



6 June 2025

**SCREENING TOOL - SITE SENSITIVITY VERIFICATION REPORT: THE PROPOSED  
DEVELOPMENT OF A FREE-RANGE POULTRY BROILER FACILITY ON THE REMAINDER OF  
FARM NUMBER 563, 564, 565 AND THE FARM KLEINFONTEIN NUMBER 954, WOCESTER.**

**1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

PHS Consulting has been appointed to complete a Basic Assessment process for the proposed development of a free-range poultry broiler facility on the Remainder of Farm Number 563 [21,3739 Hectares], the Remainder of Farm Number 564 [18,9273 Hectares], the Remainder of Farm Number 565 [6,0362 Hectares], and the Farm Kleinfontein Number 954 [940,7365 Hectares] in the Breede Valley Municipality Division Worcester, Province Western Cape. Collectively the four farm portions are approximately 987 ha in extent and are located approximately 30 kilometres south of Worcester and approximately 13 kilometres north of Villiersdorp with access being obtained via a gravel road off the R43 (**Figure 1**).

EFRC Agri Operations (Pty) Ltd. (Elgin Free Range Chickens) propose the development of a Free-Range Poultry Broiler Facility. The Broiler Facility will involve the establishment of 20 Broiler Houses (approx. 1044m<sup>2</sup> per facility [87m x 12m]). Each facility will house approximately 17 000 birds. An Ablution facility, Guard House, Spray Race and Refrigerated Container will be located at the entrance to the site. Furthermore, an additional Ablution Facility and Residential Dwelling will be located at the broiler facilities. Refer to **Figure 2**.

Access & Roads: An existing access road will be utilised, and numerous internal roads will be upgraded and realigned where applicable for biosecurity reasons, to improve traffic flow and safety, and to improve river crossings.

Electricity: The Electrical Network Service Provider (NSP) for the site is Eskom. The site is being fed from the Haamanshof-Farmers 3 11kV overhead line (OHL) feeder which is then stepped down to the 400V voltage level via a 100kVA distribution transformer. As the electrical network of Eskom currently has insufficient capacity to supply the entire project with the necessary electricity, RenEnergy was tasked to design a plan where renewable energy is used to supply the electricity needs of the project.

Based on the electrical equipment that would be installed inside each one of the 20 broiler houses, the broiler houses will have a total peak power requirement of around 301.5kVA, including the new infrastructure at the entrance of the farm and requirement of the existing

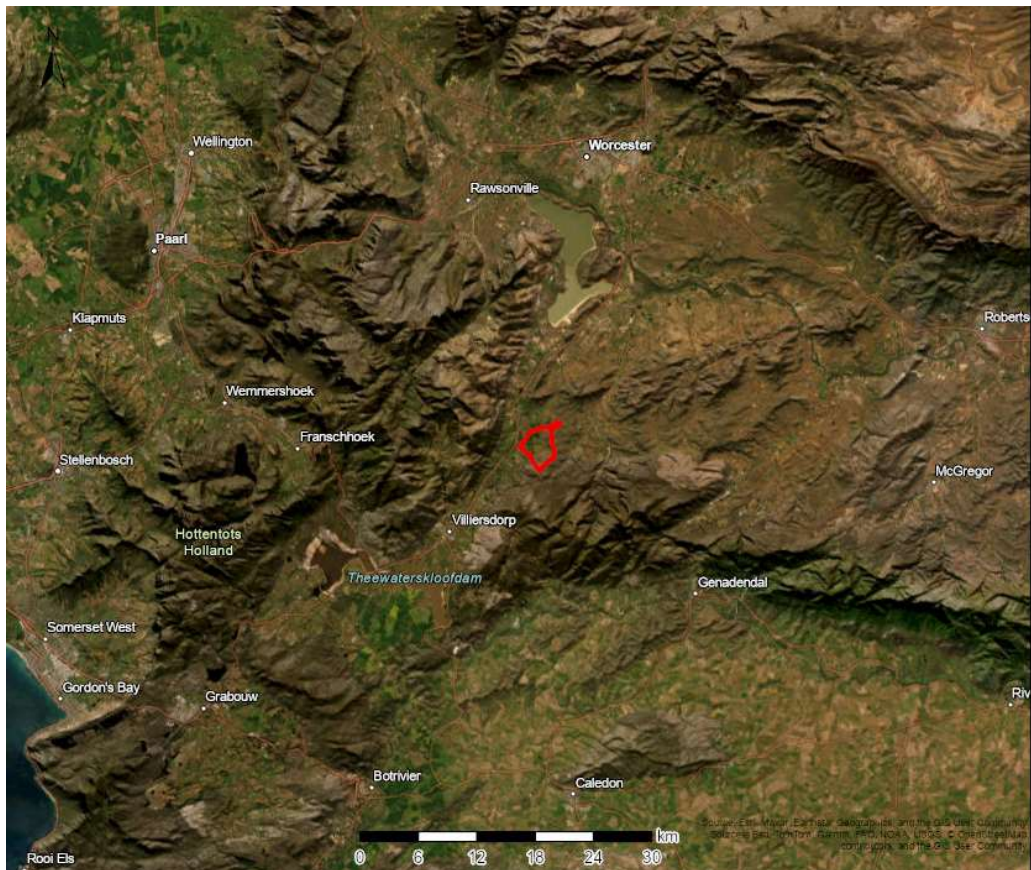
infrastructure, the total load requirement for the farm is estimated to be 312kVA. Solar panels are proposed on the roofs of the chicken houses. At a designated area close to the delivery point of Eskom the containerised solar batteries will be placed, and a generator room will be built to house the backup generators. A bunded Diesel Tank (2200L) will also be located within close vicinity of the Generator Room and Eskom delivery point.

Water: A Water Treatment Plant is proposed to treat the water from the existing Boreholes (BH1 & BH2) which will be fed via a pipeline from the boreholes to the Water Treatment Plant. Thereafter, treated water will be sent to two proposed reservoirs (300kl each) on site. Water will be sent from the main reservoir directly to the broiler houses. Water storage tanks will be located at each chicken house (1 x 5000 L & 1 x 1000 L). All water pipelines will run, as far as possible, alongside existing and the new roads. The HT power distribution lines will be located within the same trench.

