the environmental sensitivity as identified by the screening tool, such as new development or infrastructure, the change in vegetation cover or status etc.



Figure 3: Concept Plan for the Upper Station.

3. OUTCOME OF THE SCREENING TOOL REPORT

The National Web-based Environmental Screening Tool Report, (Screening Tool Report, **Appendix K1**) was generated in terms of Regulation 16(1)(v) of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations 2014, (as amended) for the proposed development which identifies environmental sensitive resources located on or in the vicinity of the development. The following Themes and specialist assessments have been identified for inclusion in the proposed development.

Furthermore, the Screening Tool Report indicates which development incentives, restrictions, exclusions, or prohibitions should be considered during the environmental process.

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

According to the Screening Report, the following development incentives, restrictions, exclusions or prohibitions and their implications that apply to the footprint of the proposed development.

- **Strategic Gas Pipeline Corridors-Phase 1A & 1B: Saldanha to Ankerlig and Saldanha to Mossel Bay**

According to the Preliminary Corridors Map in the Strategic Environmental Assessment for the Development of a Phase Gas Pipeline Network in South Africa (December 2019) compiled by the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), the proposed development site is located in the 100m buffer of the Phase Gas Pipeline Network.

The EAP is of the opinion that since the proposed development will not affect the future intended gas pipeline as it is not located in the actual route of the Phase Gas Pipeline Network.

- **South African Protected Areas & South African Conservation Areas**

The proposed development site is located within the Mont Rochelle Nature Reserve that is a Protected Area in terms of the National Environmental Management Protected Areas Act, 2003 (Act No. 57 of 2003 (NEMPAA)). Since the proposed development site is located within a Protected Area, the Competent Authority is DFFE and an application for Environmental

Authorisation will be submitted to the DFFE. The applicable Regulations and Guidelines will be adhered throughout the Basic Assessment (BA) process undertaken for this project.

4. SITE SENSITIVITY VERIFICATION REPORT

This Site Sensitivity Verification Report (SSVR) must be compiled in accordance with the Protocols which states that a Registered Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) and clarify the state of the proposed development site in comparison to the environmental sensitivities triggered in the Screening Tool Report.

The Registered EAP undertook a desktop analysis and site inspection to confirm the state of the proposed development site and compile this SSVR. The desktop analysis included the following:

- Satellite imagery using Google Earth Pro,
- Environmental resources layers utilizing CapeFarmMapper (version 3)

A site Inspection, which included the relevant Project Team members, Specialists, and the EAP, to the Upper Station location on 30 November 2022 via a Helicopter. The site inspection consisted of walking over all accessible parts of the site, photographic documentation and considered the vegetation, soils, water resources and topography of the proposed site, with the relevant Specialists.

The Site Photographs have been appended to the Basic Assessment Report as **Appendix D**.

4.1. Environmental Theme Sensitivities

The Sections below address the environmental sensitivity and themes, confirming or disputing the site sensitivity and indicating whether a Specialist Assessment, a Compliance Statement or no further assessment will be undertaken for the project.

4.1.1. Agriculture Theme & Agriculture Impact Assessment

According to the Screening Report, the agricultural sensitivity for the Lower Stations development footprint is rated to be **Medium Sensitivity** and for the Upper Station has been rated to be of **Very High Sensitivity** for the Agriculture Theme.

Furthermore, the Screening Tool Report recommended that an Agricultural Impact Assessment be included for the proposed development. The protocol for this Specialist Assessment and minimum report content requirements for Environmental Impacts on Agricultural Resources is applicable for the proposed development.

Johann Lanz has been appointed by the Applicant to assess the potential impacts associated with the proposed development in terms of the Agricultural Theme and in accordance with the Agricultural Resources Protocol. An Agricultural Compliance Statement has been appended to the Basic Assessment Report which verifies the Medium and Very High Agricultural Sensitivity rating of the Screening Tool Report.

4.1.2. Animal Species Theme & Animal Species Assessment

According to the Screening Report, the Animal Species sensitivity at the footprint of the Lower Station site is **Medium**, and the footprint of the Upper Station site is **High**.

