



# ENVIRONMENTAL SCOPING ASSESSMENT (ESA) FOR THE PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF A 25M HIGH CAMOUFLAGED TREE TELECOMMUNICATION TOWER IN ROCKY CREST, WINDHOEK, KHOMAS REGION

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Author: <b>Ms. Althea Brandt</b>	Client: <b>PowerCom (Pty) Ltd</b>
Company: <b>Excel Dynamic Solutions (Pty) Ltd</b>	Contact person: <b>Mr. Patrick Britz</b>
Telephone: <b>+264 (0) 61 259 530</b>	Telephone: <b>+264 (0) 61 201 2966</b>
Fax2email: <b>+264 (0) 886 560 836</b>	Fax: <b>+264 (0) 88 655 9891 (fax2email)</b>
Email: <b>info@edsnamibia.com</b>	Postal Address: <b>P.O. Box 40799 Windhoek</b>
	Email: <b>patrick.britz@powercom.na</b>

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Introduction

PowerCom (Pty) Ltd (*The Proponent*) proposes to erect and operate a 25 m camouflaged tree (network) tower in the town of Windhoek. The proposed site is located in the area of Rocky Crest area (22°34'36.0" S, 17°02'36.0" E). The proposed tower will be a camouflaged tree network tower, with an outdoor cabinet next to it. The total surface area of the site dedicated to tower footprint is approximately 64m<sup>2</sup> (8m x 8m).

The rapid expansion of urban development and land use in Windhoek has led to a heavy reliance on telecommunications amongst locals, from the use of telephones, mobile phones and other electronic devices for information sharing and connections. This has brought about demand for increase in telecommunications infrastructure and services. In order to facilitate mobile connection services that run smoothly and conveniently, the services infrastructure need to be of good standard in order to provide high quality and better coverage to the mobile users.

The proposed activity will provide additional capacity, reducing congestion problems and improving network coverage in Rocky Crest. This will also ensure improved quality of the service provided to mobile users in the area.

### Project Description

The current network shortfalls experienced and anticipated network shortfalls to mobile users in the area led to this project site selection. Project activity include establishment (construction), and eventual operations and maintenance of the network tower.

### Construction Phase:

There will be minimal earthworks to prepare the site for tower construction. The construction works are expected to last for at least one month. The tower structure will be mounted to a concrete foundation and will not require any supporting cables. The physical assembling of the network structure and the construction of the foundations will take place on the site. The network structure will be earthed to protect it from lightning. For safety reasons, the tower site will be fenced off with palisade fencing to ensure that access is limited to authorised personnel and to prevent vandalism.

PowerCom intends to appoint a local contractor to carry out the construction. Works will be carried out during weekdays only, between 08h00 and 17h00. The appointed contractor will be required to provide appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to all their employees while carrying out the construction works on site.

### **Operational and Maintenance Phase:**

This is the phase during which the tower and its associated infrastructure are operational, providing network signal to the residents of the Eros area. Maintenance of the tower will be done by the Proponent's Maintenance Department, when required. The Proponent should ensure that all employees carrying out maintenance works on site are provided with appropriate PPE.

### **Services and Infrastructure**

**Power supply:** No electricity is required during the construction of the tower. However, it will be required during the operational and maintenance phase of the tower. The operation of the tower will require an alternative current (AC) power, which will be connected to the Windhoek Municipal Grid via a metered connection.

**Water supply:** Minimal amount of water will be required during construction. The water is necessary for in-situ foundation works and for drinking. The water required for construction and related activity will be sourced from the Windhoek Municipal water supply schemes.

The appointed local construction contractor will be responsible for the sourcing of water.

**Site Access:** The site is located in Rocky Crest (22°34'36.0" S, 17°02'36.0" E). The site is accessible and situated in Sando Street to Erf R/527. There are is an existing informal access route leading directly to the site.

**Waste Management:** The waste generated on site during construction and maintenance phases will be stored and transported to the appropriate (waste type) landfill sites in Windhoek. The Proponent will enforce the availability of portable toilets for the construction team (contractors) while on site.

### **Decommissioning Phase**

Decommissioning of the network tower is not anticipated, as long as there is need for use of mobile communications and associated services in the town.

## Potential Impacts identified

The potential impacts of the proposed project have been identified as they relate to the project activities in terms of a source-pathway-receptor risk based methodology and in consultation with interested and affected parties. By considering the potential risk areas associated with the receiving biophysical and social environment, the following key impacts have been highlighted for consideration:

### Potential positive impacts:

- **Telecommunication convenience:** Current and future residents (mobile users) will have an improved infrastructure and will not have to struggle with network coverage.
- **Employment creation:** Creation of a few temporary jobs during the construction of the tower.
- **General contribution to local economic development** through reliable communications services.

### The following potential negative impacts are anticipated:

- **Physical land / soil disturbance:** Excavation activities to erect the tower could potentially lead to the disturbance of site soils.
- **Noise and disturbance:** During tower' construction, the presence of the construction team and movement of heavy vehicles and machinery may disturb the immediate neighbours to the site.
- **Visual impact:** The presence of the tower in the neighbourhood may be a nuisance to locals.
- **Impacts to Human Health:** Electromagnetic Radiation emitted from the antennae of cellular structures may affect human health.
- **Potential occupational health and safety risks** associated with mishandling of construction and operations equipment.
- **Civil Aviation concerns:** The proposed site designs and locations need to be verified to ensure that it meets the approval of the Directorate of Civil Aviation regarding the height of the masts and the position and stability of transmitters.
- Environmental pollution from improper disposal of waste generated during construction and maintenance phases.

- **Vehicular traffic safety** from increased number of vehicles moving around the project site and slow-moving trucks transporting project structures during construction, and
- **Archaeological or cultural heritage impact** through unintentional uncovering of unknown archaeological objects or site by certain project activities such as excavation (the minimal site works).
- **Loss of Avifaunal Biodiversity**
- **Waste Generation** from improper disposal of waste generated during construction and maintenance.
- **Dust Generation** from construction works and vehicular traffic

The potential negative impacts were assessed, and mitigation measures provided accordingly.

## Conclusion

The potential (positive and negative) impacts that are anticipated from the proposed construction of the telecommunication tower and related activities were identified, described, and assessed. Most of the identified potential negative impacts are rated as of Medium Significance. Therefore, in order to reduce the significance from medium to low, it is recommended that the Proponent effectively implement mitigation measures. In order to maintain a low significance, the implementation of measures will need to be continuously monitored in order to reduce to impact to low and bring the impact under control.

It is, therefore, recommended that in the event of an ECC issuance, the conditions provided in this ESA may be appropriate to ensure minimal environmental impact for this project.

## Limitations

EDS warrants that the findings and conclusion contained herein were accomplished in accordance with the methodologies set forth in the Scope of Work and Environmental Management Act (EMA) of 2007. These methodologies are described as representing good customary practice for conducting an Environmental Impact Assessment of a property for the purpose of identifying recognized environmental conditions. There is a possibility that even with the proper application of these methodologies there may exist on the subject property conditions that could not be identified within the scope of the assessment, or which were not reasonably identifiable from the available information. The Consultant believes that the information obtained

from the record review and during the public consultation processes concerning the proposed tower' construction activities/works is reliable.

### **Disclaimer**

EDS cannot and does not warrant or guarantee that the information provided by the other sources is accurate or complete. The conclusions and findings set forth in this report are strictly limited in time and scope to the date of the evaluations. No other warranties are implied or expressed.

Some of the information provided in this report is based upon personal interviews, and research of available documents, records, and maps held by the appropriate government and private agencies. This report is subject to the limitations of historical documentation, availability, and accuracy of pertinent records and the personal recollections of those persons contacted.

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- Appendix B:** Draft Environmental Management Plan (EMP)
- Appendix C:** Curricula Vitae (CV) for the Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP)
- Appendix D:** List of Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs)
- Appendix E:** Background Information Document (BID)
- Appendix F:** ESA Process Notification in the newspapers (*New Era* and *The Namibian*)

**Appendix G:** Proof of Consultation of IAPs (direct neighbours to the site) by hand delivery of BIDs

**Appendix H:** Letter by Ministry of Information and Communication Technology (MICT)

**Appendix I:** National Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) Response (Pending)

**Appendix J:** City of Windhoek Agreement of Lease

**Appendix K:** Non-ionising Radiation Regulations, 2019: Atomic Energy and Radiation Protection Act, 2005

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Meaning
3G/4G	Third and fourth generation of wireless mobile telecommunications technology.
AC	Alternating Current
ARPANSA	Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency
BID	Background Information Document
CoW	City of Windhoek
CRAN	Communications Regulatory Authority of Namibia
CV	Curriculum Vitae
DEAF	Department of Environmental Affairs and Forestry
EA	Environmental Assessment
EAP	Environmental Assessment Practitioner
ECC	Environmental Clearance Certificate
EDS	Excel Dynamic Solutions
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EMA	Environmental Management Act
EMF or EME	Electromagnetic Fields or Electromagnetic Emission

Abbreviation	Meaning
EMP	Environmental Management Plan
ESA	Environmental Scoping Assessment
GG	Government Gazette
GN	Government Notice
IAPs	Interested and Affected Parties
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organisation
ICNIRP	International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection
MEFT	Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism
MHSS	Ministry of Health and Social Services
MICT	Ministry of Information and Communication Technology
NCAA	Namibia Civil Aviation Authority
NRPA	National Radiation Protection Authority of Namibia
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
Reg, S	Regulation, Section
TOR	Terms of Reference
WHO	World Health Organization

## KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Alternative</b>	A possible course of action, in place of another that would meet the same purpose and need of the proposal.
<b>Baseline</b>	Work done to collect and interpret information on the condition/trends of the existing environment.
<b>Biophysical</b>	That part of the environment that does not originate with human activities (e.g., biological, physical and chemical processes).
<b>Cumulative Impacts/Effects</b>	In relation to an activity, means the impact of an activity that in it may not be significant but may become significant when added to the existing and potential impacts eventuating from similar or diverse activities or

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>Assessment</b>	undertakings in the area.
<b>Decision-maker</b>	The person(s) entrusted with the responsibility for allocating resources or granting approval to a proposal.
<b>Ecological Processes</b>	Processes which play an essential part in maintaining ecosystem integrity. Four fundamental ecological processes are the cycling of water, the cycling of nutrients, the flow of energy and biological diversity (as an expression of evolution).
<b>Environment</b>	As defined in Environmental Management Act - the complex of natural and anthropogenic factors and elements that are mutually interrelated and affect the ecological equilibrium and the quality of life, including – (a) the natural environment that is land, water and air; all organic and inorganic matter and living organisms and (b) the human environment that is the landscape and natural, cultural, historical, aesthetic, economic and social heritage and values.
<b>Environmental Management Plan</b>	As defined in the EIA Regulations (Section 8(j)), a plan that describes how activities that may have significant environments effects are to be mitigated, controlled, and monitored.
<b>Interested and Affected Party (IAP)</b>	In relation to the assessment of a listed activity includes - (a) any person, group of persons or organization interested in or affected by an activity; and (b) any organ of state that may have jurisdiction over any aspect of the activity. Mitigate - practical measures to reduce adverse impacts. Proponent – as defined in the Environmental Management Act, a person who proposes to undertake a listed activity. Significant impact - means an impact that by its magnitude, duration, intensity, or probability of occurrence may have a notable effect on one or more aspects of the environment.
<b>Fauna</b>	All the animals found in an area.
<b>Flora</b>	All the plants found in an area.
<b>Mitigation</b>	The purposeful implementation of decisions or activities that are designed to reduce the undesirable impacts of a proposed action on the affected environment.
<b>Monitoring</b>	Activity involving repeated observation, according to a pre-determined schedule, of one or more elements of the environment to detect their

TERM	DEFINITION
	characteristics (status and trends).
<b>Proponent</b>	Organization (private or public sector) or individual intending to implement a development proposal.
<b>Public Consultation/Involvement</b>	A range of techniques that can be used to inform, consult, or interact with stakeholders affected by the proposed activities.
<b>Protected Area</b>	Refers to a protected area that is proclaimed in the Government Gazette, according to the Nature Conservation Ordinance number 4 of 1975, as amended
<b>Scoping</b>	An early and open activity to identify the impacts that are most likely to be significant and require specialized investigation during the EIA work. Can, also be used to identify alternative project designs/site to be assessed, obtain local knowledge of site and surroundings, and prepare a plan for public involvement. The results of scoping are frequently used to prepare a Terms of Reference for the specialized input into full EIA.
<b>Terms of Reference (ToR)</b>	Written requirements governing full EIA input and implementation, consultations to be held, data to be produced and form/contents of the EIA report. Often produced as an output from scoping.

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Project Background and Location

Namibia is experiencing a rapid increase in the use of mobile communication services, which has led to a rise in local pressure for efforts to expand on telecommunications infrastructure. PowerCom (Pty) Ltd (*The Proponent*) proposes to erect and operate a 25 m camouflaged tree (network) tower in the town of Windhoek. The proposed site is located in the area of the Rocky Crest suburb (22°34'36.0" S, 17°02'36.0 "E), as indicated on the map in Error! Reference source not found. and in **Figure 2** the map shows the satellite view. The proposed tower will have main antennae frequencies at 900, 1800 and 2100 MHz. The antennae are designed to operate in a 900MHz (for 2G/3G), 1800MHz (for 2G/4G) and a 2100MHz (for 3G) frequencies. The total surface area of the site dedicated to tower footprint is approximately 64m<sup>2</sup> (8m x 8m). The remainder of the site area is for storing the operational and maintenance equipment.

Telecommunication tower and related infrastructure developments are among listed activities that may not be undertaken without an Environmental Clearance Certificate (ECC) under the Environmental Management Act (EMA) (2007) and its 2012 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations. The relevant listed activities as per EIA regulations are:

- *10.1 (g) The construction of masts of any material or type and of any height, including those used for telecommunication, broadcasting, and radio transmission.*

Subsequently, the Proponent has appointed Excel Dynamic Solutions (Pty) Ltd (EDS Namibia), an independent team of Environmental Consultants to apply for the project ECC (through the Competent Authority, Ministry of Information and Communication Technology (MICT)), conduct the required Environmental Scoping Assessment (ESA) process and compile this ESA Report and its Draft Environmental Management Plan (EMP) compiled). These two documents together with associated documents are submitted for evaluation and consideration of an ECC to the Environmental Commissioner at the Department of Environmental Affairs and Forestry (DEAF) of the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT).

## 1.2 Proposed Site Ownership

The anticipated network shortfalls to mobile users in these areas triggered this site selection. Furthermore, the outcome of the selection criteria used provided the best potential positions of these tower in the Town.

