PROPOSED NEWFIELDS BULK MINERAL ORE STORAGE AND HANDLING FACILITY
SALDANHA BAY MUNICIPALITY,
WEST COAST DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY,
WESTERN CAPE
31 OCTOBER 2025

SITE SENSITIVITY VERIFICATION REPORT – FOR PRE-APPLICATION PUBLIC PARTICIPATION REVIEW AND COMMENT

COMPILED BY: MRS IRMA VAN DER MERWE

Table of Contents

1. **Environmental Sensitivities and verification**

A screening tool has been developed by the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and Environmental Affairs (DFFE). The Screening Tool identifies related exclusions and/ or specific requirements including specialist studies applicable to the proposed site and/or development, based on the national sector classification and the environmental sensitivity of the site. A screening tool report was generated for the proposed project; the sensitivities identified and verified are provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Site Sensitivity Verification Requirement in terms of GNR 320

Site Sensitivity Verification Requirements in terms of GNR 320:	
" 1.2. the site sensitivity verification must be undertaken through the use of: a) A desktop analysis; using satellite imagery;	Satellite imagery obtained from Google Earth was used as well as a preliminary desktop assessment was conducted.
b) A preliminary on-site inspection and	A site inspection was conducted on 15 October 2025
c) Any other available and relevant information"	
1.3.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 the land and the environmental sensitivity as identified by the screening tool, such as new developments or infrastructure, the change in vegetation over or status etc.;	This Site Sensitivity Verification Report and Table 2
b) Contains a motivation and evidence (e.g. photographs) of either the verified or different use of land and environmental sensitivity; and	Table 2
c) Is submitted together with the relevant assessment report prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (EIA Regulations)."	The SSVR will be submitted to the competent authority along with the pre-application Scoping Report for a 30 day comment and review period.

2. **Measures utilised in site verification:**

A. Satellite imagery obtained from Google Earth
B. Specialist verifications:
    a. Agricultural verification - (Dr Darren Bower, DSA)
    b. Fauna verification and assessment as required (Jonathan Colville and Callan Cohen)
    c. Aquatic Biodiversity verification and assessment as required (Dr Brian Colloty - EnviroSci)
    d. Archaeological, Paleontology and Cultural Heritage screening report and assessment as required (Jenna Lavin -CTS Heritage)
    e. Terrestrial Biodiversity and plant species verification and assessment as required (Jamie Pote)
    f. Landscape/Visual Impact Assessment (Stephen Stead – Visual Resource Management Africa)
C. Site Visit conducted on 15 October 2025 by Mrs I van der Merwe.

3. Overview of proposed activity and locality:

Newfields Investments (Pty) Ltd (Newfields) is proposing to develop and operate a bulk mineral ore storage and handling facility on Farm RE/1139 located in Ward 5 of Saldanha Bay, in the Saldanha Bay Local Municipality, West Coast District Municipality, in the Western Cape.

The site falls within the Besaansklip Industrial Area, which includes the Saldanha IDZ/ Freeport Saldanha (Saldanha Bay Municipality, 2019; Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning, 2020).

The Newfields Bulk Mineral Ore Storage and Handling Facility is planned to have an initial throughput capacity of 8 million tons of ore per annum (MTPA) and will be capable of handling up to 12MTPA of manganese throughput per annum should market conditions dictate.

The Newfields Bulk Mineral Ore Storage and Handling Facility will store mineral ore in closed silos, until required for loading onto ships for export. The back of port bulk mineral storage technology is based on a silo-storage design which is both operationally efficient and presents a leading, innovative and environmentally compliant solution to bulk mineral logistics.

4. Site Locality Map and Site Area

The terminal is proposed to be located on Farm RE / 1139 in the industrial zone of Saldanha Bay within the jurisdiction of the Saldanha Bay Municipality (Figure 1) . The property, RE/1139, is approximately 180.17 ha in extent (SG Code: C04600000000113900000). The proposed storage and handling site is proposed to be situated on the northernmost section of Farm RE/ 1139.

