ENVIRONMENTAL SCOPING ASSESSMENT REPORT

Rezoning of Erf 1587 and Erf 1589 at the Corner of Kalahari Street and Roeseners Road, Gobabis Extension 8, from 'Undetermined' to 'General Business' with a Bulk of 2.0

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Gobabis, Omaheke Region

APP- 006500

Ekwao Consulting

PROJECT INFORMATION SHEET		
PROJECT NAME	:	**Rezoning of Erf 1587 and Erf 1589 at the corner of Kalahari Street and Roeseners Road, Gobabis Extension 8, from 'Undetermined' to 'General Business' with a Bulk of 2.0**
TYPE OF PROJECT	:	**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT SCOPING**
PROJECT LOCATION	:	**Gobabis Municipality** **Extension 8, Roeseners Road & Kalahari Street** **GOBABIS**
COMPETENT AUTHORITY	:	**Gobabis Municipality**
ECC APPLICATION NO.	:	**APP-006500**
REPORT DATE	:	**August 2025**
PROJECT PROMOTOR	:	**Soft Cloud Investments CC** **31 Dr Knobble Street** **Gobabis** **amos@mobipay.com.na** **Immsn85@gmail.com**
TOWN PLANNER	:	**DUNAMIS CONSULTING (PTY) LTD** **BOX 81108** **WINDHOEK** **Cell: 085 551 2173** **Email: ndimuhona@dunamisplan.com**
EIA CONSULTANT	:	**Ekwao Consulting** **Box 25021** **WINDHOEK** **Cell: 081 418 3125** **Email: ekwao@iway.na**

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ABBREVIATIONS

BAT	-	Best Available Technology
BID	-	Background Information Documents
GM	-	Gobabis Municipality
ORC	-	Omaheke Regional Council
EC	-	Environmental Clearance
ECC	-	Environmental Clearance Certificate
EIA	-	Environmental Impact Assessment
EIAR	-	Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations
EMA	-	Environmental Management Plan
EMP	-	Environmental Management Plan
IAPs	-	Interested and Affected Parties
MEFT	-	Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism
MURD	-	Ministry of Urban and Rural Development
NamRA	-	Namibia Revenue Agency
NHC	-	National Heritage Council
NSA	-	Namibia Statistics Agency
NSI	-	Namibia Standards Institute
PPE	-	Personal Protective Equipment
SHE	-	Safety, Health and Environment
URPB	-	Urban and Regional Planning Board

DEFINITIONS

Assessment	The process of collecting, organising, analysing, interpreting and communicating information relevant for decision making.
Cumulative Impacts	In relation to an activity, it means the impact of an activity that in itself may not be that significant, but may become significant when added to existing and potential impacts arising from similar or diverse activities or undertakings in that area.
Disposal	Means the discharge, depositing, dumping, spilling, leaking, placing of waste on or at any premises or place set aside by the DVC for such purposes, and "dispose" shall, in the context of this report, have a similar meaning.
Environment	As defined in EMA it means - "land, water and air; all organic and inorganic matter and living organisms as well as biological diversity; the interacting natural systems and the human environment insofar as it represents archaeological, aesthetic, cultural, historic, economic, paleontological or social values".
Environmental Clearance Certificate	A certificate and associated conditions issued in terms of EMA, authorizing a listed activity to be undertaken.
Environmental Impact	A description of the potential effect or consequence of an aspect of the development on a specified component of the biophysical, social or economic environment within a defined timeline and space.
Environmental Management Plan	A working document which contains site project-specific plans developed to ensure that environmental management practices to eliminate and control environmental impacts are followed during the developmental phase of that specific project and would normally consist of construction, operational and decommissioning phases.
Non-compliance	Issues that are in direct non-compliance with the requirements, commitments and/or management measures as approved in the EMP.
Storage	Means the temporary storage or containment of any waste for a period of less than 90 days after its generation and prior to its collection for recovery, reuse, recycling, treatment or disposal.
Waste	Means any substance or matter whether solid, liquid or any combination thereof, irrespective of whether it or any constituents thereof may have value or other use, and includes – a) any undesirable, rejected, abandoned or superfluous matter, material, residue of any process or activity, product, by-product; b) any matter which is deemed useless and unwanted; c) any matter which has been discarded, abandoned, accumulated or stored for the purposes of discarding, abandoning, processing, recovery, reuse, recycling or extracting a usable product from such matter; or d) products that may contain or generate a gaseous component
Waste Management Plan	Means a structured document that sets out to record /eliminate/ reuse /recycle the amounts and the types of all waste that is generated in an area or facility.

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Gobabis Municipality (GM) has resolved to sell two erven (shaded frame below) to a local developer, Soft Cloud Investments CC (SCI). The erven have stood vacant for over sixty years, and their current zoning is undetermined. Both erven are situated in extension 8, bordering the Kalahari Street to the south, Cuito Cuanavale to the southwest and Roeseners Road to the northwest. To the north, the erven are bordering a vacant land parcel which accommodates a decommissioned railway line.

Rezoning of Erf 1587 and Erf 1589 at the corner of Kalahari Street and Roeseners Road, Gobabis Extension 8, from 'Undetermined' to 'General Business' with a Bulk of 2.0

The combined footprint for two erven is 12 498 m^2. It is the plan of the developer to rezone the erven from 'undetermined' to 'general business' with a bulk of 2.0. Municipality has permitted the development of a fuel retail outlet (FRO) on the rezoned land. Land rezoning is a listed activity which may not be undertaken without an Environmental Clearance Certificate (ECC) having been granted. To this end Ekwao Consulting has been appointed by SCI to facilitate the ECC application with the Office of the Environmental Commissioner (OEC).

As part of the screening process, a background information document (BID) on the listed activity was prepared and submitted to the OEC. The assessment for two listed activities, i.e. rezoning and subsequent construction and operation of a FRO was declined by the OCE with the result that the assessment was confined to rezoning only. The rationale provided by the OEC was that a wide range of business activities was permitted under 'general business zoned' land, i.e. retail, offices, restaurants and even some light manufacturing. It was therefore deemed non-compatible with the operation of a FRO.

Land rezoning is essentially an administrative process, in this case rezoning two erven from undetermined to general business with a bulk of 2.0. The two erven were created in the late fifties and services such as water, sewerage, electricity, tarred and paved streets roads are available on the premises. The availability of the services and support infrastructure has the added advantage of obviating intrusive construction activities which are often associated with adverse impacts on the receiving environment.

While services are available on the premises, there was a likelihood that such services will be inadequate to cater for the intended development once the rezoning was permitted by the Urban and Regional Planning Board (URPB). The assessment has proceeded from the premises that some construction activities will be required to upgrade available services.

The site is completely transformed due to past and current activities with no ecological importance left anymore. It is however, heavily vegetated with savanna grass, shrubs and tall trees mostly gumtrees and camelthorn. There are no environmental fatal flaws and no significant negative impacts have been identified to be associated with the proposed activity, i.e. rezoning.

The scoping assessment has indicated that identified environmental impacts can be effectively mitigated to have a low to moderate significance. The impacts are expected to occur at a site and local level and are considered acceptable provided the mitigation measures as outlined in the EMP section of the report are implemented.