The proposed site (location) is under the ownership of Windhoek Municipality and land use (leasehold) agreement to occupy the land for the purpose of constructing tower has been granted to PowerCom by the Municipal Council. The approval to set up the tower was granted to PowerCom as per the letter dated 26 October 2021 – **Appendix J** (also as consent). The approval letter also indicated that the site of land will be leased to PowerCom by the Council for a period of five (5) years. The locality details of the site in **Table 1** below.

**Table 1: Details of the proposed tower' localities**

Site Name:	Rocky Crest
GPS Coordinates:	22°34'36.0" S, 17°02'36.0 "E
Local Authority:	Municipality of Windhoek
Regional Administration:	Khomas Regional Council
Site Name:	Rocky Crest



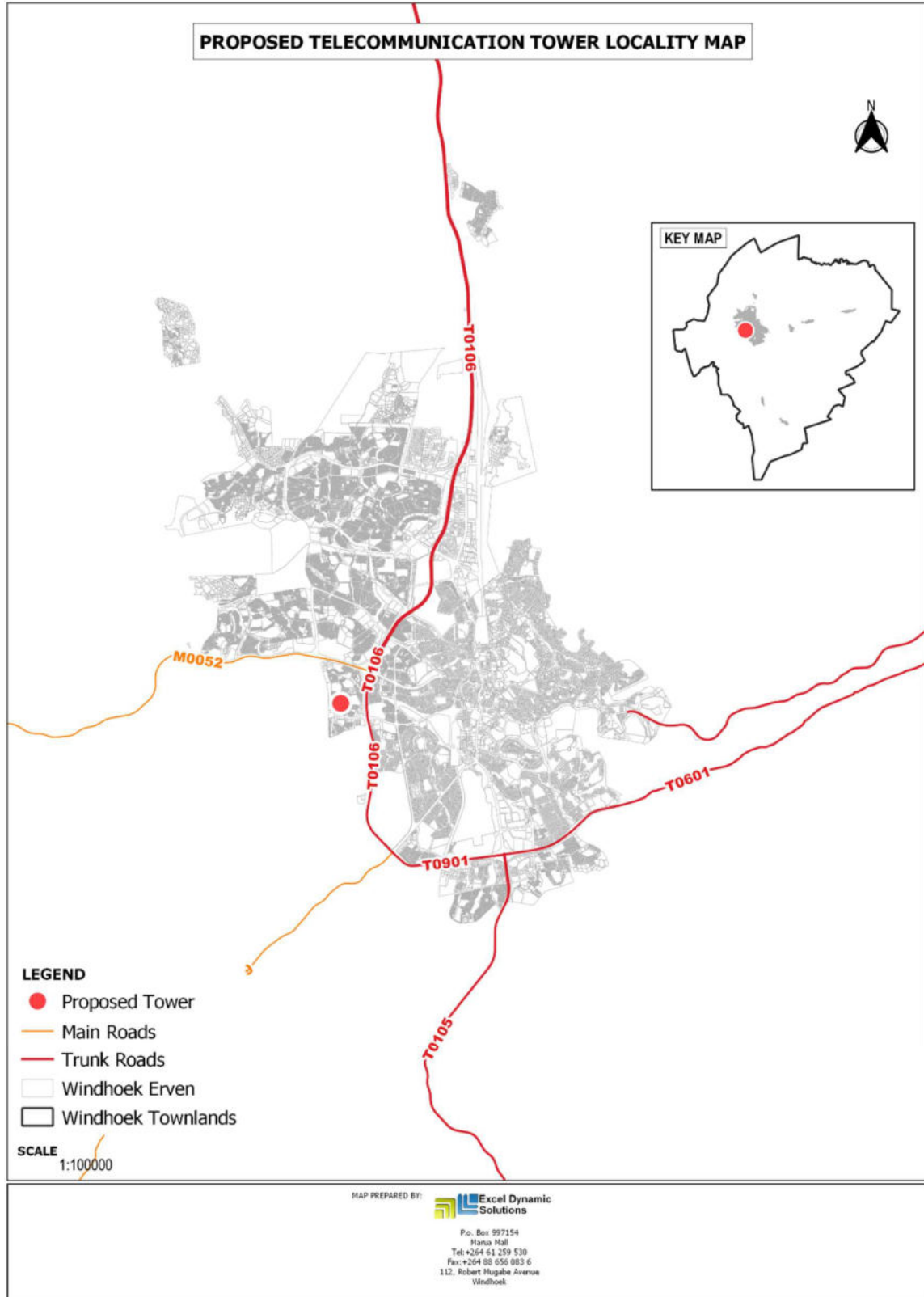


Figure 1: Locality map of the proposed a network tower in Rocky Crest, Windhoek, Khomas Region

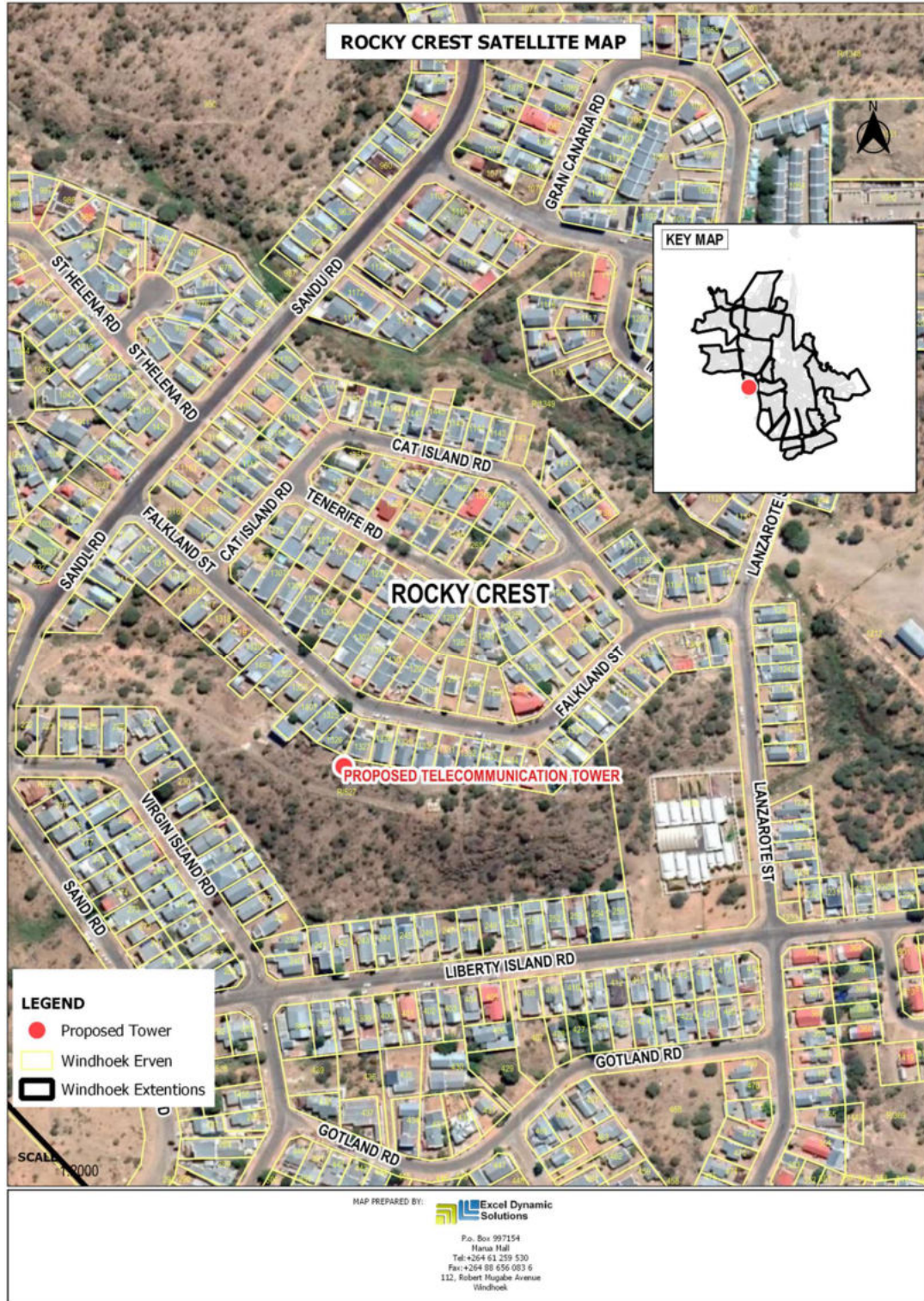


Figure 2: Satellite image of the Proposed network tower in Rocky Crest, Windhoek

### 1.3 Terms of Reference (TOR), Scope of Work and Document Contents

This ESA has been conducted according to the Environmental Management Act (EMA) (No. 7 of 2007), and its 2012 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations. In line with the Terms of Reference provided for this project, the scope of works for this project (ESA) entails the following:

- Confirm the suitability of the proposed site for the tower construction and suggest alternative site, if required;
- Conduct the required Environmental Scoping Assessment (ESA);
- Consult all potential interested and affected parties (I&APs);
- Compile an ESA report and draft Environmental Management Plan (EMP); and
- Obtain an Environmental Clearance Certificate for the proposed tower.

The main aim of the ESA is to:

- Identify, analyse and assess the bio-physical, socio-economic impacts associated with the proposed activity; and
- compile management action plans (in the form of the draft EMP that will need be implemented by the Proponent and/or their contractor(s) to minimize these impacts, if they cannot be avoided altogether, while maximizing positive impacts.

### 1.4 The Need for the Proposed Project (Motivation)

Due to the continual growth in mobile communication services in Namibia, the pressure is continuously expanded and the communications network is increasing. PowerCom have identified the need for the new structure in Windhoek Municipality. The planned telecommunication will provide an additional capacity, reducing congestion problem and improves the coverage within that area. This proposed development will ensure that the quality of the service provided to the telecommunication users in the area is improved.

## 1.5 Appointed Environmental Assessment Practitioner

To satisfy the requirements of the EMA and its 2012 EIA Regulations, the Proponent appointed an independent team of Environmental Consultants at Excel Dynamic Solutions (Pty) Ltd (hereinafter referred to as EDS, The Consultant or Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP)) to conduct the required ESA process on their behalf. As mentioned earlier, the findings of the ESA process are incorporated into this Report. The ESA Report and the Draft EMP as well as associated documents will be submitted as part of an application for an ECC to the Environmental Commissioner at the DEAF.

The ESA project is headed by Mr. Nerson Tjelos, a qualified and experienced Geoscientist and experienced Environmental Assessment Practitioner with (EAP). The ESA process and this Report and the Draft EMP were conducted and compiled by Ms. Althea Brandt, with support from Ms. Rose Mtuleni. The curriculum vitae (CV) for Mr. Tjelos is presented under **Appendix C**.

## 2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSED ACTIVITIES

The description of project activity to be undertaken for the establishment (construction) and eventual operations and maintenance of the network tower are presented as follows:

### 2.1 Planning and Design Phase

The Communications Act No. 8 of 2009, requires that service providers should first consider sharing existing infrastructure in the area before constructing new structures. There is no other infrastructure that could be shared by PowerCom to install/mount their antenna, therefore, PowerCom will need to construct a completely new tower in this area.

There are criteria that are usually employed to optimise the positions of new structures in the telecommunication industry. These include coverage of existing network infrastructure, surrounding topography & built-up environment, established and future urban areas, required footprint and the most appropriate design of the facility (GCS Water & Environmental Consultants, 2017).

Once the Proponent has been issued with the ECC and obtained all relevant and required permitting/licensing such as land use /leasehold agreements), and ready to commence with the construction activities, the planned activities will commence at the site

The planning and design phase which also include the ESA is aimed at presenting some key concepts of the project alongside a general overview of the study area, the legal landscape to be considered, and a preliminary assessment of the main aspects that might affect the feasibility of the project and or its associated activities. Thereafter, the environmental, technical, and financial aspects of the project are assessed by identifying potential risks and proposing mitigation measures where possible. This would also include highlighting 'fatal flaws' wherever mitigation measures are unavailable or impractical with regards to the available finances and other resources.

Prior to commencement of any site work, all personnel (including fully employed, contracted, and casual) will be inducted on the Proponent's Environmental, Health and Safety Policy as well as procedures and processes to follow while conducting the work on site or offsite work related to the project.

### **2.1.1 Design and Technical Aspects**

The proposed tower (structure) will be used for 3G/4G coverage, and the coverage area will be 1.5 km to have proper in-door and outdoor coverage. These site will consist of tower, perimeter fence, outdoor cabinets as well as antennae on the tower. The footprint (surface areas) to be covered by the tower and associated accessories will be small, anticipated to be about 64 m<sup>2</sup>, with only less of that dedicated to the actual footprints of the tower.

The typical examples of a camouflaged tree tower for telecommunication purposes are shown in **Figure 3**.

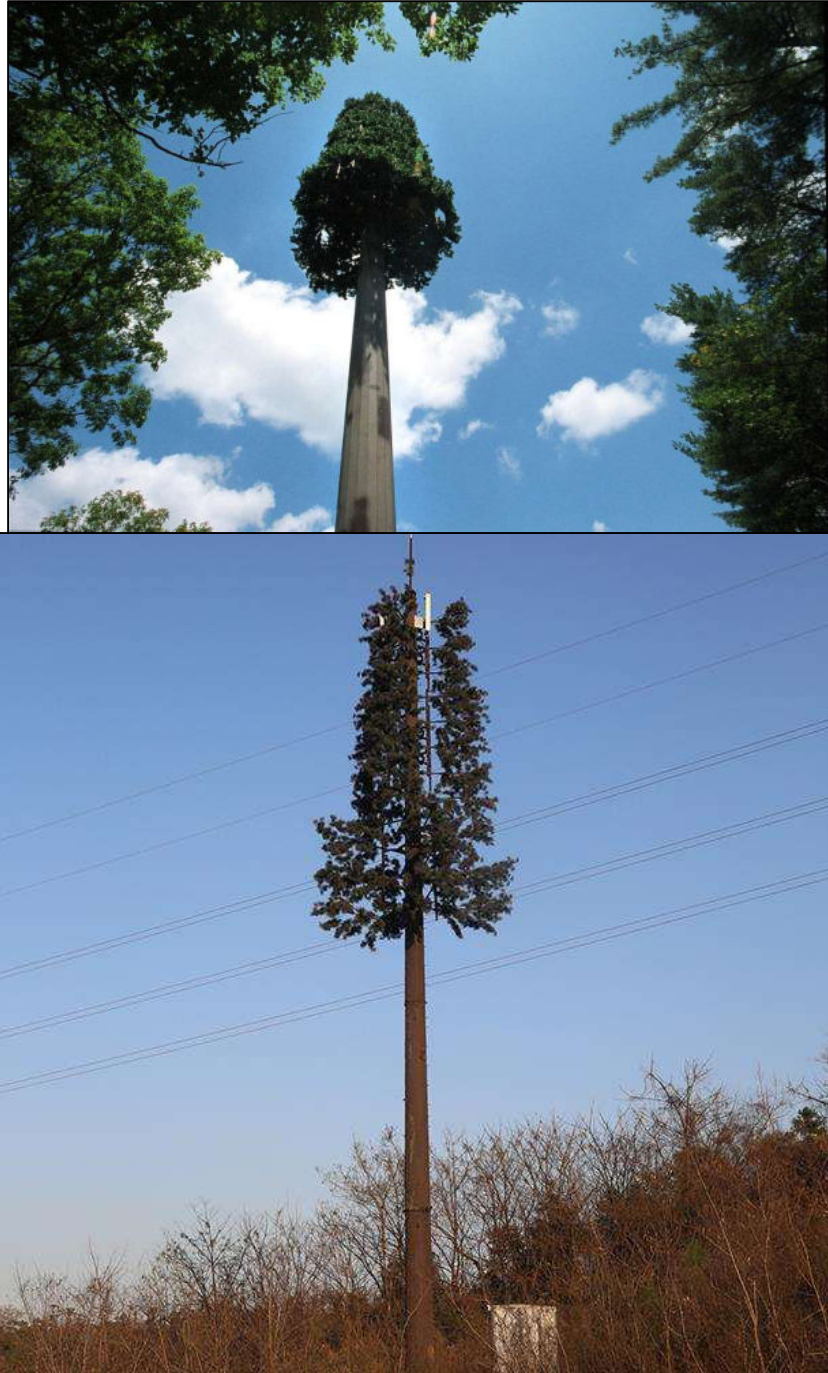


Figure 3: Typical example of a camouflaged telecommunication tower structure

## 2.2 Construction Phase

Tower construction works are expected to last for at least one month, and there will be minimal earthworks to prepare the site for construction. The total surface area of the site occupied by the

tower will be approximately 64 m<sup>2</sup>, with an 8m x 8m size dedicated to tower footprint. The tower structure will be mounted to a concrete foundation. The rest of the site area will be used for storing the operational and maintenance equipment. For safety reasons, the tower site will be fenced off with palisade fencing. This will also be done to ensure that access to the tower is only limited to authorised personnel and to prevent vandalism of the tower and its associated accessories. The tower structure will be earthed to protect it from lightning.

