

Appendix C6:
Comments and Responses Report

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

GRID CONNECTION INFRASTRUCTURE, INCLUDING 132KV OVERHEAD POWERLINE, SWITCHING STATION AND ANCILLARIES, FOR THE GREAT KAROO WIND FARM, NORTHERN CAPE

October 2020

The restrictions enforced in terms of Government Gazette 43096 which placed the country in a national state of disaster limiting the movement of people to curb the spread of the COVID-19 virus has placed some limitations on the commencement and continuation of the public consultation as part of an EIA process. Considering these limitations, the following consultation process has been designed and will be implemented, on approval by the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries (DEFF), to cater for the conducting of the public participation process which includes I&APs, the competent authority, directly impacted landowners/occupiers, adjacent landowners/occupiers, relevant Organs of State departments, Municipalities, ward councillors and other key stakeholders.

PROJECT DETAILS

Applicant: Great Karoo Wind Farm (Pty) Ltd.

Great Karoo Wind Farm (Pty) Ltd, proposes the development of specific grid connection infrastructure required to connect and evacuate the generated power of the authorised Great Karoo Wind Farm (DEA Ref No. 12/12/20/2370/3) to the national electricity grid. Following consultation with Eskom, it has been confirmed that the Great Karoo Wind Farm must connect to the Hidden Valley substation located at the ACED Renewables Hidden Valley (Karusa) Wind Farm, which is currently under construction, to the west of Great Karoo Wind Farm. The project is located ~44km south of Sutherland and ~50km north of Matjiesfontein within the Northern Cape Province and falls within the Namakwa District Municipality and the Karoo Hoogland Local Municipality.

The grid connection infrastructure required includes a switching station (up to 100m x 100m which is 2ha) to be developed adjacent to the authorised Great Karoo Wind Farm on-site substation. A 132kV double- or single-circuit overhead powerline, with a length of up to 14km, will connect the proposed switching station to the Eskom Hidden Valley substation. The pylon structures of the power line will be up to 32m high and the power line will be developed within the servitude of up to 40m wide.

A grid connection corridor of 300m has been identified for the power line, which widens to ~740m wide for the eastern section of the powerline to allow for consideration of alternatives. A 500m assessment area around the wind farm substation has been considered for the placement of the switching station. Collectively, these assessment areas are referred to as the "development envelope". The proposed infrastructure will be appropriately placed within the development envelope, outside of identified environmental sensitive areas.

Where possible, the switching station will be accessed via the authorised access road to the Great Karoo Wind Farm substation. However, where this is not feasible an access road along the length of the power line servitude, of up to 4m wide, will be required to allow for large crane movement during construction. Other

associated infrastructure includes drainage line crossing infrastructure (culverts) and temporary laydown area/s that will be rehabilitated upon completion of the construction phase.

Two power line alternatives are being considered for the project which are near the starting point of the power line at the proposed switching station. Both alternatives are assessed equally as part of the Basic Assessment process. The alternative that will be developed will depend on the final placement of turbines at the Great Karoo Wind Farm, since the powerline will need to be routed between the turbines (the final turbine positions will only be confirmed closer to the time of wind farm construction in which Eskom setback requirements will also need to be catered for). It is therefore requested that both alternatives be approved, on condition that only one of the alternatives will be developed.

The grid connection infrastructure will be located within three affected properties:

- » Farm Kentucky No. 206;
- » Portion 1 of the Farm Orange Fontein No. 203; and
- » Remaining Extent of the Farm De Hoop No. 202.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

The public participation (PP) process will be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of Regulations 39 to 44 of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations, 2014, as amended, (GNR 326) and the Department of Environmental Affairs Public Participation Guideline 2017. The aim of the public participation process is primarily to ensure that:

- » information containing all relevant facts in respect of the proposed project is made available to potential stakeholders and I&APs;
- » participation by I&APs is facilitated in such a manner that all potential stakeholders and I&APs are provided with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed project; and
- » comments received from potential stakeholders and I&APs are recorded and incorporated into the EIA process.