Figure 1: The proposed site, Remainder portion of Farm No.1139

5. Site Photographs:

1. Rocky calcrete outcrop on site

2. Overview of the proposed site

3. Overview of the proposed site

4. Overview of the proposed site facing east

5. Overview of the proposed site facing East

6. Overview of the proposed site facing north-west

7. Overview of the site facing South-East

8. Proposed site facing South

9. Proposed site facing North-East

10. Proposed site facing North

11. Rock outcrop

12. Dirt track on the proposed site.

	
Overview of the planned site access off Platinum Street	

6. DFFE Screening Tool Report

As per the DFFE's Screening Tool Report (Appendix 1), the proposed site is indicated to be located within areas ranging from low to very high sensitivity. These are identified in Table 2 below.
Based on information gathered through a desktop study and site visit, not all of the identified sensitivities apply to the site in its current state.

Table 2: Biodiversity theme sensitivity ratings assigned by the DFFE's Screening Tool Report

Biodiversity Theme	Very High Sensitivity	High Sensitivity	Medium Sensitivity	Low Sensitivity
Agricultural theme			X	
Animal Species		X		
Aquatic Biodiversity				X
Archaeological and Cultural Heritage	X			
Paleontological	X			
Plant Species Assessment			X	
Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact	X			
Civil Aviation Assessment		X		
Defence theme			X	

Table 3: Verification of environmental sensitivity identified in DFFE screening tool report

Theme	Environmental sensitivity as per screening tool report (STR)	Verification of environmental sensitivity	Description
Agricultural theme	Medium	Low to Medium	The study area is not situated within a Protected Agricultural Area. There were no agricultural activities being undertaken on site. The soil capability is classified as very low to low and the overall land capability is considered not arable for the site. The specialist is in agreement with the sensitivity rating of Low to Medium. The proposed development is not expected to have a significant impact on agricultural potential.
Animal Species	High	Low to medium The project area falls over an area considered as ecologically sensitive and that requires a biodiversity offset if developed on.	The proposed site falls within the Besaansklip Industrial Area, which includes the Saldanha IDZ/ Freeport Saldanha. The conveyor route falls over areas that have lost their natural vegetation. Ground-truthing during the site visit found that the project site is moderately to significantly disturbed although retains significant elements of its natural vegetation, especially along the routes of the conveyor and incoming/outgoing rail that fall outside of the main site area. The project site falls within the Besaansklip Industrial Zone and within a spatial category that is required to have a biodiversity offset if developed, based on the 2020 Saldanha Industrial Corridor Strategic Offsets Strategy (Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning, 2020). Suitable habitat for the animal SCC listed in the STR was found across the project areas, although the importance of the habitat for the SCC is considered as medium to low. It is considered that there is a medium to high probability of all SCC utilising parts of the main site area, mainly for foraging and less likely for breeding habitat. One area of high sensitivity is related to the southern border of the project site that appears to overlap or fall close to an area of Critically Endangered Saldanha Limestone Strandveld. Any development should avoid this sensitive vegetation type. The specialist disputes the high sensitivity in the STR, the proposed development

Theme	Environmental sensitivity as per screening tool report (STR)	Verification of environmental sensitivity	Description
			is of Low sensitivity from a faunal perspective. The project area falls over an area considered as ecologically sensitive and that requires a biodiversity offset if developed on. The proposed developments on the northern parts of Farm 1139 are unlikely to generate any significant negative impacts on any of the animal SCC: on the condition of the small development footprint and that proposed offset strategies for the Besaansklip Industrial Area are considered.
Aquatic Biodiversity	Low	Low	There were no natural freshwater aquatic features were observed within the site and only the artificial wetland on the adjoining property was observed, approximately 500m from the site. At the present the proposed development would seem to have no direct impact on any of the observed aquatic systems due to their proximity and due to the mostly closed or contained infrastructure (silos and closed conveyors)
Archaeological and Cultural Heritage	Very High	Low with 50-meter buffer around identified gravesite	Small pile of calcrete (formal) possible grave or beacon identified in screening assessment (Halkett, 2011, SAHRIS NID 345549). It is very unlikely that the proposed development will negatively impact on significant archaeological, built environment or cultural landscape heritage resources other than the possible grave identified by Halkett (2011). As such, it is recommended that no further heritage studies are required in terms of section 38 of the NHRA on condition that a 50m buffer is implemented around the identified site. The Chance Fossil Finds Procedure be implemented for the duration of trenching and excavations activities. Furthermore, if any human remains or archaeological resources are uncovered during the course of development, work must cease and HWC must be contacted regarding a way forward. The specialist disputes the sensitivity rating of Very High, and has indicated a Low sensitivity.
Paleontological	Very High	Low	Despite the known high palaeontological sensitivity of the development area, the likelihood of undocumented significant paleontological resources being

