

Appendix C8:
Comments and Reponses Report

**CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF THE 100MWac VREDE PHOTOVOLTAIC SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY, BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE SYSTEM (BESS) AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE LOCATED NEAR KROONSTAD, FREE STATTE PROVINCE
(DEFF Ref. No.: 14/12/16/3/3/2/2038)**

COMMENTS AND RESPONSES REPORT

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The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Process for the 100MWac Vrede Photovoltaic (PV) Solar Energy Facility, Battery Storage System (BESS) and associated Infrastructure was announced on Wednesday, 18 November 2020. The notification letter served to invite Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) to register their interest in the project and to submit any comments / queries that they might have.

The Scoping Report was made available for a 30-day review and comment period from **Friday, 20 November 2020** until **Monday, 11 January 2021**. In terms of the EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended, Regulation 3(2), this 30-day review period excluded the 21-days from 15 December 2020 to 05 January 2021 in which no public participation is allowed to be conducted. The Comments and Responses Report (C&RR) includes all comments received during the Scoping Phase. All comments received were included in **Appendix C8** of the final Scoping Report.

Furthermore, the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) was made available for a 30-day review and comment period from **Friday, 30 April 2021** until **Tuesday, 1 June 2021**. All comments received on the EIAR have been included in **Appendix C6** of the final EIAR and the C&RR has been updated and included as **Appendix C8** as a separate document to the final EIAR.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS / ACRONYMS

APM	Archaeology, Palaeontology and Meteorites	FGM	Focus Group Meeting
BGG	Burial Grounds and Graves	ICASA	Independent Communications Authority of South Africa
BID	Background Information Document	LM	Local Municipality
C&R	Comments and Responses	MFP	Moqhaka for the People
DAFF	Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries	NGO	Non-Government Organisation
DEFF	Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries	NHRA	National Heritage Resources Act
DFFE	Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment	OoS	Organs of State
DMRE	Department of Mineral Resources and Energy	PoSEIA	Plan of Study for Environmental Impact Assessment
DWS	Department of Water and Sanitation	REIPPP	Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme
EA	Environmental Authorisation	SACAA	South African Civil Aviation Authority
EIAR	Environmental Impact Assessment Report	SAHRA	South African Heritage Resources Agency
EMPr	Environmental Management Programme	SAHRIS	South African Heritage Information System
ESA	Ecological Support Area	SARAO	South African Radio Astronomy Observatory

1. COMMENTS RECEIVED DURING THE EIAr REVIEW AND COMMENT PERIOD

1.1. Organs of State

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
1.	<p>Good day, please find the new SACAA procedure as per the SACAA website to follow, for and application to be submitted to the ATNS, EIA notices would form part of this process.http://www.caa.co.za/Pages/Obstacles/Urgent-notices.aspxSACAA Page - Main Content Section Obstacle Notice 1/2021 – Appointment of New Windfarm Obstacle Application Service Provider.</p> <p>Kindly be advised, as of the 1st of May 2021 Air Traffic and Navigation Services (ATNS) has been appointed as the new Obstacle application Service Provider for Windfarms and later Solar Plants. Their responsibility would pertain to the assessments, maintenance, and all other related matters in respect to Windfarms and in due time Power Plant assessments.</p>	<p>Lizell Stroh Obstacle Inspector: SACAA</p> <p>Email: 29 April 2021</p>	<p>The submission by the SACAA was acknowledged and submitted to the applicant. An obstacle assessment (Glint and Glare Study) 3hwill be conducted for the project once the facility layout has been finalized.</p>
2.	<p><u>This letter serves to inform you that the following information must be included in the final EIAr:</u></p> <p>a) Listed Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please ensure that all relevant listed activities are applied for, are specific (i.e. the exact threshold must be presented in the application form) and can be linked to the development activity or infrastructure as described in the project description. Only activities applicable to the development must be applied for and assessed. 	<p>Constance Musemburi Case Officer DFFE</p> <p>Letter: 24 May 2021</p>	<p>The application form submitted along with the draft EIR for public review has not changed since submission and applies for all listed activities. This application form also corresponds with the content of the final EIR submitted for decision making. Where possible, exact values were specified for each respective listed activity, however, please note that the facility layout will only be finalized following a successful bid and therefore is not submitted for approval. Exact threshold values are therefore not possible for all activities, however where possible these have been specified.</p> <p>Please refer to the Listed activities detailed in Chapter 6 of the final EIAr, which include specification and consideration of the sub-activity applicable to each triggered activity.</p>

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the activities applied for in the application form differ from those mentioned in the final EIAR, an amended application form must be submitted. Please note that the Department's application form template has been amended and can be downloaded from the following link https://www.environmentoov.za/documents/forms. 		<p>The application form submitted along with the draft EIR for public release has not changed since submission and applies for all listed activities. In addition, this application form also corresponds with the content of the final EIR submitted for decision making.</p> <p>Please refer to the Listed activities detailed in Chapter 6 of the final EIAR, which include specification and consideration of the sub-activity applicable to each triggered activity.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The final EIAR must provide the technical details for the proposed facility in table format as well as their description and/or dimensions. 		<p>Please refer to Chapter 2 (Project Description), Table 2.3 for a detailing of the information requested.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is imperative that the relevant authorities are continuously involved throughout the environmental impact assessment process as the development property possibly falls within geographically designated areas in terms of numerous GN R. 985 Activities. Written comments must be obtained from the relevant authorities and submitted to this Department. 		<p>Proof of notifications and attempts to obtain comments from the relevant authorities are included in Appendix C4 of the final EIAR. Details of those who did submit written comments are included in Appendix C6 of the final EIAR.</p>
	<p>b) Participation Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please ensure that comments from all relevant stakeholders are submitted to the Department with the final EIAR. This includes but is not limited to the Free State Department of Small Business Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs (DESTEA), the Department of Transport, the Moqhaka Local Municipality, the Fezile Dabi District Municipality, the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS), the South African National Roads Agency Limited (SANRAL), the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA), the Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT), BirdLife SA, the Department of 		<p>All comments received from the Organs of State (OoS) on the EIAR, including those listed by the DFFE, are included in Appendix C6 of the final EIAR.</p> <p>Correspondences between OoS and the project team are included in Appendix C4 of the final EIAR.</p>

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
	<p>Mineral Resources; Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries: Directorate Biodiversity and Conservation.</p>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Comments and Response trail report (C&R) must be submitted with the final EIAR. The C&R report must incorporate all comments for this development. The C&R report must be a separate document from the main report and the format must be in the table format. All comments from I&APs must be responded to adequately. A response such as "noted" is not regarded as an adequate response to I&AP's comments. Comments from each submission must be responded to individually. The dates in which comments were received must be recorded in the C&R. Your responses to the issues raised by the Department must be included in the comments and response (C&R) report, in table format. 		<p>All written comments received from I&APs and OoS during the EIA process are captured in this C&RR. Comments have been responded to, as required.</p> <p>The comments submitted by the DFFE have also been captured in this C&RR.</p> <p>Comments submitted have been captured verbatim, as received, and have not been summarized and no 'noted' response provided.</p> <p>The C&RR complies with the DFFE requirements in terms of recording the date when the comment was received, and the C&RR is included as a separate document as Appendix C8 to the final EIAR.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The final EIAR must comply with all conditions of the acceptance of the scoping report (SR) dated 24 February 2021. The final EIAR must address all comments received on the SR and the draft EIAR, including this letter. 		<p>The conditions of the acceptance of the scoping report (SR) dated 24 February 2021 and reference to the section in the EIA Report where these are addressed is included in Table 6.5.4 of the EIA Report.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Public Participation Process must be conducted in terms of Regulation 39, 40, 41, 42, 43 & 44 of the EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended. 		<p>The Public Participation Process has been conducted in terms of Regulation 39, 40, 41, 42, 43 & 44 of the EIA Regulations 2014, as amended (GNR 326), as well as in accordance with the approved Public Participation Plan (Appendix C9). The below provides a summary of the process:</p> <p>Scoping Phase</p>

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
			<p>I&APs and OoS were notified of the commencement of the EIA process as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The BID, accompanied by a cover letter notifying I&APs of the project and EIA process was distributed via email to those I&APs identified and the relevant organs of state on 18 November 2020 (refer to Appendices C4 & C5 of the final Scoping Report.) • An advertisement notifying, I&APs of the project and EIA process was placed in 'die Volksblad' newspaper on 20 November 2020 (tearsheet included in Appendix C2 of the final Scoping Report) • Placement of site notices announcing the EIA process at visible points along the boundary of the development area (i.e. the boundaries of the affected property), in accordance with the requirements of the EIA Regulations on 17 November 2020 (Appendix C2 of the final Scoping Report). <p>The Scoping Report was made available for a 30-day review and comment period from 20 November 2020 to 11 January 2021, the availability of which was announced through the means below. The Scoping Report was available for download from Savannah Environmental's website and could also be sent via other file transfer services (i.e. We Transfer, Dropbox, etc.) or on CD, on request. Opportunity for consultation was also provided during the 30-day review and comment period.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The details of the availability of the report were included in the advertisement placed in 'die Volksblad' newspaper on 20 November 2020 (tearsheet included in Appendix C2 of the final Scoping Report).

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A notification letter was sent to all registered I&APs on 18 November 2020 and Organs of State on the project database (Appendix C1 of the final Scoping Report) informing them of the availability of the Scoping Report for review and comment and the details of where the report could be accessed for review. <p>Virtual Focus Group Meetings were held with various key stakeholder groups on 6 January 2021. Notes of the meetings were included in Appendix C7 of the final Scoping Report.</p> <p><u>Impact Assessment Phase</u> I&APs and OoS were notified of the acceptance of the Scoping Report and approval of the Plan of Study for the Environmental Impact Assessment on 16 April 2021 (refer to Appendices C4 & C5 of the final EIAr.)</p> <p>The EIAr has been made available for a 30-day review and comment period from Friday, 30 April until Tuesday 1 June 2021. The availability of the report was announced through the means below. The EIA Report was available for download from Savannah Environmental's website and could also be sent via other file transfer services (i.e. We Transfer, Dropbox, etc.) or on CD, on request. Opportunity for consultation meetings using an appropriate forum has been provided during the 30-day review and comment period.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The details of the availability of the EIAr were included in the advertisement placed in Die Volksblad on 30 April 2021 (tearsheet included in Appendix C2 of the final EIAr).

