



Earthlink Environmental Services

SITE SENSITIVITY VERIFICATION REPORT

Proposed Upgrade of NATIONAL ROAD R30 SECTION 8 FROM KLERKSDORP (KM 0.0) TO BUFFELSVALLEI (KM 37.0) within Dr Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality in the North West Province.

Prepared by:

Earthlink Environmental Services

Applicant:

South African National Roads Agency SOC Limited

Competent Authority:

Department of Forestry, Fisheries, and the Environment



SITE SENSITIVITY VERIFICATION REPORT(SSV)

This Site Sensitivity Verification Report was undertaken in terms of the Protocols for the Assessment and Minimum Criteria for Reporting on identified Environmental Themes (referred to “the Protocols” hereafter) as per Government Notice No. 320 (published in Government Gazette No. 43110 on 20 March 2020)¹. These Protocols, effected as on the 9th of May 2020, must be complied with for every new application submitted after the effective date. According to the Protocols, the EAP must verify the current use of the proposed site for development as well as the site’s environmental sensitivity, in accordance with the DFFE Screening Tool Report, to determine the need for specialist inputs in relation to the themes (and proposed specialist assessments) included in the Protocols.



Table of Contents

SITE SENSITIVITY VERIFICATION REPORT(SSV)	2
1. INTRODUCTION	4
2. PROJECT LOCATION	5
3. SCREENING TOOL RESULTS	5
3.1 OTHER PROPOSED IMPACT ASSESSMENTS THAT CAN BE UNDERTAKEN	Error!
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4. ON-SITE ASESSMENT	10
5. CONCLUSION	12

List of Tables

Table 1: DFFE Screening tool Results.....	5
Table 2: Themes and associated sensitivity as per the DFFE Screening Tool.	7
Table 3: The starting position of the R30 in Klerksdorp	10
Table 4: Middle points of the R30 road to be upgraded.....	10
Table 5: The end position of the R30 in Buffelsvallei	11
Table 6: Land uses near the R30 Road Upgrade	11
Table 7: Heritage resources along R30 Section 8.....	11

List of Figures

Figure 1: Locality Map of the proposed R30 Section 8 road to be upgraded.	5
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1. INTRODUCTION

South African National Road Agency SOC Limited (SANRAL) proposes to upgrade Road R30 section 8, from Klerksdorp (KM 0.0) TO Buffelsvallei (KM 37.0) within Dr Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality in the North West Province.

The project is aimed at improving the road geometry by adding surfaced shoulders and rehabilitating the existing pavement structure to enable it to carry a 20-year design traffic load.

The major aspects of this project include the following:

- Improving the existing 37km single carriageway road,
- Increasing the existing road reserve width from 30 m to a range of 40 m to 45 m, with a maximum of 50m where required,
- Strengthening the existing pavement,
- Improving the existing road cross-section to adhere to SANRAL standards, from an existing road formation width of 7.6m to 13.4m comprising of 3.7 m lanes and 3 m
- surfaced shoulders,
- Vertical and horizontal geometric improvements that follow the existing alignment, aiming to achieve a design speed of 120km/h,
- Widening and (or) replacement of 1 river bridge and some major and minor culverts.
- The route has 8 major culverts and 97 minor culverts.
- Improving two major intersections to adhere to SANRAL standards, located at km 19.2
- and km 35.4,
- Possible treatment of up to 1m width over and above the required width of final travel way to accommodate two-way through traffic during construction,
- Possible temporary bypass roads during construction where drainage structures need to be upgraded,
- Entry into eleven (11) potential borrow pits for sourcing G5 – G9 material during construction,
- A total of twelve (12) possible hard rock quarries within a 10 to 20 km radius from the route were identified.
- Stockpile areas and vegetation clearance outside road reserve in excess of 1 Hectare.



2. PROJECT LOCATION

South African National Road Agency SOC Limited (SANRAL) Proposed to upgrade Road R30 section 8,a 37-kilometre stretch located between Klerksdorp(km0.0) and Buffelsvallei(km 37.0) within Dr Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality in the North West Province.