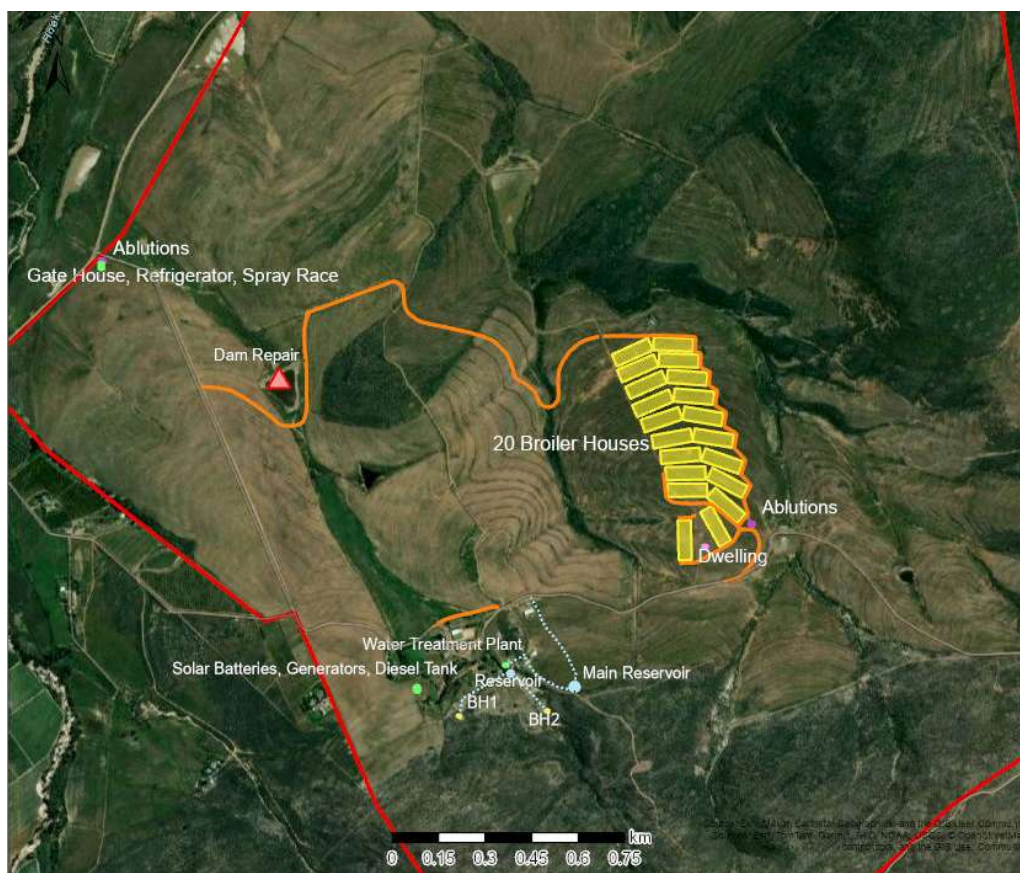
Waste: Underground collection/treatment tanks will be located at all ablution and domestic houses to manage domestic sewerage. Chicken Manure will be collected by surrounding farmers for crop fertilisation. Cold storage will be utilised as temporary storage for mortalities which will then be disposed of at a bio-approved landfill site.

The Department of Environmental Affairs' web-based National Environmental Screening Tool allows for the generation of a Screening Tool Report which is required, in terms of Regulation 16(1)(v) of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations 2014, as amended, to accompany any application for Environmental Authorisation. The Screening Tool identifies potential environmental sensitivities on the site in terms of 'Environmental Themes' (categorized as low, medium, high and very high) and makes Specialist Impact Assessment recommendations. The outcome of the Screening Tool is to be verified by the EAP in the form of a Site Sensitivity Report.

The "Procedures for the Assessment and Minimum Criteria for Reporting on identified Environmental Themes in terms of Sections 24(5)(a) and (h) and 44 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998, when applying for Environmental Authorisation [EA]" as published in Government Notice (GN) No. 320 of 20 March 2020 should be applied when considering various specialist input as part of the EA application for a proposed development. GN No. 320, sets out the requirements for a Site Sensitivity Verification Report particularly where a specific specialist assessment has not been prescribed an individual protocol. The current use of the land and the environmental sensitivity of the site identified by the Screening Tool must be confirmed by undertaking a site sensitivity verification, to be carried out by an environmental assessment practitioner or specialist. Furthermore, Government Notice No. 1150 was published on the 30 October 2020 which added two additional themes to the environmental themes list in Government Notice 320.



**Figure 1: Locality Map: Showing the site (red outline) in relation to Worcester in the North and Villiersdorp in the South.**



**Figure 2: Concept SDP for the proposed development within the property boundaries (red outlines). Orange lines indicate new roads.**

## **2. CONTENTS & METHODOLOGY:**

The applicable protocols or minimum information requirements, which were published in Government Notice No. 320 of 20 March 2020 (Government Gazette No. 43110 of 20 March 2020 refers), which came into effect on 9 May 2020, must be applied to the impact assessment process that must be followed. *"The site sensitivity verification must be undertaken through the use of:*

- a) A desk top analysis, using satellite imagery;*
- b) A preliminary on-site inspection; and*
- c) Any other available and relevant information."*

Furthermore, *"the outcome of the site sensitivity verification must be recorded in the form of a report that –*

- a) Confirms or disputes the current use of land and the environmental sensitivity as identified by the screening tool, such as new developments or infrastructure, the change in vegetation cover or status etc.*
- b) Contains motivation and evidence (e.g. photographs) of either verified or different use of either the verified or different use of the land and environmental sensitivity; and*
- c) Is submitted together with the relevant assessment report prepared in accordance with the requirements of the EIA Regulations."*

The information contained in this report was ground-truthed by means of a site visit that was conducted on the 3rd of April 2025 by Paul Slabbert (EAPASA: 2019/1036) and an additional site visit conducted by Jenna Theron (EAPASA: 2022/5926) and Paul Slabbert on the 29 April 2025. The EAP has consulted various spatial planning documents (regional and local) as well as available GIS information (i.e. Cape Farm Mapper etc.).

## **3. EIA TOOLKIT REPORT RESULTS**

The Screening Tool Report (**Appendix A**) identified the following for consideration:

1. Possible incentive, restriction, or prohibition
  - Strategic Gas Pipeline Corridors-Phase 1a & 1b: Saldanha to Ankerlig and Saldanha to Mossel Bay
  - South African Protected Areas
2. Environmental attributes/features on the site which will be sensitive to development:
  - Agriculture Theme (Very High Sensitivity)
  - Animal Species Theme (High Sensitivity)
  - Aquatic Biodiversity Theme (Very High Sensitivity)
  - Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Theme (Low Sensitivity)
  - Civil Aviation Theme (Low Sensitivity)
  - Defense Theme (Low Sensitivity)
  - Palaeontology Theme (Very High Sensitivity)
  - Plant Species Theme (Medium Sensitivity)
  - Terrestrial Biodiversity Theme (Very High Sensitivity)
3. Possible specialist studies identified:
  - Landscape/Visual Impact Assessment
  - Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment

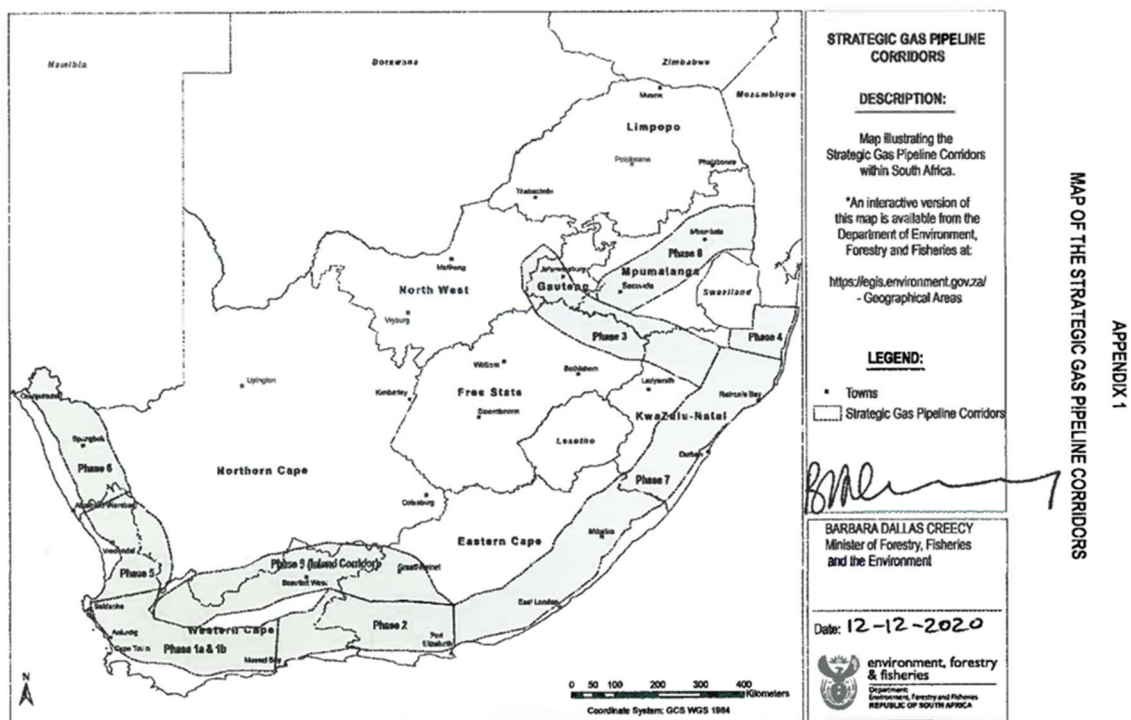


- Paleontology Impact Assessment
- Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact Assessment
- Aquatic Biodiversity Impact Assessment
- Hydrology Assessment
- Traffic Impact Assessment
- Socio-Economic Assessment
- Ambient Air Quality Assessment
- Plant Species Assessment
- Animal Species Assessment

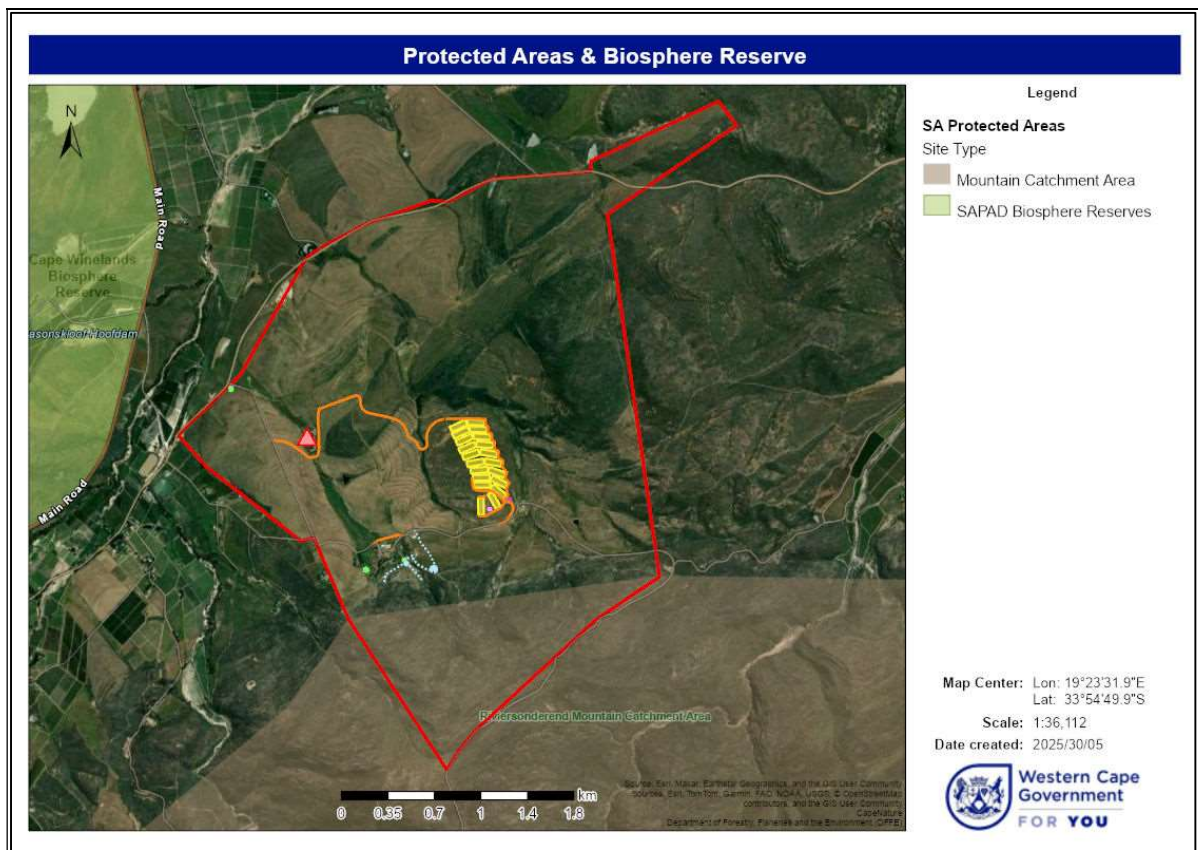
**NB: It is important to note that the DEA screening tool automatically reverts to the highest sensitivity for the block area drawn.**

### 3.1 INCENTIVE, RESTRICTION OR PROHIBITION

The site is located within a Strategic Gas Pipeline Corridor (Phase 1a & 1b) between Saldanha to Ankerlig and Saldanha to Mossel Bay (**Figure 3**). However, the site falls along the edge of the Riviersonderend Mountain Catchment Area and does not entail activities involving dangerous goods etc. The proposed activities involve the construction of a Broiler Facility, largely within fallow agricultural fields, within private property zoned for Agriculture. The proposed activities are considered supportive to the Agricultural zoning of the property. The Riviersonderend Mountain Catchment Area is considered a Protected Area and although it falls inside the property, no activities take place within this area (**Figure 4**). The site is located just outside the Cape Winelands Biosphere Reserve (**Figure 4**).