The physical assemblage of the network tower structure and the construction of the foundations will take place on the site by using manual labour as far as possible. The Proponent will appoint a contractor to carry out the construction. Construction works will be carried out during weekdays only, between 08h00 and 17h00. The number of workers expected for this work will depend on the local contractors appointed and their standard human capacity for development of the project. Preference for the construction works will be given to locals, i.e. contractors from Windhoek. All non-skilled labour will also be given to local residents (from Windhoek).

If necessary, the appointed construction contractor will need to make arrangements for their workers to be housed in Windhoek or nearby places, but not on site. The appointed contractor will be required to provide appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to all their employees while carrying out construction works on site.

## **2.3 Project Input and Resources Requirements**

In terms of human resources and services infrastructure, the following will be required:

### **2.3.1 Project Personnel and Accommodation**

The number of people that would be employed during the construction of the tower cannot be determined now; it will be determined by the appointed contractor once the ECC is issued. The workforce personnel include both skilled, semi and unskilled people, as necessary to complete the work. All non-skilled labour will also be given to residents (from Windhoek, preferably within the vicinity of the tower site).

**2.3.2 Water Supply**

Minimal amount of water will be required during construction. This water will be used for drinking and efficiently used for in-situ concrete mixture. In other words, the amount of water will be part of the concrete works, which will only be during the foundation casting. The required water will be sourced from the municipal sources. This will be upon agreement with the Municipality or relevant water supplier, who can be the nearest home or business owners.

**2.3.3 Power Supply**

No electricity is required during the construction of the tower. However, it will be required during the operational maintenance phase of the tower. However, it will be required during the operational maintenance phase of the tower. Alternating Current (AC) power will be required for the operation of the tower and will be connected to the City of Windhoek grid.

**2.3.4 Site Access (Roads)**

The site is within the town of Rocky Crest in Sando Street Erf R/527, Windhoek; therefore, it will be accessed through the existing access roads and streets.

**2.2.5 Health and Safety**

Adequate and appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) will be provided to every project personnel while on and working at site. A first aid kit will be readily available at the site.

**2.3.6 Potential Accidental Fire management**

A minimum of basic firefighting equipment, i.e., a fire extinguisher will be readily available in vehicles, at each site

**2.3.7 Waste Management**

Any waste generated on site during construction and maintenance phases will be stored and transported to the appropriate (waste type) garbage skips or landfill sites.

In management during the construction phase, The Proponent will enforce the availability of portable toilets for the construction team (contractors) while on site during the construction phase, for sewage waste management. Chemical toilets with sealed septic tanks will be used as ablution facilities and the sewage waste handled according to the manufacturer's instructions of the facility provided.



### **2.3.8 Site Fencing**

For safety and security reasons, the tower site will be fenced off. This will also be done to ensure that access to the tower is limited to authorized personnel (such as maintenance team) only and to prevent vandalism of the tower and their associated accessories/structures.

## **2.4 Decommissioning Phase**

As long as the use of mobile communications and other associated services is on the increase and the need for better services in Windhoek, the decommissioning of the network tower is not anticipated. Regardless, recommendations will be provided in the impact assessment chapter and EMP, in the event that the network tower needs to be decommissioned.

## **2.5 Post-Construction Site Rehabilitation and Decommissioning**

Once construction phase has been completed, the associated works will be ceased, and site cleaned up in preparation for the next phase (operations). The Proponent will need to properly decommission the construction works and rehabilitate disturbed site. The aim is to ensure that the project related disturbed site areas are left close to their pre-work state as much as possible.

The activities to be carried out to clean up and rehabilitate the site post-construction are as follows:

- Dismantling and removal of all temporary infrastructures and structures (erected or set up to support construction) that will no longer be required for the operational and maintenance phases. These will be transported to designated storage facilities offsite.
- Removal of all construction related vehicles, machinery, and equipment from site to designated parking and storage site off site, respectively.
- Carrying away the waste storage containers and disposal of waste to the designated local approved waste management site in Windhoek.
- If any, closure of all onsite access roads that may have been created for the construction phase and no longer required for operational phase.
- Levelling of all stockpiled topsoil and where possible, backfilling of all construction excavated pits and trenches, respectively.

## 2.6 Operational and Maintenance Phase

This is the phase during which the tower and its associated infrastructure will be operational and providing telecommunication signal to the residents of Rocky Crest and other future land users in this part of the town. Maintenance of the tower is to be carried out by the Proponent's Maintenance Department, as and when required. No onsite accommodation will be required during this phase, as the maintenance works are not expected to last for more than a day. In the event that maintenance works are lasting more than one day, accommodation arrangements are to be made by the Proponent for their maintenance team.

The Proponent is to ensure that all employees carrying out maintenance works on site are provided with appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

## 3 PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

Alternatives are defined as the “*different means of meeting the general purpose and requirements of the activity*” (EMA, 2007). This section will highlight the different ways in which the project can be undertaken and to identify the alternative that will be the most practical, but least damaging to the environment is identified.

Once the alternatives have been established, these are examined by asking the following four questions:

- (a) What alternatives are technically and economically feasible?
- (b) What are the environmental effects associated with the feasible alternatives?
- (c) What is the rationale for selecting the preferred alternative?

The alternatives considered for the proposed PowerCom tower in Windhoek are discussed under the following subsections.

### 3.1 Types of Alternatives Considered

#### 3.1.1 The "No-go" Alternative

The “No-go” alternative is the option of not proceeding with the activity, which typically implies a continuation of the status quo. In this case, this would mean, the status quo of the proposed site remains unchanged with poor to no network/communication signal. Should the proposed project be discontinued, the poor to no network coverage in this part of Windhoek will continue and

there will be no improvement in local socio-economic development, in terms of communications services.

In considering the proposed activity and its benefits to the local communities, the no-go option is not a preferred option.

### **3.1.2 Locations of the Telecommunication Tower**

The location is strategically chosen whereby Telecom Namibia uses radio planning tools to select sites and thereafter PowerCom gets the instruction to apply for the intended sites. In this instance in, to address any network coverage issues in this part of Windhoek and provide improved network coverage in the area. During the EA process, neighboring residents complained about the proposed location of the tower, arguing that because of the close distance to the neighboring houses it would pose health risks due to RF Radiation.

### **3.1.3 Infrastructure sharing as per the Communications Act of 2009: Tower Sharing**

The Communications Act No. 8 of 2009 requires that service providers consider sharing existing infrastructure in the area first, before constructing new structures to avoid cumulative impacts. There are no other telecommunication towers within the vicinity of the new proposed project site that could have been used by the Proponent to mount their communications antenna on to serve the affected communities. Therefore, the distance from the existing structures will not allow compliance with the Communications Act regarding the sharing/using of existing structures in an area (Town).

It is for this reason that the proposed tower (new structures) need to be erected (constructed) so that they can be potentially used (shared) in future with similar services providers, thus promoting infrastructure sharing as per the Communications Act.

## 4 LEGAL FRAMEWORK: LEGISLATION, POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

A review of applicable and relevant Namibian legislation, policies, and guidelines to the proposed development is given in this section. This review serves to inform the project Proponent, Interested and Affected Parties, and the decision-makers at the DEAF of the requirements and expectations, as laid out in terms of these instruments, to be fulfilled to establish the proposed tower' construction and operational activities.

### 4.1 The Environmental Management Act (No. 7 of 2007)

This ESA was carried out according to the Environmental Management Act (EMA) and its Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations (GG No. 4878 GN No. 30). The EMA has stipulated requirements to complete the required documentation in order to obtain an ECC for permission to undertake certain listed activities. These activities are listed under the following Regulations:

- *10.1 (g) The construction of masts of any material or type and of any height, including those used for telecommunication, broadcasting, and radio transmission.*

### 4.2 The Communications Act (No. 8 of 2009)

The Act provides for the regulation of telecommunications services and networks, broadcasting, postal services and the use and allocation of radio spectrum; for that purpose, the establishment of an independent Communications Regulatory Authority of Namibia; to make provision for its powers and functions; the granting of special rights to telecommunications licensees; the creation of an Association to manage the “.na” internet domain name space and for matters connected therewith.

**Applicability to the Proposed Project:** The Proponent is required to comply with the relevant Sections and Parts of the Act, and of importance is Part 5 of the Act. This Part (Special Rights of Carriers) states the following in relation to the project:

- *‘Applicability of this Part: Section 59(1) The rights granted by this Part are granted to all holders of technology and service neutral licences and to other licensees to whom and in so far as it has been made applicable to them in terms of section 38(12) or 38(13).*

- *(3) Subject to subsection (4) and (5), the rights granted by this Part, to install telecommunications facilities, only relate to wires, fibres, or any other form of telecommunication's line as well as facilities used to protect or support such wires, fibres or lines (including poles, stays, ducts and pipes), but do not relate to masts, antennas, tower, pay telephones and other similar equipment.*
- **Entry upon and construction of lines across any land: Section 60.** *A carrier may, for the purposes of provision of telecommunications services, enter upon any land, including any street, road, footpath or land reserved for public purposes, and any railway, and construct and maintain a telecommunications facility upon, under, over, along or across any land, street, road, footpath or waterway or any railway, and alter or remove the same, and may for that purpose attach wires, stays or any other kind of support to any building or other structure.*
- **Fences: Section 64(1)** *If any fence erected or to be erected on land over which a telecommunications facility, pipe, tunnel or tube is constructed or is to be constructed by a carrier, renders or would render it impossible or inconvenient for the carrier to obtain access to that land the carrier may at its own expense erect and maintain gates in that fence and must provide duplicate keys therefor, one of which must be handed to the owner or occupier of the land.*
- **Section 64(2)** *Any person intending to erect any such fence must give not less than six weeks' notice in writing to the carrier of his or her intention.*
- **Height or depth of cables and facilities: 66(1)** *Aerial telecommunication wires or cables along any railway or public or Private Street, road, footpath, or land must be at the prescribed height above the surface of the ground.*
- **Section 66(2)** *Underground telecommunication facilities, pipes, tunnels, and tubes must be placed by a carrier at the prescribed depth below the surface of the ground*
- **Section 66(3)** *If the owner of any private land is obstructed in the free use of his or her land by reason of the insufficient height or depth of any telecommunications wire, cable or other facility, pipe, tunnel or tube constructed by that carrier, the carrier must take such steps as are necessary for giving relief to that owner".*

Other applicable legal obligations to the proposed tower constructions and related activities are presented in **Table 2.**

**Table 2: Applicable national and international legislations governing the proposed project and related activities**

Legislation/Policy/ Guideline	Relevant Provisions	Implications for this project
<b>NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL</b>		
<p>The Constitution of the Republic of Namibia, 1990 as amended</p>	<p>The Constitution of the Republic of Namibia (1990 as amended) addresses matters relating to environmental protection and sustainable development. Article 91(c) defines the functions of the Ombudsman to include:</p> <p><i>“...the duty to investigate complaints concerning the over-utilisation of living natural resources, the irrational exploitation of non-renewable resources, the degradation and destruction of ecosystems and failure to protect the beauty and character of Namibia...”</i></p> <p><i>Article 95(l) commits the state to actively promoting and maintaining the welfare of the people by adopting policies aimed at the:</i></p> <p><i>“...Natural resources situated in the soil and on the subsoil, the internal waters, in the sea, in the continental shelf, and in the exclusive economic zone are property of the State.”</i></p>	<p>By implementing the environmental management plan, the establishment will be in conformant to the constitution in terms of environmental management and sustainability.</p> <p>Ecological sustainability will be main priority for the proposed development.</p>
<p>Environmental Assessment Policy of Namibia 1994</p>	<p>The Environmental Assessment Policy of Namibia states Schedule 1: Screening list of policies/ plans/ programmes/ project subject to environment must be accompanied by environmental assessments. “The Proposed tower activities” are on that list.</p>	<p>The establishment of the proposed project triggers the need for environmental assessments prior commencement of civil works as they may alter the environment which could result on the damage of the</p>

Legislation/Policy/ Guideline	Relevant Provisions	Implications for this project
	<p>The policy provides a definition to the term “Environment” broadly interpreted to include biophysical, social, economic, cultural, historical, and political components and provides reference to the inclusion of alternatives in all project, policies, programmes, and plans.</p>	<p>environment.</p> <p>The construction of the tower requires the assessment of all possible environmental and social impacts to avoid, minimise or compensate environmental damage associated with the activities.</p>
<p>The Regional Councils Act (No. 22 of 1992)</p>	<p>This Act sets out the conditions under which Regional Councils must be elected and administer each delineated region. From a land use and project planning point of view, their duties include, as described in section 28 “to undertake the planning of the development of the region for which it has been established with a view to physical, social, and economic characteristics, urbanisation patterns, natural resources, economic development potential, infrastructure, land utilisation pattern and sensitivity of the natural environment.</p> <p>The main objective of this Act is to initiate, supervise, manage, and evaluate development.</p>	<p>The relevant Regional Councils are considered to be Interested &amp; Affected Parties and must be consulted during the Environmental Assessment (EA) process. The project site fall under the Khomas Regional Council; therefore, they should be consulted.</p>
<p>Local Authorities Act No. 23 of 1992</p>	<p>To provide for the determination, for purposes of local government, of local authority councils; the establishment of such local authority councils; and to define the powers, duties and functions of local authority councils; and to provide for incidental matters.</p>	<p>The Windhoek Municipality is the Local Authority responsible for the project site. Therefore, the Municipality should ensure that the network tower establishment activities are in compliance with the Act and its Regulations, as relevant to the proposed</p>