Based on the appraisal above, it is recommended that an ECC be granted to allow the listed activity subject to the developer committing to comply with the recommendation n the EMP.

2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 Introduction

Soft Cloud Investments (SCI) has been allocated two erven by the Gobabis Municipality in Omaheke region. Both erven require rezoning from 'undetermined' to 'general business' – a statutory process for which an Environmental Clearance Certificate (ECC) is mandatory. SCI has appointed Ekwao Consulting to facilitate its ECC application in terms of the Environmental Management Act (EMA).

An ECC is granted by the Environmental Commissioner (EC) following an EIA conducted in terms of EMA and a formal application submitted to the Office of the Environmental Commissioner (OEC). A scoping assessment was undertaken by Ekwao Consulting to:

- Determine the potential impacts which the proposed activity will bring to bear on the receiving environment.
- Identify suitable management actions to avoid, reduce or mitigate potential adverse impacts to acceptable levels.
- Comply with the Environmental Management Act including other applicable legislations and policies.
- Present the findings and recommendation to OEC in order to help the EC to make an informed decision when deciding on the application for the ECC.

2.2 Land Particulars

The Gobabis Municipality has resolved to sell to Soft Cloud Investments CC (SCI or the developer) two pieces of land - Erf 1587 measuring 3036 m^2, and Erf 1589 measuring 9 192 m^2. Both erven are vacant, their current zoning undetermined, and situated at the corner of Kalahari Street and Roenesers Road in extension 8 of the town. The combined footprint for both erven is 12 498 m^2. The developer would like to use the land for 'General Business' with a bulk of 2. Rezoning is an activity which requires an ECC.

The resolution has provided for the developer to shoulder the cost related to carrying out the statutory process. The prominent Braham bull statue on the premises (Erf 1587) is also to be relocated at the cost of the developer.

2.3 The Town Planning Steps

The two erven are offered to SCI on the basis that the developer will shoulder the cost related to undertaking the required statutory process. In terms of the resolution, access to the 'general business rezoned land' is to be provided from Kalahari Street and Roeseners Road.
The town planning process to be undertaken is:

Rezoning of Erf 1587 and Erf 1589 at the corner of Kalahari Street and Roeseners Road, Gobabis Extension 8, from 'Undetermined' to 'General Business' with a Bulk of 2.0

2.4 The Scoping Assessment

This scoping assessment was conducted in order to gather adequate information on the proposed activity. The bulk of the information was gathered through desk studies, field reconnaissance, speaking with Gobabis Municipality officials.

Additionally, these aspects have been considered in the scoping assessment:

- The baseline conditions of the environment
- Applicable legislations to the study;
- Public consultation process;
- Methodology followed to assess identified impacts;
- Any sensitivity of the receiving environment, and
- Any potential ecological, environmental and social impacts.

In the EMP section of the report, practical mechanisms have been recommended on how impacts associated with the activities can be eliminated, avoided, reduced or sufficiently mitigated to have no harmful effects on the receiving environment.

Finally, the gathered information is presented to the OEC in order to assist the EC to make an informed decision when considering the ECC application.

2.5 Assumptions and Limitations

This scoping report is based on a several assumptions and is therefore subject to certain limitations, which it is hoped will not compromise the overall findings of the report.

- The information provided to EIA Consultant by the promoter and Gobabis Municipality officials and the town planner is assumed to be accurate and correct.
- The assessment has been confined to the two erven 1587 and 1589 at the corner of Kalahari Street and Roeseners Road, Extension8, Gobabis.
- Infrastructure and services such as water, sewerage, electricity, paved roads (Kalahari Street) and unpaved road (Roeseners Road) are available at the site and there will be no construction required to install such services/infrastructure.
- It has been assumed that the developer will in good faith implement the mitigation measures recommended in the EMP, commit sufficient resources and hire suitably qualified personnel for any construction work that may be required.

2.6 Project Screening

A background information document (BID) on the project was prepared and submitted to the OEC for screening. In the BID, the business activities that will be conducted on the rezoned erven was provided as a fuel retail outlet (FRO) as resolved by the Gobabis Municipality.

When OEC screened the project, the assessment for the construction and operation of a FRO was not well received. The reason provided was that a ‘general business zoning’ permits a wide range of businesses such as retail, offices, restaurants and even some light manufacturing. The scoping assessment was therefore confined to ‘land rezoning’ only.

Once the rezoning application has been approved by the Urban and Regional Township Board, the developer can conduct a scoping for the construction and operation of FRO should that still be desired.

The project was allocated an application number of **APP-006500.**

3 SITE DESCRIPTION

3.1 Project Location

The project site constitutes a section of an open piece of land situated to east of the corner of Roeseners Road and Cuito Cuanavale Street – with Cuito Cuanavale being the main street leading to the CDB of Gobabis from B6 highways as more or less depicted in the Google Earth Image in Figure 1. It is in extension 8 of the town with the layout as presented in Figure 2. The site is dotted with tall gumtrees and camelthorn trees along the Kalahari Street and savanna grass to its northern side (Figures: 3 to 9).

A public sanitation facility (Fig. 6) is on Erf 1587 along Kalahari Street – it has running water and separate toilets for men and women.

The Braham bull statue which has to be relocated is at the intersection of Roeseners Road and Cuito Cuanavale (Figures: 3 & 7)

3.2 Site Accessibility and Surrounds

The project site has three streets around it - Kalahari Street and Cuito Cuanavale Street and Roeseners Street. Kalahari and Roeseners are paved roads while Cuito Cuavanale is a tarred road.

South – Cuito Cuanavale and Kalahari streets are to the south. Cuito Cuanavale is the main street leading to the CDB of Gobabis from the B6. Kalahari Street forks from Cuito Cuanavale as more or less depicted in Figures: 2, 4 & 5. Kalahari is a paved street road while Cuito Cuanavale is a tarred road. Municipality has directed access to the new rezoned site be provided from Kalahari Street.

North- To the north, the project site is bordering a big empty plot, the remainder of Erf 1298 which accommodates a decommissioned railway line (Figures 7 & 8). An informal street road is running on this side of the project.

West: Erf 1587 is this and is bordering both Cuito Cuanavale and Roeseners Road road. The bull statue is standing at the foremost corner where Roeseners road intersects Cuito Cuanavale (Figures: 3 & 7).

East: Erf 1589 is extending to the east end where it borders an empty stand and a residential house to on the extreme right-hand.

3.3 Existing Infrastructure & Services

The project site has essentially all services and infrastructure available around it.

3.3.1 ROAD ACCESS

Paved streets and tarred road are available as mentioned in the preceding section.

Potential Impact
An internal route may be required to link the 'business' that will be developed to the street road. This will result in vegetation clearance the extent of which will be limited to the footprint of the road. Minimal disturbances and pollution may be expected from excavation activities. (Potential impacts: vegetation clearing, soil disturbances, dust, erosion, waste, etc.)

3.3.2 ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

Electricity reticulation network is available around the project site. The proposed business will therefore be connected to the existing network with minimal impacts. Consideration should be given to the use alternative energy sources such as solar or wind energy so as to reduce the carbon footprint of the project site.