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A notification letter was sent to all registered I&APs and OoS on the project database (Appendix C1 of the final EIAR) on 28 April 2021, informing them of the availability of the EIAR for review and comment and the details of where the report could be accessed for review. Proof of notification is included in Appendices C4 and C5 of the final EIAR. • Details of the report review period were included within a live read on OFM on Friday, 30 April 2021 and Monday 24 May 2021 (proof of log sheets included in Appendix C2 of the final EIAR). Live recording is available on request. <p>Virtual Focus Group Meetings (FGM) were conducted with the Ward Councillor and his Ward Committee Members in which the proposed development site is located and the MFP on 18 May 2021. A meeting was scheduled with the Moqhaka Local Municipality but due to technical constraints at their Offices, the meeting could not be facilitated. Proof of attempts to secure a meeting with DESTEA and the follow-up attempts with Moqhaka Local Municipality are included in Appendix C5 of the final EIAR.</p> <p>A public participation process meeting was held with community members of Moqhaka on 20 May 2021.</p> <p>Notes of the meetings held have been included in Appendix C7 of the final EIAR).</p> <p>An email reminder to all registered I&APs and OoS on the project database regarding the review and comment period of the EIAR was distributed on 30 May 2021.</p>
	<p>c) <u>Cumulative Assessment</u></p>		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should there be any other similar projects within a 30km radius of the proposed development site, the cumulative impact assessment for all identified and assessed impacts must be refined to indicate the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identified cumulative impacts must be clearly defined, and where possible the size of the identified impact must be quantified and indicated, i.e. hectares of cumulatively transformed land. 		<p>Please refer to Chapter 9 of the EIA report for a complete assessment of the cumulative impacts associated with the proposed development. Where possible, these impacts have been quantified.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Detailed process flow and proof must be provided, to indicate how the specialist's recommendations, mitigation measures and conclusions from the various similar developments in the area were taken into consideration in the assessment of cumulative impacts and when the conclusion and mitigation measures were drafted for this project. 		<p>All similar renewable energy projects within a 30km radius of the project were considered in relation to cumulative impacts in the respective specialist reports and the EIA report. Please refer to Chapter 9 of the final EIA report for a complete assessment of the cumulative impacts associated with the proposed development.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The cumulative impacts significance rating must also inform the need and desirability of the proposed development 		<p>Please refer to Section 5.7 of the EIA report (Chapter 5) for a discussion on the cumulative impact considerations in relation to need and desirability.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A cumulative impact environmental statement on whether the proposed development must proceed. 		<p>Please refer to Chapter 9 of the EIA report for a complete assessment of the cumulative impacts associated with the proposed development, including a cumulative impact statement.</p>
	<p>d) Specialist Declaration of Interest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A copy of the layout map must be submitted with the final report. All available biodiversity information must be used in the finalization of the layout map. Existing infrastructure must be used as far as possible e.g. roads. The layout map must indicate the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The location of the BESS, PV facility and associated infrastructure; 		<p>A detailed Layout Map indicating the proposed infrastructure is included in Appendix L – A3 maps. Coordinate points of the development site are provided in Appendix Q of the EIA Report.</p>

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	b. All supporting onsite infrastructure e.g.roads (existing and proposed);		
	c. The location of sensitive environmental features on site e.g. CBAs, heritage sites, wetlands, drainage lines etc. that will be affected;		
	d. Buffer areas; and		
	e. All "no-go" areas.		
	f. The above map must be overlain with a sensitivity map and a cumulative map which shows neighbouring renewable energy developments and existing grid infrastructure.		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Google maps will not be accepted. 		No Google maps were used for layout and sensitivity mapping.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specialist Declaration of interest forms must be attached to the final EIAR. You are therefore requested to submit original signed Specialist Declaration of interest forms for each specialist study conducted. The forms are available on Department's website (please use the Department's template). 		Please refer to Appendix O for signed specialist declarations in the format requested.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendations provided by specialist reports must be considered and used to inform the preferred layout alternative. 		An optimized layout was developed by the Applicant having considered the sensitivities and mitigation measures proposed by the specialists for the study. Please refer to Figure 10.2 of Chapter 10 (conclusions and recommendations) for the optimized layout of the facility overlaid onto the identified sensitivities, showing how the respective layout has considered the specialist reports.
	e) Undertaking of an Oath <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please note that the final EIAR must have an undertaking under oath/ affirmation by the EAP. 		Please refer to Appendix M – EAP affirmation and declaration for the undertaking under oath/ affirmation by the EAP.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on the above, you are therefore required to include an undertaking under oath or affirmation by the EAP (administered by a Commissioner of Oaths) as 		Please refer to Appendix M – EAP affirmation and declaration for the undertaking under oath/ affirmation by the EAP.

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	<p>per Appendix 3 of the NEMA DA Regulations, 2014, as amended, which states that the EIAR must include: "an undertaking under oath or affirmation by the EAP in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the correctness of the information provided in the reports; ii. the inclusion of comments and inputs from stakeholders and I&APs; iii. the inclusion of inputs and recommendations from the specialist reports where relevant; and iv. any information provided by the EAP to interested and affected parties and any responses by the EAP to comments or inputs made by interested and affected parties". 		<p>In addition, please refer to Chapter 1, section 1.5 of the final EIR which expressly confirms these aspects.</p>
	<p>f) <u>Details and Expertise of the EAP</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please ensure that the Final EIAR includes the details and expertise of the EAP, including a curriculum vitae, in order to comply with the requirements of Appendix 3 of the NEMA EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended. 		<p>Please refer to Chapter 1, section 1.5 of the final EIR which contains the details and expertise of the EAP. Please also refer to Appendix A – CVs for the CV of the EAP.</p>
	<p>g) <u>Environmental Management Programme</u></p> <p>The EMPr must also include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All recommendations and mitigation measures recorded in the EIA and the specialist studies conducted. 		<p>All recommendations and mitigation measures recorded in the EIAR, and the specialist studies are included in the respective EMPrs (Appendix K – Facility EMPr, and Appendix R – Generic substation EMPr) for the project.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An environmental sensitivity map indicating environmental sensitive areas and features identified during the assessment process. 		<p>Please refer to the following for the environmental sensitivity map as required:</p> <p>Appendix K – Facility EMPr: Figure 2.3 of Chapter 2. Appendix R – Generic substation EMPr: Figure 1, page 88.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition to the above, the EMPr must comply with Appendix 4 of the EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended. 		<p>Appendix K – Facility EMPr complies with the requirements of Appendix 4 of the EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended.</p>

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			<p>Similarly, Appendix R – Generic substation EMPr complies with the template requirements for the Generic Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) for the development and expansion of substation infrastructure for the transmission and distribution of electricity, and therefore also complies with Appendix 4 of the EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended.</p>
	<p>General Please also ensure that the final EIAR includes the period for which the Environmental Authorisation is required and the date on which the activity will be concluded as per Appendix 3 of the NEMA EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended.</p>		<p>Please refer to Section 10.5 of Chapter 10 which provides the period for which the EA is requested.</p> <p>Should a positive EA be issued for this project, the period for which the Environmental Authorisation is requested to remain valid is 10 years from the date of authorisation, with a period of 5 years for the design, planning, construction and commissioning of the activity to be concluded.</p>
	<p>You are further reminded to comply with Regulation 23(1)(a) of the NEMA EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended, which states that: <i>"The applicant must within 106 days of the acceptance of the scoping report submit to the competent authority - (a) an environmental impact assessment report inclusive of any specialist reports, and an EMPr, which must have been subjected to a public participation process of at least 30 days and which reflects the incorporation of comments received, including any comments of the competent authority."</i></p>		<p>The final EIA report was submitted in accordance with the regulated timeframe.</p>
	<p>Should there be significant changes or new information that has been added to the EIAR or EMPr which changes or information was not contained in the reports or plans consulted on during the initial public participation process, you are required to comply with Regulation 23(1)(b) of the NEMA EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended, which states: <i>"The applicant must within 106 days of the acceptance of the scoping report</i></p>		<p>No significant changes or new information that has been added to the EIAR or EMPr.</p>

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
	<p><i>submit to the competent authority (b) a notification in writing that the reports, and an EMPr, will be submitted within 156 days of acceptance of the scoping report by the competent authority, or where regulation 21(2) applies, within 156 days of receipt of application by the competent authority, as significant changes have been made or significant new information has been added to the environmental impact assessment report or EMPr, which changes or information was not contained in the reports or plans consulted on during the initial public participation process contemplated in subregulation (1)(a) and that the revised environmental impact assessment report or EMPr will be subjected to another public participation process of at least 30 days".</i></p> <p>Should you fail to meet any of the timeframes stipulated in Regulation 23 of the NEMA EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended, your application will lapse.</p> <p>You are hereby reminded of Section 24F of the National Environmental Management Act, Act No. 107 of 1998, as amended, that no activity may commence prior to an Environmental Authorisation being granted by the Department.</p>		<p>No extension of timeframes is required for this project and the submission of the final EIAR is within the legislated timeframe.</p> <p>Comment acknowledged. No further action required.</p>
3.	<p>We would like to confirm that the Department has invited Independent Power Producers (IPPs) to submit proposals for the generation of electricity from renewable energy sources under the Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme (REIPPP).</p> <p>We have gone through the report and wish to inform Savannah Environmental consultants that we are satisfied with the report.</p> <p>We further wish you all the best in securing a positive Environmental Authorization from the Department of</p>	<p>Nomawethu Qase Director: Renewable Energy Projects</p> <p>Letter: 28 May 2021</p>	<p>The comments are acknowledged, and it is confirmed that the DMRE, as an OoS and registered stakeholder on the project database, will be notified once the EA has been issued</p>

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
	<p>Environment, Forestry and Fisheries (DEFF). The Department would appreciate being kept informed of progress with this project.</p> <p>Should you need any energy policy related information or clarity, kindly contact: Ms. Nomawethu Qase on Tel: 012 406 7687, Email: Noma.Qase@dmre.gov.za, or Mr. Pheladi Masipa on Tel: 012 406 7650, Email: Pheladi.Masipa@dmre.gov.za.</p>		
4.	<p>Final Comment</p> <p>The following comments are made as a requirement in terms of section 3(4) of the NEMA Regulations and section 38(8) of the NHRA in the format provided in section 38(4) of the NHRA and must be included in the Final EIA report and EMPr:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 38(4)a – The SAHRA Archaeology, Palaeontology and Meteorites (APM) Unit has no objections to the proposed development; • 38(4)b – The recommendations of the specialists are supported and must be adhered to. Further additional specific conditions are provided for the development as follows; • The monitoring report by the palaeontologist must be submitted upon completion of the construction phase that includes site clearance and excavations. • 38(4)c(i) – If any evidence of archaeological sites or remains (e.g. remnants of stone-made structures, indigenous ceramics, bones, stone artefacts, ostrich eggshell fragments, charcoal and ash concentrations), fossils or other categories of heritage resources are found during the 	<p>Sityhilelo Ngcatsha Archaeology, Palaeontology, Meteorite Assistant SAHRA</p> <p>Letter: 31 May 2021</p>	<p>Comment acknowledged. No further action required</p> <p>Comment acknowledged. No further action required</p> <p>Comment acknowledged. No further action required</p> <p>Please refer to the following, where this requirement has been inserted into the project EMPrs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix K – Facility EMPr: Objective 7 – construction phase heritage management • Appendix R – Generic substation EMPr: Section C – 8.4, construction phase heritage management. <p>Please refer to the following, where this requirement has been inserted into the project EMPrs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix K – Facility EMPr: Objective 7 – construction phase heritage management