Legislation/Policy/ Guideline	Relevant Provisions	Implications for this project
		project.
Atomic Energy and Radiation Protection Act No. 5 of 2005	<p>To provide for adequate protection of the environment and of people in current and future generations against the harmful effects of radiation by controlling and regulating the production, processing, handling, use, holding, storage, transport and disposal of radiation sources and radioactive materials, and controlling and regulating prescribed non-ionising radiation sources; to establish an Atomic Energy Board and to provide for its composition and functions; to establish a National Radiation Protection Authority; to amend the Hazardous Substances Ordinance, 1974 (Ordinance No. 14 of 1974); and to provide for related matters.</p> <p>Under Section 43(1) of the Act, the Non-ionising Radiation Regulations have been made in 2019.</p>	<p>To determine the “safe distance” around the site.</p> <p>The Proponent should comply with the Regulations and requirements of the Act throughout the project life cycle.</p>
The Aviation Act, Act No. 74 of 1962	Gives effect to certain International Aviation Conventions and makes provision for the control, regulation, and encouragement of flying within the Republic of Namibia and for other matters incidental thereto.	Provides the regulations for setting up cellular as well as other masts structures in Namibia.
Civil Aviation Act No. 6 of 2016	“.....; to establish the Air Navigation Services in the Authority; to provide for a civil aviation regulatory and control framework for maintaining, enhancing and promoting the safety and security of civil aviation for ensuring the implementation of international aviation agreements; to establish the Directorate of Aircraft	The applicable part of the Act is the establishment of the Directorate of Aircraft Accident and Incident Investigations and to provide for its powers and functions.



Legislation/Policy/ Guideline	Relevant Provisions	Implications for this project
	<p>Accident and Incident Investigations. <b>Section 6(1) The Minister may, by issuing a directive, require the removal of any building structure, tree or other object whatsoever on any land or water which, in the opinion of the Minister on the advice of the Executive Director, may constitute a danger to aircraft flying</b> in accordance with normal aviation practice.</p>	<p>The height of the proposed tower might be a threat to the nearest aerodrome site. Therefore, the Proponent should verify these prior to construction with the Namibia Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA).</p>
Soil Conservation Act No. 76 of 1969	<p>The Act makes provision for the prevention and control of soil erosion and the protection, improvement and conservation of soil, vegetation and water supply sources and resources, through directives declared by the Minister.</p>	<p>Duty of care must be applied for soil conservation management measures must be included in the EMP.</p>
Forestry Act No. 12 of 2001	<p>The Act provides for the management and use of forests and related products / resources. It offers protection to any living tree, bush or shrub growing within 100 metres of a river, stream or watercourse on land that is not a surveyed erven of a local authority area. In such instances, a licence would be required to cut and remove any such vegetation.</p> <p>These provisions are only guidelines.</p>	<p>Should there be trees within the actual footprint of the site that need to be removed; the Proponent should notify the nearest Department of Environmental Affairs and Forestry (Forestry Division in Windhoek (DEAF)), The number and/or type of trees to be removed to allow the construction of the tower should also be submitted to DEAF. Should these trees be of a protected species, the permit to remove them should be applied from the DEAF office.</p>
Public Health Act (No. 36 of 1919)	<p>Section 119 states that “no person shall cause a nuisance or shall suffer to exist on any land or premises owned or occupied by him</p>	<p>The Proponent and all its employees or contractors should ensure compliance with</p>

Legislation/Policy/ Guideline	Relevant Provisions	Implications for this project
	or of which he is in charge any nuisance or other condition liable to be injurious or dangerous to health.”	the provisions of these legal instruments.
Health and Safety Regulations GN 156/1997 (GG 1617)	Details various requirements regarding health and safety of labourers.	
Public and Environmental Health Act No. 1 of 2015	The Act serves to protect the public from nuisance and states that no person shall cause a nuisance or shall suffer to exist on any land or premises owned or occupied by him or of which he is in charge any nuisance or other condition liable to be injurious or dangerous to health.	<p>The Proponent and their contractors should ensure that the project infrastructure, vehicles, equipment, and machinery are designed and operated in a way that is safe, or not injurious or dangerous to public health and that the noise which could be considered a nuisance remain at acceptable levels.</p> <p>The Proponent should ensure that the public as well as the environmental health is preserved and remain uncompromised.</p>
Pollution Control and Waste Management Bill	<p>The bill aims to “prevent and regulate the discharge of pollutants to the air, water and land” Of particular reference to the Project is: Section 21 “(1) Subject to sub-section (4) and section 22, no person shall cause or permit the discharge of pollutants or waste into any water or watercourse.”</p> <p>Section 55 “(1) No person may produce, collect, transport, sort, recover, treat, store, dispose of or otherwise manage waste in a</p>	<p>The construction and operation/maintenance activities trigger section 21 and 22 of the Bill, activities like construction works generates lots of waste that require good management practices.</p> <p>Contractors of the construction works, and maintenance of the project should make it</p>

Legislation/Policy/ Guideline	Relevant Provisions	Implications for this project
	manner that results in or creates a significant risk of harm to human health or the environment.”	mandatory that they manage their waste in a manner that do not cause environmental threat and risk both to the surroundings and the local communities.
National Solid Waste Management Strategy	The Strategy ensures that the future directions, regulations, funding, and action plans to improve solid waste management are properly co-ordinated and consistent with national policy, and to facilitate co-operation between stakeholders. The Strategy listed priorities for the strategy to address for effective solid waste management.	The construction and operation/maintenance of the tower can potentially generate significant amount of solid waste that might need proper management by contractors to avoid pollution. Waste management plans should be compiled and implemented prior the commencement of civil works and during tower maintenance.
Road Traffic and Transport Act, No. 22 of 1999	The Act provides for the establishment of the Transportation Commission of Namibia; for the control of traffic on public roads, the licensing of drivers, the registration and licensing of vehicles, the control and regulation of road transport across Namibia's borders; and for matters incidental thereto. Should the Proponent wish to undertake activities involving road transportation or access onto existing roads, the relevant permits will be required.	Mitigation measures should be provided for since the project activities will make use of the public roads.
National Heritage Act No. 27 of 2004	The Act makes provision for the protection and conservation of places and objects of heritage significance and the registration of such places and objects. Part V Section 46 of the Act prohibits removal, damage, alteration, or excavation of heritage site or	The Proponent should ensure compliance with this Acts' requirement. The necessary management measures and related permitting requirements must be taken. This

Legislation/Policy/ Guideline	Relevant Provisions	Implications for this project
	remains, while Section 48 sets out the procedure for application and granting of permits such as might be required in the event of damage to a protected site occurring as an inevitable result of development. Part VI Section 55 Paragraphs 3 and 4 require that any person who discovers an archaeological site should notify the National Heritage Council. Section 51 (3) sets out the requirements for impact assessment.	done by consulting with the National Heritage Council of Namibia.
The National Monuments Act (No. 28 of 1969)	The Act enables the proclamation of national monuments and protects archaeological site.	
Labour Act (No. 6 of 1992)	The Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment is aimed at ensuring harmonious labour relations through promoting social justice, occupational health and safety and enhanced labour market services for the benefit of all Namibians. This ministry insures effective implementation of the Labour Act no. 6 of 1992.	The Proponent should ensure that the project construction and operations and maintenance, do not compromise the safety and welfare of workers.
<b>APPLICABLE INTERNATIONAL POLICIES, PRINCIPLES, STANDARDS, GUIDELINES AND CONVENTIONS</b>		
Statue	Provision	Implication for the project and its activities
Convention on International Civil Aviation, Annex 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annex 14 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation.</li> <li>• Chapter 4: Obstacle restrictions and removal</li> </ul>	The proposed new structures may be obstacles to some aerodromes in Namibia. Those that are close to existing aerodromes need to be assessed in accordance with the

Legislation/Policy/ Guideline	Relevant Provisions	Implications for this project
	Chapter 6: Visual aids and donating of obstacles	document. Visual aids to the new structures to make them visible to aircraft need to be applied in accordance with this Convention.
"Guidelines for Limiting Exposure to Time-Varying Electric, Magnetic, and Electromagnetic Fields (up to 300GHz)" (April 1998 developed by the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP))	Provides international standards and guidelines for limiting the adverse effects of non-ionising radiation on human health and well-being, and, where appropriate, provides scientifically based advice on non-ionising radiation protection including the provision of guidelines on limiting exposure. ICNIRP exposure limits for non-ionizing radiation is 4.5W/m <sup>2</sup> .	Justifies the need for assessing the impact of electromagnetic radiation from the tower, on the nearby residents or community members.

The legal requirements above have been listed and explained as per their relevance to the project. The project is being carried in a specific environment that may be affected in terms of its biophysical and social features. Thus, the environmental and social baseline (receiving environment) of the project area is presented under the next chapter.

## 5 ENVIRONMENTAL BASELINE

The proposed tower will be constructed and operated in specific environmental and social conditions, and it is crucial to understand these pre-project conditions of the environment. This will aid in laying down background "information" of the status quo and future projections of environmental conditions after the implementation of the project. This also aids in identifying the sensitive environmental and social features that may need to be protected through the effective implementation of impact specific management and mitigation measures.

The baseline information presented below is sourced from different reports of studies conducted in the Khomas Region, as well those done for Windhoek. The baseline information has also been complemented by review of existing different and relevant data sources conducted in the Region and immediate surroundings of the site. The information has been complemented by raw data obtained from observations made on the site on the 25<sup>th</sup> of November 2021.

The summary of selected biophysical and social baseline information about the project site areas is given below.

### 5.1 Climate

The Khomas region is characterized with a semi-arid highland savannah climate characterized as very hot in summer and moderate dry in winter. Windhoek has fluctuating climatic conditions. Temperature averages between 4 - 32 °C, with December being the hottest month and July the coldest. During the hottest month of the year (December) the average maximum temperatures are at about 30 - 32 °C. During the coldest month (July) the average minimum temperature is 4-6 °C. Rainfall is variable and unpredictable, occurring mostly as thunderstorms, with an average rainfall between 350 – 400 mm per year, characterized by sporadic and unpredictable localised storm events between October and April. The relative humidity during the least humid months of the year (i.e. September and October) is around 10 - 20% and the most humid month is March with 70 - 80% humidity. Namibia is characterized by low humidity in general, and the lack of moisture in the air has a major impact on its climate by reducing cloud cover and rain and increasing the rates of evaporation. Wind direction is predominantly southeasterly. Southerly, easterly and northerly airflow is also common (City of Windhoek, 2015).

## **5.2 Topography**

The regional topography of the area can be described as a wide graben valley sloping north inside the surrounding hilly terrain. The landscape in Windhoek is classified as the Khomas Highland Plateau, which is about 300km inland from the west coast of Namibia, and approximately 1540 metres above sea level (Lahnsteiner & Lempert, 2007). The valley floor is relatively flat compared to the surrounding terrain (Komas Hochland to the west and Eros Mountains to the east) where moderate to steep slopes are the norm. A very distinct mountain range (Auas Mountains) cuts across the valley south of the city and divides the valley into two parts, with the southern part draining to the south. The topography is strongly related to the historic geological structural activities that took place in the area. These can be summarized as a graben structure striking roughly from north to south and thrusting that is evident along the Auas Mountains (Excel Dynamic Solutions, 2019).