LOCALITY MAP
Gobabis Municipality

Legend

Project Site

Map Prepared by:

Ekwao Consulting

Box 25021, Windhoek
Cell: 081 418 3125
Email: ekwao@iway.na

Date	August 2025
Site GPS Coordinates	-22.338410 S 18.967455 E

Figure 1: Project Locality Map – Google Earth Image

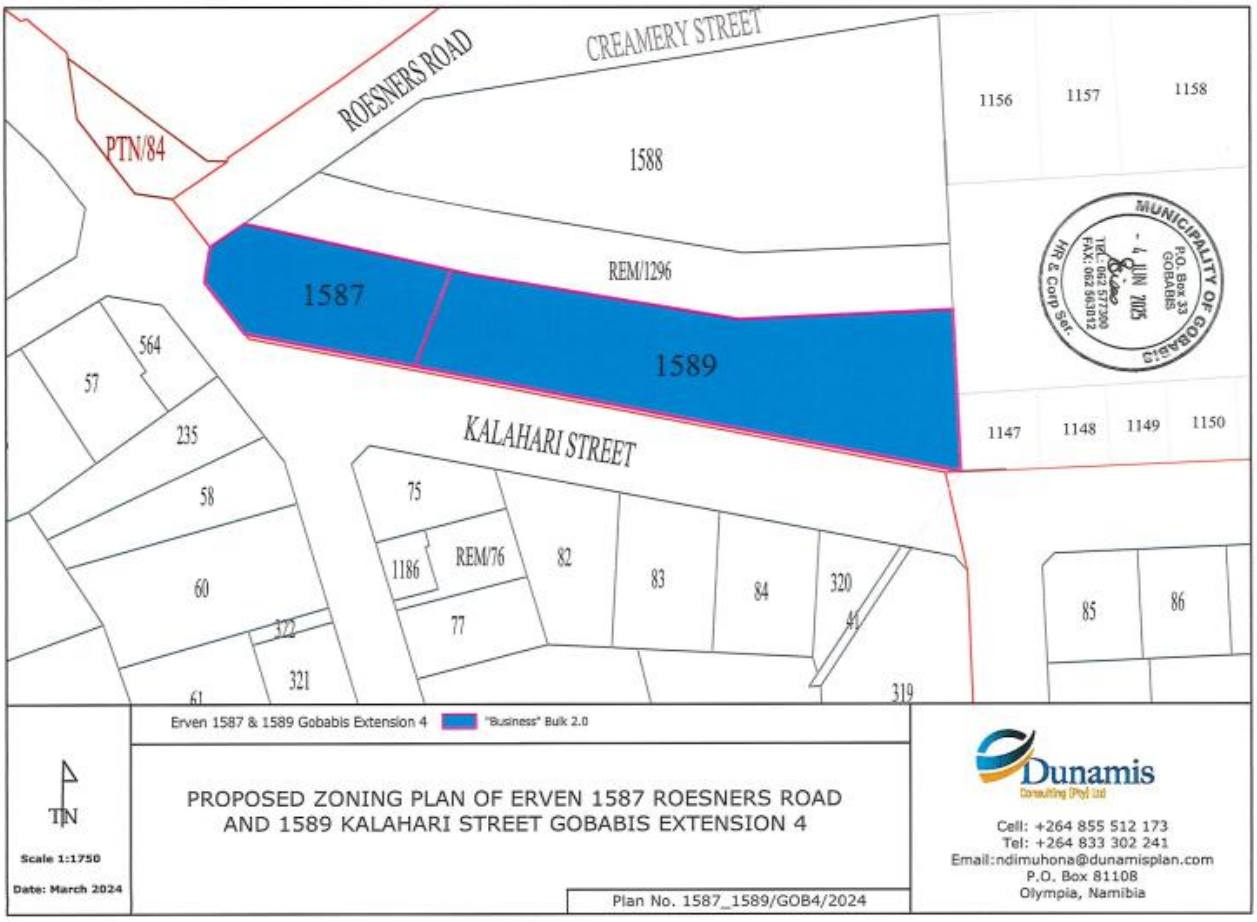

Figure 2: Erven 1587 and 1589 to be rezoned

Figure 3: Bull Statue at the Intersection of Roeseners and Cuito Cuanavale

Figure 4: View of Kalahari Street towards Cuito Cuanavale Street – the site is to the right

Figure 5: View of Kalahari Street Looking East away from Cuito Cuanavale

Figure 6: A public Sanitation Facility on the property (Erf 1587)

Figure 7:Bull Statue Where Roeseners Road Intersects Cuito Cuanavale

Figure 8: The Decommissioned Railway Line behind the Project Site

Figure 9: Project Site looking from the North

3.3.3 WATER SUPPLY

The public sanitation on Erf 1587 has running water. Water is therefore available on the project site. However, there will be a need to bring the water to the business premises that may be developed. Minimal impacts are associated with this activity.

3.3.4 SEWERAGE

The public sanitation facility has toilets which are connected to the sewerage network of Municipality. Sewerage infrastructure is therefore available on the site. It is helpful to ascertain if existing capacity is adequate to handle the waste effluent that will be generated by the proposed development.

3.3.5 COMMUNICATION

Communication services in the form of mobile network by MTC and land based network by Telecom Namibia are available in the town. Connection of any development to existing infrastructure is not expected to involve any adverse impacts on the environment.

3.3.6 SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL

The Municipality has an established solid waste handling and disposal services in place. No adverse impacts are anticipated with this aspect provided the recommendation in the EMP are implemented.

3.3.7 STORM WATER MANAGEMENT

Existing road networks in the town have been developed to discharge stormwater in the municipality stormwater drainage system.

3.4 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

3.4.1 NEED AND DESIRABILITY

In the context of Vision 2030 and NDP 6 which outline the government's development agenda for the country, there is need to provide serviced urban land for the construction of both commercial and residential properties. Considering that the town of Gobabis was declared as a Municipality in 1968, and that railway line to the town was already completed in 1930, it is safe to assume that the two erven have been vacant for over sixty without any assigned zoning and therefore overtaken by events.

There are challenges with urban land availability everywhere in Namibia, including vacant land being held by local authorities for future use, allowing such land to appreciate in the meantime and to sell it later at a much higher price. Such practice cannot be morally correct. This vacant land is close to amenities including the CDB and the decision of the Gobabis Municipality to dispose of it by way of private treat is commendable. The proposed rezoning is considered needed and desirable and should be supported.

3.4.2 CONSIDERATION FOR ALTERNATIVES

In terms of the screening notice received from OEC, this study is limited to assessing the impacts associated with the land rezoning only – from 'undetermined' to 'general business with a bulk of 2.0. As such the project does not lend itself to 'No-Go' options, technical or location alternatives. The two erven have been vacant, with no zoning assigned for over sixty years. To continue with the status quo under acute urban land shortage is therefore not supported.

4 THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

4.1 Introduction

In this section, the relevant legislation, policies and guidelines that are applicable to the proposed development are presented. The overall objective is to acquaint the proponent, SCI and IAPs of the requirements and expectations as laid out legal instruments that have to be fulfilled in order to undertake the envisaged activity.