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	<p>proposed development, SAHRA APM Unit (Sityhilelo Ngcatsha/Phillip Hine 021 462 5402) must be alerted as per section 35(3) of the NHRA. Non-compliance with section of the NHRA is an offense in terms of section 51(1)e of the NHRA and item 5 of the Schedule;</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix R – Generic substation EMPr: Section C – 8.4, construction phase heritage management.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 38(4)c(ii) – If unmarked human burials are uncovered, the SAHRA Burial Grounds and Graves (BGG) Unit (Thingahangwi Tshivhase/Mimi Seetelo 012 320 8490), must be alerted immediately as per section 36(6) of the NHRA. Non-compliance with section of the NHRA is an offense in terms of section 51(1)e of the NHRA and item 5 of the Schedule; 		<p>Please refer to the following, where this requirement has been inserted into the project EMPrs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix K – Facility EMPr: Objective 7 – construction phase heritage management • Appendix R – Generic substation EMPr: Section C – 8.4, construction phase heritage management.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 38(4)d – See section 51(1) of the NHRA; 		<p>Comment acknowledged. No further action required</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 38(4)e – The following conditions apply with regards to the appointment of specialists: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) If heritage resources are uncovered during the course of the development, a professional archaeologist or palaeontologist, depending on the nature of the finds, must be contracted as soon as possible to inspect the heritage resource. If the newly discovered heritage resources prove to be of archaeological or palaeontological significance, a Phase 2 rescue operation may be required subject to permits issued by SAHRA; 		<p>Please refer to the following, where this requirement has been inserted into the project EMPrs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix K – Facility EMPr: Objective 7 – construction phase heritage management • Appendix R – Generic substation EMPr: Section C – 8.4, construction phase heritage management.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Final EIA Report and EMPr must be submitted to SAHRA for record purposes; 		<p>Please refer to the following, where this requirement has been inserted into the project EMPrs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix K – Facility EMPr: Objective 7 – construction phase heritage management • Appendix R – Generic substation EMPr: Section C – 8.4, construction phase heritage management.

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The decision regarding the EA Application must be communicated to SAHRA and uploaded to the SAHRIS Case application. 		As a registered party, SAHRA will be informed once the project EA is issued. The EA will also be uploaded to SAHRIS as required.
5.	<p>According to the information provided in the Draft Environmental Impact Assessment Report (DEIAR) and the specialists report, the proposed development is located within an area classifies as Ecological Support Area (ESA1) and loss of and transformation of intact habitats could compromise the status and the ecological function of the ESA and may fracture and disrupt the connectivity of these ESAs, impacting the Province's ability to meet its conservation targets. The land use for the proposed site is livestock farming and the proposed development will result in a low negative impact because the proposed development area is located within a degraded or transformed area. The proposed development is not located within any Important Bird Area and is classified as low sensitivity.</p> <p>Due to the site being highly degraded grassland the proposed development may result in increased erosion therefore vegetation clearing must be limited to the construction site and all mitigation measures proposed in the report must be adhered to.</p> <p>In Overall, there are no potential impacts associated with the proposed development that are of high significance and which cannot be mitigated to an acceptable level.</p> <p>As such, there are no fatal flaws or other major impediments that should prevent the development from going ahead to the next EIA phase</p> <p>NB: The Public Participation Process documents related to Biodiversity EIA for review and queries should be submitted to the Directorate: Biodiversity Conservation at Email; BCAdmin@environment.gov.za for attention of Mr. Seoka Lekota</p>	<p>Portia Makitla Case Officer DFFE: Directorate Biodiversity Conservation</p> <p>Letter: 01 June 2021</p>	<p>Comment acknowledged. No further action required.</p> <hr/> <p>Comment acknowledged. No further action required.</p> <hr/> <p>Comment acknowledged. No further action required.</p> <hr/> <p>Comment acknowledged. No further action required.</p> <hr/> <p>It is confirmed that all communication regarding this proposed project, including the notification of availability of reports for comments, was submitted to the e-mail address provided.</p>

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
6.	<p>The Department of Water and Sanitation has no objection towards the proposed project on condition that the following is adhered to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant has to ensure the storm water run-off has to be directed away from the site to ensure the separation of clean and dirty water. • No activities may take place, without the necessary authorisation from this Department, within a horizontal distance of 100 m from any watercourse or estuary or within a 500 m radius from a delineated boundary of any a wetland or pan. • The Plant should be sited, designed and managed so that the quality of surface and groundwater in the vicinity are not degraded by runoff, leaching or seepage from the site or waste utilization areas. • Zero discharge of contaminated surface water. • Monitoring must take place on a continuous basis to ensure the above. • The storage of material, chemicals, fuels, etc. must not pose a risk to the surrounding environment and this includes surface and groundwater resources. Temporary bunds must also be constructed around chemical or fuel storage areas to contain possible spillages. Such storage areas must be located outside the 1:100 year floodline of a river and must be fenced to prevent unauthorised access into the area. The maintenance of vehicles and equipment used for any purpose during the prospecting activity will take place only in the maintenance yard area. • The applicant must comply with all the conditions of the National Water Act (Act 36 of 1998) (NWA). • Registration of water uses under Section 21 of the NWA is compulsory. 	<p>George Nel DWS</p> <p>Letter: 01 June 2021</p>	<p>Please refer to Objective 6 of Appendix K – Facility EMPR, where a requirement for a stormwater management plan is included. This requirement has been expanded to ensure that these conditions are also contained in the stormwater plan to be developed by the contractor prior to commencement of construction. In addition, the requirement towards appropriate water use authorization has also been included.</p> <p>Please further refer to Appendix R – Generic substation EMPr: Section C – 8.3 (wetlands) where these requirements have been included verbatim.</p> <p>Please refer to Objective 12 of Appendix K – Facility EMPR, where these requirements have been incorporated verbatim.</p> <p>Please further refer to Appendix R – Generic substation EMPr: Section C – 8.3 (wetlands) where these requirements have been included verbatim.</p> <p>Please refer to Objective 6 of Appendix K – Facility EMPR and Appendix R – Generic substation EMPr: Section C – 8.3 (wetlands), specifically for the requirement that all water use</p>

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
			activities must have the necessary authorisation from the DWS under the National Water Act (Act 36 of 1998) (NWA).
	In terms of Section 22 of the NWA a person may only use water without a license:		Comment acknowledged. No further action required.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If that water use is permissible under Schedule 1. 		Comment acknowledged. No further action required.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If that water use is permissible as a continuation of an existing lawful use. 		Comment acknowledged. No further action required.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If that water use is permissible in terms of a General Authorisation issued under Section 39 of the NWA. 		Comment acknowledged. No further action required.
	In terms of Section 4(1) of the NWA a person may use water from a water resource for purposes such as reasonable domestic use, domestic gardening, animal watering, firefighting and recreational use, as set out in Schedule 1.		Comment acknowledged. No further action required
	To apply for authorisation and registration of water uses the responsible official can be contacted at the following address: Deputy Director: Water Use Attention: Mr. V Blair Private Bag 528, Bloemfontein, 9300 Telephone: 051 405 9000		The contact details provided have been submitted to the Applicant for their attention and record purposes.

1.2. Interested and Affected Parties

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
1.	Can you please forward KML files for the development? We require this to do the assessment.	Wouter Du Randt Manager: Radio Planning and Quality MTN South Africa Email: 29 April 2021	The .KML file was e-mailed to the I&AP on 30 April 2021 (refer to Appendix C5 of the final EIAR)

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
	Can you please provide us with more details on the proposed project	Email: 31 May 2021	The development area was refined and the updated .KMZ file was e-mailed to the I&AP on 01 June 2021. The project BID was also provided in order to provide the requested project details (refer to Appendix C5 of the final EIAr).
2.	MTN Transmission approves Vrede and Rondavel Solar projects in Kroonstad area.	Hendry Karstel Specialist: Transmission Planning MTN South Africa E-mail: 01 June 2021	The approval as submitted by MTN South Africa is acknowledged.
3.	As stated in the recorded Public Participations meeting held at the Constancia Hall, we the public demand: 1. The first right of refusal for electricity produced based on the fact that the energy is harvested within our borders.	Spiro Khoury Email: 29 May 2021	The project is intended to be bid into the Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Procurement (REIPPP) Programme, or a similar programme under the IRP (2019). At the time of writing, the rules of the programme do not allow for direct sales to any party other than Eskom. It is also not the proponent's intention to enter into a PPA with the Moqhaka Municipality for the sale of generated electricity from this project. Considering the above, it is understood that should the project become a preferred bidder under the REIPPP or similar programme of the IRP, that the rules and regulations concerning the respective signatory entities to the resulting PPA and therefore the ultimate direct off-taker of the generated electricity will be determined by the form and requirements of the bidding programme at the time. No commitment is made towards pricing, off-taker agreements or sales agreements by the proponent.
	2. That Moqhaka Municipality receives at least 60 Mega Watts of electricity and pays for it at the same price that		Please refer to the response above.

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
	it would be offered to Eskom, if Moqhaka does not pay its account the Electricity may then be sold to Eskom.		The pricing and direct off-taker for the generated electricity, should the project be awarded preferred bidder, will be set and determined by the rules and regulations of the respective bidding programme and the resulting PPA. No commitment is made towards pricing, off-taker agreements or sales agreements by the proponent.
3.	The above is placed on record, based on the fact that Kroonstad has its own Power Station and that Moqhaka used to purchase electricity at a cheaper rate than it could produce. This is based on Eskom having excess electricity and it was in both parties' interest for Eskom to sell its electricity at a reduced rate to Moqhaka, as the electricity generated could not be stored at that time.		The comment is acknowledged. No further response / action required.

2. COMMENTS RECEIVED DURING COMMENCEMENT OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT PHASE

2.1. Organs of State

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
1.	The area is in the Eskom distribution area therefore the Electricity Section cannot comment on the proposed Solar PV developments.	Louis Greeff Directorate: Technical Services – Electricity Moqhaka LM E-mail: 27 January 2021	The comment is acknowledged, no further action required.
2.	You may proceed with the environmental impact assessment process in accordance with the tasks contemplated in the PoSEIA as required in terms of the EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended.	Constance Musemburi Case Officer DFFE Letter: 24 February 2021	Minor modifications have been made to the descriptions of the listed activities (specifications added in response to DFFE requirements). As such, a revised application form is submitted along with the draft EIAR which includes corresponding descriptions and listed activities as that captured in the EIA Report.