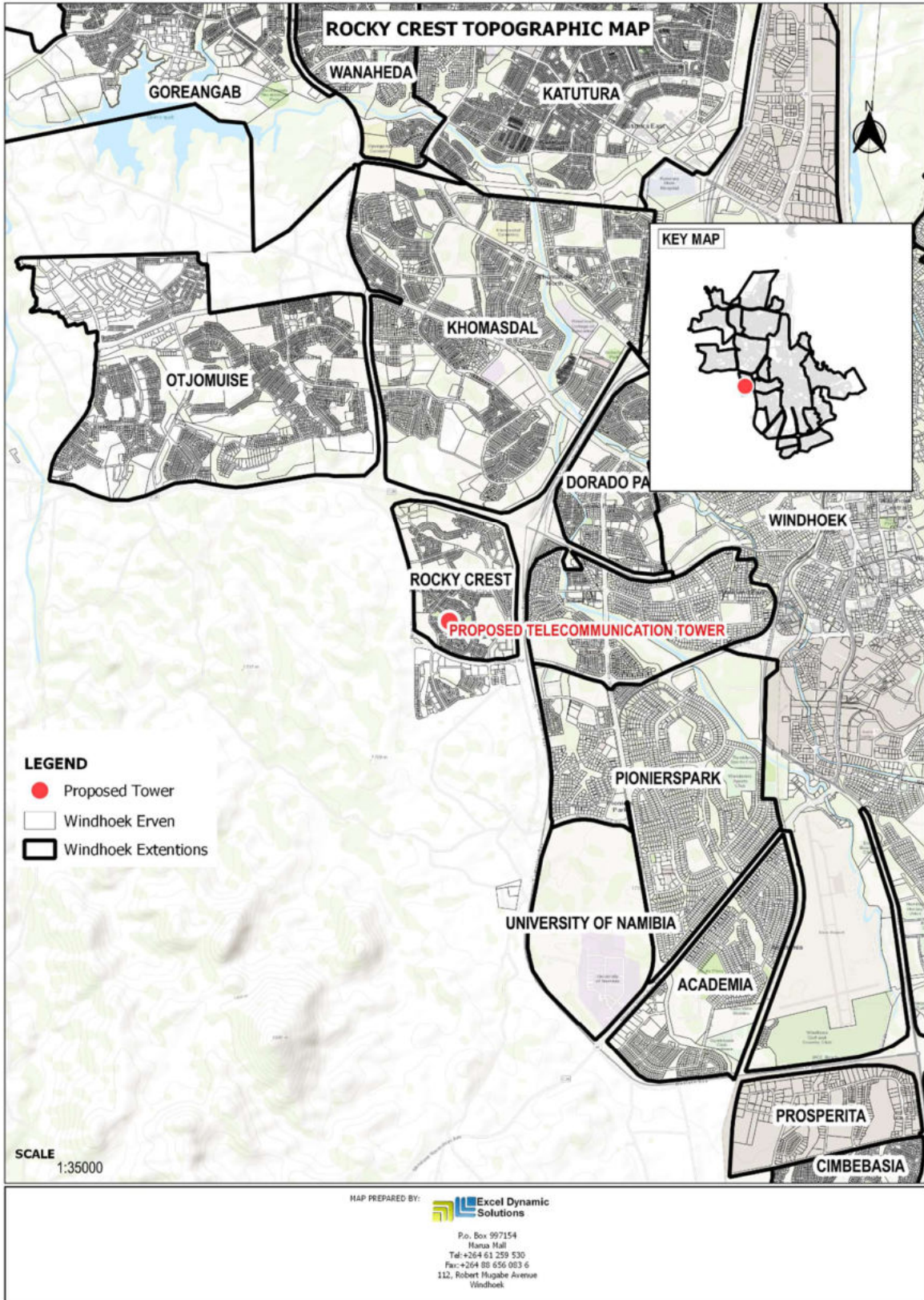


Figure 4: The topography of Rocky crest



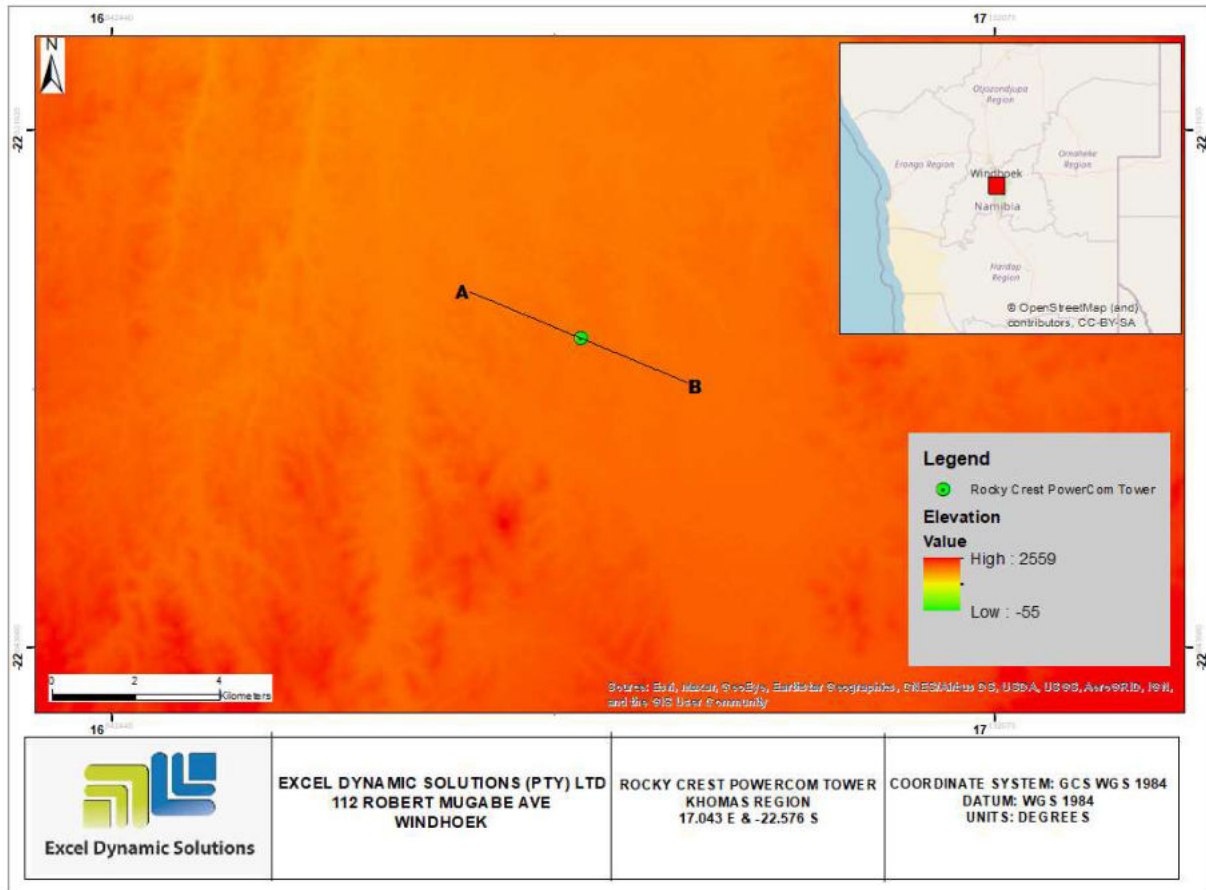


Figure 5: Elevation of the project area

### 5.3 Geology and Soils

The geology of Windhoek area is characterized by Damara Supergroup and Gariiep Complex comprising of rock units such as granites, marbles, schists and quartzites (Excel Dynamic Solutions, 2019). The most dominant soils in the Windhoek area are Lithic Leptosols. The soil cover in the study area is largely shallow and has been derived from the underlying lithologies and is classified as ‘leptosol’ (Mendelsohn, et al 2002) referring to shallow soil cover over hard rocks. ‘Leptosol’ dominate the entire project area.

The proposed site is covered by light grey to light brown sandy loam soils with some small stones in it. Soil cover in the project area is extremely thin (measuring less than 0.5 m thick) and poorly developed. The schist that occurs in the upper 0.5 m is intermediate hard excavation (Gold, Muller and Mitlin, 2001). Due to its thin soil cover and hills the project site is prone to erosion especially considering that the surrounding area has already been cleared for

development. **Figure 6** shows the geological map, **Figure 7** the soil map for the project and **Figure 8** pictures taken during site visit.

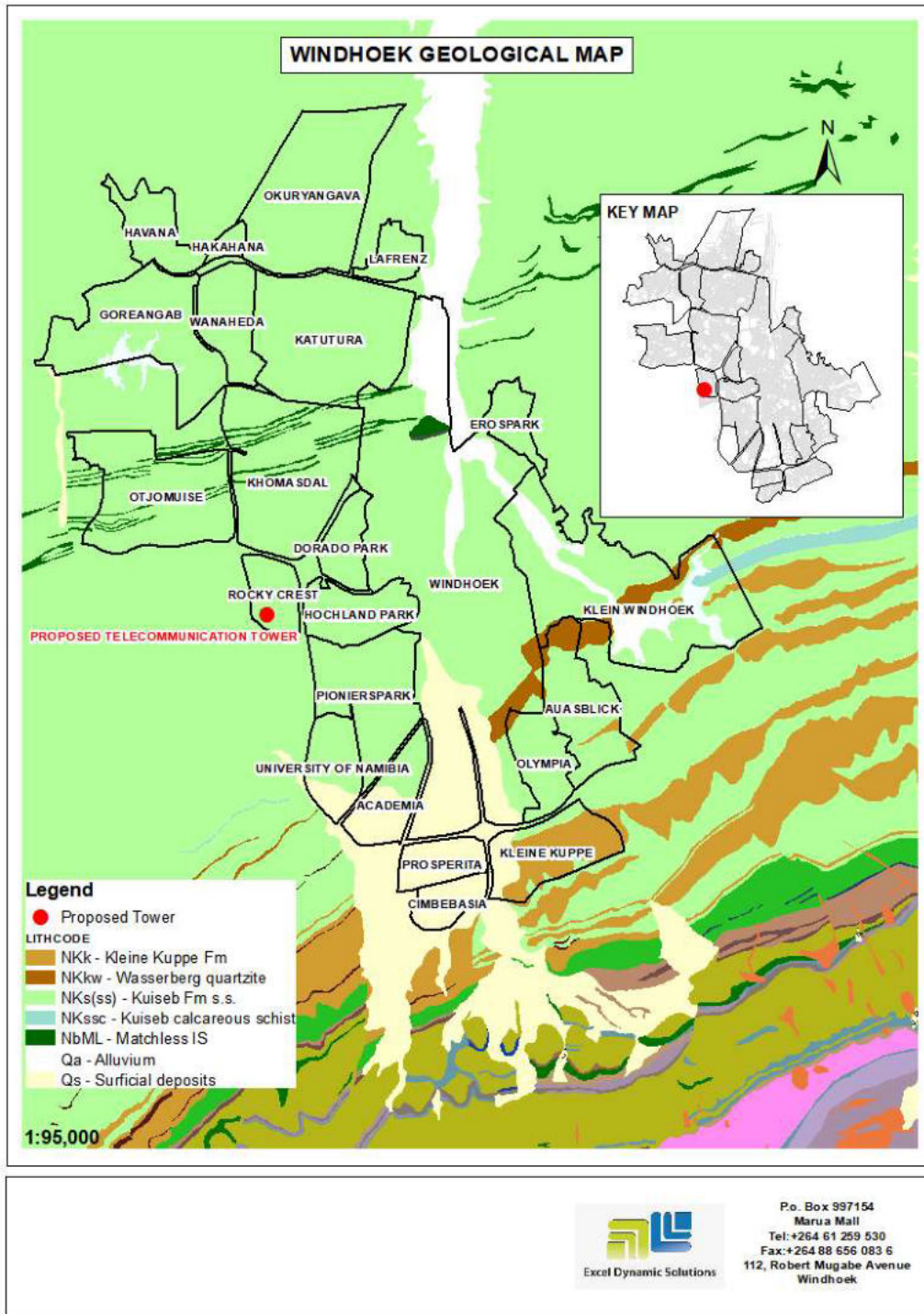


Figure 6: The geology map for Rocky Crest

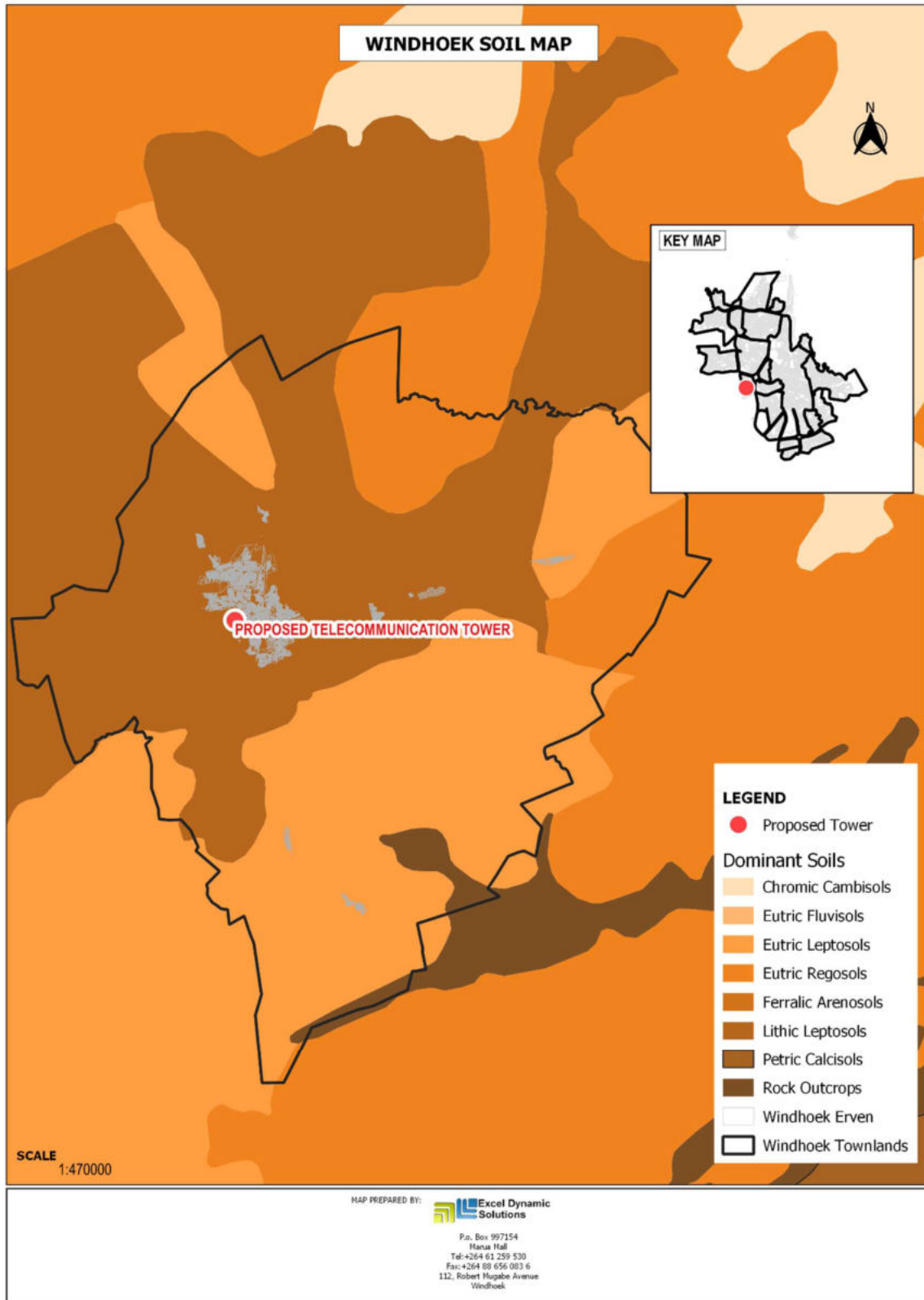


Figure 7: Soil types found around the Proposed site area



(a)



(b)

Figure 8: Evidence of (a) Mica schist and (b) general soil formation at the vicinity of the proposed site

#### 5.4 Flora and Fauna

In terms of fauna, Khomas Region harbors a recorded species number of invertebrates frogs, snakes and geckoes. Most of these organisms occur on the southern portion of the Windhoek Basin (Karijua, 2008). A portion of these is also likely to occur in the vicinity of drainage lines

and other reptiles mainly in rocky habitats such as slopes and ridges. Small mammals occurring in the smaller landscape, encompass several species of bats, shrews, mice, gerbils, hares, mongooses, rats, rock dassies, porcupines, ground squirrels and black backed jackal. Antelope detections include kudu, duiker and steenbok. Herds of baboons are regular within the City of Windhoek (Stubenrauch Planning Consultants, 2004). In addition, there are also cattle and game farming is prominent in the outskirts of Windhoek.

In terms of flora, the area in Windhoek lies in the centre of the Highland savanna vegetation and the vegetation is complex and varies (Karijua, 2008). The vegetation within the vicinity of the proposed tower comprises mainly, vegetation of Highland Shrubland. The Highland Shrubland comprises mainly shrubs and low trees. **Figure 9** shows the map of vegetation for the project area.