4.2 The Laws

The Republic of Namibia has five tiers of law and a number of policies relevant to environmental assessment and protection which include the following:

- The Namibia Constitution;
- Statutory Law;
- Common Law;
- Customary Law, and
- International Law.

4.3 Applicable Legislations

The legislations applicable to this activity are listed in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Laws, Policies and Regulations

Legislations & Policies	Applicable Legislation										
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
The Constitution of Namibia	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Environmental Management Act	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
EIA Regulations		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Hazardous Substance Ordinance	x	x	x	x				x	x	x	x
National Heritage Act								x	x		
Local Authorities Act							x	x		x	x
Public & Environmental Health Act		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Soil Conservation Act							x	x			
EIA Regulations Act	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Forest Act	x						x	x			
Road Traffic and Transport Act		x	x	x						x	x
Urban and Regional Planning Act						x	x			x	
Water Resources Management Act	x		x			x				x	
Namibia Vision 2030	x						x	x		x	x

Legend

A	Use of Natural Resources	H	Biodiversity
B	Emissions Impact (Air & Odour)	I	Archaeological, Cultural and Heritage
C	Emissions (to land & hazard)	J	Social-economic Impacts
D	Noisy Impacts	K	Health and Safety Impacts
E	Visual Impacts		
F	Vibrations		
G	Land Use		

5 THE BASELINE ENVIRONMENT

5.1 Introduction

The baseline aspects considered for this project had included the physical environment, the socio-economic, biological and physical environment. Only those elements of the environment that have a direct bearing on the impact assessment process of the proposed development are discussed. The severity of the potential impacts is largely determined by the state of the receiving environment.

5.2 Population

During the last national census conducted in 2023, the population of the Omaheke region was 102 881 compared to 71 233 counted twelve years earlier in 2011. The region has one town (Gobabis) and three villages (Leonardville, Otjinene and Witvlei).

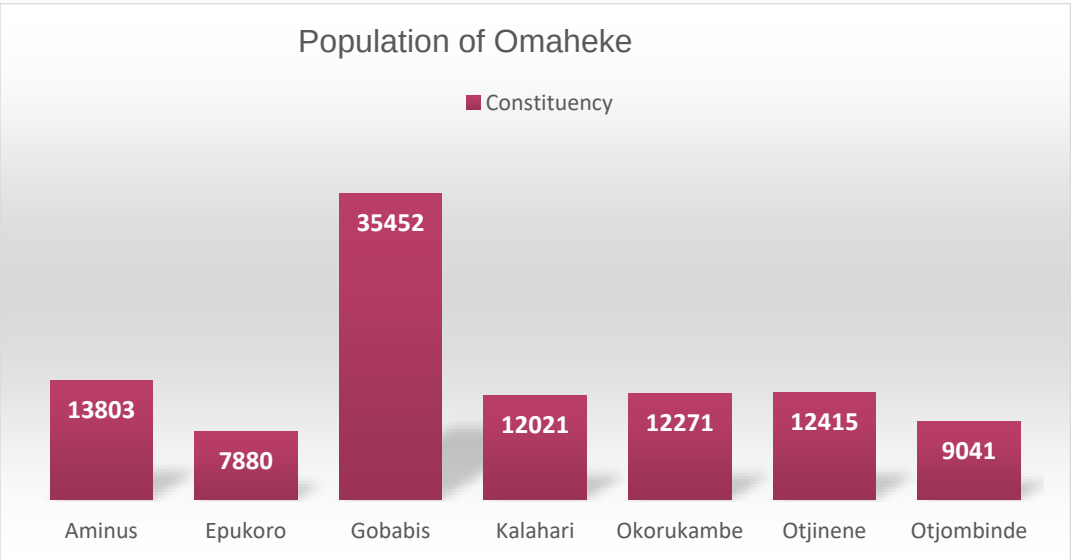

Figure 10: Population of the Region

5.3 Urban/Rural Population

The urban and rural based population is presented in Figure 11.

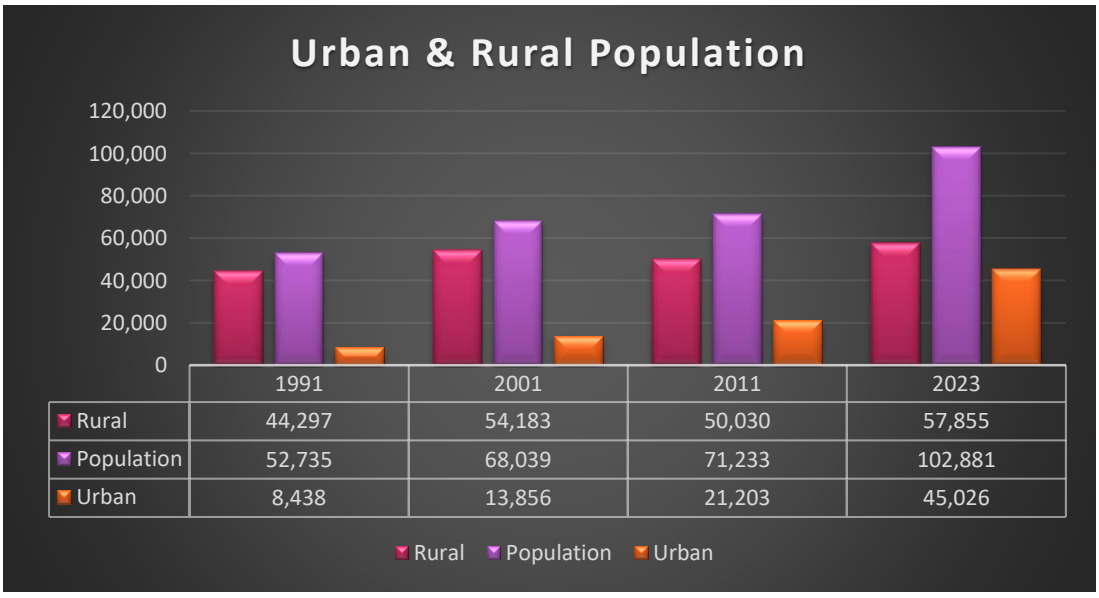

Figure 11: Urban & Rural Population in the Omaheke Region

5.4 Population Age Groups

The population age groups are presented below (Fig. 11). Of the region's total population of 102 881, about 39% (about 40124) were in the age bands of between 0 and 14 years while 57% were between 15 and 64 years old.