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
	<p>In addition, the following amendments and additional information are required for the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR):</p> <p>a) <u>Listed Activities</u></p> <p>i. The listed activities represented in the EIAR and the application form must be the same and correct</p> <p>ii. Note that for every activity, a sub-activity must be selected i.e. Listing Notice 1, Activity 12(ii)(a). The EIAR must assess the correct sub listed activity for each listed activity applied for.</p> <p>iii. The EIAR must provide an assessment of the impacts and mitigation measures for each of the listed activities applied for</p> <p>iv. Kindly include the proposed threshold for each activity. For each listed activity, where possible, provide the proposed threshold/footprint associated with the listed activity i.e. the footprint of infrastructure in m2, the removal of material in m3, the clearance of land in m2, number of BESS per site (each individual unit, if applicable), the storage of hazardous goods in m3, road dimensions etc.</p> <p>v. If the activities applied for in the application form differ from those mentioned in the final SR, an amended application form must be submitted. Please note that</p>		<p>Minor modifications have been made to the descriptions of the listed activities (specifications added as per DFFE requirements). As such, a revised application form is submitted along with the draft EIAR which have corresponding descriptions and listed activities as that captured in the EIA Report.</p> <p>Please refer to the Listed activities detailed in Chapter 6 of the draft EIAR, which include specification and consideration of the sub-activity applicable to each triggered activity.</p> <p>An assessment of impacts and recommended mitigation measures are included in Chapter 8 of the EIA report</p> <p>Please refer to the Listed activities detailed in Chapter 6 of the EIAR, which specify the threshold where possible for each listed activity triggered.</p> <p>Minor modification has been made to the descriptions of the listed activities contained in the EIA report in response to the comments raised by DFFE, and therefore an amended</p>

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
	<p>the latest version of the Department's application form template can be downloaded from the following link https://www.environment.gov.za/documents/forms.</p> <p>b) Public Participation</p> <p>i. Please ensure that comments from all relevant stakeholders are submitted to the Department with the EIAR. This includes but is not limited to the Free State Department of Small Business Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs (DESTEA), the Department of Transport, the Moqhaka Local Municipality, the Fezile Dabi District Municipality, the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS), the South African National Roads Agency Limited (SANRAL), the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA), the Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT), BirdLife SA, the Department of Mineral Resources & Energy; Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and the Department of Environment, Forestry & Fisheries: Directorate Biodiversity and Conservation.</p> <p>ii. Please ensure that all issues raised and comments received during the circulation of the draft SR and draft EIAR from registered I&APs and organs of state which have jurisdiction in respect of the proposed activity are adequately addressed in the final EIAR. Proof of correspondence with the various stakeholders must be included in the final EIAR. Should you be unable to obtain comments, proof should be submitted to the Department of the attempts that were made to obtain comments.</p>		<p>application form has been compiled for the project and has been submitted as part of this EIA report.</p> <p>All comments received from the Organs of State on the process to date have been included within this Comments and Responses Report (C&RR), and have been responded to, as required.</p> <p>Copies of all written comments received from Organs of State are included in Appendix C6 of the EIAR.</p> <p>All comments received during the EIA process to date have been included within this C&RR, and have been responded to, as required.</p> <p>Copies of all written comments received from registered I&APs and Organs of State are included in Appendix C6 of the EIAR.</p> <p>Proof of attempts to obtain comments on the EIAR will be included in Appendices C4 and C5 and included in the final EIAR.</p> <p>Proof of correspondence with the various stakeholders is included in Appendices C4 and C5 and included in the EIAR.</p>

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
	iii. A Comments and Response trail report (C&R) must be submitted with the final EIAR. The C&R report must incorporate all comments for this development. The C&R report must be a separate document from the main report and the format must be in the table format as indicated in Appendix 1 of this comments letter. Please refrain from summarising comments made by I&APs. All comments from I&APs must be copied verbatim and responded to clearly. Please note that a response such as "noted" is not regarded as an adequate response to I&AP's comments.		All written comments received from I&APs and Organs of State during the EIA process to date have been included within this C&RR, and have been responded to, as required. Comments submitted have been captured verbatim, as received, and have not been summarized.
	iv. Comments from I&APs must not be split and arranged into categories. Comments from each submission must be responded to individually,		Comments received from I&APs and Organs of State captured in this C&RR have not been split and arranged into categories and appropriate responses have been included for all comments.
	v. The Public Participation Process must be conducted in terms of Regulation 39, 40, 41, 42, 43 & 44 of the EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended.		The Public Participation Process has been conducted in terms of Regulation 39, 40, 41, 42, 43 & 44 of the EIA Regulations 2014, as amended (GNR 326), as well as in accordance with the approved Public Participation Plan (Appendix C9). <u>Scoping Phase</u> I&APs and Organs of State were notified of the commencement of the EIA process as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The BID, accompanied by a cover letter was submitted via email to those I&APs identified and the relevant organs of state on 18 November 2020 (refer to Appendices C4 & C5 of the final Scoping Report.) • An advertisement was placed in 'die Volksblad' newspaper on 20 November 2020 (tearsheet included in Appendix C2 of the final Scoping Report) • Placement of site notices announcing the EIA process at visible points along the boundary of the development area

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
			<p>(i.e. the boundaries of the affected property), in accordance with the requirements of the EIA Regulations on 17 November 2020.</p> <p>The Scoping Report was made available for a 30-day review and comment period from 20 November 2020 to 11 January 2021, the availability of which was announced through the means below. Opportunity for consultation was also provided during the 30-day review and comment period.</p> <p>The details of the availability of the report were included in the advertisement placed in 'die Volksblad' newspaper on 20 November 2020 (tearsheet included in Appendix C2 of the final Scoping Report).</p> <p>A notification letter was sent to all registered I&APs on 18 November 2020 and Organs of State on the project database (Appendix C1 of the final Scoping Report) informing them of the availability of the Scoping Report for review and comment and the details of where the report could be accessed for review.</p> <p>Virtual Focus Group Meetings were held with various key stakeholder groups on 6 January 2021. Notes of the meetings were included in Appendix C7 of the final Scoping Report.</p> <p>The Scoping Report was made available for download from Savannah Environmental's website and could also be sent via other file transfer services i.e. We Transfer, Dropbox, etc. or on CD, on request.</p>

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
			<p>Site notices were placed at the proposed development site and proof of the placement of the site notices are included in Appendix C2 of the final Scoping Report.</p> <p><u>Impact Assessment Phase</u></p> <p>I&APs and Organs of State were notified of the acceptance of the Scoping Report and approval of the Plan of Study for the Environmental Impact Assessment on 16 April 2021 (refer to Appendices C4 & C5 of the EIAr.)</p> <p>The EIAr has been made available for a 30-day review and comment period from Friday, 30 April until Tuesday 1 June 2021. The availability of the report was announced through the means below. Opportunity for consultation meetings using an appropriate forum will be provided during the 30-day review and comment period.</p> <p>The details of the availability of the EIAr were included in the advertisement placed in the 'die Volksblad' newspaper on 30 April 2021 (the tearsheet will be included in the final EIAr).</p> <p>A notification letter was sent to all registered I&APs and Organs of State on the project database (Appendix C1 of the EIAr) on 28 April 2021, informing them of the availability of the EIAr for review and comment and the details of where the report could be accessed for review. Proof of notification is included in Appendices C4 and C5 of the EIAr.</p> <p>Details of the report review period were included within a live read on OFM on Friday, 30 April 2021 and Monday 24 May 2021 (proof will be included in Appendix C2 of the final EIAr).</p>

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
	<p>c) Alternatives</p> <p>i. Please provide a description of each of the preferred alternative type and provide detailed motivation on why it is preferred.</p> <p>ii. The applicant must determine the need for decommissioning of existing facilities, structures or infrastructure. This information must inform whether there is a need to update the application form and/or to amend the terms of reference for the specialist studies.</p> <p>d) Layout & Sensitivity Maps</p> <p>i. The EIAR must provide the four corner coordinate points for the proposed development site (note that if the site has numerous bend points, at each bend point coordinates must be provided) as well as the start, middle and end point of all linear activities for each of the sites. Coordinates must be in the format as prescribed in the 2014 NEMA Regulations, as amended.</p> <p>ii. The EIAR must provide the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear indication of the envisioned area for the proposed solar and BESS facility, i.e. placing of BESS, PV panels and all associated infrastructure should be mapped at an appropriate scale. 		<p>Virtual Focus Group Meetings and, where applicable, face-to-face meetings are scheduled to take place the week of 17 May 2021. Notes of the meetings will be included in Appendix C7 of the final EIAR).</p> <p>A description of the alternative types available, as well as the motivation for the preferred options is contained in Chapter 3 of the EIA report.</p> <p>Land use agreements with the landowner are ongoing and all decommissioning of infrastructure which may be necessary will be in accordance with the agreement between the proponent and the landowner. No amendment to the specialists ToR was required as the need to decommission existing infrastructure was considered as part of the layout and development area assessed. In addition, decommissioning of the PV facility will be considered in terms of the relevant legislation at the time of decommissioning.</p> <p>Please refer to Appendix Q of the EIA report for the project coordinates.</p> <p>A detailed Layout Map indicating the proposed infrastructure is included in Appendix O. Coordinate points of the development site are provided in Appendix Q of the EIA Report.</p>

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear description of all associated infrastructure. This description must include, but is not limited to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Power lines; ➤ Internal roads infrastructure; and; ➤ All supporting onsite infrastructure such as laydown area, guard house and control room etc. <p>iii. A copy of the final preferred layout map. All available biodiversity information must be used in the finalisation of the layout map. Existing infrastructure must be used as far as possible e.g. roads. The layout map must indicate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Permanent laydown area footprint; ➤ Internal roads indicating width (construction period width and operation period width) and with numbered sections between the other site elements which they serve (to make commenting on sections possible); ➤ Wetlands, drainage lines, rivers, stream and water crossing of roads and cables indicating the type of bridging structures that will be used; ➤ The location of sensitive environmental features on site e.g. CBAs, heritage sites, wetlands, drainage lines etc. that will be affected by the facility and its associated infrastructure; ➤ Location of access and service roads; ➤ All existing infrastructure on the site, especially railway lines and roads; ➤ Buffer areas; ➤ Buildings, including accommodation; and ➤ All "no-go" areas. 		

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
	iv. An environmental sensitivity map indicating environmental sensitive areas and features identified during the assessment process.		An Environmental Sensitivity Map indicating all environmentally sensitive features is included in Appendix L .
	v. A map combining the final layout map superimposed (overlain) on the environmental sensitivity map.		A combined Layout and Environmental Sensitivity Map indicating all environmentally sensitive features and proposed infrastructure is included in Appendix L .
	vi. Google Maps will not be accepted.		No google maps were used for layout and sensitivity mapping.
	e) Specialist assessments PoSEIA		
	i. The EAP must ensure that the terms of reference for all the identified specialist studies must include the following: ➤ A detailed description of the study's methodology; indication of the locations and descriptions of the development footprint, and all other associated infrastructures that they have assessed and are recommending for authorisations.		The methodologies and assessments undertaken by specialists are detailed in the relevant specialist studies (Appendix D to Appendix J).
	➤ Provide a detailed description of all limitations to the studies. All specialist studies must be conducted in the right season and providing that as a [imitation will not be allowed		The limitations and assumptions of specialists are detailed in the relevant specialist studies (Appendix D to Appendix J).
	➤ Please note that the Department considers a `no-go' area, as an area where no development of any infrastructure is allowed; therefore, no development of associated infrastructure including access roads is allowed in the `no-go' areas		No-go areas have been identified for freshwater features (amongst others) delineated within the development area. An optimised layout map avoiding these No-Go areas is included in Appendix L .
	➤ Should the specialist definition of `no-go' area differ from the Departments definition; this must be clearly indicated. The specialist must also indicate the 'no-go' area's buffer if applicable.		The definition of 'no-go' used in the specialist reports as well as the EIAR does not differ from the Department's definition except for the avifaunal specialist. This specialist determined a no-go area to be an area of exclusion for panels only, but allows for other associated infrastructure to be placed therein. This has been clearly identified in the avifaunal specialist report.