**Figure 3: Strategic Gas Pipeline Corridors within South Africa. The site falls within Phase 1a and 1b.**



**Figure 4: Showing the property (red) and the activities in relation to the Protected Area (bottom right) and the Biosphere Reserve (top left).**

### 3.2 ENVIRONMENTAL THEMES

**\* It is important to note that the DEA screening tool automatically reverts to the highest sensitivity for the property/site.**

**\*\* Where the property only includes one sensitivity rating overall, no image is included. Images are only included below where more than one sensitivity rating is shown across the property.**

#### 3.2.1 Agriculture Theme (Very High Sensitivity)

The report generated for the proposed development area identified the site as having a 'Very high' agricultural sensitivity for the entire property.

The development is proposed on land zoned for Agriculture with the Broiler Facility located on fallow agricultural fields. The proposed activity is in line with the current permissible land use (Agriculture with consent use for intensive feed farming) and the development will complement the agricultural productivity on the farm, therefore having a high positive impact to the farming operations. The turnover of the proposed operations will contribute an estimated R55 million per annum to the agricultural economy with an estimated 4 359 168 kg of poultry meat produced per annum to contribute towards food security. The economic contribution within the agricultural supply chain of the region will have significant positive impacts i.e. approximately 6357 tons of feed will be required per annum.

It must be understood that the proposed activities are in keeping with the agricultural zoning and practices of the intended land use of the property as well as the surrounding area. The proposed activity relates to the overall enhancement of the agricultural potential of the

property as it is an agricultural supportive project. Given that the development will contribute to agriculture onsite and in the region, it is the opinion of the EAP that no further input will be required from an agricultural specialist. Furthermore, as part of the Public Participation Process, I&APs will have the opportunity to comment, and the Department of Agriculture will be included as a commenting authority. It is our opinion that the Department of Agriculture (DoA) would be the Competent Authority to comment regarding the agricultural sensitivity of the site, the nature of the project and the need for specialist involvement.

The overall VERY HIGH sensitivity rating in terms of this particular project is therefore refuted. A **LOW sensitivity rating** would be more appropriate given the overall supportive agricultural nature of the project. The Western Cape Department of Agriculture will be notified of the application as a registered I&AP and will be requested to provide comment.

### 3.2.2 Animal Species Theme (High Sensitivity)

The proposed development site was assigned a 'High' sensitivity rating for the 'Animal Species Theme' based on the Aves species *Circus maurus* (See Figure 5). However, this is incorrect as the development footprint in fact largely falls within the areas identified as 'Medium' Sensitivity. The approximate location of the 20 broiler houses is indicated by the blue star in Figure 5 below. The proposed activities are largely taking place within fallow agricultural fields, as confirmed by a site visit and aerial imagery. Considering the agricultural nature of the development, its location within agricultural fields and within the existing farmyard it is thus improbable that the faunal species listed would be present within the development site and the Animal Species Sensitivity of the site is considered LOW.

The overall HIGH sensitivity rating in terms of this project is therefore refuted. A **LOW sensitivity** rating would be more appropriate given the location of the activities within the agricultural fields, existing roads and within the existing Farmyard.

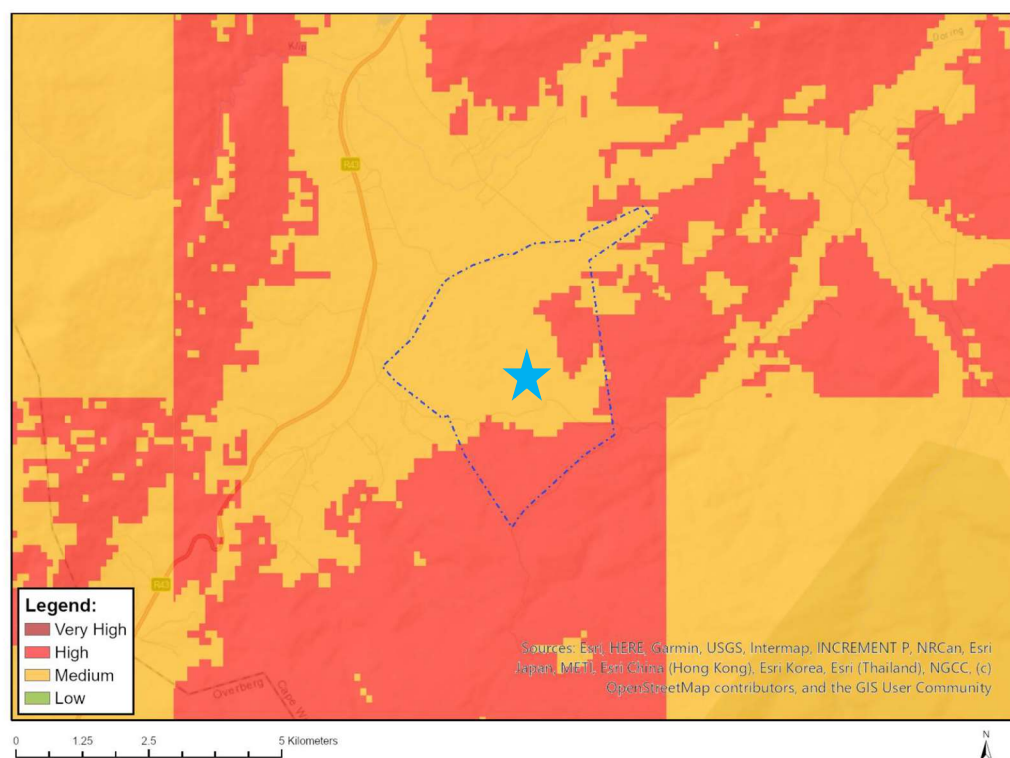


Figure 5: Animal Species Sensitivity (blue star indicating the approx. position of the 20 broiler houses).

### 3.2.3 Aquatic Biodiversity Theme (Very High Sensitivity)

This theme is identified and mapped as 'Very High'. However, the majority of the site is made up of areas identified as 'Low' sensitivity (Refer to **Figure 6** below). There are a number of drainage channels traversing the property and although the majority of the proposed activity falls within areas with no aquatic features (LOW sensitivity) there are a number of river crossings that would be required along the road network.

Therefore, the **VERY HIGH Sensitivity** rating is not refuted and A Freshwater Impact Assessment will be undertaken.



**Figure 6: Aquatic Biodiversity Sensitivity.**

### 3.2.4. Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Theme (Low Sensitivity)

This theme is identified and mapped as 'Low' across the property. A NID and Heritage Screener has been undertaken for the property and was submitted to HWC for comment.

According to the Heritage Specialist, "Based on the information available, it is unlikely that significant heritage resources will be negatively impacted by the proposed development and as such, no further heritage studies are recommended". Therefore, the **LOW Sensitivity** rating is not refuted.



### 3.2.5. Civil Aviation Theme (Low Sensitivity)

The Civil Aviation theme is identified as 'Low' across the property. An applicant intending to undertake an activity for which a specialist assessment has been identified on the screening tool as being of **'LOW' sensitivity** for civil aviation, no further assessment requirements are identified. The Civil Aviation Sensitivity in terms of the site and in relation to the proposed activity is therefore considered negligible.