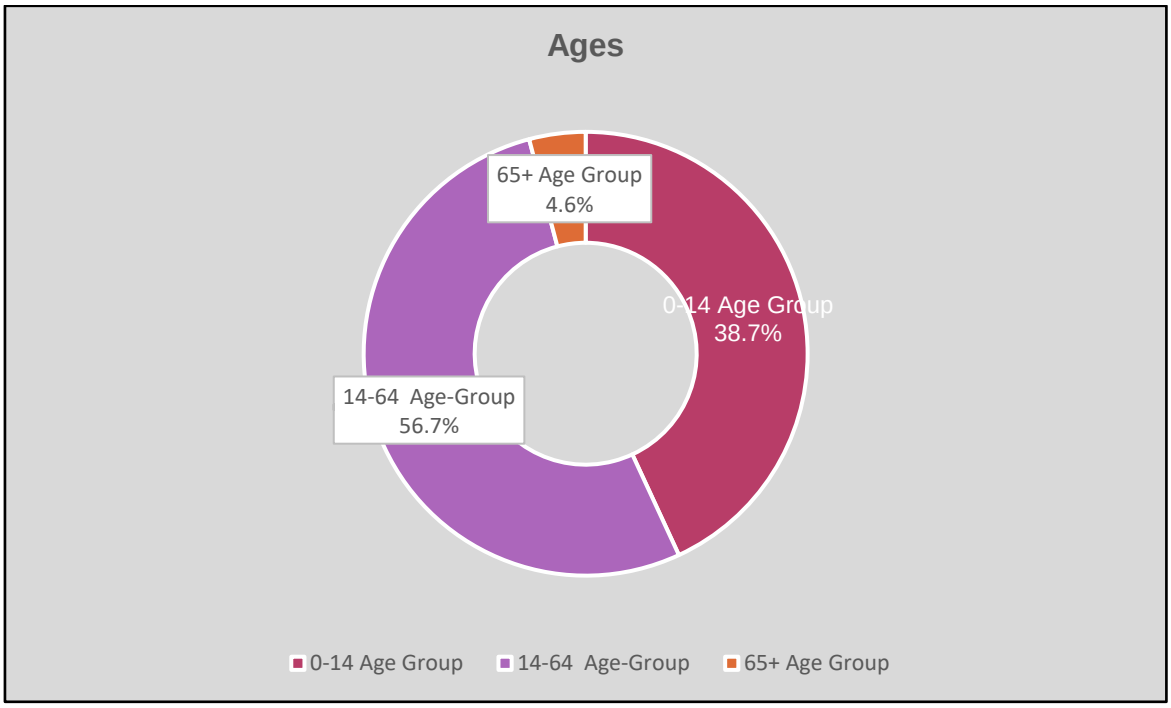

Figure 12: Population Age Groups

5.5 Housing Units

According to the national census of 2023, about 46.8% of the population in the region lived in shacks followed by Khomas region with 46.9%.

5.6 Employment

The level of unemployment was measured at 35.5% during the 2023 census, which is below the national unemployment rate of 36.9%.

Potential Impact
The project will have positive impacts in terms of employment creation, transfer of skills and technology especially to the youth who make a large segment of population. Payment for services (rates & taxes) to Municipality as well as increased economic activities at the local and regional level are all economic benefits that will be derived from the project.

5.7 Location and Land Use

Gobabis is the one of the oldest towns in Namibia having become a municipality way back in 1968. It is the administrative capital for the Omaheke region and a prime region for cattle farming. It is because of cattle farming that Omaheke is referred to as the 'cattle country' of Namibia. It has extensive pastures that are a key feature, contributing to the national economy through cattle farming and export. While it is a strong region for cattle, it is also vulnerable to drought, which can impact farming both cattle and game.

Erven 1587 and 1589 are located to the west of the town at the intersection of Cuito Cuanavale and Roeseners streets – with Cuito Cuanavale being the main route leading to the CDB from B6 highway. The predominant land use around the erven is a mix of businesses and industrial – the railway station which had been decommissioned many years back, is to the north. To the east end corner of the Erf 1589 is a

residential house while across the Kalahari street to the south is a car workshop. A church is further down the road about 500 m away.
At the time of the assessment a number of long distance road trucks were found parked on the premises (Erf 1589) along Kalahari Street.


Figure 13: Long distance road trucks parked on the premises

Potential Impact
There are no impacts anticipated to the existing land users. This is because the project being assessed is for compliance and administrative purposes only. As matter of fact, the rezoning and the subsequent development of top structures on the rezoned land will lead to the appreciation in values of the neighbouring properties which is a positive impact.

5.8 Climatic Conditions

Annual average rainfall is about 460 mm with February being the wettest month with an average precipitation of 108 mm. of precipitation. Generally, there is a clear distinction between the wet season and the dry season. Summers are normally very hot while winter months are normally warm. High temperatures range from 30 ^{0}C to 35 ^{0}C.

Gobabis is considered part of a climate change hotspot, with future projections indicating increased temperatures, greater heat stress, and more severe droughts. (ASSAR website)

Potential Impact
High temperature implies that alternative energy sources such as solar can be used effectively which is has long term benefits - because solar is renewable energy which reduces the carbon footprint of the project.

5.9 Topography and Landscape

The town of Gobabis has a flat topography with undulating terrains and gentle slope towards the south-west. The elevation of the project site ranges between 1 200 to 1380 m above sea level (masl) to the north-west of the town. Located on the edge of the Kalahari Desert, the landscape features a mix of arid and semi-arid savannah with sandy plains, grasses, and acacia trees.

Potential Impact
There are no potential impacts expected from the topography and landscape of the project site.

5.10 Geological Aspects

According to several publications of the Geological Survey of Namibia, the geology of Gobabis, and by extension that of the eastern part of Namibia, is made up by a varied of the oldest rock formations (Late Precambrian), followed by the Damara Oregon – a fold belt formed during the plate tectonic events. The belt covers the central and northern sections of Namibia.
The basin (belt) is filled by other rock formations (quartzites, conglomerates, schists and marbles) with the Kalahari sands being the youngest. At the project site and its surroundings are thick layers of sands (Kalahari Formation). Underneath the sand are rock units of sandstone, black limestone, conglomerate and shale.

Potential Impact
There are no potential impacts anticipated from or to the geological aspects.

5.11 Water Resource – Surface and Groundwater

The Hochfeld-Dordabis-Gobabis groundwater aquifer which starts east of Windhoek proceeding to the eastern Namibia borders with Botswana is the main sources from which groundwater is supplied from. A porous aquifer exists to the northeast of Gobabis where sediments of the Kalahari overlie quartzites (Lohe et al, 2021). Groundwater within the project site is hosted in fractured, fissured and karstifified aquifers. A borehole correctly sited to hit the aquifer can yield good quality water.

Potential Impact
There are no impacts expected from the project activities on water resources.

5.12 The Fauna and Flora (Biological) Environment

The project site is in an urban setting and therefore transformed by human activities. It has been cleared of vegetation with only savanna grass covering a large section of the site. There are several trees to the south along the Kalahari Street and at the corner of Roeseners Road and Cuito Cuavanale. The trees are mostly imported gumtrees with two or three native camelthorn trees.

Figure 14: Vegetation on the Project Site – Looking South

Figure 15: Plants & Trees on the Project Site – Looking West

5.13 Archaeological and Heritage Resources

It could be established whether there were any signs or evidence (unearthed during construction) of culturally or heroically items including archaeological sites on or in close proximity to the site, however, historical aerial imagery indicates that by the late forties the area was already in a developed state, effectively as an existing urban setting with a railway station adjacent on the erven to be rezoned.

6 IMPACT ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

6.1 Introduction

Potential impacts that are likely to occur as a result of the various stages of the project, i.e. planning & design and construction (installation of services) are assessed using the methodology presented in this section.

6.2 Types of Impacts

In general, different types of impacts may occur from undertaking an activity. These impacts could be:

- Positive or negative impacts;
- Direct impact or primary;
- Indirect impact or secondary, and/or
- Cumulative impacts.