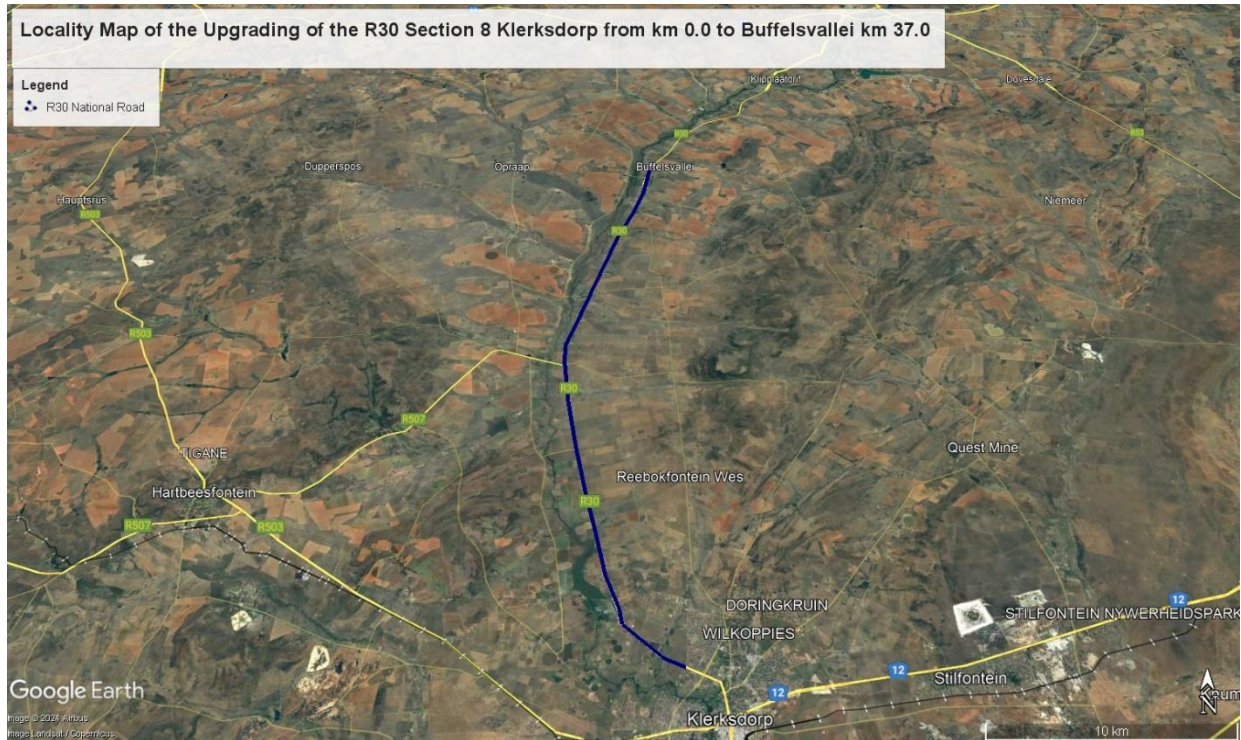


Figure 1: Locality Map of the proposed R30 Section 8 road to be upgraded.

3. SCREENING TOOL RESULTS

The following environmental themes and their associated sensitivities were identified in the Screening Tool Report generated from the Department of Forestry, Fisheries, and the Environment (DFFE) national web. The screening tool is attached in this report as the **Appendix 1**.

According to the screening tool report, various specialist studies were identified and recommended to be undertaken as part of the environmental process.

Table 1: DFFE Screening tool Results

Theme	Very high sensitivity	High sensitivity	Medium sensitivity	Low sensitivity
Agriculture Theme	X			
Animal Species Theme		X		



In rhythm with nature

Aquatic Biodiversity Theme	X			
Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Theme				X
Civil Aviation Theme		X		
Defence Theme				X
Palaeontology Theme			X	
Plant Species Theme			X	
Terrestrial Biodiversity Theme	X			

Table 2: Themes and associated sensitivity as per the DFFE Screening Tool.