### 3.2.6. Defence Theme (Low Sensitivity)

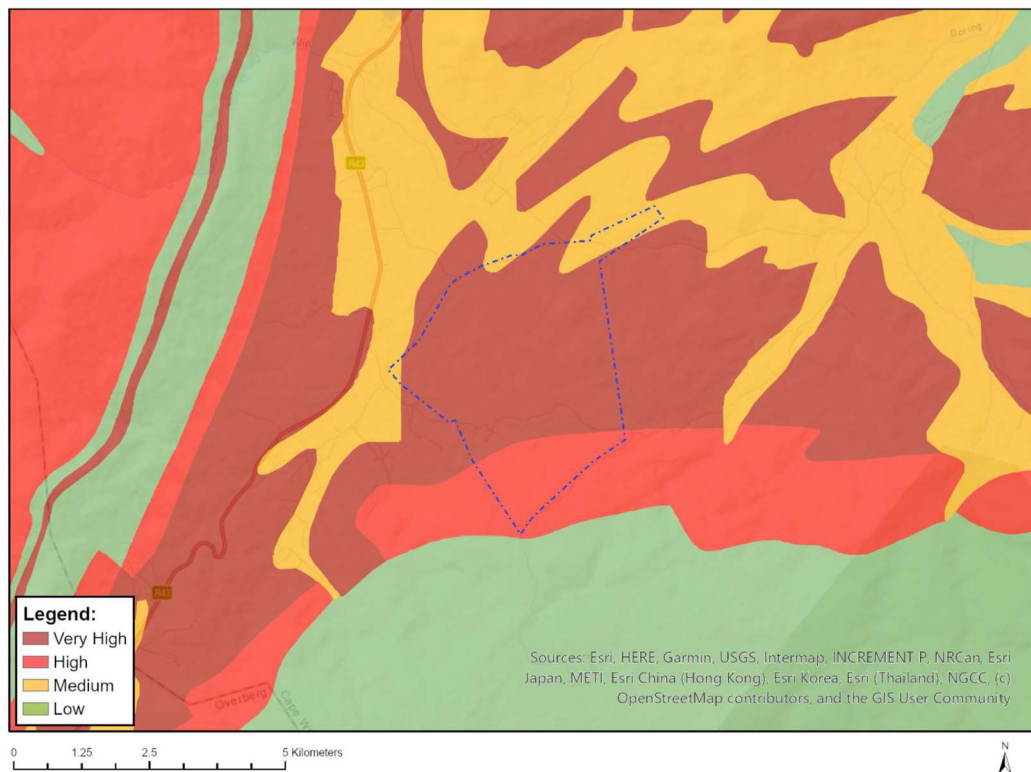
A 'LOW' sensitivity has been assigned across the property. In accordance with the "Protocol for the specialist assessment and minimum report content requirements for environmental impacts on defence installations" an applicant intending to undertake an activity for which a specialist assessment has been identified on the screening tool, on a site identified as being of **'LOW' sensitivity** for defence, no further assessment requirements are identified. As no negative impacts on any defence installations are expected, this theme does not apply further to the application and is considered negligible.

### 3.2.7. Palaeontology Theme (Very High Sensitivity)

A 'VERY HIGH' sensitivity has been assigned to the proposed development site due to *'Features with a Very High paleontological sensitivity'* (See Figure 7). A NID and Heritage Screener has been undertaken for the property and was submitted to HWC for comment. The Heritage Screener stated the following:

*"According to the SAHRIS Palaeosensitivity map, the proposed development is underlain by sediments of very high palaeontological sensitivity. According to the 3319 Worcester CGS Map, the sediments of very high palaeontological sensitivity are ascribed to the Dh: Hexriver Formation and Dv: Voorstehoek Formation, both in the Ceres subgroup, Bokkeveld Group. According to the SAHRIS Fossil Heritage Browser, the Ceres Subgroup sediments are known to conserve diverse shelly invertebrate biotas dominated by brachiopods, echinoderms, trilobites and molluscs (with several other minor groups), diverse trace fossils, rare fish remains (acanthodians, placoderms, sharks, bony fish) as well as primitive vascular plants (psilophytes, lycopods); and microfossils. Additional comments on this layer is that the rich fossil record of these units in the Eastern Cape is poorly recorded when compared with the Western Cape. Tectonic deformation in these areas limit fossil collection, especially within mudrock-rich horizons. Rich fossil invertebrate biotas are commoner in mudrock-dominated units (especially the Gydo and Voorstehoek Formations), with low diversity shelly coquinas in sandstones (Dga, Dh: Hexriver Formation), while trace fossils are best preserved in heterolithic units (thin-bedded sandstones and mudrocks). As such, it is not anticipated that the proposed development improvement will negatively impact on significant fossil heritage."*

According to the Heritage Specialist, *"Based on the information available, it is unlikely that significant heritage resources will be negatively impacted by the proposed development and as such, no further heritage studies are recommended"*. Therefore, the 'VERY HIGH' Sensitivity rating is refuted, and a **LOW Sensitivity** rating is recommended in accordance with the Heritage Specialist.