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ All specialist studies must be final, and provide detailed/practical mitigation measures for the preferred alternative and recommendations, and must not recommend further studies to be completed post EA. 		<p>All specialist studies are final and provide detailed/practical mitigation measures for the preferred alternative and recommendations. No additional studies are recommended.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Should a specialist recommend specific mitigation measures, these must be clearly indicated. 		<p>Specialist mitigation measures have been incorporated verbatim into the Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) (Appendix K) and this EIAR.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Outcomes regarding the radiological study must be clearly explained in the subsequent reports. It must be illustrated whether the findings of the previous radiological study or a new study will be commissioned. 		<p>The Vrede Solar PV Facility is not located within any sensitive regions in terms of RFI and therefore no study is deemed necessary. Comments from the South African Radio Astronomy Observatory (SARAO) and Sentech were however requested during the course of the assessment process to determine any requirement for further study (Refer Appendix C).</p> <p>No comments have been received from SARAO or Sentech to date regarding the need for these studies and therefore no radiological study has been conducted.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Regarding cumulative impacts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clearly defined cumulative impacts and where possible the size of the identified impact must be quantified and indicated, i.e. hectares of cumulatively transformed land. 		<p>Please refer to Chapter 9 of the EIA report for a complete assessment of the cumulative impacts associated with the proposed development. Where possible, these impacts have been quantified.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A detailed process flow to indicate how the specialist's recommendations, mitigation measures and conclusions from the various similar developments in the area were taken into consideration in the assessment of cumulative impacts and when the conclusion and mitigation measures were drafted for this project. 		<p>All similar renewable energy project within a 30km radius of the project were considered in relation to cumulative impacts in the respective specialist reports and the EIA report. Please refer to Chapter 9 of this report for a complete assessment of the cumulative impacts associated with the proposed development.</p>

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identified cumulative impacts associated with the proposed development must be rated with the significance rating methodology used in the process. 		Impact ratings were derived using the impact assessment methodology defined for the process for all cumulative impacts identified by specialists.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The significance rating must also inform the need and desirability of the proposed development. 		Please refer to Section 5.7 of the EIA report (Chapter 5) for a discussion on the cumulative impact considerations in relation to need and desirability.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A cumulative impact environmental statement on whether the proposed development must proceed. 		Please refer to Chapter 9 of the EIA report for a complete assessment of the cumulative impacts associated with the proposed development, including a cumulative impact statement.
	ii. Should the appointed specialists specify contradicting recommendations, the EAP must clearly indicate the most reasonable recommendation and substantiate this with defensible reasons; and where necessary, include further expertise advice.		Chapter 10 of the EIA Report contains a summary of recommendations and conclusions made by specialists. No contradicting recommendations have been made.
	iii. The following Specialist Assessments will form part of the EIAR: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural Impact Assessment • Terrestrial Ecological Study • Heritage Impact Assessment • Socio-Economic Impact Assessment • Visual Impact Assessment 		Please refer to Appendices D – J for the respective listed specialist studies.
	f) General i. The proposed development must consider the requirements of the custodians/authorities of existing infrastructure on site when designing the layout.		Final design of the layout will be conducted with due consideration by the proponent to custodians/authorities of existing infrastructure.
	ii. The EIAR must provide the technical details for the proposed facility in a table format as well as their description and/or dimensions. A sample for the minimum information required is listed under Annexure 2 below.		Please refer to Chapter 2 (Project Description), Table 2.2 for a detailing of the information requested.

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
	iii. Should a Water Use License be required, proof of application for a license must to be submitted.		The water use authorisation process for the Vrede Solar PV Facility will only be completed once a positive EA has been received and the project selected as Preferred Bidder. This is in line with the requirements of the Department of Human Settlements, Water and Sanitation.
	iv. The EAP must provide landowner consent for all farm portions affected by the proposed project, whether the project component is linear or not, i.e. all farm portions where the access road, solar panels and associated infrastructure is to be located		Please refer to the Landowner Consents attached to the amended application form submitted with the EIA report for consents of all infrastructure related to this application for Environmental Authorisation.
	v. A construction and operational phase EMPr that includes mitigation and monitoring measures must be submitted with the final EIAR. The EMPr must include a detailed fire management and protection plan		Please refer to Appendix K of the EIA report for the Environmental Management Programme (EMPr), which includes an Emergency Preparedness & Fire Management Plan, as well as a Plant Rescue & Protection Plan in accordance with this requirement.
	vi. Should the applicant wish to expand the footprint of the proposed development, implications to public participation, listed activities (application form), scope of the specialist studies and impacts and mitigations must be considered and reflected clearly.		The full extent of the development area was assessed as part of the EIA phase assessment in order to allow for refinement and placement of the proposed infrastructure within the assessed region. The proposed layout is contained within this development area and therefore no expansion of project footprint is required or necessary for the purposes of this assessment.
	The applicant is hereby reminded to comply with the requirements of Regulation 45 of GN R982 of 04 December 2014, as amendment, with regard to the time period allowed for complying with the requirements of the Regulations.		No extension of timeframes is required for this project.
	You are hereby reminded of Section 24F of the National Environmental Management Act, Act No. 107 of 1998, as amended, that no activity may commence prior to an environmental authorisation being granted by the Department.		Comment acknowledged. No further action required.

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
3.	<p>Please note that all development applications are processed via our online portal, the South African Heritage Resources Information System (SAHRIS) found at the following link: http://sahra.org.za/sahris/. We do not accept emailed, posted, hardcopy, faxed, website links or DropBox links as official submissions.</p> <p>Please create an application on SAHRIS and upload all documents pertaining to the Environmental Authorisation Application Process. As per section 24(4)b(iii) of NEMA and section 38(8) of the National Heritage Resources Act, Act 25 of 1999 (NHRA), an assessment of heritage resources must form part of the process and the assessment must comply with section 38(3) of the NHRA.</p> <p>Once all documents including all appendices are uploaded to the case application, please ensure that the status of the case is changed from DRAFT to SUBMITTED. Please ensure that all documents produced as part of the EA process are submitted as part of the application.</p>	<p>Natasha Higgitt Case Officer SAHRA</p> <p>E-mail: 19 April 2021</p>	<p>The EIAR has been uploaded onto SAHRIS CaseID 15827 on 30 April 2021 (proof of upload will be included in Appendix C4 of the final EIAR).</p>

2.2. Interested and Affected Parties

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
1.	<p>We would like to be involved in any way possible going forward.</p> <p>There's also another community forum in Moqhaka that can be key stakeholder on this project.</p>	<p>Morena Thebe Founder Moqhaka Community Forum</p> <p>E-mail: 19 April 2021</p>	<p>The information provided has been acknowledged and the organisation has been registered on the project database.</p>

3. COMMENTS RECEIVED DURING SCOPING REPORT REVIEW AND COMMENT PERIOD

3.1. Organs of State

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
1.	<p><u>This fetter serves to inform you that the following information must be included to the final SR:</u></p> <p>a) <u>Listed Activities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is noted that activity 11 (i) of Listing Notice 1 has been applied for however the draft SR on page 10 mentions that "The grid connection solution for the Rondavel Solar PV facility forms part of a separate application for environmental authorisation subject to a Basic Assessment, to be submitted in due course. This application will be submitted separately and does therefore not form part of this application". Please confirm why is this activity applied for in this application? For each listed activity, where possible, please ensure that the proposed threshold/footprint associated with the listed activity are included, i.e. the footprint of infrastructure in m2, the removal of material in m3, the clearance of land in ha or m2, number of BESS per site (each individual unit, if applicable), the storage of hazardous goods in m3, road dimensions etc. Please confirm the relevance of activity 12 (b) (ii) of Listing Notice 3 (985) to this development and whether the Free Sate Biodiversity Spatial Plan has been adopted. 	<p>Constance Musemburi Case Officer DEFF</p> <p>Letter: 10 December 2020</p>	<p>Activity 11 (i) of listing notice 1 has been applied for to ensure on-site cabling required for the operation of the facility, in particular cabling between the PV arrays, as well as the on-site substation, have been included and are appropriately authorised.</p> <p>Please refer to Table 6.1 in the final Scoping Report for the listed activities included in the application, as well as specifications (where possible) towards thresholds/footprints of each activity.</p> <p>Please note: the application is currently in the scoping phase and as such much of these specifications are not currently available. Further design and layout refinements will be provided for the EIA phase, wherein further detail towards these specifications will be available.</p> <p>Subsection (b)(ii) of activity 12 of Listing Notice 3 (985) is not being applied for the Vrede Solar PV project, as the development area is not located within a CBA area. However, subheading (b)(iv) of the same activity 12 of Listing Notice 3 (985) does trigger for this application (clearance of 300m² or</p>

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="237 341 969 517">• Please ensure that all relevant listed activities are applied for, are specific and can be linked to the development activity or infrastructure as described in the project description. Only activities applicable to the development must be applied for and assessed. <li data-bbox="237 517 969 732">• If the activities applied for in the application form differ from those mentioned in the final SR, an amended application form must be submitted. Please note that the Department's application form template has been amended and can be downloaded from the following link https://www.environment.govia/documents/forms, <li data-bbox="237 732 969 836">• It is noted that Activity 14 is triggered since hazardous goods will be stored on site and the electrolyte for the BESS will also periodically be refilled. <p data-bbox="237 836 969 868">b) <u>Alternatives</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="237 916 969 1043">• Please note that all reference to a basic assessment process in the report must be corrected as this is a scoping and environmental impact assessment. This is a serious fatal flaw. <li data-bbox="237 1123 969 1362">• Please ensure that a description of any identified alternatives for the proposed activity that are feasible and reasonable, including the advantages and disadvantages that the proposed activity or alternatives will have on the environment and on the community that may be affected by the activity as per Appendix 2 (1) (c) (d) and 2 (h) of GN R.982 of 2014, as amended is provided. Alternatively, you 		<p data-bbox="1386 229 2112 341">more of indigenous vegetation within areas within a 100m from the edge of a watercourse or wetland), and as such the activity remains applicable.</p> <p data-bbox="1386 341 2112 517">All relevant listed activities have been applied for and correspond between the application form and the final Scoping Report.</p> <p data-bbox="1386 517 2112 732">All activities correspond between the final scoping report and the application form.</p> <p data-bbox="1386 732 2112 836">Comment noted, no further action required.</p> <p data-bbox="1386 836 2112 1123">All references of Basic Assessment (or similar) in the final scoping report are in the context and discussion of the relevant regulatory processes towards environmental authorisation, or the process being followed for the grid connection infrastructure (subject to a separate authorisation process). All references to the current process for environmental authorisation represented by this project are clearly defined as a Scoping and EIA process.</p> <p data-bbox="1386 1123 2112 1362">Please refer to Chapter 3 of the Final Scoping report for a detailing of the alternatives considered for the project. Where no alternatives are deemed feasible a motivation has been provided.</p>