Theme	Environmental sensitivity as per screening tool report (STR)	Verification of environmental sensitivity	Description
			exposed on the surface is highly unlikely. As such, a palaeontological field assessment is unlikely to yield any significant findings. The implementation of the HWC Chance Fossil Finds, and palaeontological monitoring during development will increase mitigation in case subsurface palaeontology is uncovered during development and is the preferred approach for this development. The Chance Fossil Finds Procedure is to be implemented for the duration of trenching and excavations activities. Furthermore, if any resources are uncovered during the course of development, work must cease and HWC must be contacted regarding a way forward. The specialist disputes the sensitivity rating of Very High, and has indicated a Low sensitivity.
Plant Species Assessment	Medium	Low	In terms of the screening tool report; the following flora SCC were identified as medium sensitivity features: - Sensitive species 828 - Sensitive species 554 - Sensitive species 944 - Sensitive species 191 The specialist conducted a site visit early in August 2025. No significant populations of any flagged flora species of conservation concern were found within the site at the time of assessment, which was deemed to be seasonally adequate.
Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact	Very high	High	The main vegetation types found at the project sites are: • Saldanha Flats Strandveld (**Endangered**; ~37% of natural area remaining): main development area and access road. • Langebaan Dune Strandveld (**Endangered**; ~12% of natural area remaining): main development area, pipeline, and access road. • Saldanha Limestone Strandveld (**Critically Endangered**; ~81% of natural area remaining): main development. Based on landcover models, the main development area is classed as mostly

Theme	Environmental sensitivity as per screening tool report (STR)	Verification of environmental sensitivity	Description
			natural vegetation (Skowno, 2020). The conveyor route falls over areas that have lost their natural vegetation. Ground-truthing during the site visit found that the project site is moderately to significantly disturbed although retains significant elements of its natural vegetation, especially along the routes of the conveyor and incoming/outgoing rail that fall outside of the main site area. The project site falls within the Besaansklip Industrial Zone and within a spatial category that is required to have a biodiversity offset if developed, based on the 2020 Saldanha Industrial Corridor Strategic Offsets Strategy (Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning, 2020). The project area falls over an area considered as ecologically sensitive and that requires a biodiversity offset if developed on. Proposed offset strategies for the Besaansklip Industrial Area are to be considered. The specialist conducted a site visit early in August 2025. No significant populations of any flagged flora species of conservation concern were found within the site at the time of assessment, which was deemed to be seasonally adequate. In addition, the specialist is of the opinion that the vegetation on site is secondary in nature. The footprint of the silo component of the development is approximately 2.5 ha. The conveyor from the silos, to the tippler, will be elevated with support beams. As per WC BSP (2023), the site overlaps with a mosaic of designated CBA 1 & CBA 2 areas. The silo and conveyor corridor will result in the transformation of vegetated areas falling within these designated areas. Since the silo and conveyor have limited footprint, this loss will be restricted to the footprint area lost and would not be considered an extensive area. The onsite terrestrial biodiversity assessment findings suggests that the vegetation is secondary and/or degraded in nature and was likely cultivated at some point historically, although this is likely more than 20-30 years ago and

Theme	Environmental sensitivity as per screening tool report (STR)	Verification of environmental sensitivity	Description
			aerial photos from that time-period are scares. Evidence on site includes rock piles, which are evidence of historical ploughing and also based on vegetation observations and key elements that would be indicative of pristine or natural strandveld are absent.
Civil Aviation Assessment	High	Low	A civil aviation assessment / compliance statement is **excluded** as the proposed development will not have an impact on civil aviation aerodrome or associated aviation infrastructure (e.g. radars). The silos will be in 20m in height and does not trigger the 45m height threshold for obstacles.
Defence theme	Medium	Low	A defence them compliance statement is **excluded** as the proposed development will not have an impact on the defense theme or on any military infrastructure.

Appendix 1