The traditional means and opportunities available for the undertaking of public participation are still covered and implemented as part of this plan. Alternative means of undertaking consultation has been designed and will be implemented by Savannah Environmental to ensure that I&APs are afforded sufficient opportunity to raise comments on the project through an interactive web-based platform readily available and accessible to any person illustrating interest in the project and enables the public participation process to be undertaken in line with Regulations 41 to 44 of the EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended. This online stakeholder engagement platform allows the EAP to visually present details regarding the project and our consultation documentation, including project maps and plans, presentations and posters regarding the project, and reports available for review. The use of online tools enables stakeholders and I&APs to explore the project-specific content in their own time and allow them to participate in a meaningful way in the consultation process. The online platform allows for instant feedback and comments to be submitted, in so doing saving time for the stakeholder and also giving the assurance that their comments have been submitted for inclusion in the project reporting. The online stakeholder engagement platform considers the limitations applied by the Disaster Management Act Regulations prohibiting the gathering of people, as well as limitations which certain I&APs may have in terms of access to computers and internet as well as access to public spaces not open for operation or which have restricted access.

The benefits of the online stakeholder engagement platform include:

- » Ability to create a dedicated project-specific online platform to enable easy access to project-related information.
- » Ability to reach a wider audience, allowing more widespread consultation for major infrastructure projects.
- » Allowing stakeholders and I&APs the opportunity to engage on a project without leaving their office or home.
- » Enabling stakeholders and I&APs to register their interest in a project (for inclusion on the project database), and automatically gaining access to comprehensive project documentation.
- » Enabling the EAP to maintain a complete database of I&APs through maintaining a record of persons accessing the online stakeholder consultation platform.
- » Enabling the EAP and stakeholders/I&APs to meet virtually.
- » Provides a resilient solution to a public consultation process.

Where I&APs do not have the applicable facilities i.e. access to internet, mobile phones, or computers, provision has been made to include these I&APs in the consultation process by consulting with the Ward Councillor, the ward committee members, community representatives and local community forum members.

The schematic illustration below provides an overview of the tools that are available to I&APs and stakeholders to access project information and interact with the public participation team to obtain project information and resolve any queries that may arise, and to meet the requirements for public participation.

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| i. Stakeholder identification and register of I&APs | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Register as an I&AP on the online platform or via completion of a form and provision of contact information, by responding to an advert, or sending a 'please call me' which will be responded to with a telephone call.• State interest in the project.• Receive all project related information via email, post or other appropriate means. |
| ii. Advertisements and notifications | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advertisements, site notices and notifications provide information and details on the project and where to access project information.• Notifications regarding the EIA process and availability of project reports for public review to be sent via email, post or SMS notifications. |
| iii. Public Involvement and consultation | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Submission of comments or queries via the online platform, email or post to the PP team.• Virtual presentations available via the online platform.• Availability of project information via the online platform, email, post and telephonic platforms such as WhatsApp, and including telephonic discussions to provide description of information verbally.• An opportunity for I&APs and stakeholders to request virtual meetings with the project team. |
| iv. Comment on the BA Report | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Availability of the project reports via the online platform for 30-day comment period. Hard copies to be available only where sanitary conditions can be assured.• Submission of comments via the online platform, email or post to the PP team.• Comments recorded and responded to, as part of the process. |
| v. Identification and recording of comments | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Comments and Responses Report, including all comments received to be included in the reporting.• Comments received prior to report release for review to be included in draft reports.• Comments received during full process to be included within the final Report for decision-making. |

The PP plan, as set out in the table below, has been drafted for the above-mentioned project to ensure compliance with the requirements of the EIA Regulations and that reasonable opportunity is provided to I&APs and that all administrative actions are reasonable. Proof of all notifications will be included in the public participation appendix included in the Basic Assessment report.

The PP plan is submitted to the DEFF for discussion and approval before the PP process is undertaken for the proposed project.