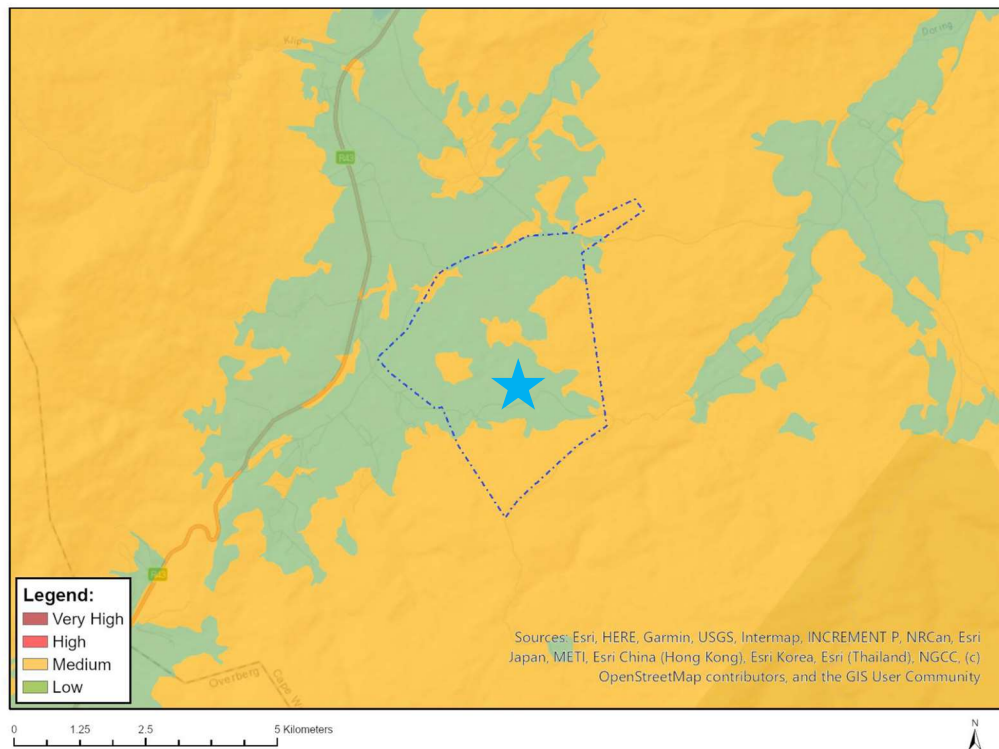


**Figure 7: Palaeontology Sensitivity.**

### 3.2.8. Plant Species Theme (Medium Sensitivity)

This theme is identified and mapped as 'Medium' sensitivity (**See Figure 8**). However, this is incorrect as the development footprint largely falls within the areas identified as 'Low' Sensitivity. The approximate location of the 20 broiler houses is indicated by the blue star in **Figure 8** below. The proposed activities are largely taking place within fallow agricultural fields, as confirmed by a site visit and Aerial Imagery. Considering the agricultural nature of the development, its location within agricultural fields and within the existing farmyard it is thus improbable that the plant species listed would be present within the development site and the Plant Species Sensitivity of the site is considered LOW. The only indigenous vegetation disturbed would be as a result of river crossings which will be assessed as part of the Freshwater Impact Assessment.

The overall 'Medium' sensitivity rating in terms of this project is therefore refuted. A **LOW sensitivity** rating would be more appropriate given the location of the activities within the agricultural fields, existing roads and within the existing Farmyard (as per Figure 8 below).



**Figure 8: Plant Species Sensitivity (blue star indicating the approx. position of the 20 broiler houses).**

### 3.2.9. Terrestrial Biodiversity Theme (Very High Sensitivity)

A 'very high' sensitivity has been assigned to the property (**See Figure 9**) due to the proposed activities location to the:

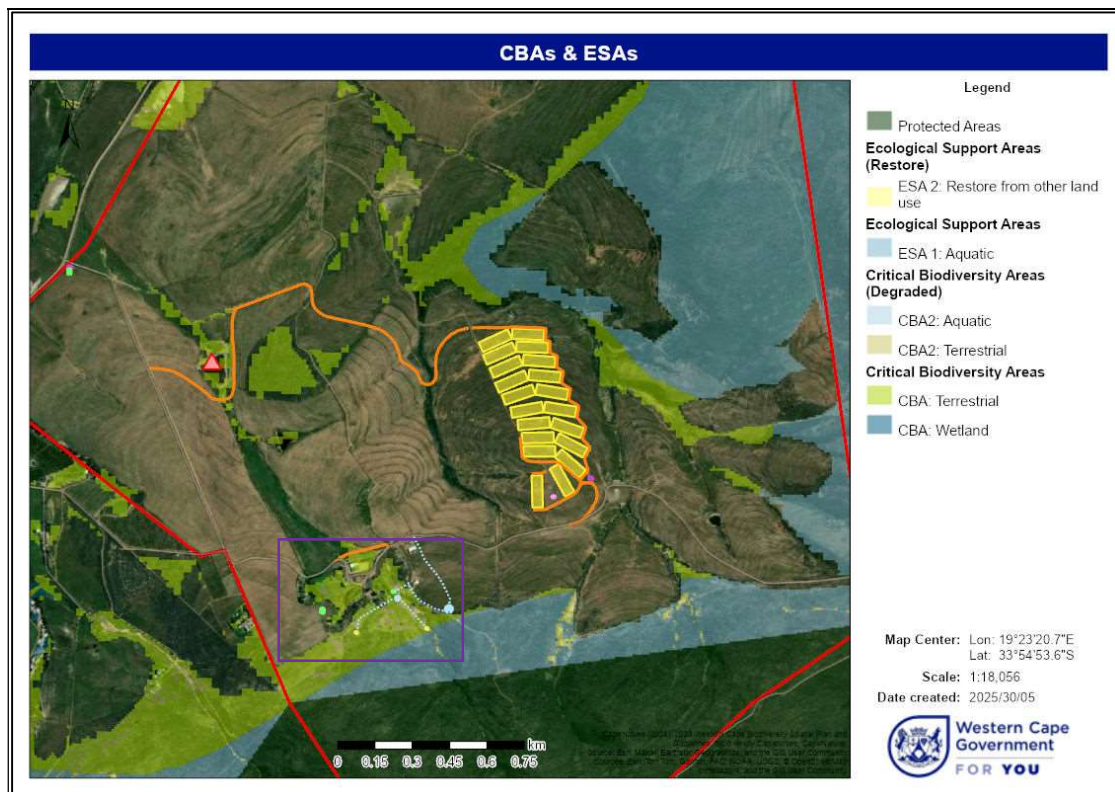
- *Riviersonderend Mountain Catchment Area*
- *ESA 2: Restore from other land use*
- *CBA 2: Terrestrial*
- *CBA: Terrestrial*
- *'Endangered ecosystem - Breede Shale Renosterveld'*

As confirmed by the site visit and desktop information, the proposed development will largely be located within fallow agricultural fields and the existing Farmyard (**Figure 11** below). **Figure 10A and Figure 10B** below confirms that the proposed activities fall outside the Riviersonderend Mountain Catchment Area (marked as a Protected Area). Furthermore, the majority of the proposed activities all fall outside the areas indicated as CBAs and ESAs (refer to **Figure 10A and Figure 10B**). The red triangle depicts the Dam which is existing. It is only the River Crossing here which falls within a CBA and this will be addressed as part of the Freshwater Impact Assessment. Furthermore, minor associated infrastructure shown in Figure 10B might overlap with a CBA area. However, the proposed road (orange lines) will be assessed by the Freshwater Specialist as there is a drainage line within this location. Furthermore, it is important to note that BH1 and BH2 already exist and are currently utilised by the Farm for the purposes of distributing water where required.

The overall 'VERY HIGH' sensitivity rating in terms of this project is therefore refuted. A **LOW sensitivity** rating would be more appropriate given the location of the activities within the agricultural fields, existing roads and within the existing Farmyard (as per Figure 10A & 10B below). No activities take place within the Riviersonderend Mountain Catchment Area (Protected Area) and the majority of the activities avoid all CBAs and ESAs.



**Figure 9: Terrestrial Biodiversity Sensitivity.**



**Figure 10A: Showing the location of the various Terrestrial Biodiversity Sensitivities in relation to the proposed activities within the property boundaries (red line). The red triangle indicates an existing Dam.**





Figure 10B: Showing the location of the various Terrestrial Biodiversity Sensitivities in relation to the proposed activities within the farmyard area (purple block in Figure 10A). Note: Boreholes 1 & 2 (BH1 & BH2) are existing.