Direct impacts are impacts that are caused directly by the activity and generally occur at the same time and at the place of the activity. These impacts are usually associated with the operation and maintenance of a development or activity, and are therefore conspicuous evident and quantifiable.

On the other hand, indirect impacts are induced changes that may occur as a result of the activity or development. Cumulative impacts can occur from the collective impacts of individual minor actions over a period of time and can include both direct and indirect impacts.

6.3 Evaluation and Assessment of Impacts

This section provides an assessment of the nature, extent, duration, impact and significance of the consequences for or impacts on the environment of each of the activities that may be associated with the project. The methodology used in determining the significance of actual and/or potential environmental impacts is also outlined below. In addition, the effects of the activity on the affected community have been described. Potential impacts are scored according to description provided in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Points Assigned to Potential Impacts

Severity			**Occurrence**
Magnitude of Severity of Impact **Magnitude (M)**	**Duration of Impact** **Duration (D)**	**Extent of Impact** **Scale (S)**	**Probability of Occurrence** **Probability (P)**
10 = Very high /Don't know	5 = Permanent	5 = International	5 = Definite / Don't know
8 = High	4 = Long term (Impact ceases after closure of activity)	4 = National	4 = High Probability
6 = Moderate	3 = Medium term (5 to 15 years)	3 = Regional	3 = Medium Probability
4 = Low	2 = Short term (2 to 5 years)	2 = Local	2 = Low Probability
2 = Minor	1 = Transient	1 = Site specific	1 = Improbable
1 = None /Non-significant			

After ranking these criteria for each impact, a significance rating was calculated using the following formula:

Magnitude:

= Average of (Severity, Duration, Extent, Value of Affected Component and Risk to the human population)

SP (Significant Points)

= Magnitude x Probability

Table 3: Impact Significance Rating

Value	Significance	Comment
SP > 75	Indicates Severe Environmental Significance	An impact that could influence the decision about whether or not to proceed with the project regardless of any possible mitigation
SP 60 - 75	Indicates Major Environmental Significance	Where an accepted limit or standard may be exceeded, or large magnitude impacts occur to highly valued/sensitive resource/receptors. Impacts of high significance would typically influence the decision to proceed with the project unless it is mitigated.
SP 30 - 60	Indicates Moderate Environmental Significance	Where an effect will be experienced, but the impact magnitude is sufficiently small and well within accepted standards, and the receptor is of low sensitivity/value. Such an impact is unlikely to influence the decision. Impacts may justify significant modification of the project design or alternative mitigation
SP < 30	Indicates Low Environmental Significance	Where an effect will be experienced, but the impact magnitude is small and is within accepted standards, and the receptor is of low sensitivity/value, or the probability of impact is extremely low. Such an impact is unlikely to influence the decision, although impact should still be reduced as low as possible, particularly when approaching moderate significance.
SP < 4	Indicates negligible environmental significance	A resource or receptor will not be affected in any material way by a particular activity, or the predicted effect is deemed imperceptible or indistinguishable from natural background levels. No mitigation is required.
+ve	Positive	Where positive consequences / effects are likely

7 ASSESSMENT OF IMPACTS

In this section the assessment for predicted impacts is presented. The assessment has proceeded from the premises that rezoning by its very nature is an administrative process. For this specific project, the impact assessment has been informed by the fact that there are already services and infrastructure (e.g. water, electricity, sewerage network, paved and tarred street roads, etc.) on and all around the both erven that are being rezoned from 'undetermined' to 'general business'.

The existence of services and infrastructure has the advantages of obviating the necessity of construction and therefore associated impacts. At this stage, it is uncertain whether the existing capacity of those infrastructure will be able to meet the requirements for the proposed project. The mitigation measures outlined in this EMP are based on the assumption that some construction activities will be undertaken to upscale the existing infrastructure to cater for the proposed development.

7.1 Planning & Design

During this phase, there are minimal to nor environmental impacts involved. However, by the time when this phase has been completed, the developer would have injected quite some capital into the development by paying the various professionals involved (e.g. town planner, EIA Consultant to obtain the ECC, engineers to design the required infrastructure, payment for land, etc.) These are all positive benefits to the local economy that are derived from the envisaged development

The rezoning is an activity that is of an administrative in nature, and therefore constitutes an integral component of the planning phase. The planning and design of any infrastructure must comply with all relevant legislations and policies including the local council bylaws including securing all approvals that may be required.

All technical drawings for the project must be prepared by qualified and experienced professionals and preferably with the knowledge of the local conditions and standards.

Since the rezoning activity is essentially a once- off statutory administrative process, there will be no need to renew the ECC unless it expires before the process is completed.

7.2 Construction Phase

As indicated elsewhere, there are services and infrastructure on and around the erven to be rezoned, however it is anticipated that they have to be upscaled to match the requirements of the proposed development. Should it become necessary to upgrade the infrastructure the upgrading, it is assumed these impacts are likely to occur:

- Mobilisation – getting equipment, plant, machinery & workforce to the site
- Site preparation – clearance of vegetation (give +/- size of affected area);
- Earthworks – stripping and stockpiling of topsoil and subsoil
- Change in land use /landform, soil capability and compaction;
- Establishment of stormwater controls civil works, etc.
- Storage of building materials, sand, aggregates, cement, etc.
- Installation of water pipelines, sewerage, drainage, etc.

Assumed impacts on the biophysical and socio-economic environments which may occur during the construction phase:

7.3 Socio-economic environments

It is assumed that a boost in the short term employment opportunities and business opportunities for the small local enterprises may occur during the construction phase. There is therefore both positive and negative impacts – positive for those few persons who will get some employment, but the news of job opportunities could also lead to crowds of jobseekers gathering at the construction site in the hope of getting hired. The significance of the positive impact is rated as low and is summarised as follows: .

7.3.1 CREATION OF EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

These measures are proposed with respect to creation and offering of employment opportunities:

- Recruitment must be done in line with the labour laws of Namibia;
- Employment opportunities should be offered without prejudice but with preference given the locals (within the settlement) who have the necessary skills and experience;
- Women, people with disabilities and those from marginalized communities should also be considered for employment and

- Hiring of non-Namibians for low skilled jobs is forbidden and acceptable justification must be provided to the authorities.

7.3.2 TRAINING AND SKILLS TRANSFER PHASE

The measures proposed are:

- Ensure all employees are inducted on the EMP.
- Empower employees through on the job training and skills transfer.
- Inform employees about the parameters and requirements for references on their employment.

7.3.3 SUPPORT FOR THE LOCAL AND REGIONAL ECONOMY

These measures are proposed:

- Source and procure goods and services for the development from local businesses.
- Use local transport companies to transport goods required for construction activities as well as other professional service providers.
- Provide business opportunities to local companies so as to contribute to the socio-economic stability of the village and surrounding rural villages.

7.4 Noise Pollution

It is assumed that localised and temporarily increase in noise levels in the immediate surroundings may be experienced as a result of construction machinery and vehicles on site. The construction will be of a short duration, resulting in a 'low' significance before and after the implementation of mitigation measures.

7.5 Air Quality

It is assumed that some dust generation activities associated with the envisaged construction phase are likely to cause an increase in atmospheric dust especially around the project site, with potential increase in particulate matter 10 (PM_{10}) and particulate matter 2.5 ($PM_{2.5}$) and exposed loose materials that may be dispersed by the wind.