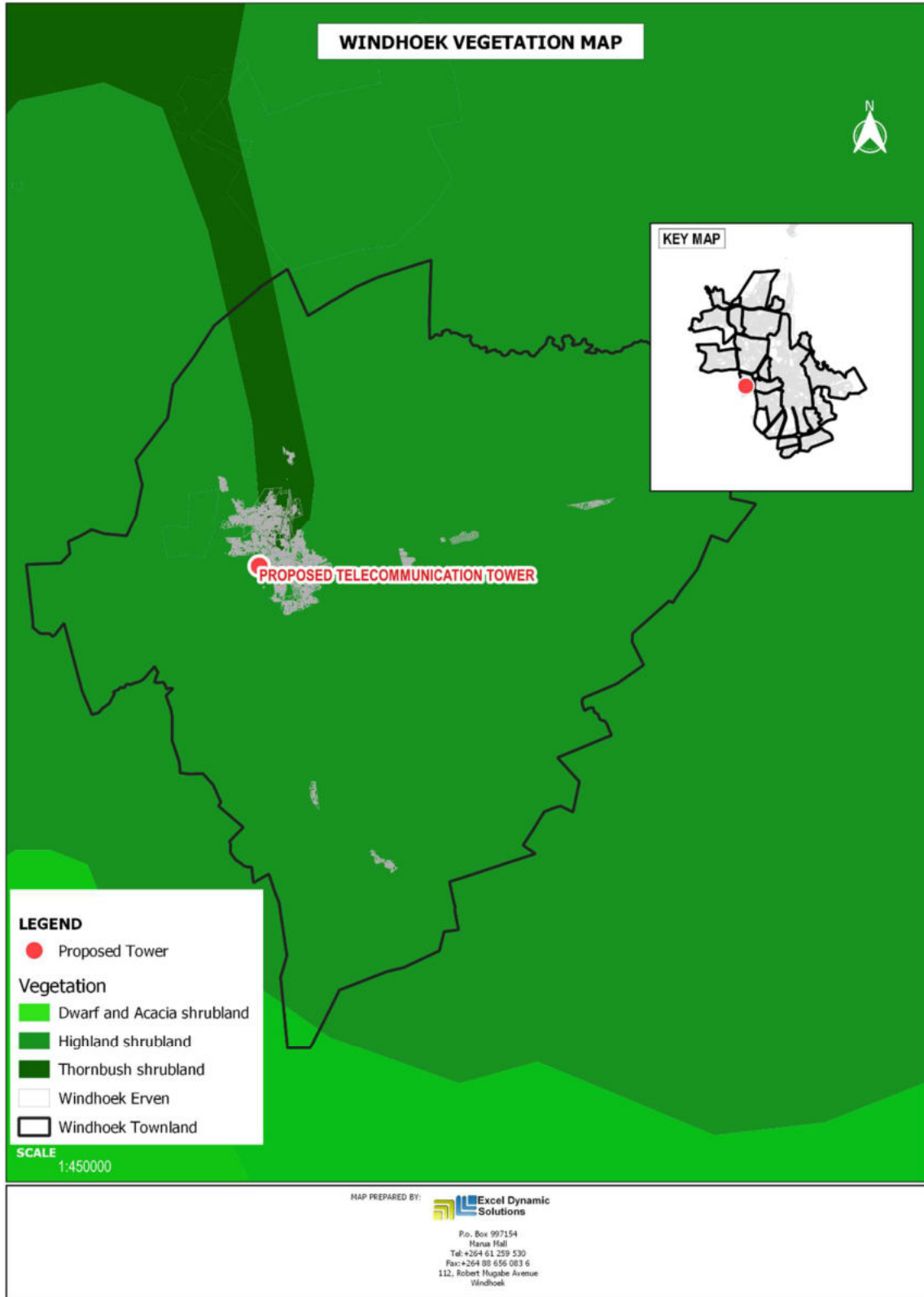


Figure 9: The vegetation type around Rocky Crest



Figure 10: Typical vegetation structure found around the proposed site

## 5.5 Socio-economic Status

**Population:** The Rocky Crest suburb area of Windhoek falls under the Windhoek West Constituency of the Khomas Region. The population of Windhoek was recorded at approximately 325, 858 during the 2011 Housing and Population Census. The regional growth rate indicated that Khomas region's population have rapidly increased.

**Tourism:** Various tourist attractions exist within Windhoek such as the Christ Church (a germ Lutheran church constructed from local sandstone in 1907), Heinitzburg Castle, National Museum and more located in the city centre as well various tourist accommodation establishments. Most of these attractions are dedicated to the country's anticolonial and independence struggle.

**Surrounding Land Uses:** The site proposed for network tower erection is located on Erf R/527 Rocky Crest. The site is located at least 250 m away from the boundary of existing houses in the area, and is within the extensions of the Windhoek Municipal jurisdiction.

**Services Infrastructure:** Khomas Region has the basic infrastructure necessary for transportation and telecommunication, while water and electricity are supplied to the urban areas. Windhoek forms an important railway junction, linking the city with the rest of the country's rail network as well as South Africa. Windhoek is centrally located, and the major national roads connect Windhoek to Namibia's southern, eastern and northern neighbours. Hosea Kutako International Airport, is located approximately 35k m east of Windhoek, while Eros Airport, located within the city, links Windhoek to the rest of Namibia (KRC, 2001).





Figure 11: Land use map of the proposed tower area in Rocky Crest

## **5.6 Telecommunications**

It is priority for the Government to maintain and upgrade the telecommunication systems in an optimised way. For historical reasons, physical infrastructure in Namibia has been unequally distributed, to the disadvantage of indigenous Namibians. Significant improvement in infrastructure distribution has taken place around the country, however, a proportion of the urban residents continue to live without access to basic services such as water supply, adequate sanitation, electricity supply, and telecommunication services.

The country generally has wide coverage of telecommunication service provision by various service providers. However, some citizens still experience network access issues, which indicate the need for new and enhanced telecommunication infrastructure.

Residence of city of Windhoek is well connected to the world through different local network service provider. The main providers of this service in the town are Telecom Namibia and Mobile Telecommunications Company (MTC Namibia).

## 6 PUBLIC CONSULTATION PROCESS

Public consultation forms an important component of an Environmental Assessment (EA) process. Public consultation provides potential Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) with an opportunity to comment on and raise any issues relevant to the project for consideration as part of the assessment process. Public consultation has been done in accordance with the EMA and EIA Regulations.

The public consultation process assists the Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) in identifying all potential impacts and to what extent further investigations are needed. Public consultation can also aid in the process of identifying possible mitigation measures.

### 6.1 Registered Interested and Affected Parties (IAPs)

The Consultant identified relevant and applicable national, regional, and local authorities, local leaders, and other interested members of the public. Pre-identified IAPs were contacted directly, while other parties who contacted the Consultant after project advertisement notices in the newspapers, were registered as IAPs upon their request. Newspaper notices of the proposed tower construction activities were placed in two widely read national newspapers in the region (*The Namibian* and *New Era* Newspapers). The project advertisement/announcement ran for two consecutive weeks inviting members of the public to register as IAPs and submit their comments. The summary of pre-identified and registered IAPs is listed below and the complete list of IAPs is provided in **Appendix D**. The list of pre-identified and registered I&APs is listed in **Table 3** below.

**Table 3: Summary of pre-identified Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs)**

National (Ministries and State Owned Enterprises)
Ministry of Environment and Tourism
Ministry of Information and Communication Technology
Ministry of Urban and Rural Development
Ministry of Works and Transport
Ministry of Health and Social Services

Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform
National Radiation Protection Authority
Roads Authority
Namibia Civil Aviation Authority
CRAN
<b>Regional &amp; Local</b>
Khomas Regional Council
Windhoek West Constituency
Windhoek Municipality
<b>General Public</b>
Interested members of the public / Neighbours

## 6.2 Communication with I&APs

Regulation 21 of the EIA Regulations details the steps to be taken during a public consultation process and these have been used in guiding this process. Communication with IAPs with regards to the proposed development was facilitated through the following means and in this order:

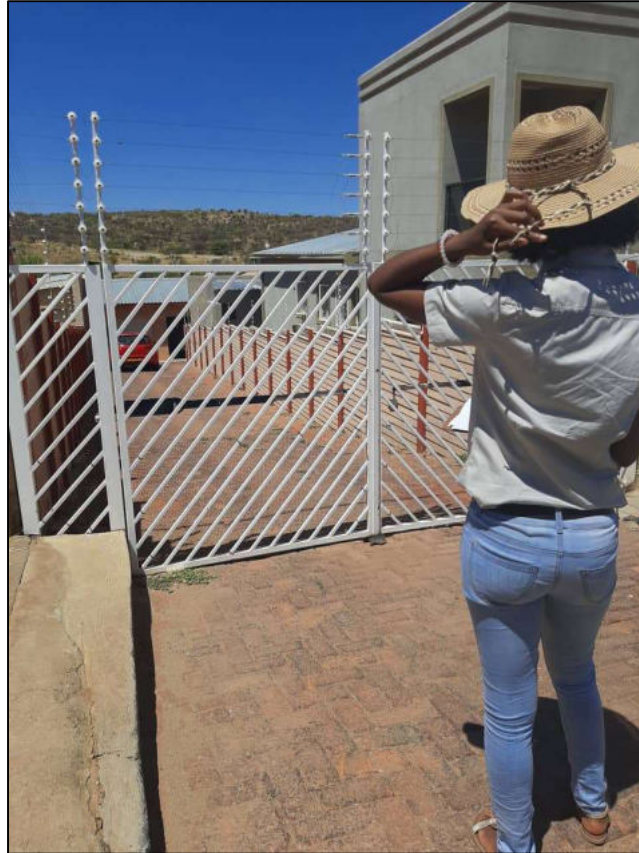
- A Background Information Document (BID) containing brief information about the proposed facility was compiled (**Appendix E**) and circulated to relevant pre-identified authorities (stakeholders), and upon request to all new registered IAPs,
- Project Environmental Assessment notices were published in *The Namibian newspaper* and *New Era* on 15 and 22 November 2021) - **Appendix F**, briefly explaining the activity and its locality, inviting members of the public to register as IAPs and submit their comments/concerns.
- Public site notices (size A3) were placed at different areas close to the site (**Figure 12**), to inform members of the public of the EIA process and register as IAPs, as well as submit comments.



(a)



Figure 12: Site Notice placed at (a) Rocky Crest shopping centre and (b) Rocky Crest High School



**Figure 13: House-to-house consultation conducted in the area of Rocky Crest on the 25 November 2021**

### 6.3 Public Consultation & Immediate Neighbours' Survey (Forms)

A public consultation meeting is one of the most important component of public consultation process as it brings the consultant and affected members of the public (particularly from the affected site area) together. The meeting is usually done in an interactive session form so that the community members or members of the public can express their opinions, give their concerns, and make suggestions to the proposed project.

Given the lack of interest in registration as IAPs by the public and experience with previous similar project where the public shows little to no interest especially attending public meetings of such nature, no public meeting was held.

Subsequently, the Environmental Consultant arranged for a direct or neighbouring property/house-to-property/house or institution/office survey on the 25<sup>th</sup> of November 2021 (**Figure 13**) in the respective project area to introduce the immediate neighbours to the proposed project as well as the ESA/EIA process. This was done as follows:

- A house-to-house survey was undertaken by explaining the EIA process and importance of public consultation to the available residents. The hard copies of the BID and Comments sheet were than circulated to the immediate houses bordering the planned site and the BID delivery registry was signed as proof.

The signed BID and Comments Sheet delivery forms are attached hereto as **Appendix G**.

### 6.4 Stakeholders and Public Consultation Feedback

The only feedback received by EDS as a response to newspaper adverts, emails sent to pre-identified letters with BIDs sent to the relevant national and regional authorities was an acknowledgement letter of receipt from the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology and notification to submit the ECC application to MEFT. This letter is attached as **Appendix H**.



## 7 IMPACT IDENTIFICATION, ASSESSMENT AND MITIGATION MEASURES

### 7.1 Identification of Potential Impacts

The proposed activities are usually associated with potential positive and negative impacts. For an environmental assessment, the focus is mainly placed on the negative impacts. This is done to ensure that these impacts are addressed by providing adequate mitigation measures such that an impact's significance is brought under control, while maximizing the positive impacts of the project to promote sustainable development and environmental and social protection. The potential positive and negative impacts that have been identified are listed as follow:

#### **Positive impacts:**

- **Telecommunications convenience:** Current and future residents (mobile users) will have an improved infrastructure and will not have to struggle with network coverage.
- **Employment creation:** Creation of a few temporary jobs during the construction of the tower.
- **General contribution to local economic development** through reliable communications services.

#### **Negative impacts:**

- **Physical land / soil disturbance:** excavation activities to erect the tower could potentially lead to site soils' disturbance.
- **Noise:** During tower' construction, the presence of the construction team and movement of heavy vehicles and machinery may disturb the immediate neighbours to the site.
- **Visual impact:** The presence of the tower in the neighbourhood may be a nuisance to locals.
- **Impacts to Human Health:** Electromagnetic Radiation emitted from the antennae of cellular structures may affect human health.
- **Potential occupational health and safety risks** associated with mishandling of construction and operations equipment.
- **Civil Aviation concerns:** The proposed site designs and location need to be verified to ensure that it meets the approval of the Directorate of Civil Aviation regarding the height of the masts and the position and stability of transmitters.
- **Environmental pollution** from improper disposal of waste generated during construction and maintenance phases.

- **Vehicular traffic safety** from increased number of vehicles moving around the project site and slow-moving trucks transporting project structures during construction, and
- **Archaeological or cultural heritage impact** through unintentional uncovering of unknown archaeological objects or site by certain project activities such as excavation (the minimal site works).
- **Waste Generation** from improper disposal of waste generated during construction and maintenance.
- **Dust Generation** from construction works and vehicular traffic
- **Loss of Avifaunal Biodiversity**

## 7.2 Impact Assessment Methodology

The Environmental Assessment is primarily a process used to ensure that potential impacts that may occur from project activity are identified and addressed with environmentally cautious approaches and legal compliance. The impact assessment method used for this project is in accordance with Namibia's Environmental Management Legislation (Environmental Management Act No. 7 of 2007) and its EIA Regulations of 2012.

### 7.2.1 Impact Assessment Criteria

The identified impacts were assessed in terms of probability (likelihood of occurring), scale/extent (spatial scale), magnitude (severity) and duration (temporal scale) as presented in **Table 4**. To enable a scientific approach to the determination of the environmental significance, a numerical value is linked to each rating scale. This methodology ensures uniformity and that potential impacts can be addressed in a standard manner so that a wide range of impacts are comparable. It is assumed that an assessment of the significance of a potential impact is a good indicator of the risk associated with such an impact. The following process will be applied to each potential impact:

- Provision of a brief explanation of the impact.
- Assessment of the pre-mitigation significance of the impact; and
- Description of recommended mitigation measures.