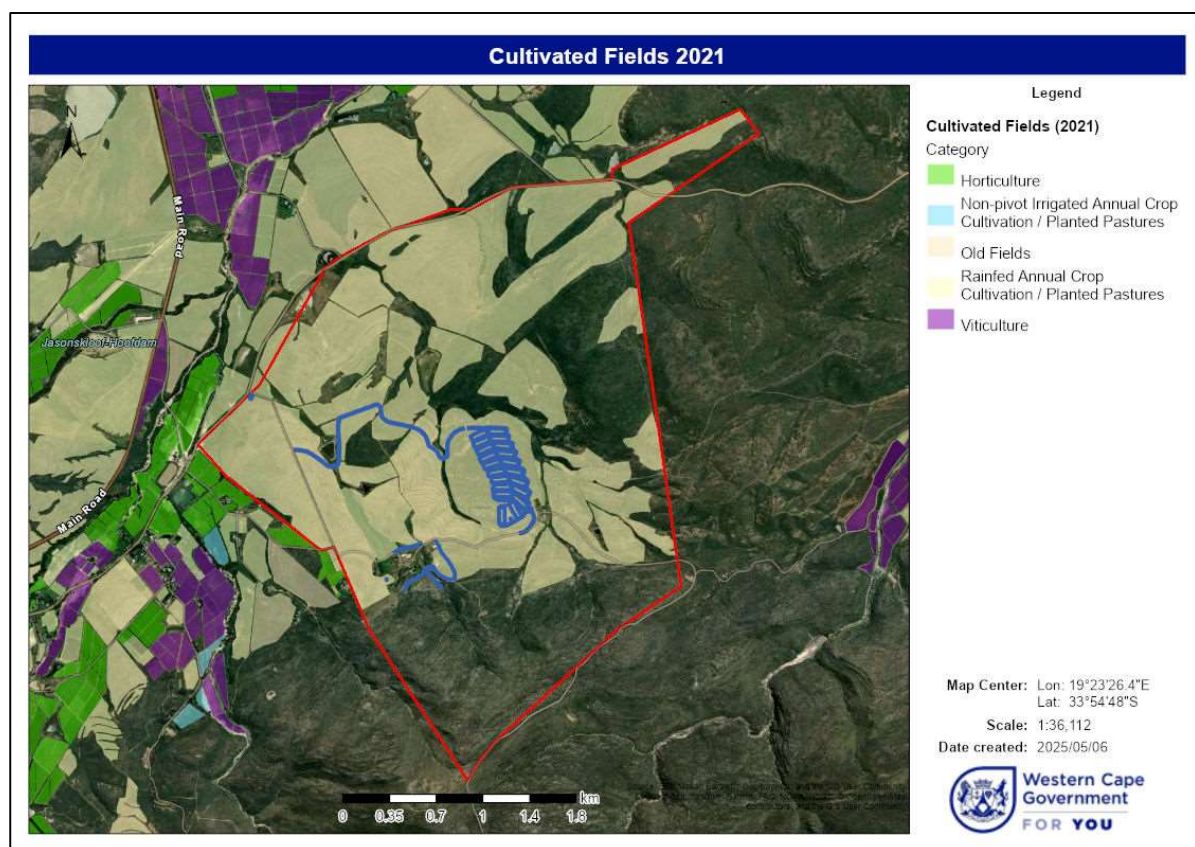


Figure 11: Showing the proposed activities (blue) in relation to the Cultivated Fields Layer (2021, CFM).

### 3.3 SPECIALIST STUDIES IDENTIFIED

The following Specialist Studies were identified as part of the Screening Tool Reports. This section also includes a motivation for complying/ not complying with the recommendations. This section is to be read in conjunction with the 'Environmental Themes' section above.

#### 3.3.1. Landscape/Visual Impact Assessment

The land use of the property and surrounding area is primarily Agricultural in nature. The proposed project brief relates to activities that are in keeping with the activities of a working farm and the agricultural zoning of the property.

Furthermore, landscape/ visual elements are dealt with as part of the Heritage Studies and further studies in this regard would be raised as part of the Heritage process. Jenna Lavin stated the following in the Heritage Screener:

*"In 2021, CTS Heritage conducted a desktop report for the proposed establishment of blueberry cultivation approximately 40km northwest of the proposed development. According to the desktop study, following increased colonial settlement, Worcester was established on 28 February 1820. The Breede River area has been extensively farmed since the 1700s, initially with cattle and later orchards and vineyards so that by 1865, viticulture yields were matching those of Stellenbosch and Paarl. Before colonial settlement, the Breede River Valley would have been home to Stone Age peoples as evidenced by Early, Middle and Later Stone Age (ESA, MSA and LSA) artefacts found in the area and later, Khoe herders and San hunter-gatherers. Before 1700, the area was teeming with big game and as such, the Dutch East India Company (DEIC) profited from the issuing of hunting licences for this area, including elephants for their tusks. By 1709, the DEIC granted grazing rights in the Breede Valley to European farmers, and by 1714, first quitrent farms were released. The proposed development falls within agricultural lands, in a valley through which the R43 passes. The R43 follows a historical route. The study area is located approximately 12km from the Brandvlei dam, which, according to Raper et al (2018), was "Encountered about 1776 in the spelling Brandvalley, it owes its name to South Africa's largest thermal spring; derived from Afrikaans brand, "burn"". The dam itself was constructed between 1920-1922, and is sometimes known as Lake Marais. The proposed development is located less than 2km south of the confluence of the Klip- and Ratel Rivers.*

*A declared PHS is located along the R43 - Stettyn Homestead. This property was declared in 1985. According to the gazette notice for this site, "Stettyn, which has been in the possession of the Botha family since 1818, was originally granted to Jan Cloete and Jan Jurgen Radyn on 26 September 1714. The Cape Dutch farm-house, the original portion of which was built in 1777 by the then-owner Schalk van der Merwe, was enlarged in the early nineteenth century by Phillippus Roedolph Botha. He was probably also responsible for the addition of the typical Worcester front gable. The house, which was badly damaged by Fire in 1930, was restored in 1977. The mill-house, which was in operation until approximately 1929, was presumably erected in 1850." It is noted that this structure and its protected area is located well-away from the proposed development and no direct impact to this resource is anticipated.*

*The landscape in which the proposed development falls is one of agriculture, with most of the nearby structures being farm buildings. The chicken farm platforms fall within cultivated land, and the satellite imagery and topographical maps indicate no existing structures within any of the proposed platform areas. The proposed guardhouse and associated facilities are also located within existing agricultural fields. Some of the other proposed developments (Containers - Solar Batteries/Generator, reservoirs,*

pipelines, boreholes, and water treatment plant) are located around the Kleinfontein werf. Due to their distance to existing infrastructure, no impact is anticipated."

According to the Heritage Specialist, "Based on the information available, it is unlikely that significant heritage resources will be negatively impacted by the proposed development and as such, no further heritage studies are recommended".