Public Participation Plan: Discussion of approach and methodology to meet the requirements of the Regulations

| Regulation | Approach & Methodology to meet requirements |
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| <p>Regulation 40(1), Regulation 40(3) & Regulation 43 – provide all potential or registered interested and affected parties, including the competent authority, access to project related information, access to the BA report which will be made available for a period of at least 30 days to submit comments on draft reports prior to submission of final reports for decision-making.</p> | <p><u>Notification of Basic Assessment (BA) process to be undertaken for application for Environmental Authorisation (EA) to be distributed using the following means:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » E-mail » Dedicated project page on the Savannah Environmental online stakeholder engagement platform » Post » Process notices placed on site at locations that are accessible to I&APs » Advertisement in the printed media. <p><u>Notification of availability of reports and period for review using the following means:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Newspaper adverts, including details of where the reports can be accessed and details of the Savannah Environmental website. » Notification letter (to be sent via email, fax or post) to registered I&APs. » Notifications to communities via Ward Councillors, ward committee members, identified and confirmed community representatives, and local community forum members. » SMS and/ or WhatsApp notifications where no other means are available. <p><u>Availability of reports for review and comment:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Reports available on the Savannah Environmental website for download. Access to the report is monitored through an electronic gateway (where access is requested by the I&AP) so that accurate records of persons accessing the reports can be maintained. » Electronic copies can be made available to parties via a secure Dropbox link (or other means) that will be emailed upon request for the documentation. » CDs to be posted, if requested. » Hard copy reports to be available only where appropriate sanitary conditions can be maintained. » Reports will be submitted to the DEFF using the DEFF online portal. » Reports will be submitted to Organs of State and commenting authorities via an agreed electronic platform (such as on CD, or via a secure Dropbox link or WeTransfer, etc.). <p><u>Submission of comments to PP team:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Comments will be able to be submitted directly to the PP team using the Savannah Environmental online stakeholder engagement platform. |

| Regulation | Approach & Methodology to meet requirements |
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The online platform allows for feedback and comments to be submitted by I&APs, in so doing saving time for the stakeholder and also giving the assurance that their comments have been submitted for inclusion in the project reporting. » Written comments can also be submitted via email, post or fax. » Any comments provided telephonically or via instant message will be transcribed and recorded as formal comments. <p><u>Opportunity and means of consultation where applicable facilities are not available to I&APs:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Post. » Placement of process notices at accessible locations in the study area. » Placement of site notices on all affected properties. » Advertisement in printed media (local newspaper). » Consultation and communication through the ward councillor, ward committee members and confirmed community representatives and local community forum members. » SMS or WhatsApp notification. » CDs to be posted, if requested (and where a computer is available). » Hard copy report where sanitary conditions can be maintained. |
| <p>Regulation 40(2) - Provide access to all project information that has the potential to influence any decision regarding the application, unless protected by law, and must include consultation with Competent Authority, Organs of State & registered I&APs.</p> <p>Regulation 41(6) – Relevant information available and accessible</p> | <p><u>Provision of project information and consultation via various means including:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Telephonic consultation. » Email correspondence. » Correspondence sent via post. » SMS and/or WhatsApp. » The Savannah Environmental online stakeholder engagement platform will ensure that I&APs are afforded sufficient opportunity to participate in the project and raise comments on the project to any person with interest in the BA process for the project. This online stakeholder engagement platform which will include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A means to register on the project database and provide details of their interest in the project. ○ Background information on the project. ○ Project maps (including locality map, layout map, sensitivity map, landowner map, etc). ○ Photos of the project sites and surrounds. ○ Presentation with narration providing a summary of the project details and the findings of the BA. ○ Posters providing a summary of the findings of the BA. ○ A means of submitting written comment or queries. |