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
	<p>should submit written proof of an investigation and motivation if no reasonable or feasible alternatives exist in terms of Appendix 2 (2)(x)(xi).</p>		
	<p>c) <u>Specialist Studies</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please note that the Social Impact Assessment (SIA) Scoping Report must be reviewed by an independent peer reviewer. 		<p>Please refer to Appendix P of the Final scoping report for a peer review conducted by Neville Bews for the Social Scoping Report</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please note that the specialist studies to be conducted must provide their comments and recommendations on the preferred alternatives. 		<p>Scoping level findings determined by the specialists considered the project in relation to the preferred alternatives deemed feasible for the project at this stage in the process. Please further note: feasible layout alternatives will be assessed as part of the EIA phase and will be considered by all specialists.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should the appointed specialists specify contradicting recommendations, the EAP must clearly indicate the most reasonable recommendation and substantiate this with defensible reasons; and where necessary, include further expertise advice. 		<p>No contradictions between the findings of the Scoping Report and the specialist studies are applicable.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The specialist studies must also provide a detailed description of all limitations to their studies. All specialist studies must be conducted in the right season and providing that as a limitation, will not be accepted. 		<p>Please refer to Appendix D - I of the Final Scoping report for the specialist studies, which contains a description of assumptions and limitations applicable to their respective study. No assumptions and limitations are provided for the heritage, agricultural and visual scoping reports as no limitations were apparent at the desktop level of study. Where assumptions and limitations apply to the EIA phase studies, these will be detailed in the respective studies. All studies were conducted within a suitable season, where applicable.</p>
	<p>d) <u>Cumulative Assessment</u></p> <p>Should there be any other similar projects within a 30km radius of the proposed development site, the cumulative impact</p>		<p>Please refer to Section 8.4 of the final scoping report for an evaluation of the potential cumulative impact of the project.</p>

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
	<p>assessment for all identified and assessed impacts must be refined to indicate the following:</p> <p>a) Identified cumulative impacts must be clearly defined, and where possible the size of the identified impact must be quantified and indicated, i.e. hectares of cumulatively transformed land.</p> <p>b) Detailed process flow and proof must be provided, to indicate how the specialist's recommendations, mitigation measures and conclusions from the various similar developments in the area were taken into consideration in the assessment of cumulative impacts and when the conclusion and mitigation measures were drafted for this project.</p> <p>c) The cumulative impacts significance rating must also inform the need and desirability of the proposed development.</p> <p>d) A cumulative impact environmental statement on whether the proposed development must proceed.</p> <p>e) <u>Public Participation Process</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please ensure that comments from all relevant stakeholders are submitted to the Department with the final SR. This includes but is not limited to the Free State Department of Small Business Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs (DESTEA), the Department of Transport, the Moqhaka Local Municipality, the Fezile Dabi District Municipality, the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS), the South African National Roads Agency Limited (SANRAL), the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA), the Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT), BirdLife SA, the Department of Mineral Resources; Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and 		<p></p> <p>Please refer to Section 8.4 of the final scoping report for an evaluation of the potential cumulative impact of the project, which includes identification of potential cumulative impacts related to aspects such as biodiversity, freshwater features, avifauna, agricultural potential, heritage and social impacts.</p> <p>These impacts will be assessed, and mitigation measures provided as appropriate within the EIA phase of the development. Impact significance ratings will be supplied which will inform the need and desirability of the proposed development. The Environmental Impact Assessment Report will provide a cumulative impact environmental statement based on the cumulative assessments conducted during the EIA phase of the project.</p> <p>All comments received from the Organs of State listed during the commencement of the EIA process and those received on the Scoping Report that was made available for a 30-day review and comment period have been included within this Comments and Responses Report, and have been responded to, as required.</p> <p>Copies of all written comments received from Organs of State are included in Appendix C6 of the final Scoping Report.</p>

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
	<p>the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries: Directorate Biodiversity and Conservation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="237 304 969 616">• Please ensure that all issues raised and comments received during the circulation of the draft SR from registered I&APs and organs of state which have jurisdiction in respect of the proposed activity are adequately addressed in the final SR. Proof of correspondence with the various stakeholders must be included in the final SR. Should you be unable to obtain comments, proof should be submitted to the Department of the attempts that were made to obtain comments. 		<p>All comments received during the commencement of the EIA process and those received on the Scoping Report that was made available for a 30-day review and comment period have been included within this Comments and Responses Report, and have been responded to, as required.</p> <p>Copies of all written comments received from registered I&APs and Organs of State are included in Appendix C6 of the final Scoping Report.</p> <p>Proof of attempt to obtain comments on the Scoping Report is included in Appendices C4 and C5 included in the final Scoping Report.</p> <p>Proof of correspondence with the various stakeholders during the scoping phase and during the Scoping Report review and comment period is included in Appendix C4 and C5 and included in the final Scoping Report.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="237 951 969 1182">• A Comments and Response trail report (C&R) must be submitted with the final SR. The C&R report must incorporate all comments for this development. The C&R report must be a separate document from the main report and the format must be in the table format. Please note that a response such as "noted" is not regarded as an adequate response to I&APs' comments. 		<p>All written comments received during the commencement of the EIA process and the 30-day review and comment period of the Scoping Report from I&APs and Organs of State are captured in this C&RR which is included as a separate report to the final Scoping Report (Appendix C8).</p> <p>Comments submitted have been captured verbatim, as received, and have not been summarised. Appropriate responses have been included for all comments.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="237 1270 969 1359">• The Public Participation Process must be conducted in terms of Regulation 39, 40, 41, 42, 43 & 44 of the EIA Regulations 2014 as amended. 		<p>The Public Participation Process has been conducted in terms of Regulation 39, 40, 41, 42, 43 & 44 of the EIA Regulations 2014,</p>

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
			<p>as amended (GNR 326), as well as in accordance with the approved Public Participation Plan (Appendix C9).</p> <p>I&APs and organs of State were notified of the commencement of the EIA process as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The BID, accompanied by a cover letter was submitted via email to those I&APs identified and the relevant Organs of State on Wednesday, 18 November 2020 (refer to Appendices C4 and C5 of the final Scoping Report.) • An advertisement was placed in the Volksblad newspaper on Friday, 20 November 2020 (tearsheet included in Appendix C2 of the final Scoping Report) <p>The Scoping Report was made available for a 30-day review and comment period from, Friday, 20 November 2020 until Monday, 11 January 2021 and the availability of the report was announced through the means below. Opportunity for consultation was also provided during the 30-day review and comment period.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The details of the availability of the report were included in the advertisement placed in the Volksblad newspaper on 20 November 2020 (tearsheet included in Appendix C2 of the final Scoping Report). • The notification letter announcing the commencement of the EIA process was sent to all registered I&APs and Organs of State on the project database (refer to Appendix C1 of the final Scoping Report) informing them of the availability of the Scoping Report for review and comment and the details of where the report could be accessed for review. • A virtual Focus Group Meeting was held with the Moqhaka for the People, an NGO representing the community of

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
			<p>Moghaka on 06 January 2021. Notes of the meetings is included in Appendix C7 of the final Scoping Report</p> <p>The Scoping Report was also made available for download from Savannah Environmental's website and could also be sent via other file transfer services i.e. We Transfer, Dropbox, etc. or on CD, on request.</p> <p>Site notices were placed at the proposed development site and proof of the placement of the site notices are included in Appendix C2 of the final Scoping Report.</p>
	<p><u>General</u></p> <p>You are further reminded to comply with Regulation 21(1) of the NEMA EIA Regulations 2014, as amended, which states that: <i>"If S&EIR must be applied to an application, the applicant must, within 44 days of receipt of the application by the competent authority, submit to the competent authority a scoping report which has been subjected to a public participation process of at least 30 days and which reflects the incorporation of comments received, including any comments of the competent authority"</i></p>		<p>The final Scoping Report will be submitted within the prescribed regulated timeframes.</p>
	<p>You are further reminded that the final SR to be submitted to this Department must comply with all the requirements in terms of the scope of assessment and content of Soaping reports in accordance with Appendix 2 and Regulation 21(1) of the EIA Regulations 2014, as amended.</p>		<p>The Scoping report complies with the scope and content requirements as determined in Appendix 2 of the EIA regulations 2014, as amended.</p>
	<p>Further note that in terms of Regulation 45 of the EIA Regulations 2014, as amended, this application will lapse if the applicant fails to meet any of the timeframes prescribed in terms of these Regulations, unless an extension has been granted in terms of Regulation 3(7).</p>		<p>The final Scoping Report will be submitted within the prescribed regulated timeframes.</p>

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
	You are hereby reminded of Section 24F of the National Environmental Management Act, Act No. 107 of 1998, as amended, that no activity may commence prior to an Environmental Authorisation being granted by the Department.		Comment noted, no further action required.
2.	<p>NATIONAL FORESTS ACT, ACT 84 OF 1998 (AS AMENDED)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 12(1) read with s15(1) of the National Forests Act, Act 84 of 1998 (NFA) states that the Minister may declare a particular tree, group of trees, woodland; or trees belonging to a particular species, to be a protected tree, group of trees, woodland or species. A list of protected tree species was gazetted in GN 635 of 6 December 2019, those found in Freestate Province including Camel thorn (<i>Vachellia erioloba</i>), Bushman's tea (<i>Catha edulis</i>), Shepherd's tree (<i>Boscia albitrunca</i>), Real yellowwood (<i>Podocarpus latifolius</i>), Outeniqua yellowwood (<i>Podocarpus fakatus</i>) and Cheesewood (<i>Pittosporum viridiflorum</i>). The effect of the declaration is that no person may (a) cut, disturb, damage or destroy; or (b) possess, collect, remove, transport, export, purchase, sell, donate or in any other manner acquire or dispose of any protected tree, or any forest product derived from a protected tree, except under a license granted by the Minister; or in terms of an exemption published by the Minister in the Gazette. Section 58(1) of the NFA read with s62 and s63 states that any person who contravenes the prohibition on the cutting, disturbance, damage or destruction of protected trees referred to in section 15(1)(a) of the NFA; or the possession, collection, removal, transport, export, purchase or sale of any forest product derived from a protected tree referred to in section 15(1)(b), is guilty of a first category offence and 	<p>Zilungile Matiwane Chief Forester: Regulations DAFF: Directorate: Forstry Management (Other Regions) – in the DEFF</p> <p>Letter: 11 January 2021</p>	<p>Comment noted, no further action required.</p> <p>Comment noted, no further action required.</p> <p>Comment noted, no further action required.</p> <p>Comment noted, no further action required.</p>

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
	<p>may be sentenced to a fine or imprisonment for a period of up to three years, or both.</p> <p>COMMENTS ON BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Rondavel Solar PV Facility is to be developed on the remaining extent of the farm Rondavel Noord No. 1475 and the remaining extent of the farm Rondavel No. 627, located approximately 6km south-west of the town of Kroonstad in the Free State Province. The proposed project area may have an impact on protected trees under s15 (1) of the National Forests Act, Act 84 of 1998 (NFA) The developer must do an assessment to determine how many protected trees (If there are any) will be destroyed by the proposed development. • The development area contains many areas of dense thorny shrubs. One small ephemeral drainage line bisects the southeastern corner of the development area, with a length of approximately 1.5km. Drainage lines are important corridors for woodland species because the woodland along the banks is a refuge for woodland species. The largest concentration of shrubs and a few small trees in the development area is found along the banks of the drainage line. If these thorny scrubs are protected under Section 15 (1) of the National Forests Act, Act 84 of 1998 (NFA), there may be a need for an application for a license under the NFA. • The license application form is available on the Departments' website or at any Forestry Office. Supporting documentation required when applying for a license is listed on the license application form. Each property is required to apply individually for a license and there 		<p>An ecological Impact assessment will be conducted during the course of the EIA phase, which will determine if any protected species are contained within the site and likely to be damaged. Should any be determined for the project, further recommendations will be made towards ensuring appropriate biodiversity permits have been obtained prior to commencement with the construction phase. These measures will be included into the EIR and EMPr for the project, should protected species be found on site.</p>