Theme	DFFE Screening	EAP Rating And Specialist to be undertaken	Motivation
Agriculture Theme	Very High Sensitivity	Low (compliance statement is required)	The area is in close proximity to mixed-use farming practices. However the proposed road is an existing road, and the upgrade is expected to have minimal impacts on the surrounding. It is an EAP's view that agricultural compliance statement is sufficient.
Animal Species Theme	High Sensitivity	Low (compliance statement is required)	The animal theme is rated as high. However, since the road already exists and passes through agricultural land, it is unlikely that fauna permanently reside in the area. A compliance statement will suffice for this theme.
Aquatic Biodiversity Theme	Very High Sensitivity	Low (aquatic and wetland delineation study is required)	The proposed upgrade is located within an Ecological Support Area (ESA), crossing a river and associated wetlands. These features may be impacted by the development. Aquatic and wetland delineation assessment is therefore essential.
Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Theme	Low Sensitivity	Low (heritage study is required)	Although the DFFE screening tool rates this theme as low sensitivity, observations indicate medium sensitivity due to the presence of nearby graveyards. There is potential for heritage impacts; hence, a Heritage Impact Assessment must be included in the BAR.
Civil Aviation Theme	High Sensitivity	Low (no assessment required)	Klerksdorp and Potchefstroom Airports are near the project site, but due to the nature and scale of the road upgrade, civil aviation is not likely to be affected. Civil aviation authorities will be consulted during the public participation process.



Theme	DFFE Screening	EAP Rating And Specialist to be undertaken	Motivation
Defence Theme	Low Sensitivity	Low (no assessment required)	The Defence Theme has been rated as low sensitivity. Given that this project involves improvements to an existing national road, no defence-related impacts are anticipated. The EAP concludes that further assessment is unnecessary.
Paleontology Theme	Medium Sensitivity	Medium (a desktop assessment is required)	The area may contain paleontological resources such as fossils, A desktop Paleontological Assessment should be sufficient.
Plant Species Theme	Medium Sensitivity	Medium (compliance statement is required)	A variety of plant species were identified along the road. The assessment of terrestrial biodiversity will include a compliance statement addressing plant species. The results will be attached to the BAR.
Terrestrial Biodiversity Theme	Very High Sensitivity	Low (compliance statement is required)	Although the road is an existing infrastructure, the planned vegetation clearance will primarily occur within the existing road reserve. Given this limited disturbance and the context of the development, a full terrestrial biodiversity assessment is not required. A terrestrial biodiversity compliance statement will be sufficient to address potential impacts.

3.1 Other Recommended Studies

- Geotechnical Impact Assessment

A Geotechnical Impact Assessment is not undertaken as the project involves upgrades of an existing road, where geotechnical conditions were previously assessed. No new major earthworks or new infrastructure requiring detailed sub-surface investigations are anticipated, except upgrading existing infrastructure within same disturbed footprint.

- Noise Impact Assessment

A Noise Impact Assessment is not undertaken as the proposed upgrade is limited to an existing road alignment, where traffic activity already occurs. The upgrade is not expected to significantly alter noise levels beyond the current baseline conditions. The noise impacts will be discussed and covered in the EMPr.

- Traffic Impact Assessment

A Traffic Impact Assessment is not undertaken as the project involves improvements to an existing national road (R30), aimed at enhancing traffic flow and safety. No new access routes or major changes to traffic patterns are proposed.

- Socio-economic Impact assessment

A Socio-Economic Impact Assessment is not undertaken as the proposed road upgrade is expected to have a positive impact by improving accessibility, safety, and mobility along an existing route. No displacement, land acquisition, or significant negative socio-economic impacts are anticipated.

- Ambient Air Quality Impact Assessment

An Ambient Air Quality Impact Assessment is not undertaken as the proposed works are limited to upgrading an existing road. Any dust or emissions generated during construction will be temporary and can be managed through standard mitigation measures outlined in the Environmental Management Programme (EMPr).



4. ON-SITE ASESMENT

A site visit was conducted on 31 July 2024 and the Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) personally inspected the location, and few photographs were taken to get an impression of the site sensitivities at high level.