The recommended mitigation measures prescribed for each of the potential impacts contribute towards the attainment of environmentally sustainable operational conditions of the project for

various features of the biophysical and social environment. The following criteria (**Table 4**) were applied in this impact assessment:

**Table 4: Impact Assessment Criteria employed to assess the potential negative impacts**

Nature	Description	Rating
<b>Extent (Spatial scale)</b>	An indication of the physical and spatial scale of the impact.	<p><b>Low (1):</b> Impact is localized within the site boundary: Site only.</p> <p><b>Low/Medium (2):</b> Impact is beyond the site boundary: Local.</p> <p><b>Medium (3):</b> Impacts felt within adjacent biophysical and social environments: Regional.</p> <p><b>Medium/High (4):</b> Impact widespread far beyond site boundary: Regional</p> <p><b>High (5):</b> Impact extend National or over international boundaries.</p>
<b>Duration</b>	The timeframe, over which the impact is expected to occur, measured in relation to the lifetime of the project.	<p><b>Low (1):</b> Immediate mitigating measures, immediate progress</p> <p><b>Low/Medium (2):</b> Impact is quickly reversible, short-term impacts (0-5 years)</p> <p><b>Medium (3):</b> Reversible over time; medium term (5-15 years).</p> <p><b>Medium/High (4):</b> Impact is long-term.</p> <p><b>High (5):</b> Long term; beyond closure; permanent; irreplaceable or irretrievable commitment of resources</p>
<b>Intensity, Magnitude / Severity (Qualitative criteria)</b>	The degree or magnitude to which the impact alters the functioning of an element of the environment. The magnitude of alteration can either be positive	<p><b>Medium/low (4):</b> Low deterioration, slight noticeable alteration in habitat and biodiversity. Little loss in species numbers.</p> <p><b>Low (2):</b> Minor deterioration,</p>

Nature	Description	Rating
	or negative	nuisance or irritation, minor change in species / habitat / diversity or resource, no or very little quality deterioration.
<b>Probability of occurrence</b>	Probability describes the likelihood of the impacts occurring. This determination is based on previous experience with similar project and/or based on professional judgment	<p><b>Low (1):</b> Improbable; low likelihood; seldom. No known risk or vulnerability to natural or induced hazards.</p> <p><b>Medium/low (2):</b> Likely to occur from time to time. Low risk or vulnerability to natural or induced hazards.</p> <p><b>Medium (3):</b> Possible, distinct possibility, frequent. Low to medium risk or vulnerability to natural or induced hazards.</p> <p><b>Medium/High (4):</b> Probable if mitigating measures are not implemented. Medium risk of vulnerability to natural or induced hazards.</p> <p><b>High (5):</b> Definite (regardless of preventative measures), highly likely, continuous. High risk or vulnerability to natural or induced hazards.</p>

**7.2.2 Impact Significance**

After the impact has been assessed, its significance is then determined. The impact significance is determined through a synthesis of the above impact characteristics (in Table 3 above). The significance of the impact “without mitigation” is the main determinant of the nature and degree of mitigation required. Once the above factors (**Table 4**) have been ranked for each potential impact, the impact significance of each is assessed using the following formula:

$$SP = (magnitude + duration + scale) \times probability$$

The maximum value per potential impact is 100 significance points (SP). Potential impacts were rated as high, moderate, or low significance, based on the following significance rating scale (Table 5).

**Table 5: Significance rating scale**

<b>Significance</b>	<b>Environmental Significance Points</b>	<b>Colour Code</b>
High (positive)	>60	H
Medium (positive)	30 to 60	M
Low (positive)	<30	L
Neutral	0	N
Low (negative)	>-30	L
Medium (negative)	-30 to -60	M
High (negative)	>-60	H

**Positive (+)** – Beneficial impact

**Negative (-)** – Deleterious/ adverse Impact

**Neutral** – Impacts are neither beneficial nor adverse.

For an impact with a significance rating of high (-ve), mitigation measures are recommended to reduce the impact to a medium (-ve) or low (-ve) significance rating, provided that the impact with a medium significance rating can be sufficiently controlled with the recommended mitigation measures. To maintain a low or medium significance rating, monitoring is recommended for a period to enable the confirmation of the significance of the impact as low or medium and under control.

The assessment of the construction and operational phases is done for pre-mitigation and post-mitigation.

The risk/impact assessment is driven by three factors:

- **Source: The cause or source of the contamination**

- **Pathway: The route taken by the source to reach a given receptor**
- **Receptor: A person, animal, plant, eco-system, property or a controlled water source. If contamination is to cause harm or impact, it must reach a receptor.**

The potential negative impacts stemming from the proposed activities are described, assessed and management/mitigation measures provided thereof. Further mitigation measures in a form of management action plans are provided in the Draft EMP.

### 7.3 Assessment of Potential Negative Impacts: Construction & Operations

The main potential negative impacts associated with the construction, operation and maintenance phases of the tower are identified and assessed below:

#### 7.3.1 Soil Disturbance (Land Degradation) and Pollution

The excavations and land clearing to enable erection of project structures and installation of services will potentially result in soil disturbance which will leave the site soils exposed and vulnerable to erosion. This impact would be probable at site areas with no to little vegetation cover to hold the soils in place. The movement of heavy vehicles and equipment may lead to compaction of the soils during construction phase. This will however be short-term and localized impact.

There is also a potential of soil pollution from accidental spills or leaks of fuel from project vehicles and machinery.

The potential impact can be rated as medium if no mitigation measures are implemented. However, with the effective implementation of mitigation measures and monitoring, the impact significance will be reduced to low. The impact is assessed in **Table 6**.

**Table 6: Assessment of the impacts of construction activities on site and surrounding soils**

Mitigation Status	Extent	Duration	Intensity	Probability	Significance
Pre mitigation	M - 3	M/H - 4	L/M - 4	M/H - 4	M - 44
Post mitigation	L/M - 2	L/M - 2	L - 2	L/M - 2	L - 12

#### ***Mitigations and recommendation to minimize soil disturbance and pollution***

- The topsoil that was stripped from certain site areas to enable construction works and can be returned to its initial position, should be returned. This is to avoid unnecessary stockpiling of site soils which would leave them prone to erosion.
- All possible trenches excavated for construction on site should be rehabilitated and returned to their pre-excavation state as far as possible.
- Soils that are not within the intended footprints of the site areas should be left undisturbed and soil conservation implemented as far as possible.
- Project vehicles/machinery should stick to temporary access roads provided and or meant for the project works but not to unnecessarily create further tracks on and around the site by driving everywhere which would result in compaction of site' and surrounding soils.
- In an event that any of the substances mentioned above, spill on the soil, the contaminated soil should be cleaned up immediately and dispose of in a designated hazardous waste bin and transported to the nearest approved landfill site. The contaminated and removed soil should be replaced with clean soil.

### **7.3.2 Potential Impact on Human Health: Radiation**

Although tower operational phase health concerns were not specifically raised as a concern during the public participation process, it is a national and international topic that requires investigation, as the tower will be in proximity to some of community members (houses and school).

According to Carstens and Kuliwoye (2012), electromagnetic radiation is emitted from electrical appliances commonly used in most homes today, such as televisions, radios, cell phones, microwave ovens, electrical blankets, and computers. Studies have shown that transceiver base stations emit weaker electromagnetic radiation than most household daily appliances i.e. microwave or cell phone used close to your body.

The health authorities around the world, including Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA) and the World Health Organization (WHO), have examined the scientific evidence regarding possible health effects from signal transmitting tower. Current research indicates that there are no established health effects from the low radio frequency electromagnetic emission (RF EME) exposure encountered by the public from broadcast tower (Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency, 2015).

Despite the above information from ARPANSA, the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNRP) provides guidance on protecting against the adverse health effects associated with electromagnetic fields (EMF) or electromagnetic emission (EME). These guidelines are based on short-term, immediate health effects such as stimulation of peripheral nerve muscles, shocks and burn caused by touching conducting objects, and elevated tissue temperatures resulting from absorption of energy during exposure to EMF/EME.

The National Radiation Protection Authority of Namibia (NRPA) under the Ministry of Health and Social Services (MHSS) is the responsible or regulatory authority that is tasked with the administration of the Atomic Energy and Radiation Protection Act (Act 5 of 2005). The Act specifically requires that account be taken of any guidelines published by ICNIRP regarding the radiation risks associated with Base Transceiver Station structures (National Radiation Protection Authority, Unknown date). The health impacts of radiation are explained for both short- and long-term in the Energy Board of Namibia Directive. These effects are summarized (as per the afore-mentioned Directive) as follows:

#### **A. Short-term Radiation (Health) effects**

The basic restrictions on the effects of exposure are based on established health effects. Different scientific bases were used in the development of basic exposure restrictions for various frequency ranges. Depending on the frequency, the physical quantities used to specify the basic restrictions on exposure to EMF are current density, SAR (Specific Energy Absorption Rate), and power density. For further information on the short-term effect.

The significance of this impact can be regarded as medium to high but can be reduced to a low significance rating by ensuring that the sufficient mitigations measures governed by the national and international legal standards such as International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) on infrastructure EMR emissions are adequately implemented.

#### **B. Long-term Radiation (Health) Effects**

In the case of potential long-term health effects of exposure, such as an increased risk of cancer, ICNIRP conducted that the available data are insufficient to provide a basis for this setting exposure restriction. Thus, the ICNIRP guidelines alone should not be used as a basis for protection against non-thermal effects or long-term biological effects.

The significance of this impact is considered medium to high because the long-term effect is unknown. In the context of the above, a cautionary approach is adopted, and the Precautionary Principle, which states that if an action or policy has a suspected risk of causing harm to the



public or to the environment, in the absence of scientific consensus that the action or policy is harmful, the burden of proof that it is not harmful falls on those taking the action. The effective implementation of measures, the impact significance can be significantly reduced to medium and eventually low. The assessment is shown in **Table 7**.

Therefore, ICNIRP uses a reduction factor of 10 to derive at occupational limits for workers and a factor of about 50 to arrive at exposure limits for the public. This factor serves as a precautionary buffer to compensate for uncertainties in the research. By adhering to the threshold levels of ICNIRP, the precautionary measures should be sufficient to adequately address this impact. However, the risk will not be abolished, and it is recommended that the Proponent keep up to date with regards to any new literature published by ICNIRP.

**It is also very crucial that the Proponent to familiarize themselves with the soon to be gazetted Non-ionising Radiation Regulations, 2019: Atomic Energy and Radiation Protection Act, 2005 attached under Appendix I of this Report.**

**Table 7: Assessment of the tower on human health (Short and Long-term radiation)**

Mitigation Status	Extent	Duration	Intensity	Probability	Significance
Pre mitigation	M – 3	H – 5	M/H – 8	M/H – 4	M – 64
Post mitigation	L/M – 2	L/M – 2	L/M – 4	L/M – 2	L - 16

***Mitigations and recommendation to minimize the potential radiation impact on human health***

- The Proponent should ensure that the tower construction and its EMR are within the international standards of The Atomic Energy and Radiation Protection Act, Act 5 of 2005 and Guidelines for Limiting Exposure to Time-Varying Electric, Magnetic, and Electromagnetic Fields (April 1998 developed by the International Commission on ICNIRP).
- The design standards to be applied for the tower should comply with the internationally accepted public exposure guidelines.
- The National Radiation Protection Authority should be involved during the operational phase to assess the possible emissions from the tower.

### 7.3.3 Potential Impact on Civil Aviation

Potential impact on civil aviation is attributed to the height and location of the site. Generally, the effective utilisation of an aerodrome can significantly be influenced by natural features and man-made constructions inside and outside its boundary. These features may result in limitations on the distance available for take-off and landing and on the range of meteorological conditions in which take-off and landing can be undertaken. For these reasons certain areas of the local airspace are regarded as integral parts of the aerodrome environment (Carstens and Kuliwoye, 2012).

According to GCS Water & Environmental Consultants (2017), a decrease in aviation safety could have severe impacts on third parties considering the potential for injury, death or damage/loss of third party property associated with aviation accidents. In this regard, the consequences of potential incidents would affect families and communities beyond the project boundary and lifespan. The Civil Aviation Standards of the ICAO dictate that all obstructions to be erected within 8 km from an airport need to be approved by the applicable Civil Aviation Authority.

The proposed height of the tower is 25 m and the Namibia Civil Aviation Regulations (NAMCARS) require that erected structures/obstacle should not be higher than 45 m above the mean level of the landing area. The height of the tower is well within the height limit, therefore complies with the NAMCARS. Without the implementation of any mitigation measures can be considered slightly medium and upon the implementation of the mitigation measures, the impact will receive a low significance rating.

In terms of tower heights, the national Civil Aviation Authority (Namibia Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA)) and Civil Aviation Standards of the ICAO dictate that all obstructions to be erected within 15 km and 8 km from an airport / aerodrome reference point, respectively should be authorized. The proposed site (obstruction) are all located within 8 km from the Eros Airstrip. The project site lies about 5 km southeast from the Eros Airport, therefore, the approval from the NCAA will be required. Additionally, the Civil Aviation Authority will need to be consulted throughout the project lifetime.

Without the implementation of any mitigation measures, the impact will receive a medium significance rating, and upon implementing the measures, this significance will be reduced to low. This impact is assessed in **Table 8** below.

**Table 8: Assessment of the tower presence on civil aviation**

Mitigation Status	Extent	Duration	Intensity	Probability	Significance
Pre mitigation	M - 3	M/H - 4	L/M - 4	M/H - 4	M - 44
Post mitigation	L/M - 2	L/M - 2	L/M - 4	L/M - 2	L - 16

#### ***Mitigations and recommendation to minimize the impact on civil aviation safety***

- The designs and locations of the proposed tower should be verified to ensure that it meets the approval of the Namibia Civil Aviation Authority regarding the tower heights and the positions in the area.
- Civil Aviation Standards of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) pertaining to the network tower structure should be adhered to.
- The Regulations of Namibian Aviation Act No. 74 of 1962 for setting up cellular tower in Namibia should be complied with.
- The Proponent **should apply for the approval or permit to erect the tower, especially that it is less than 8 km distance from the Eros Airstrip** (as per ICAO requirements).

#### **7.3.4 Visual Impact**

Telecommunication tower usually cause a visual impact on the social environment. PowerCom intends to camouflage the network tower to make it less of a nuisance. If not planned properly, the network tower's presence will contrast the surrounding landscape and thus potentially become a visual nuisance to residents and travelers in the areas. Currently and with no measures implemented, the visual impact can be rated as of medium significance. However, upon effectively implementing the measures, it will be significantly reduced to low. The impact is assessed **Table 9**.

**Table 9: Assessment of the visual impacts of the network tower**

Mitigation Status	Extent	Duration	Intensity	Probability	Significance
Pre mitigation	L/M - 2	L/M - 2	L/M - 4	M - 3	M - 24
Post mitigation	L - 1	L - 1	L - 2	L/M - 2	L - 8

#### ***Mitigations and recommendation to minimize visual impact***

- The Proponent should ensure to camouflage the tower to cause less of a visual nuisance.

- All the necessary options to improve the aesthetic of the site should be considered so that it blends in with the surrounding area or at least enhance it for a better appeal to the public.