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
	<p>department cannot issue a blanket license for the entire project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to the late receipt of the scoping report the department has not had sufficient time to go through the entire report and is willing to visit the proposed site should there be time available to do so. 		<p>Late receipt of the report by the department was due to internal routing within the department. Further opportunity to comment will be available in the EIA phase of the project and should a site visit be requested appropriate arrangements can be made.</p>
3.	<p>The owner of the farm (developer) will need to apply to the Municipality for a consent use to conduct a generating works on the properties if it is zoned as "agriculture".</p> <p>This application is done in terms of the Council's by-laws on land use planning and must be accompanied by inter alia the following documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) the Record of Decision (RoD) comments from Department of Agriculture <p>It is suggested that an appointment be made with the Planner of the Municipality and a pre-application consultation be conducted before the application is started with.</p>	<p>André Kotze Manager Spatial Planning Moghaka Local Municipality</p> <p>E-mail: 12 January 2021</p>	<p>A separate application for consent use will be applied for by the proponent should on be required, once the EIA process has concluded and an EA has been issued. The comments have been provided to the proponent for further action.</p>
4.	<p>The SAHRA Archaeology, Palaeontology, Meteorite unit notes the Heritage Screening Assessment along with the recommendations provided therein. It is noted that a Heritage Impact Assessment inclusive of an Archaeological and Palaeontological Impact Assessment is recommended. The SAHRA supports the recommendations of the Heritage Screening Assessment and requests the submission of the pending HIA before further comments can be issued.</p> <p>The HIA must comply with section 38(3) of the National Heritage Resources Act, Act 25 of 1999 (NHRA). Additionally, the archaeology and palaeontology specialist reports must comply with the SAHRA 2006 Minimum Standards: Archaeological and Palaeontological Component of Impact</p>	<p>Sityhilelo Ngcatsha Archaeology, Palaeontology, Meteorite Intern</p> <p>and</p> <p>Phillip Hine Manager: Archaeology, Palaeontology, Meteorite Unit SAHRA</p> <p>Letter: 15 January 2021</p>	<p>The Heritage Specialist study will be submitted as per the DEFF's Plan of Study, should it be approved.</p> <p>The specialist studies will be conducted in according to the specified regulations and public comments considered, as required.</p>

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
	Assessments, and the 2012 Minimum Standards: Palaeontological Component of Heritage Impact Assessments. The HIA should also incorporate the results of the Visual Impact Assessment and any heritage related public comments received during the Public Review period.		
	The Final Scoping Report must be submitted to the SAHRIS Case application once completed for record purposes. Additionally, the draft EIA and all appendices must be submitted to SAHRA at the start of the Public Review period so that an informed comment may be issued		The final Scoping Report will be uploaded onto SAHRIS Case ID 15828. The EIA Report and all appendices will be uploaded onto SAHRIS at the start of the public review period onto SAHRIS Case ID15828.

3.2. Interested and Affected Parties

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
1.	Can you please provide me with KML/KMZ files of the polygons for these facilities.	Dennis Govender MTN E-mail: 19 November 2020	The requested .KMZ file was e-mail to the stakeholder on 20 November 2020.
2.	May I kindly ask how you need MTN to respond to the information?	Tessa Smith Property: Central Region MTN SA E-mail: 19 November 2020	It is important for MTN as a service provider to confirm that MTN's infrastructure would not be impacted upon i.e. signal frequency and also if any property in close proximity are registered to MTN. .KMZ files were e-mailed to the stakeholder for ease of reference and to will the stakeholder with their evaluation of possible impact on their infrastructure.
3.	In response to your request for a letter of clearance regarding the planned photovoltaic solar energy facility near Kroonstad in the Free State province. MTN hereby confirms that presently, there would be no foreseeable interference or obstructions to MTN's network	Letter: 25 November 2020	Comment noted, no further action required.

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
	<p>caused by the above-mentioned photovoltaic solar energy facility.</p> <p>MTN has no objection to the construction of the aforementioned facility, subject to the project conforming to the relevant ICASA regulations as it relates to radio frequency emissions.</p>		
4.	<p>The MFP (Moqhaka for the People) is disturbed by a lack of acknowledgement and or reply by Savannah Environmental on the writing by the MFP;</p> <p>For your edification the PDF document will be attached to this email,</p> <p>Please note writing is dated 27 November 2020, and receipt thereof by Moqhaka Municipality, 30 November 2020, confirmed by Municipal Stamp.</p>	<p>Anton Meyer Administrative Secretary MFP</p> <p>E-mail: 07 December 2020</p>	<p>It is unclear as to what acknowledgement the MFP is referring as the e-mail received on 07 December 2020 is the first communication received by Savannah Environmental from the MFP. Please note: Following this initial correspondence, a FGM was held with MFP on the 6th of January 2021 and detailed interaction between the parties has been undertaken since. Further detailed interaction between the project team and MFP will continue.</p> <p>Savannah Environmental contacted the MFP on 07 December 2020 to obtain a clear understanding regarding the e-mail and letter submitted – the outcome of the call is captured in the response e-mail dated 08 December 2020 and included in Appendix C5 of the final Scoping Report.</p> <p>The project's BID was attached to the responding email dated 08 December 2020.</p> <p>This letter referred to was not applicable to Savannah Environmental however as the MFP is objecting to the approved repurposing project of the Moqhaka decommissioned power station by the Moqhaka Local Municipality</p> <p>This letter referred to is not applicable to Savannah Environmental as the MFP is objecting to the approved repurposing project of the Moqhaka decommissioned power station by the Moqhaka Local Municipality</p>

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
	<p>Please acknowledge both emails as received, by return email, to my email address meyerab54@gmail.com, My contact detail/s follow below: Cellphone Voice & WhatsApp +27 74 265 3962 Skype: antonbmeyer</p>		<p>Savannah Environmental contacted the MFP on 07 December 2020 to obtain a clear understanding regarding the e-mail and letter submitted – the outcome of the call is captured in the response e-mail dated 08 December 2020 and included in Appendix C5 of the final Scoping Report.</p>
5.	<p>Public Notice by Savannah environmental for and on behalf of South African Mainstream Renewable Power Developments (Pty) Ltd. (Undated) The MFP a Public Participation Forum and also the Imperial Investment Appointed Agent hereby oppose the above Illegal and unwarranted public Notice, based on the following fact;</p> <p>That the above Public Notification is in direct breach of the Appointment on Risk: Expression of Interest in Moqhaka Power Station issued by Moqhaka Municipality, dated 27 December 2018 and the acceptance of the Appointment by Imperial Investments dated (<i>date not visible</i>) December 2018.</p>	<p>Letter: 27 November 2020</p>	<p>The process notice referred to by the I&AP are not a legislated requirement in terms of the EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended but does address the DEFF (previously DEA) Public Participation Guidelines, 2019. The process notices were erected at various public places within Kroonstad (see Appendix C2 of the final Scoping Report).</p> <p>It is Savannah Environmental's understanding that the breach referred to by the I&AP is in relation to the MFP's application for an energy generation project by utilizing the decommissioned Moqhaka Power Station.</p> <p>The proposed Vrede Solar PV Facility project is not located near the decommissioned Moqhaka Power Station and therefore does not bear any risk to the MFP's proposed repurposing of the Moqhaka Power Station.</p> <p>Please note: "the Appointment on Risk: Expression of Interest in Moqhaka Power Station issued by Moqhaka Municipality" is a project proposed by the MFP, which is in no manner related to the current application for the Vrede solar PV facility.</p>
6.	<p>May I request a Google Earth Location and or Pin, In the interim I have requested a MFP Executive meeting to view / discuss the aforementioned proposal, in the week from Monday the 14th of December 2020,</p>	<p>E-mail: 08 December 2020</p>	<p>The requested .KMZ file was e-mailed to the I&AP on 09 December 2020.</p>

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
	Again thank you for your prompt response, appreciated!		
7.	<p>I have just come from the MFP Exec meeting, during the discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I was asked about the Shareholding of SA Mainstream, (if you may disclose, please do so, if not a NDA may be requested) <p>The commitment if any to local labour, training and upskilling, (So called Potable Skills)</p> <p>And then the question, which I asked before, the reference to REIPPPP in the Scoping Report & elsewhere, when everyone knows the DMRE has said that Window 5, with a little bit of luck will be announced in the first quarter Of 2021</p> <p>Possibly with amended / changed Regulations, different from Window 4</p> <p>And finally, that Savannah Environmental present themselves for a face to face meeting, as soon as possible, but before the 6th of January 2021, to finalise if possible the Public Participation presentation, presently scheduled for 11 January 2021:</p> <p>Dates available, 28 – 30 December 2020, and 4 - 6 January 2021</p>	E-mail: 22 December 2020	<p>Savannah Environmental responded to the MFP's e-mail on 20 December 2020 (refer to Appendix C5 of the final Scoping Report) by informing the MFP that in terms of the EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended, Regulation 3.(2) no public participation is permitted to be conducted for the period 15 December 2020 and 05 January 2021. Therefore, the MFP's request for a meeting before 06 January 2021 could be considered but a meeting at another date would be set.</p> <p>(Please note: a focus group meeting with the MFP was subsequently held on the 6th of January 2021, wherein the REIPPPP round, labour/training/upskilling aspects and shareholder/company structure were further detailed. Please refer to Appendix C7 for minutes of the meeting).</p> <p>In response to the request for a face-to-face meeting, the MFP was informed that in terms of the Disaster Management Act, 2002: Amendment of Regulations issued in terms of Section 27(2), issued 18 September 2020, and in terms of Savannah Environmental's COVID-19 procedures to reduce the risks associated with the pandemic the request for a face-to-face meeting can unfortunately not be considered given the increasing transmission rates of the virus. Savannah Environmental recommend that an on-line meeting (MS Teams / Zoom / Skype) be held with the representatives of the MFP members in line with the approved public participation plan for the project.</p> <p>As part of the public participation process for the project, Savannah Environmental is committed to provide the MFP and</p>

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
			its members the opportunity to participate in the open and transparent public participation process.
8.	With the announcement of South Africa back on Level Alert 3 of COVID-19, a focus group meeting via the Zoom platform to take place on Wednesday, 06 January 2021 at 10h00.	<p>Sphiro Khoury and Anton Meyer Chairperson & Admin Secretary MFP and Nicolene Venter Public Participation & Social Consultant Savannah Environmental</p> <p>Telephone Discussion: 29 December 2020</p>	<p>The following responses were submitted via e-mail on 30 December 2020 (refer to Appendix C5 of the final Scoping Report):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was mentioned that Nicolene Venter will communicate the date (same date of e-mail) to the Savannah Environmental team and the applicant to confirm their availability. • An Agenda will be drafted for the meeting and distribute to the MFP as soon as possible. • The presentation will be distributed Monday, 04 January 2021 for all parties' preparation prior to the meeting • Savannah Environmental will send a calendar invitation to the Chairperson and the Admin Secretary, and it is Savannah Environmental's understanding that they will forward the invitation to the MFP's Executive Members. Confirm of Savannah Environmental's understanding was requested. • It was requested that the MFP forward Savannah Environmental a list of their current questions / concerns regarding the proposed projects to enable the project team to provide responses, where possible, at the Focus Group Meeting as it will ensure a meaningful discussion at the meeting.
9.	<p>Saturday, 02 January 2021 Savannah Agenda – Zoom Meeting</p> <p>Dear Brothers, My concerns are the following: The Public Announcement is deficient in the following respect/s,</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Dept of Mineral Resources & Energy have not published a “new” REIPPPP (Renewable Energy Independent Power 	WhatsApp: 05 January 2021	The project is intended to be bid in the next REIPPPP round, or similarly suitable procurement programme under the Integrated Resource Plan for Electricity (IRP) 2010-2030 (2019). However, no specific round has been published and therefore at present no specific round has been specified. This was communicated to the MFP in the focus group meeting held on 6 January 2021 (refer Appendix C7 for minutes of this meeting).