Table 3: The starting position of the R30 in Klerksdorp

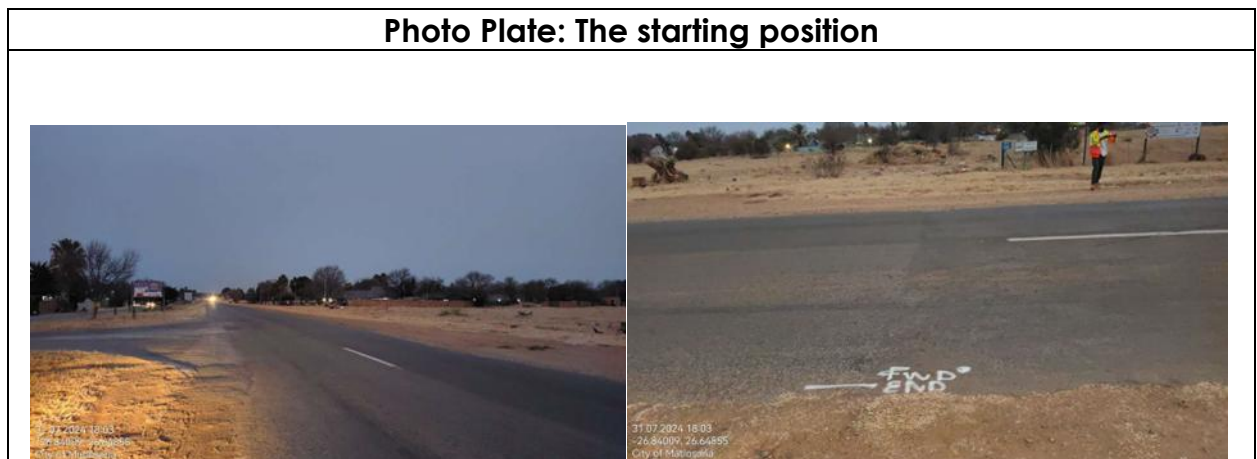


Table 4: Middle points of the R30 road to be upgraded.





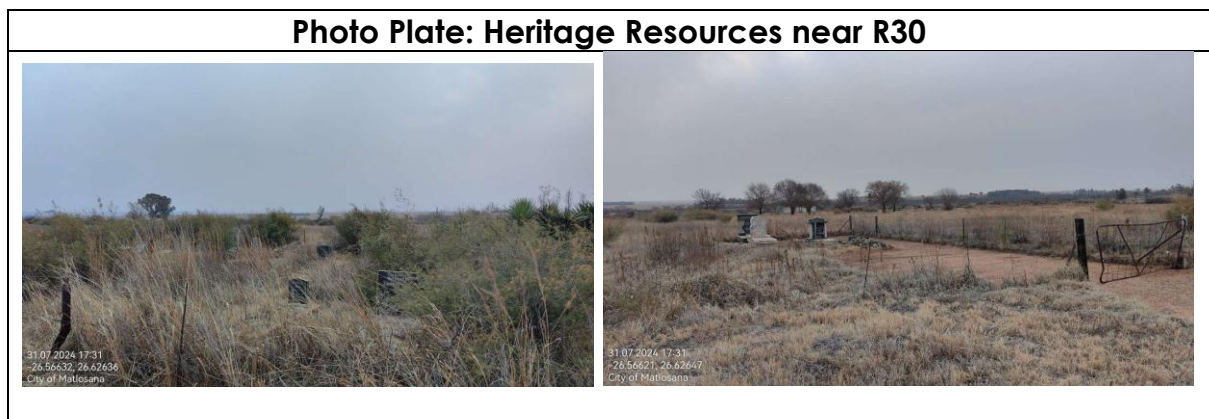
Table 5: The end position of the R30 in Buffelsvallei



Table 6: Land uses near the R30 Road Upgrade



Table 7: Heritage resources along R30 Section 8





5. CONCLUSION

The Screening Tool Report generated for the proposed development identified several environmental themes with varying sensitivity ratings—ranging from very high to low. Each theme with a sensitivity rating above 'low' has been appropriately addressed through either specialist studies or compliance statements.

The Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) is of the view that all relevant factors associated with the identified sensitivity themes have been thoroughly considered in this Site Sensitivity Verification Report. It is therefore concluded that the proposed development is unlikely to result in significant impacts on these sensitivities beyond those already detailed in the Basic Assessment Report (BAR).

Based on the findings of this Site Sensitivity Verification Report, the following studies are required:

- **Agricultural Compliance Statement**
- **Terrestrial Biodiversity Compliance Statement**
- **Heritage Compliance Statement**
- **Palaeontological Compliance Statement**
- **Aquatic and Wetland Biodiversity Impact Assessment**

We trust you find this in order.

Kind Regards,

Lehlogonolo
Environmental Assessment Practitioner



Appendix 1: Screening Report