Furthermore, the Screening Tool Report has indicated that the following Animal Species could potentially be present on the proposed development site:

Scientific name	Common name	Sensitivity rating
<i>Falco biarmicus</i>	Lanner falcon	High
<i>Aquila verreauxii</i>	Verreaux's eagle	High
<i>Sarothrura affinis</i>	Striped flufftail	Medium
<i>Turnix hottentottus</i>	Fynbos buttonquail	Medium
<i>Conocephalus peringueyi</i>	Peringuey's Meadow Katydid	Medium
<i>Brinckiella aptera</i>	Mute Winter Katydid	Medium
<i>Aneuryphymus montanus</i>	Yellow-winged Agile Grasshopper	Medium

The Amended Protocol for the specialist assessment and minimum report content requirements for environmental impacts on animal species is required to be used for the Animal Species is applicable for the proposed development.

The Applicant has appointed a Faunal Specialists, Jonathan Colville from Birding Africa, to verify the Animal Species Sensitivities and undertake the necessary assessment. A Faunal Impact Assessment has been appended to the Basic Assessment Report which verifies the ratings of the specific Animal Species noted in the Screening Tool Report.

4.1.3. Aquatic Biodiversity Theme & Aquatic Biodiversity Impact Assessment

According to the Screening Report, the Aquatic Biodiversity Sensitivity for the Lower and Upper Station has a **Very High Sensitivity** for the Aquatic Biodiversity Theme.

Furthermore, the Screening Tool Report has recommended that an Aquatic Biodiversity Impact Assessment be undertaken for the proposed development. The Applicant has appointed Toni Belcher as the Aquatic Specialists to verify the rating and confirm the Very High Aquatic Sensitivity.

The Applicant has appointed Toni Belcher to verify the Aquatic Sensitivity and undertake the necessary assessment. An Aquatic Compliance Statement has been appended to the Basic Assessment Report.

4.1.4. Archaeological and Cultural Heritage, Palaeontology Theme & Impact Assessments

According to the Screening Report, the Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Sensitivity for the development footprint of the Lower and Upper Station site has been rated as **Very High** for the Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Theme. Furthermore, an Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment has been recommended to be included in the EIA process.

The Palaeontology Sensitivity for the Lower Station site is rated to be **Low** and for the Upper Station is rated to be of **High** Palaeontology Sensitivity and a Palaeontology Impact Assessment has been recommended to be included in the EIA process.

The Applicant has appointed a Heritage Specialist, Graham Jacobs, an Archaeologist Specialist, John Gribble and a Palaeontologist Specialist, Prof Marion Bamford, to undertake the necessary assessments for the proposed development. The Heritage Impact Assessment, including the Archaeological and Palaeontological Impact Assessment has been appended to the Basic Assessment Report.

4.1.5. Civil Aviation Theme

The Screening Report identifies the Civil Aviation theme as **High** sensitivity for the Lower and Upper Station since the proposed development site is within 8 km of other civil aviation aerodromes.

The EAP does not believe that the proposed development would impact any civil aviation activities within close proximity of the site. The relevant State Departments will be provided an opportunity to comment

during the BA process. Therefore, the High Sensitivity rating for the Civil Aviation Theme is disputed and deemed to be negligible, and thus no further assessments will be undertaken.

4.1.6. Defence Theme

The Screening Report identifies the Defence theme as **Low** sensitivity. No further assessments will be undertaken.

4.1.7. Plant Species Theme

According to the Screening Report, the Plant Species sensitivity for the Lower Station site is rated to be **Low**, and for the Upper Station is rated to have a **Medium** Plant Species Sensitivity. Furthermore, the Screening Report recommends that a Plant Species Assessment should be included in the EIA process.

The Applicant has appointed Dave McDonald to undertake the necessary assessment in terms of the Plant Species Protocol. The Botanical Impact Assessment will be appended to the Basic Assessment Report verifying the Plant Species rating.

4.1.8. Terrestrial Biodiversity Theme & Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact Assessment

According to the Screening Report, the Terrestrial Biodiversity sensitivity for the Lower and Upper Station has been rated a **Very High** sensitivity for the Terrestrial Biodiversity Theme. Furthermore, the Screening Report recommended that a Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact Assessment be included in the EIA process.