HWC (competent to rule over visual and cultural aspects) will provide comment in this regard. Visual aspects will be addressed further in the BAR with no specialist appointment envisaged. Furthermore, it must be noted that we are in the pre-application phase and have not undertaken any PPP at this point. During the initial round of PPP I&APs will have the opportunity to raise any issues in this regard which will at this point be dealt with accordingly.

### **3.3.2. Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment**

A Notification of Intent to Develop and Heritage Screener report was submitted to HWC for comment by the Heritage Specialist. According to the Heritage Specialist, "Based on the information available, it is unlikely that significant heritage resources will be negatively impacted by the proposed development and as such, no further heritage studies are recommended".

We are awaiting comment from HWC, however it is anticipated that no further studies in this regard would be required.

### **3.3.3. Palaeontology Impact Assessment**

A Notification of Intent to Develop and Heritage Screener report was submitted to HWC for comment by the Heritage Specialist. According to the Heritage Specialist, "Based on the information available, it is unlikely that significant heritage resources will be negatively impacted by the proposed development and as such, no further heritage studies are recommended".

We are awaiting comment from HWC, however it is anticipated that no further studies in this regard would be required.

### **3.3.4. Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact Assessment**

The EAP is of the opinion that Terrestrial Biodiversity Specialist input will not be required based on the following:

- As confirmed by the site visit and desktop information, the proposed development will largely be located within fallow agricultural fields and the existing Farmyard (Figure 11 above).
- Figure 10A and Figure 10B above confirms that the proposed activities fall outside the Riviersonderend Mountain Catchment Area (marked as a Protected Area).
- Furthermore, the majority of the proposed activities all fall outside the areas indicated as CBAs and ESAs (refer to Figure 10A and Figure 10B).
- The red triangle depicts the Dam which is existing. Furthermore, it is important to note that BH1 and BH2 already exist and are currently utilised by the Farm for the purposes of distributing water where required.
- While the river crossing near the dam and the road near the farmyard is indicated to fall within a CBA area, this will be addressed/assessed as part of the Freshwater Impact Assessment.

### **3.3.5. Aquatic Biodiversity Impact Assessment**

There are a number of drainage channels traversing the property and although the majority of the proposed activity falls within areas with no aquatic features (LOW sensitivity) there are a number of river crossings that would require specialist input. A Freshwater / Aquatic Biodiversity Impact Assessment will be undertaken.

### **3.3.6. Hydrology Assessment**

A Freshwater / Aquatic Biodiversity Impact Assessment will be undertaken and a Geohydrological Assessment for the abstraction of groundwater. This assessment will deal with a hydrosensus and baseflow in the area, therefore supplementing the Freshwater Specialist information. While it is not anticipated that any additional Hydrological Assessment is required this will be determined by the Freshwater Specialist in the Freshwater Impact Assessment – should it be required. Furthermore, BOCMA are included as I&APs and will have an opportunity to comment in this regard.

### **3.3.7. Traffic Impact Assessment**

The existing access to the farm will be utilised and existing internal farm roads will be utilised where possible. Existing roads will be upgraded where applicable to 6m wide and certain roads will be realigned where required for biosecurity reasons, to improve traffic flow and safety, and to improve river crossings. The proposed development will somewhat increase the current number of vehicles entering and exiting the farm. However, this is only estimated to create **an additional 2.4 trips per day** (approximately 2 additional vehicles will enter and exit the site every day). Given the surrounding land use and the fact that access to the development areas is direct and existing, the potential traffic impact is anticipated to be low. No further specialist studies will be required.

### **3.3.8. Socio-Economic Assessment**

The site falls within the Breede Valley Municipality which is a local municipality located within the Cape Winelands District Municipality.

No potential negative socio-economic impacts are anticipated for the proposed development of the chicken farm. On the contrary, the chicken farm and proposed additions provides socio-economic benefits for the region in terms of job creation, economic growth and food security. The intention is facilitating production of free-range chickens in response to the growing market need for free range chicken. A number of job opportunities will be provided during the construction phase (approximately 100 jobs) and an additional 40 job opportunities will result directly from the operational phase of the development. Furthermore, additional job opportunities will result in the Elgin Free Range Hatcheries and the associated supply chain.

It is estimated that the farm turnover will amount to an estimated R55 million per annum with the farm producing produce 4 359 168 kg of poultry meat per annum once in operation. Furthermore, the farm will require the use of 6 357 tons of feed and a number of products that will benefit from the supply chain.

The socio-economic aspects and impacts will be considered further in the EIA process, however, no specialist input will be required.



### **3.3.9. Ambient Air Quality Impact Assessment**

There will be no impacts on ambient air quality and the Air Quality Act does not apply. No specialist input will be required.

### **3.3.10. Plant Species Assessment**

The proposed activities are largely taking place within fallow agricultural fields, as confirmed by a site visit and aerial imagery. Considering the agricultural nature of the development, its location within agricultural fields and within the existing farmyard it is thus improbable that the plant species listed would be present within the development site and the Plant Species Sensitivity of the site is considered LOW. The only indigenous vegetation disturbed would be as a result of river crossings and this will be assessed as part of the Freshwater Impact Assessment. A Botanical Specialist input will not be required.

### **3.3.11. Animal Species Assessment**

The proposed activities are largely taking place within fallow agricultural fields, as confirmed by a site visit. Considering the agricultural nature of the development, its location within agricultural fields and within the existing farmyard it is thus improbable that the faunal species listed would be present within the development site the Animal Species Sensitivity of the site is considered LOW. Terrestrial Faunal Specialist input will not be required. The proposed development will be in a cleared area already used for agricultural purposes. No indigenous vegetation currently occurs within the proposed development site, except in certain instances where river crossings are proposed in which case this will be addressed in the Freshwater Impact Assessment.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The environmental attributes/features on the site which will be sensitive to development are summarised as follows:

- Agriculture Theme (LOW Sensitivity)
- Animal Species Theme (LOW Sensitivity)
- Aquatic Biodiversity Theme (Very High Sensitivity)
- Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Theme (Low Sensitivity)
- Civil Aviation Theme (Low Sensitivity)
- Defense Theme (Low Sensitivity)
- Paleontology Theme (LOW Sensitivity)
- Plant Species Theme (LOW Sensitivity)
- Terrestrial Biodiversity Theme (LOW Sensitivity)

A Notification of Intent to Develop and Heritage Screener report was submitted to HWC for comment by the Heritage Specialist. According to the Heritage Specialist, "Based on the information available, it is unlikely that significant heritage resources will be negatively impacted by the proposed development and as such, no further heritage studies are recommended". We are awaiting comment from HWC, however it is anticipated that no further studies in this regard would be required.

Therefore, it is only the need for a Freshwater Impact Assessment and Geohydrological Assessment that has been determined.

- Jeanne Snyman from *EverWater* has been appointed to undertake the Freshwater Impact Assessment.
- GEOSS has been appointed to undertake the Geohydrological Assessment.