Given the short-term nature of the construction phase, it is assumed that the significance of the impact on air quality would have been as 'low' to 'negligible', before and after the implementation of mitigation measures.

7.6 Soil and Land Use

The assumption is that the following impacts on soil, land use and land capability may occur during the construction phase

- Movement of construction vehicles, machinery and workers in unprotected areas (bare) that may have resulted in soil compaction.
- Compaction and erosion of soils removed and stockpiled during excavation activities.
- Loss of topsoil due to erosion of areas exposed following excavation and stockpiling.

It is assumed that the significance of the impact on soils and land use can be rated as medium to low before the implementation of mitigation measures , and 'low' to 'very low' after the implementation of mitigation measures.

7.7 Impacts on Terrestrial Ecology

The assumption is that some impacts are likely to occur on the flora and fauna environment during the construction phase. Some of these are:

- Direct loss of flora habitat and indirect loss of habitat quality;
- Potential spreading of alien invasive species brought to the construction site by construction vehicles as indigenous vegetation may be removed;
- Loss of faunal habitat and ecological structure as a result of site clearing;
- Where invasive plants are observed, they should be cleared without causing such species to spread. Native vegetation should be re-planted.
- Avoid cutting down mature trees on the project site.

Since the project area was already developed in the fifties, the impact on terrestrial ecology during any future construction activities is rated as 'very low' significance.

7.8 Contamination of Surface and Groundwater Sources

There are surface waterbodies within a 500 m of the project site. It is therefore assumed that potential impacts on surface water during the construction phase of the site development is not expected to have any impacts on water sources both surface and groundwater. These measures are suggested.

- Areas where hazardous products are handled must have impermeable floors.
- Any spill or leak of hazardous products that occurs during construction activities must be immediately contained and cleaned up.
- Minimise soil disturbance by phasing construction activities outside the rainy season.

It is assumed that the significance of the impact on surface water is rated as 'low' before the implementation of mitigation measures, and very low' after mitigation measures are implemented.

7.9 Traffic Impacts

It is assumed that an increase in traffic around the construction site may be experienced during the construction phase as a result of construction vehicles driving in and out of the construction site delivering building materials. It is however assumed that the significance of the impacts on traffic would be rated as very low before and after the implementation of mitigation measures.

7.10 Waste

It has been assumed that impacts on the surrounding environment as a result of construction activities that may be undertaken will result in waste generation which has to be carefully handled and disposed of in a responsible manner. The type of waste likely to be generated include household waste, soil. Damaged materials, construction debris, waste oils, various types of packaging materials, cans, etc.

The assumption is that the significance of the impacts associated with improper waste management could be rated as 'moderate' for hazardous waste and 'low' for non-hazardous waste before the implementation measures and 'low' for hazardous waste and 'very low' before and after the implementation of mitigation measures.

7.11 Visual Impacts

It is assumed that potential impacts could occur on the three visual components which briefly described here:

- Negative visual aesthetics due to alteration of site topography and general appurtenance:

The removal of the bull statue which has become synonyms with Gobabis as a 'cattle country' from the site to a new location could result in a physiological or psychological virtual distress. The impact is expected to be of low significance.

- Visual intrusion as a result of the movement of machinery.

It is assumed that visual intrusion as a result of movement of construction machinery may occur during the construction phase. However, since the development occurs in an urban area the level of visual intrusion will be 'low' before mitigation and very low with mitigation measures.

- Visual impacts caused by airborne dust clouds and dust pollution.

Airborne dust clouds caused by construction activities are usually far more visible than the activities that cause them and can in windy conditions, be propagated over great distances. The development footprint is expected to be small and not cover a vast area. The impact will have a low to moderate significance.

7.12 Archaeological and Cultural Resources

The assumption is that the site has been developed in the late fifties already such that any potential sites of archaeological or cultural nature should have been unearthed or discovered at that time. However, these measures are proposed:

- All people employed on site must be made aware of possible cultural and archaeologically important artefacts and what process to follow if these are found or suspected.
- A method statement must be written and included but limited to training on chance find procedure.
- Follow the measures provided in the EMP.

Table 4: Assessment of Identified Impacts

Potential Impacts	Aspects Affected	Magnitude	Duration	Scale	Probability	Significance	Significance WOM	Magnitude	Duration	Scale	Probability	Significance	Significance WM
Socio-economic Environmental													
Short term employment and local businesses opportunities	Social	4	2	2	3	24	Low	4	2	2	4	32	Moderate
Training and skills transfer phase	Social	4	1	1	3	18	Low	4	1	1	4	24	Low
Generation of dust potentially resulting in health issues	Social	4	2	2	3	24	Low	4	2	2	4	32	Moderate
Clearing of land which may result in loss of sense of place	Social	4	3	1	3	24	Low	4	3	1	4	32	Moderate
Hundreds of job seekers storming the construction site	Social	6	2	2	3	30	Moderate	6	2	2	2	20	Low
Jobseekers erecting shacks in the vicinity of the construction site	Social	4	2	2	3	24	Low	4	2	2	2	16	Low
Noise Impacts													
Increase in noise levels construction vehicles and machinery.	Noise	4	2	2	2	16	Low	4	2	2	2	16	Low
Loud noise from construction workers.	Noise	2	2	2	2	12	Low	2	2	2	2	12	Low
Air Quality													
Increase in atmospheric dust and exposed loose materials that may be mobilized by the wind.	Air pollution	4	2	2	3	24	Low	4	2	2	2	16	Low
Surface Water													
Accidental spillages of hazardous substances from construction vehicles used as well as from hazardous storage areas on the surface water.	Water	2	1	1	2	8	Low	2	1	1	2	8	Low
Contamination of runoff by poor materials/waste handling practices, solids, sediments and fuel residue resulting in impact on local surface water quality.	Water	2	2	2	2	16	Low	2	2	2	1	6	Low
Groundwater													
Potential discharges of chemicals and fuels to ground surface, and subsequent impact on the groundwater system.	Water	2	2	2	2	12	12	2	2	2	1	6	Low
Poor maintenance of onsite sewerage system resulting in leaking of sewerage effluent.	Water	2	2	2	3	18	18	2	2	2	2	12	Low
Impacts on Fauna & Flora													
Direct loss of habitat due to site vegetation clearance.	Fauna	4	2	2	3	24	Low	4	2	2	2	16	Low