### 7.3.5 Loss of Biodiversity

The most potentially affected fauna in tower erection projects are birds. According to Partners in Flight (2020), each year, approximately 7 million birds collide with communication towers in North America. Migrating songbirds are attracted to and disoriented by non-flashing obstruction warning lights on towers, especially on foggy and cloudy nights. Birds attracted to lights fly close to towers and often suffer collisions with guy wires or tower structures. However, birds are much less attracted to flashing tower lights and elimination of the non-flashing tower lights reduces the numbers of bird collisions by as much as 70%.

The proposed tower site in Rocky Crest, Windhoek, is located a few meters away from the nearest residential area, on an elevated piece of shrub land, with no major natural open water sources where birds would fly over, in the near vicinity of the site. Therefore, the impact is minimal. However, this does not rule out the possibility of the area and its surroundings being a migratory route for birds. In that case, the presence of the tower may impact such birds.

Before consideration of mitigation measures, the existence of a tower could lead to potential collision of birds, causing mortality among affected bird species. This impact has a Medium Significance rating, but if care is taken in handling equipment around vegetation on site, the impact will significantly be reduced to a low rating. The assessment of this impact is presented in **Table 10**. The recommended mitigation measures are presented below.

**Table 10: Assessment of the impacts of the presence of the tower on avifauna**

Mitigation Status	Extent	Duration	Intensity	Probability	Significance
Pre mitigation	L/M - 2	L/M - 2	M - 6	M - 3	M - 30
Post mitigation	L - 1	L - 1	L - 2	L - 1	L - 4

#### ***Mitigations and recommendation to minimize the loss of avifauna***

- Although there are already other structures that could already be contributing to the impact (such as existing towers and power lines), the cumulative impacts of the new tower in relation to the existing power lines and associated structures in the area are an important consideration to minimize the impact on birds.

- Migratory bird attraction and energy costs can be further minimized by eliminating continuously burning security lights under towers. Many tower operators use down-shielded, motion sensor-triggered security lighting, which promotes tower safety, reduces energy costs, and reduces the possibility of attracting migratory birds.
- Flashing lights would not only minimize migratory bird collisions but also maintain aircraft safety while decreasing tower lighting costs and maintenance costs.
- Other proper measures on minimizing bird mortalities by the telecommunication towers should be developed and implemented.

### 7.3.6 Dust Generation

Dust emanating from site access roads when transporting project equipment, materials, and supply to and from site (time-to-time) may compromise the air quality in the area. Vehicular movements create dust even although it is not always so severe. Not only dust but also the possible emissions of gases from heavy vehicles and machinery. These sources of dust and emissions may lead to air pollution, thus decreasing the air quality in the local project area. This could contribute to short-term decrease in air quality around the working site areas.

The tower site is relatively small and localised, and the period for construction works, short. Therefore, given the relatively limited footprint size and short construction timeframe, dust, and gas emissions during the tower construction would be minimal and short-term in nature. Therefore, can be rated as low to slightly medium (significance) if no mitigation measures are implemented. However, once this is done, the impact significance can be reduced to low - please refer to the assessment below (**Table 11**).

**Table 11: Assessment of the impacts of the construction activities on air quality**

Mitigation Status	Extent	Duration	Intensity	Probability	Significance
Pre mitigation	M - 3	M/H - 4	M - 6	M - 3	M – 49
Post mitigation	L - 1	L - 1	L - 2	L/M - 2	L – 8

#### ***Mitigations and recommendation to minimize dust generation***

- Construction and delivery vehicles should not drive at a speed more than 40 km/h on unpaved/untarred roads to avoid dust generation around and within the site areas.

- The Proponent should ensure that the construction work schedule is limited to the given number of days of the week to keep the vehicle-related dust level minimal in the area.
- Dust control measures such as reasonable amount of water spray should be used on gravel roads and near specific exposed areas of work on site to suppress the dust that may be emanating from certain project activities on site.
- Dust masks, eye protective glasses and other respiratory personal protective equipment (PPE) such as face masks should be provided to the workers carrying out potential dust generating activities such as excavation, where they are exposed to dust.

### 7.3.7 Noise

Noise generated by project related vehicles and equipment during construction and operational phase can be a nuisance to the neighbours. This impact is regarded as of minimal significance given the fact that even construction work will only be limited to certain days of the week (Monday – Friday) for the duration of the construction period. Construction related noise will be limited to the working hours between 8am and 5pm. Therefore, the noise level is bound to be limited to the site, affecting the immediate neighbours to the site. The impact can be rated as low to medium significant if no mitigation measures are implemented, but upon implementation, the impact will be of low significance. This impact is assessed in **Table 12** below.

**Table 12: Assessment of the noise impact**

Mitigation Status	Extent	Duration	Intensity	Probability	Significance
Pre mitigation	L/M - 2	L/M - 2	M - 6	M - 3	M – 30
Post mitigation	L - 1	L/M - 2	L - 2	L/M - 2	L – 10

### Mitigations and recommendation to disturbance

- Noise from vehicles and equipment on site should be reduced to acceptable levels.
- Construction and operational hours should be restricted to between 08h00 and 17h00 to avoid noise by vehicles and equipment before working or after hours to avoid noise generated by equipment and the movement of heavy vehicles, thus affecting neighbours.
- When operating excavators and other noise generating machinery on site, workers should be equipped with personal protective equipment (PPE) such as earplugs to reduce exposure to excessive noise.

- Construction workers should respect the tranquillity and way of living of the neighbouring residents (property owners) by not making unnecessary noise while on site.

### 7.3.8 Waste Generation / Environmental Pollution

The two significant project phases (construction and, operations and maintenance) will be associated with the generation of different waste, ranging from domestic, sewage, general waste to hazardous. If the generated waste is not disposed of in a responsible way, land pollution may occur not only within the site boundary but also the surroundings. Improper handling, storage and disposal of hydrocarbon products and hazardous materials for instance may lead to soil and groundwater contamination, in case of spills and leakages.

Without any mitigation measures, the general impact of waste generation has a medium significance. The impact will reduce to low significance, upon implementing the mitigation measures. The assessment of this impact is given in **Table 13**.

**Table 13: Assessment of waste generation impact**

Mitigation Status	Extent	Duration	Intensity	Probability	Significance
Pre mitigation	L/M - 2	L/M - 2	M - 6	M - 3	M - 30
Post mitigation	L - 1	L - 1	L - 2	L - 1	L - 4

#### ***Mitigations and recommendation to waste management***

- Biodegradable and non-biodegradable wastes must be stored in separate containers and collected regularly for disposal at a recognized landfill/dump site (in Windhoek upon reaching an agreement with the Municipality of Windhoek).
- Any hazardous waste that may have an impact on the physical and social environment should be handled cautiously and disposed of carefully at the nearest approved waste management facilities.
- Workers should be sensitized to dispose of waste in a responsible manner and not to litter.
- After each daily works, the Proponent should ensure that there are no wastes left on the site.
- No waste may be buried or burned on site or anywhere else in the environment, apart from authorized and approved waste management site.

- There should be separate waste bins for hazardous and general/domestic waste in both construction as well as the operational and maintenance phases until such that time it will be transported to designated waste site.
- Sewage waste should be managed as per the portable chemical toilets' manufacturer's instructions and regularly disposed of at the nearest treatment facility.

### 7.3.9 Occupational Health, and Safety

The planned project construction and operational activities can be associated with some health and safety risks. This is possible when workers involved in the project activities are exposed to health and safety risks during operations, which may lead to incidents that cause injury or fatalities. Incidents may include accidents leading to minor injuries (i.e., superficial physical injury) or major injuries (i.e., involving heavy machinery, equipment or vehicles). Construction workers will be working at height during construction of the network tower. The lack of safety measures may potentially lead to injuries. Improper handling of construction material and equipment may cause injury.

The use of heavy equipment, especially during excavation, and erection of the tower structures may result in accidental tripping and falling of such structures. This could pose a safety risk to the project personnel, equipment, and vehicles. If machinery and equipment are not properly stored and packed, there would be risks of falling equipment and injury to workers or site visitors. The impact can be rated as medium significant if no mitigation measures are implemented, but upon implementation, the impact will be of low significance. This impact is assessed in **Table 14** below and mitigation measures provided thereof.

**Table 14: Assessment of the impacts of the project activities on health and safety**

Mitigation Status	Extent	Duration	Intensity	Probability	Significance
Pre mitigation	M - 3	M/H - 3	M - 6	M/H - 4	M – 48
Post mitigation	L/M - 2	L/M - 2	L - 2	L/M - 2	L – 12

#### ***Mitigations and recommendation to minimize health and safety issues***

- Ensure that all personnel are provided with the correct personal protective equipment (PPE) for the job at all times during construction hours on site.
- As part of their induction, the workers should be provided with an awareness training of the risks of mishandling equipment and materials on site.



- Ensure that all personnel involved in operating machinery and equipment are adequately trained and experienced with properly and correctly using the equipment and machinery.
- All personnel should be trained in/sensitised to the potential health and safety risks associated with their respective jobs, especially with regards to mishandling of equipment on site.
- No employee should be allowed to consume alcohol or other intoxicants prior to and during working hours as this may lead to mishandling of equipment which results into injuries and other health and safety risks
- The heavy vehicle, equipment and fuel storage area should be properly secured to prevent any harm or injury to the workers and surrounding residents.

### 7.3.10 Vehicular Traffic Use and Safety

The project works will involve the movement of one or two heavy trucks during construction of the tower per site and this may potentially cause short-term increase in traffic in the area. However, the tower construction period is short-term with frequent transportation of material and equipment to site. It should be noted that the site is located along busy streets in the Town and the movement of project related vehicles for a limited time period of works would not have a significant impact on the roads.

Pre-mitigation, the impact can be rated medium and with the implementation of mitigation measures, the significance will be low as assessed in **Table 15** below.

**Table 15: Assessment of the impacts of project activities on road use (vehicular traffic)**

Mitigation Status	Extent	Duration	Intensity	Probability	Significance
Pre mitigation	M - 3	M/H - 4	L/M - 4	M/H - 4	M – 44
Post mitigation	L/M - 2	L/M - 2	L - 2	L/M - 2	L – 12

#### ***Mitigations and recommendation to minimize impact on road safety and related vehicular traffic issues.***

- The transportation of construction materials, equipment and machinery should be limited to once or twice a week only, but not every day to reduce the pressure on local roads.
- The heavy truck loads should comply with the maximum allowed limit while transporting materials and equipment/machinery on the public and access roads.

- Drivers of all project phases' vehicles should be in possession of valid and appropriate driving licenses and should adhere to the road safety rules.
- Drivers should drive slowly (40km/hour or less) and be on the lookout for residents, especially children within proximity of the site.
- The Proponent should ensure that the site access roads are well equipped with temporary road signs condition to cater for vehicles travelling to and from site throughout construction.
- Project vehicles should be in a road worthy condition and serviced regularly to avoid accidents owing to mechanical faults.
- Vehicle drivers should only make use of designated site access roads provided and as agreed.
- Vehicle's drivers should not be allowed to operate vehicles while under the influence of alcohol.
- Sufficient parking area for all project vehicles should be provided for and clearly demarcated on site.
- The Proponent should make provision for safe materials and equipment offloading and loading areas on site.
- To control traffic movement on site, deliveries from and to site should be carefully scheduled. This should optimally be during weekdays and between the hours of 8am and 5pm.
- The site access roads should be equipped with road safety signs.

### 7.3.11 Heritage/Archaeological resources

During construction works, historical resources may be impacted through inadvertent destruction or damage. This may include the excavation of subsurface graves or other archaeological objects when preparing the site for tower foundation laying and erection. There was no information provided about either known heritage or site(s) of significant cultural values within or near the proposed site. Therefore, the project activities will not have an impact of great significance on these and potentially other archaeological remains, at least on surface and visible resources if any. However, this does not mean rule out the possibility of finding some of these objects during the construction phase. With that said, the potential impact significance is slightly medium if no mitigation measures, are implemented. However, after the implementation of the measures provided below, this impact significance will be low. The assessment of the impact is shown in **Table 16** below.

**Table 16: Assessment of the impacts of project activities on archaeological resources**

Mitigation Status	Extent	Duration	Intensity	Probability	Significance
Pre mitigation	M - 3	M - 3	M - 6	M - 3	M – 36
Post mitigation	L/M - 2	L/M - 2	L/M - 4	L/M -2	L – 16

***Mitigations and recommendation to minimize impact on archaeological resources.***

- Contractors working on the site during construction should be made aware of items protected under the National Heritage Act, 2004 (Act No. 27 of 2004). Therefore, caution should be exercised when carrying out excavations/earthworks associated with the construction activities if archaeological/heritage remains are discovered.
- Any items protected under the definition of heritage found during unearthing for construction works should be reported to the National Heritage Council.
- Identification of any archaeological significant objects or site (such as graves) on the site should not be disturbed but are to be reported to the project Environmental/Safety officer or National Heritage Council office for further instructions and actions.
- The Proponent should familiarise themselves with the National Heritage Council's Chance Finds Procedure and if uncertain about the procedure should receive training by a suitably qualified archaeologist with respect to the identification of archaeological/heritage remains and the procedures to follow if such remains are discovered particularly during construction. The Chance and Finds Procedure is attached to the EMP.

## 8 RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The potential (positive and negative) impacts that are anticipated from the proposed construction of the telecommunication tower and related activities were identified, described, and assessed. Most of the identified potential negative impacts are rated as of Medium Significance. Therefore, in order to reduce the significance from medium to low, it is recommended that the Proponent effectively implement mitigation measures. In order to maintain a low significance, the implementation of measures will need to be continuously monitored in order to reduce to impact to low and bring the impact under control.

It is, therefore recommended that in the event of an ECC issuance, the following conditions may be appropriate to ensure minimal environmental impact for this project:

- All required permits, licenses and approvals for the proposed activities should be obtained as required.
- The Proponent complies with the legal requirements governing this type of project and its associated activities.
- All mitigations provided in this Report and the management action plans in the Draft EMP should be implemented and monitoring conducted as recommended.
- All the necessary environmental and social (occupational health and safety) precautions provided should be adhered to.
- Excavated/trenched and other project related disturbed areas on the site where construction activities have been completed should be rehabilitated, as far as practicable, to their original state.
- The monitoring of the implementation of mitigation measures should be conducted, applicable impact's actions taken, reporting done and recorded.
- Environmental (EMP) Compliance Monitoring should be conducted on a weekly basis during the construction phase by the project Safety, Health and Environmental Officer or an independent Environmental Consultant and bi-annually during the operational phase. Environmental Compliance monitoring reports should be compiled and submitted to the DEAF as per provision made on the MEFT/DEAF's Portal.

These recommendations are primarily aimed at improving environmental management, ensuring sustainability and promote harmonious co-existence of the project activities and the host biophysical and social environment.

## 9 LIST OF REFERENCES

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