| Regulation | Approach & Methodology to meet requirements |
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Virtual meetings using an appropriate platform agreeable to all parties (such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams). The meetings will be recorded, and the attendees' details captured in an attendance register. Confirmation of their attendance will also be requested by e-mail and the correspondence will be included in the report. Face-to-Face meetings can be undertaken where sanitary conditions can be guaranteed. » Communities will be consulted via the relevant Ward Councillors, ward committee members, community representatives or local community forum members, as determined and confirmed during the consultation process. <p><u>Opportunity and means of consultation where applicable facilities are not available to I&APs:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Telephonic consultation. » Post. » SMS and/or WhatsApp. » Consultation and communication through the ward councillor, ward committee members and confirmed community representatives and local community forum members. |
| Regulation 41(2)(a) – Site notice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Site notices will be placed at affected properties. » Size and content will be in accordance with Regulation 41(3) & 41(4). |
| Regulation 41(2)(b) – Written notification to affected and neighbouring landowners and occupiers; municipality; ward councillors; Organs of State & other parties required by the CA | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Notification letter to be sent via email, fax or post. <p><u>Opportunity and means of consultation where applicable facilities are not available to I&APs:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Post. » SMS or WhatsApp notification. |
| Regulation 41(2)(c) – (e) – Advertisements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Advert to be placed in a local newspaper. |
| Regulation 42 – Project database | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » I&APs to be identified through a process of networking and referral, obtaining information from the Savannah Environmental existing stakeholder database, liaison with potentially affected parties in the greater surrounding area and a registration process involving the completion of a reply form or response to adverts. » Organs of State, key stakeholders and affected and surrounding landowners and occupiers will be identified and registered on the project database. » Other stakeholders will be required to formally register their interest in the project through either directly contacting the Savannah Environmental Public Participation team via email or fax or use of the Savannah Environmental website. |

| Regulation | Approach & Methodology to meet requirements |
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » In order to access the Savannah Environmental online stakeholder engagement platform for a specific project, I&APs will be required to provide their details such that they are automatically registered on the project database. » The register of I&APs will contain the names of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ all persons who requested to be registered on the database through the use of the Savannah Environmental website, or in writing and disclosed their interest in the project; ○ all Organs of State which hold jurisdiction in respect of the activity to which the application relates; and ○ all persons who submitted written comments or attended virtual meetings and viewed virtual presentations on the Savannah Environmental website during the public participation process. » The information captured on the project database will contain the names, organisation and contact details, as required. It must be noted that personal details will not be shared in public documentation in accordance with the requirements of the POPI Act. <p><u>Opportunity and means of consultation where applicable facilities are not available to I&APs:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Process of networking and referral. » Telephonic registration. » SMS and/or WhatsApp. » Fax or post. |
| Regulation 44 – Comments to be recorded | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Comments will be able to be submitted directly to the PP team using the Savannah Environmental online stakeholder engagement platform. A customised reply form is available on this webpage. » The Savannah Environmental online stakeholder engagement platform includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A means to register on the project database and provide details of their interest in the project. ○ A means of submitting written comment or queries. » The online platform allows for feedback and comments to be submitted by I&APs, in so doing saving time for the stakeholder and also giving the assurance that their comments have been submitted for inclusion in the project reporting. » Written comments can also be submitted via email, post or fax. » Any comments provided telephonically or via instant message will be transcribed and recorded as formal comments. » I&APs without the applicable electronic facilities to access the Savannah Environmental website will be provided with the opportunity to submit their comments and communicate with the public participation |

| Regulation | Approach & Methodology to meet requirements |
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| | <p>team via SMS, WhatsApp or by sending a Please-call-me notification. These comments will be transcribed and recorded as formal comments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » All comments received throughout the EIA process will be acknowledged and captured in the comments and responses report (C&RR) with a relevant response. » The C&RR and all comments received will be included each final report submitted to the CA. <p><u>Opportunity and means of consultation where applicable facilities are not available to I&APs:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Written comments via post or fax. » Comment submission telephonically and instant messaging (SMS and/or WhatsApp). » Sending a Please-call-me notification to the Public Participation team so that contact can be made. |
| Regulation 4(2) – Notification of decision on application | <p><u>Notification of Environmental Authorisation (EA) using the following means:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Notification letter with details as outlined in EA issued will be sent via email, fax or post. » Notification will be available on the Savannah Environmental website. » Notifications that the EA has been issued and where to download and/or obtain a copy to communities via Ward Councillor and his/her ward committee members and identified and confirmed community representatives. » SMS or WhatsApp notification. <p><u>Opportunity and means of consultation where applicable facilities are not available to I&APs:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Post. » Communication through the ward councillor, ward committee members and confirmed community representatives and local community forum members. » SMS and/or WhatsApp. |