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
	<p>Producer Procurement Programme) window, the last one, if memory serves in 2014/2015 known as 3.5/4.0.</p>		
2.	<p>My conversation with a Ms Jansen van Vuuren of SA Mainstream Renewable Energy Pty Ltd, I mentioned above, and the concession was made that, indeed there is no "active" REIPPPP notice at present, this is in preparation for Window 5 or even Window 6?</p>		
3.	<p>One further point of a potential "problem" is that the Window 5/6 Regulations might deviate substantially, or again not?! This supposition is based on the amended Emergency Programme Procurement Rules & Regulation/s!</p>		<p>The proponent is currently in the process of completing studies in support of environmental authorisation for the project on the assumption that a valid EA will be required by any procurement programme advertised under the IRP (2019). Where rules and regulations deviate at the time of bidding, the proponent will determine how to proceed by evaluating if a compliant bid may be prepared. Environmental Authorisation is however still pursued by the proponent in order to ensure compliance with the NEMA and EIA regulations.</p>
4.	<p>Ok lets us accept that it is good business practice, "forewarned is forearmed", preparation / insight / foresight.</p>		
5.	<p>"Virtual meetings are in line with the Public Participation Plan as approved by the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries (DEFF) for the project. Further, a public meeting needs to be advertised and open to any member of the public. As Savannah Environmental cannot control the number of people who would attend such a meeting, we could not be certain that COVID-19 Regulations would be adhered to."</p> <p>The above is copied from the email of 29 December 2020, maybe I am being too sensitive, be that as it may, I do not appreciate the tone of the copied, it seems to suggest that we, the MFP is incapable of organizing / preparing a "Legal – Compliant, Covid Regulation meeting!"</p>		<p>A virtual focus group meeting was held with the MFP on the 6th of January 2021 in accordance with the approved public participation plan for the project.</p>
6.	<p>"We are open to holding a public meeting later in the EIA process should the COVID-19 risks be reduced and the</p>		<p>Comment noted, no further action required.</p>

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
	Regulations allow for this." (See Point/s 9-10-11 below.later in the EIA process should the COVID-19 risks be reduced and the Regulations allow for this." (See Point/9 0-10-11 below.		
7.	In the Scoping Report and the many email correspondence recipients it was forwarded to, The Dept of Agriculture & Rural Development, (To which National / Province/s) is not clear, ditto Free State Province and any correspondence received as to or from, as of date 18 November 2020, and other Govt Departments such as Heritage etc....?		Please refer to Appendix C1 of the final Scoping report for a complete listing of the I&APs corresponded with for this application, including the parties mentioned.
8.	Please note the caveat, as supplied by Savannah, (Small Print) Savannah Public Process.		Comment noted, no further action required.
9.	It is important to note they project is at the end of the scoping phase and that detailed environmental studies (ground truthing) will only take place during the EIA phase where the outcome of the specialists' studies will be presented. Further public consultation and opportunities for meetings will be provided in this detailed EIA Phase.		Comment noted, no further action required.
10.	Inputs from your organization and that of the public received during the scoping phase are important and will inform the EIA process i.e. confirming / ensuring that the environmental specialists assess and /or address (where applicable) impacts, whether negative or positive.		Comment noted, no further action required.
	<p>Brothers, this is long winded process, much RED TAPE to jump through!</p> <p><i>My persoonlike bydra, Anton s'n tot deursigte gesprek</i></p> <p>Translation</p> <p>My personal contribution, Anton's for transparent dialogue</p>		Comment noted, no further action required.
10.	Please send me the original notification, BID, etc. for this project. I do not find it anywhere on my system or records. Please find attached Eskom general comments for works at or near Eskom infrastructure as well as the Eskom setbacks guideline for consideration by the IPP. Please send me KMZ files of the affected	John Geeringh Senior Consultant Environmental Management Land and Rights Eskom Transmission Division	The requested documents were e-mail to the I&AP on 18 November 2020 (see Appendix C5 for email proof). As requested, the documents, including the required .KMZ file for the Vrede SEF project was e-mailed on 07 January 2021.

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
	<p>properties, proposed development areas as well as the proposed grid connection.</p> <p>Renewable Energy Generation Plant Setbacks to Eskom Infrastructure included in <u>Appendix C5</u> of the final Scoping Report</p> <p>Eskom requirements for work in or near Eskom servitudes.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Eskom's rights and services must be acknowledged and respected at all times. 2. Eskom shall at all times retain unobstructed access to and egress from its servitudes. 3. Eskom's consent does not relieve the developer from obtaining the necessary statutory, land owner or municipal approvals. 4. Any cost incurred by Eskom as a result of non-compliance to any relevant environmental legislation will be charged to the developer. 5. If Eskom has to incur any expenditure in order to comply with statutory clearances or other regulations as a result of the developer's activities or because of the presence of his equipment or installation within the servitude restriction area, the developer shall pay such costs to Eskom on demand. 6. The use of explosives of any type within 500 metres of Eskom's services shall only occur with Eskom's previous written permission. If such permission is granted the developer must give at least fourteen working days prior notice of the commencement of blasting. This allows time for arrangements to be made for supervision and/or precautionary instructions to be issued in terms of the blasting process. It is advisable to make application separately in this regard. 	<p>Eskom Holdings SOC Ltd</p> <p>E-mail: 06 January 2021</p>	<p>The I&AP's attention was drawn to the fact that the Basic Assessment for the proposed Grid Connection project has not yet commenced, but the .KMZ file was provided in the above-mentioned e-mail.</p> <p>The requirements for development at or near Eskom infrastructure servitudes are noted. These requirements have been submitted to the developer for their attention and consideration for the development.</p> <p>In addition, the need to comply with Eskom required (as applicable) will be included into the EMPr for the project.</p>

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
7.	<p>Changes in ground level may not infringe statutory ground to conductor clearances or statutory visibility clearances. After any changes in ground level, the surface shall be rehabilitated and stabilised so as to prevent erosion. The measures taken shall be to Eskom's satisfaction.</p>		
8.	<p>Eskom shall not be liable for the death of or injury to any person or for the loss of or damage to any property whether as a result of the encroachment or of the use of the servitude area by the developer, his/her agent, contractors, employees, successors in title, and assignees. The developer indemnifies Eskom against loss, claims or damages including claims pertaining to consequential damages by third parties and whether as a result of damage to or interruption of or interference with Eskom's services or apparatus or otherwise. Eskom will not be held responsible for damage to the developer's equipment.</p>		
9.	<p>No mechanical equipment, including mechanical excavators or high lifting machinery, shall be used in the vicinity of Eskom's apparatus and/or services, without prior written permission having been granted by Eskom. If such permission is granted the developer must give at least seven working days' notice prior to the commencement of work. This allows time for arrangements to be made for supervision and/or precautionary instructions to be issued by the relevant Eskom Manager</p> <p>Note: Where and electrical outage is required, at least fourteen work days are required to arrange it.</p>		
10.	<p>Eskom's rights and duties in the servitude shall be accepted as having prior right at all times and shall not be obstructed or interfered with.</p>		

No.	Comment	Raised by	Response
	11. Under no circumstances shall rubble, earth or other material be dumped within the servitude restriction area. The developer shall maintain the area concerned to Eskom's satisfaction. The developer shall be liable to Eskom for the cost of any remedial action which has to be carried out by Eskom.		
	12. The clearances between Eskom's live electrical equipment and the proposed construction work shall be observed as stipulated by Regulation 15 of the Electrical Machinery Regulations of the Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993 (Act 85 of 1993).		
	13. Equipment shall be regarded electrically live and therefore dangerous at all times.		
	14. In spite of the restrictions stipulated by Regulation 15 of the Electrical Machinery Regulations of the Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993 (Act 85 of 1993), as an additional safety precaution, Eskom will not approve the erection of houses, or structures occupied or frequented by human beings, under the power lines or within the servitude restriction area.		
	15. Eskom may stipulate any additional requirements to highlight any possible exposure to Customers or Public to coming into contact or be exposed to any dangers of Eskom plant.		
	16. It is required of the developer to familiarise himself with all safety hazards related to Electrical plant		
	17. Any third party servitudes encroaching on Eskom servitudes shall be registered against Eskom's title deed at the developer's own cost. If such a servitude is brought into being, its existence should be endorsed on the Eskom servitude deed concerned, while the third party's servitude		

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	<p>deed must also include the rights of the affected Eskom servitude.</p>		
11.	<p>Good day, you would require to follow the SACAA current procedure and processes.</p> <p>Please take note of the requirements as mentioned on the following link as on the CAA website to follow. Website link provided– included in Appendix C6 Guidance on glint and Glare requirements are provided under the notices Website link provided– included in Appendix C6</p> <p>Kindly provide a .kml (Google Earth) file reflecting the footprint of the proposed development site.</p>	<p>Lizell Ströh Obstacle Inspector PANS-OPS Section Air Navigation Services Department SACAA</p> <p>E-mail: 07 January 2021</p>	<p>The information was communicated to the proponent for completion of an obstacle assessment as required by the SACAA.</p> <p>The information provided by the SACAA as acknowledged on 07 January 2021 and forwarded to the applicant for attention.</p> <p>The .KMZ file for the Vrede SEF was attached to the acknowledgement e-mail.</p>
12.	<p>Thank you for the notice.</p> <p>Can you please send me maps of the area of the Rondavel farm?</p>	<p>Riaan Crous Farmprops 19 (Pty) Ltd</p> <p>E-mail: 07 January 2021</p>	<p>The requested .KMZ file was e-mailed to the I&AP on 07 January 2021. Proof of e-mail included in Appendix C5 of the final Scoping Report.</p>