

HOOGLAND WIND FARMS: BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT



PROJECT OVERVIEW

Red Cap Energy (Pty) Ltd ('Red Cap') proposes to develop four (4) wind farm facilities (together referred to as the Hoogland Project) and their associated grid connections, between Loxton and Beaufort West in the Northern and Western Cape Provinces. Red Cap has appointed SLR Consulting (South Africa) (Pty) Ltd as the Independent Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) to undertake the required Application processes.

PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

The purpose of this Background Information Document (BID) is to:

- provide a high-level description of the proposed project;
- describe the Application processes to be followed;
- provide an overview of the key environmental impacts; and
- describe how you can participate in the process.

AUTHORISATIONS REQUIRED

As per the National Environment Management Act (NEMA, Act No. 107 of 1998, as amended) and the 2014 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations (as amended), a Scoping and Environmental Impact Reporting (S&EIR) process will be followed for the Northern Cluster Wind Farms and a Basic Assessment (BA) process will be followed for the Southern Cluster Wind Farms. BA processes will be undertaken for the North Grid Connection and Southern Grid Connection respectively. The formal applications will be submitted to the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) at different stages. However, a joint public participation process (PPP) is being conducted for all Applications.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Hoogland 1 Wind Farm and Hoogland 2 Wind Farm are located to the north closer to Loxton and form the Northern Cluster of wind farms which will share a grid connection, named the Hoogland Northern Grid Connection. Hoogland 3 Wind Farm and Hoogland 4 Wind Farm are located closer to Beaufort

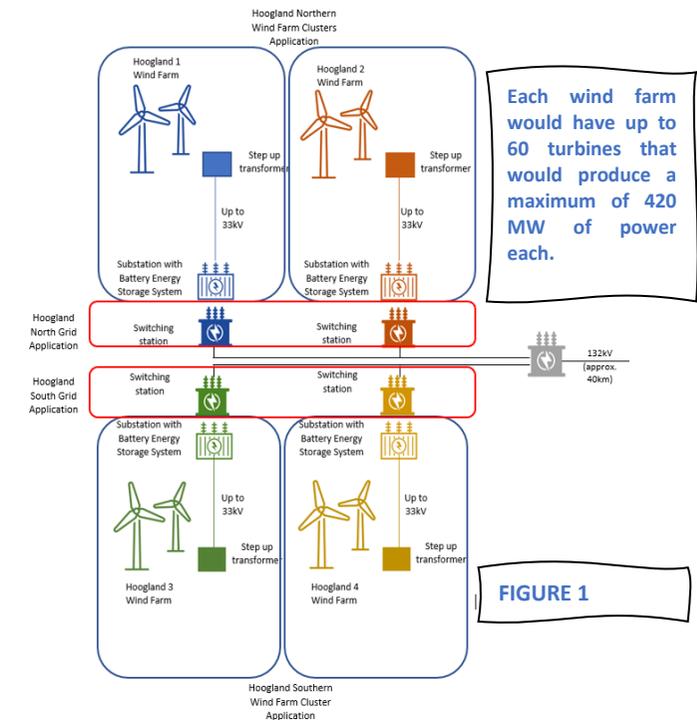


West and comprise the Southern Cluster which will similarly share a separate grid connection, named the Hoogland Southern Grid Connection. The two Grid Connections are each in the form of 132 kV overhead power lines and will connect the Hoogland Wind Farms to the Nuweveld Collector Substation on Red Cap's adjacent Nuweveld Wind Farms Project.

The Project will include:

- **Turbines:** Up to 60 turbines per wind farm with associated turbines hardstands and temporary laydown areas (turbines are up 150 m from the ground to the hub (the part where the blades attach to) with 3 blades each up to 97.5m long).
- **Substation and switching station:** On-site substation and switching station each located in a 150m x 75m yard.
- **Control room, offices, stores, workshops and laydown area:** to be housed in the substation yard.
- **Battery energy storage system (BESS):** which may be located near the substation.
- **Roads:** Permanent gravel roads of 6m wide for access to the wind farm and to each turbine and the substation.
- **Cables:** Underground cables linking the turbines to each other and to the substation, with limited above-ground powerlines only used to cross difficult terrain e.g. steep slopes or drainage lines.
- **Grid Connections:** Each Wind Farm Cluster (Northern and Southern) will require a ~40km 132kV overhead power line to connect the Wind Farms to the Nuweveld Collector Substation on Red Cap's neighbouring Nuweveld Wind Farms Project.