The Applicant has appointed Dave McDonald to compile the necessary assessments and verify the rating of the Screening Tool Report in accordance with the Terrestrial Biodiversity Protocol. The Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact Assessment will be appended to the Basic Assessment Report.

4.2. Specialist Assessments Identified

The following list of specialist assessments has been identified by the Screening Tool Report for inclusion in the Basic Assessment Report.

Specialist Assessment	To be Conducted (Yes/No)	Protocol Required	Assessment & Consultants Information
Agricultural Impact Assessment	Yes	Agriculture Assessment Protocol	An Agricultural Compliance Statement will be conducted by Johann Lanz.
Visual Impact Assessment	Yes	General Requirement Assessment Protocol	A Visual Impact Assessment will be undertaken by Antoinette de Beer from ARLA Consulting.
Landscape Assessment	Yes	No Protocol, Technical Report.	The Landscape Master Plan and Landscape Guidelines are considered to be Technical Reports.
Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment	Yes	General Requirement Assessment Protocol	A Heritage Impact Assessment will be undertaken by Graham Jacobs from ARCON

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Specialist Assessment	To be Conducted (Yes/No)	Protocol Required	Assessment & Consultants Information
Palaeontology Impact Assessment	Yes	General Requirement Assessment Protocol	<p><i>Specialist Architectural & Spatial Heritage Consultants.</i></p> <p>The Archaeological and Palaeontological Impact Assessments will be done by John Gribble (ACO Associates) and Marion Bamford.</p>
Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact Assessment	Yes	Terrestrial Biodiversity Assessment Protocol	A Terrestrial Biodiversity and Plants Impact Assessment will be undertaken by Dr David MacDonald from <i>Bergwind Botanical Surveys & Tours</i> .
Plant Species Assessment	Yes	Plant Species Assessment Protocol	
Aquatic Biodiversity Impact Assessment	Yes	Aquatic Biodiversity Assessment Protocol	An Aquatic Biodiversity Compliance Statement will be compiled by Antonia Belcher.
Noise Impact Assessment	Yes	General Requirement Assessment Protocol	Terry Mackenzie-Hoy from MACHOY will conduct a Noise Impact Assessment.
Traffic Impact Assessment	Yes	No Protocol, Technical Report.	<p>David Faure from EFG Engineers will conduct a Traffic Impact Assessment.</p> <p><u>Please note the Traffic Impact Assessment will be regarded as a technical report and not a specialist assessment in terms of Appendix 6 of the EIA Regulations, 2014 (as amended).</u></p>
Geotechnical Assessment	Yes	No Protocol, Technical Report.	<p><i>Kantey & Templer Consulting Engineers</i> will conduct a Geotechnical Investigation.</p> <p><u>Please note the Geotechnical Investigation will be regarded as a technical report and not a specialist assessment in terms of Appendix 6 of the EIA Regulations, 2014 (as amended).</u></p>

Specialist Assessment	To be Conducted (Yes/No)	Protocol Required	Assessment & Consultants Information
Socio-Economic Assessment	Yes	General Requirement Assessment Protocol	<i>Urban-Econ</i> will conduct a Socio-Economic Impact Assessment.
Animal Species Assessment	Yes	Animal Species Assessment Protocol	A Faunal Impact Assessment including terrestrial animals, insects and avifauna will be undertaken by Jonathan Colville Terrestrial Ecologist & Faunal Surveys and Birding Africa.

5. CONCLUSION

This Site Sensitivity Verification Report (SSVR) is required to confirm or dispute the inclusion of specialist's assessments. Furthermore, the SSVR must provide a motivation for the exclusion of specialist assessments and specify the required Protocols in terms of NEMA.

The Applicant has appointed all the required specialists as deemed necessary by the Screening Tool Report (**Appendix K1**). It should be noted that all specialists' studies will be undertaken in terms of the required Protocols besides the Traffic Impact Assessment and the Geotechnical Assessment, which have been appended to the Basic Assessment Report as a Technical Reports.