Spreading of alien invasive species brought to the site by construction vehicles.	Flora	2	2	1	2	10	Low	2	2	2	1	1	6
Chopping down trees for firewood harvesting.	Flora	2	2	1	2	10	Low	2	2	1	1	5	Low
Soil and Land Use													
Poor handling of hydrocarbon resulting in leaks and or spills during construction activities.	Soil	4	2	2	4	32	Moderate	4	2	2	3	24	Low
Waste Generation, Storage & Handling													
Potential impact on the surrounding environment as a result of waste generation, poor handling and incorrect disposal.	Waste	4	2	2	3	24	Low	4	2	2	2	16	Low
Poor housekeeping rules of the construction campsite resulting in wind dispersal of waste.	Waste	4	2	2	3	24	Low	4	2	2	2	16	Low
Traffic Impacts													
Alteration of the traffic around the project site during construction	Traffic	2	2	2	2	12	Low	4	2	2	1	8	Low
Increased traffic around the site as a result of construction vehicles moving in and out.	Traffic	2	2	2	2	12	Low	2	2	2	1	6	Low
Visual Impacts													
Residents and visitors have become accustomed to the bull statue and its relocation to new area has the potential to make residents and visitors alike feel less at home, i.e. 'loss of sense of place'.	Visual	6	2	2	4	40	Moderate	6	2	2	3	30	Moderate
Visual intrusion as a result of the movement of machinery.	Visual	4	2	2	3	24	Low	4	2	2	3	30	Low
Visual impacts caused by airborne dust clouds and dust pollution.	Visual	6	2	2	4	40	Moderate	6	2	2	3	30	Moderate
Alteration of site topography and loss of vegetation cover.	Visual	4	2	2	4	32	Moderate	4	2	2	3	24	Low
Health, Safety & Security													
Falls or tripping as a result of slippery due to uneven surfaces or debris	Health & Safety	2	2	1	2	10	Low	2	2	1	2	10	Low
Accidentally struck by falling objects or moving equipment or cranes.	Health & safety	2	2	1	2	10	Low	2	2	1	2	10	Low
Theft of construction materials as a result of poor policing and security of the construction premises	Security	4	2	2	4	32	Low	4	2	2	3	24	Low
Archaeological & Cultural Resources													
Potential damage to items of cultural & heritage interest during the construction	Heritage	2	2	1	2	10	Low	2	2	1	2	10	Low

8 POSSIBLE MITIGATION MEASURES

Mitigation measures for adverse environmental and social impacts were developed concentrating on feasible, realistic and enforceable alternatives in the context of existing uses. The full range of possible mitigation measures were considered for construction (in case this may become necessary to upgrade existing infrastructure) to cater for the envisaged activities that will be conducted on the rezoned general business land.

Table 5: Summary of Possible Mitigation Measures

Environmental Aspect	Potential impacts	Potential Mitigation Measures
Socio-economics	Labour recruitment, high possibility for hundreds of jobseekers crowding the construction site.	➢ All unskilled employment should be hired from local project affected residential areas. Promote the 'local first' approach. ➢ Recruitment of labour shall be in accordance with the agreed procedures and based on a fair and transparent selection process. ➢ Regular communication with households and other receivers living close to construction activities where noise and dust are potentially affecting them. ➢ Address any complain received from any stakeholder or Interest and Affected Parties (IAPs) in a timely manner.
Noise	Increase in ambient noise levels	➢ All construction vehicles and equipment shall be fitted with noise suppression, as appropriate, and operated and always maintained in conformity with the manufacturer's specifications, instructions, and manuals. ➢ Construction vehicles and machinery should be turned off when not in use to avoid unnecessary idling. ➢ Work should be confined to daylight hours of between 07h00 to 17h00. ➢ No work may be conducted on Sunday and or public holidays.
Air Quality	Increased emissions	➢ In dry weather conditions, the paved surface must be watered to prevent dust propagation. ➢ Regular and prompt maintenance of machinery, equipment and vehicles to reduce the generation of black tailpipe smoke. ➢ No burning of waste onsite. ➢ Store bulky construction materials (sand, gravel, etc.) away from prevailing wind direction. Avoid mixing cement in open air.
Soil and Land Use	Soil contamination	➢ Water pipelines and sewerage pipes on site must be regularly inspected and maintained to minimise leaks. ➢ Spill kits must be made available on site to clean up accidental spillages. ➢ Ensure proper handling and storage of hazardous chemicals and materials (e.g., thinners, paint, fuel, cement, concrete, reagents, etc.) as per their corresponding Materials Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)
Surface water	Contamination of surface water	➢ Installation of clean stormwater drains to collect runoff into municipal drains. ➢ Clean and dirty storm water systems must be in place and must be adequate. ➢ Sewerage pipes on site must be regularly inspected and maintained to minimise leaks.
Waste	Waste management	➢ Develop a waste management plan for the site during the construction phase

Environmental Aspect	Potential impacts	Potential Mitigation Measures
		➢ Waste should be properly segregated and separated. ➢ Hydrocarbon spills should be cleaned immediately. ➢ Waste should be taken for disposal to the approved dumpsites and by licensed waste takers.
Traffic	Local traffic increase	➢ Erect adequate signage including speed limit to warn road users of construction activities taking place in the vicinity ➢ Trucks must be allowed to park onsite when delivering building materials ➢ Reduction in unnecessary traffic volume.
Visual	Visual intrusion	➢ Working period time should be between 07:30 a.m. to ➢ 17:00 p.m., during construction and decommissioning phases. ➢ Plan the lighting requirements of the site to ensure that lighting meets the need to keep the site secure and safe, without offending neighbouring residents. ➢ Billboards should be erected on the start of the project to psychologically prepare the people in the vicinity especially to the relocation of bull statue. ➢ The site should be kept very neat and organized to reduce visual pollution. ➢ Water down any bare areas associated with the construction and rehabilitation phases as frequently as is required to minimise airborne dust. ➢ Apply chemical dust suppressants if wet dust suppression is insufficient. ➢ Limit the physical extents of areas cleared for material laydown, vehicle parking and the like as much as possible and rehabilitate these areas as soon as is feasible.
Archaeological, cultural & heritage	Destruction of heritage resources/items	➢ The bull statue on the property is a popular landmark sign synonyms with the town as a ‘cattle country’. Its relocation should be handled with care. ➢ Train employees on what to do when items of cultural or heritage nature are unearthed during construction activities. ➢ Follow the measures recommended in the EMP.

9 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

The environmental scoping assessment conducted for the rezoning of erven 1587 and 1589 from 'undetermined' to 'general business' will not have any negative impacts on the environment. This is because the required services and infrastructure (water, electricity, sewerage, roads, etc.) already exist and or are in close proximity to the project site. There is thus no construction needed.

The land is in close proximity to the CDB and other vital amenities but has been lying vacant for over sixty years. The original plan to leave the land unzoned for possibly expanding the train station probably fitted the developmental goals of the town at that time - when the development agenda of the town focussed on providing separate amenities to whites and African residents of the town. This has now been overtaken by events and it serves no purpose to leave such prime land vacant and undeveloped when there is acute shortage for land.

The assessment has only considered those impacts that are associated with rezoning, more specifically with the installation of bulk services /infrastructure during the construction phase. At this stage, the type of business activities that will be undertaken on the rezoned premises are unknown, and therefore such impacts could not be identified and subjected to an assessment process.

One objection was received from the adverts placed in the newspapers but the issues have been resolved between the parties. It is the opinion of the EIA Consultant that the proposed rezoning is needed and desirable and does not present any adverse impacts to the environment.

Overall the economic benefits that will accrue to Gobabis Municipality from having both erven rezoned from undetermined to general business, both in the short term and long term, by far outweigh the minimal environmental impacts associated with the rezoning activities.

It is recommended that an ECC be granted to the applicant subject to the applicant committing to comply with mitigation measures as recommended in the EMP.

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