Figure 1 shows the major components of the project and associated infrastructure and how the six (6) projects are connected to one another.



LOCATION

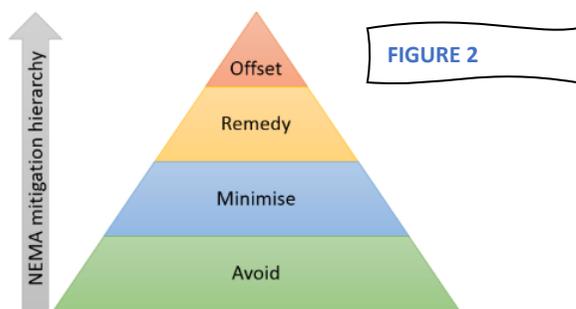
Please find a **Map** of the Project on the last page of this pamphlet.

The Hoogland Project is partially within the Beaufort West Renewable Energy Development Zone (REDZ). REDZ are geographical areas where wind and solar photovoltaic power development can occur in concentrated zones which are identified as important for the expansion of South Africa's energy mix. Projects within the REDZ require a Basic Assessment process and those outside the REDZ a Scoping and EIA process.

APPROACH AND PROCESS

Overall philosophy

Red Cap have proactively sought to identify the best practical environmental option possible for the Hoogland Project. This approach aligns with the NEMA principles advocating for sustainable development through the adoption of the mitigation hierarchy as set out in section 2 of NEMA and depicted in **Figure 2**. Through application of this hierarchy, 'avoidance' of environmental impacts was then the basis for the approach.



Screening Phase

The detailed screening process for the Hoogland Project was based on identification and mapping of No-Go areas of the site in order to avoid all environmental, socio-economic and technical sensitive areas, and considered both impacts from turbines and other infrastructure (internal overhead power lines, roads and underground cables and buildings).

This allowed all suitable areas for turbine locations, and associated infrastructure within the site to be identified. These layouts are the basis for the wind farms that are taken forward for environmental assessment.

Project Processes

Two different types of environmental Applications and related deliverables can be expected through the

environmental permitting process for the different components of the project:

Scoping and EIA processes for Hoogland Northern Cluster (Hoogland 1 and Hoogland 2 Wind Farms):

Scoping Report: A scoping report provides a brief description of the baseline environment before any assessments on the potential impacts are undertaken. Specialists will provide input into these descriptions. Areas requiring further investigation are identified and a proposed way forward for the EIA phase is prepared.

Environmental Impact Report (EIR): An EIR builds on the Scoping Report and assesses the impacts of the proposed development on the surrounding environment. This process includes evaluating alternatives for the project and provides mitigation measures to minimise negative impacts and optimise positive impacts.

Basic Assessment (BA) process for Hoogland Southern Cluster (Hoogland 3 and Hoogland 4 Wind Farms); Hoogland Northern Grid Connection and Hoogland Southern Grid Connection:

Basic Assessment Report (BAR): A BAR consists of a description of the baseline environment with a streamlined impact assessment process used to identify potential negative and positive consequences of a proposed project and recommends mitigation measures.

Please note: The Draft Scoping Report for the Northern Wind Farm Cluster will be available for comment in March 2022 along with the three BA Pre-Application Reports for the Southern Wind Farms Cluster; and Northern and Southern Grid Connections. The BA Pre-Application Reports allow for an extra round of commenting for these three BA processes before their official process starts in about August 2022.

See **Figure 3** for how the process for each component will occur and which reports will be available for public comment.

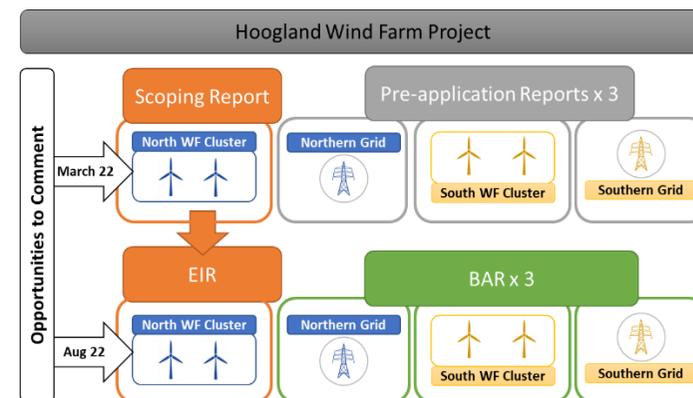


FIGURE 3

KEY ISSUES AND IMPACTS

There are a number of environmental and social impacts and benefits associated with the construction, operation and decommissioning of a wind farm and associated power line. These include some of the following:

- Impacts on terrestrial and aquatic ecology;
- Impacts on birds and bats and other animal species;
- Shadow and noise impacts;
- Impacts on landscape;
- Impacts on cultural heritage;
- Change in land use;
- Traffic impacts; and
- Social impacts during construction and operation.

The brief summary of the overall impacts that the proposed wind farms will have as determined by specialists is presented in the following Table:

Discipline	Specialist Company	Summary of Overall Initial Findings
Agriculture	Johann Lanz Consulting	Insignificant

Discipline	Specialist Company	Summary of Overall Initial Findings
Aquatic Ecology	EnviroSci (Pty) Ltd	Low Negative
Terrestrial Ecology	3Foxes Biodiversity Solutions	Medium - Low Negative
Reptiles and Amphibians	Sungazer Faunal Surveys	Medium - Low Negative
Climate Change	Promethium Carbon	Very High Positive
Geotechnical	R.A. Bradshaw' & Associates cc	Medium - Low Negative
Birds	Wildskies	Medium - Low Negative
Bats	Animalia Consultants	Medium - Low Negative
Archaeology	ASHA Consulting	Medium - Low Negative
Palaeontology	Natura Viva	Low Negative
Noise	Enviro-Acoustic Research	Low Negative
Shadow Flicker	Arcus	Low Negative
Socio-economic / tourism	Independent Economic Researchers	Medium - High Positive
Traffic	Athol Schwartz	Medium - Low Negative
Visual	Bernard Oberholzer Landscape Architects (BOLA) and qARC	Medium - High Negative

CUMULATIVE IMPACT SUMMARY

Cumulative impacts may occur if multiple activities impact the same resource. It is therefore important to consider other similar activities that may be planned in the area.

The proposed adjacent Nuweveld Wind Farms, are currently the only other approved renewable energy EA applications within a 30km of the project. The cumulative impact assessed will therefore consider the collective impact of the four Hoogland Wind Farms and Grid Connection applications with

the three Nuweveld Wind Farm and Gridline applications. The key cumulative impacts identified to date include:

Discipline	Specialist Company	Summary of Cumulative Findings
Aquatic Ecology	EnviroSci (Pty) Ltd	Low- Very Low Negative
Terrestrial Ecology	3Foxes Biodiversity Solutions	Low Negative
Climate Change	Promethium Carbon	Very High Positive
Birds	Wildskies	Medium - Low Negative
Bats	Animalia Consultants	Medium - Low Negative
Archaeology and Palaeontology	ASHA Consulting	Medium - Low Negative
Socio-economic / tourism	Independent Economic Researchers	High Positive and Medium Negative
Traffic	Athol Schwartz	Medium Negative
Visual	Bernard Oberholzer Landscape Architects (BOLA) and qARC	Medium - High Negative

WAY FORWARD

The full findings of the specialists' reports and the **Draft Scoping Report and BA Pre-Application Reports** will be available during the Public Participation phase later in March 2022 at:

- The Loxton Public Library (Margaretha Prinsloo St)
- Beaufort West Public Library (15 Church St)
- The Klein Karoo Agri Store (80 Donkin St)
- The SLR website:
<https://www.slrconsulting.com/en/public-documents>
<https://slrpublicdocs.datafree.co/en/public-documents>

Notifications will be sent out informing the public of the report's availability later in March 2022. Please register as an I&AP to stay informed.



CONTACT US:

For further information and to register as an I&AP, in writing, please contact **Mrs Liandra Scott-Shaw** of **SLR Consulting** (contact details below), together with your own full contact details and any comments or concerns.

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Link to SLR's Privacy Policy:

<https://cdn.slrconsulting.com/uploads/2020-08/SLR-Privacy-Notice.pdf>

SLR Consulting (South Africa) (Pty) Ltd

Attention: Mrs Liandra Scott-Shaw

Postal Address: PO Box 1596, Cramerview, 2060*

Physical Address: 5th Floor, 178 Campground Rd, Newlands, Cape Town, 7700. **Tel:** (011) 467 0945. **Cell:** 0736587955

E-mail: hoogland@slrconsulting.com

***Note: If using post, please also contact SLR telephonically to notify us of your submission**

