



## environmental affairs

Department:  
Environmental Affairs  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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NEAS Reference: DEA/EIA/0000611/2011

DEA Reference: 12/12/20/2501

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Ms Louise Corbett  
Aurecon South Africa (Pty) Ltd  
PO Box 494  
CAPE TOWN  
8000

Fax No: 086 667 3532

**PER FACSIMILE / MAIL**

Dear Ms Corbett

**APPLICATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORISATION: PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF THE 100MW PHOTOVOLTAIC SOLAR ENERGY FACILITY ON THE FARM KLIPGATS PAN NEAR COPPERTON, NORTHERN CAPE**

The Final Scoping Report (FSR) and the Plan of Study for Environmental Impact Assessment (PoSEIA) dated January 2012 and received by the Department on 17 January 2012 refer.

The Department has evaluated the submitted the FSR and the PoSEIA dated January 2012 and is satisfied that the documents comply with the minimum requirements of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations, 2010. The FSR is hereby accepted by the Department in terms of regulation 30(1)(a) of the EIA Regulations, 2010.

You may proceed with the environmental impact assessment process in accordance with the tasks contemplated in the Plan of Study for Environmental Impact Assessment as required in terms of the EIA Regulations, 2010. All comments and recommendations made by all stakeholders and Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) in the Draft Scoping Report and submitted as part of the FSR must be taken into consideration when preparing an environmental impact assessment report in respect of the proposed development.

Please ensure that comments from all relevant stakeholders are submitted to the Department with the Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR). This includes but is not limited to the Siyathemba Local Municipality; the Pixley ka Seme District Municipality; the Department of Water Affairs (DWA); the South African Heritage Resource Agency (SAHRA); Eskom Holdings SOC Limited; the South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA); the Provincial Department of Environment and Nature Conservation (NCDENC) and the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF).

Proof of correspondence with the various stakeholders must be included in the Final EIR. Should you be unable to obtain comments, proof should be submitted to the Department of the attempts that were made to obtain comments.

The EAP must, in order to give effect to regulation 56(2), give registered interested and affected parties access to, and an opportunity to comment on the report in writing within 21 days before submitting the final environmental impact assessment report to the Department.

In addition, the following amendments and additional information are required for the EIR:

1. Details of the future plans for the site and infrastructure after decommissioning in 20-30 years and the possibility of upgrading the proposed infrastructure to more advanced technologies.
2. The total footprint of the proposed development should be indicated. Exact locations of the PV panels, power lines, roads and other associated infrastructure should be mapped at an appropriate scale.
3. Should a Water Use License be required, proof of application for a license needs to be submitted.
4. Possible impacts and effects of the development on the agricultural potential of the area.
5. The EIR should include information on the following:
  - Environmental costs vs benefits of the solar farm facility;
  - Financial implications to tourism in the area; and
  - Economic viability of the facility to the surrounding area and how the local community will benefit.
6. Information on services required on the site, e.g. sewage, refuse removal, water and electricity. Who will supply these services and has an agreement and confirmation of capacity been obtained? Proof of these agreements must be provided.
7. A copy of the final site layout plan. All available biodiversity information must be used in the finalisation of the layout plan. Existing infrastructure must be used as far as possible e.g. roads. The layout plan must indicate the following:
  - PV positions and its associated infrastructure;
  - Foundation footprint;
  - Permanent laydown area footprint;
  - Construction period laydown 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 heritage sites that will be affected by the facility and associated infrastructure;
  - Sub-station(s) and/or transformer(s) sites including their entire footprint;
  - Cable routes and trench dimensions (where they are not along internal roads);
  - Connection routes (including pylon positions) to the distribution/transmission network;
  - Cut and fill areas at panel sites, along roads and at sub-station/transformer sites indicating the expected volume of each cut and fill;
  - Borrow pits;
  - Spoil heaps (temporary for topsoil and subsoil and permanently for excess material);
  - All existing infrastructure on the site, especially roads;
  - Environmental sensitive features and buffer areas.
  - Buildings, including accommodation; and
  - All "no-go" areas.
8. An environmental sensitivity map indicating environmental sensitive areas and features identified during the EIA process.
9. A map combining the final layout plan superimposed (overlain) on the environmental sensitivity map.

The Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) to be submitted as part of the EIR must include the following:

- All recommendations and mitigation measures recorded in the EIR.
- The final site layout plan.
- Measures as dictated by the final site lay-out plan and micro-siting.
- An environmental sensitivity map indicating environmental sensitive areas and features identified during the EIA process.
- A map combining the final layout plan superimposed (overlain) on the environmental sensitivity map.
- An alien invasive management plan to be implemented during construction and operation of the facility. The plan must include mitigation measures to reduce the invasion of alien species and ensure that the continuous monitoring and removal of alien species is undertaken.
- A plant rescue and protection plan which allows for the maximum transplant of conservation important species from areas to be transformed. This plan must be compiled by a vegetation specialist familiar with the site and be implemented prior to commencement of the construction phase.
- A re-vegetation and habitat rehabilitation plan to be implemented during the construction and operation of the facility. Restoration must be undertaken as soon as possible after completion of construction activities to reduce the amount of habitat converted at any one time and to speed up the recovery to natural habitats.
- An open space management plan to be implemented during the construction and operation of the facility.
- A traffic management plan for the site access roads to ensure that no hazards would result from the increased truck traffic and that traffic flow would not be adversely impacted. This plan must include measures to minimize impacts on local commuters e.g. limiting construction vehicles travelling on public roadways during the morning and late afternoon commute time and avoid using roads through densely populated built-up areas so as not to disturb existing retail and commercial operations.
- A transportation plan for the transport of PV components, main assembly cranes and other large pieces of equipment.
- A storm water management plan to be implemented during the construction and operation of the facility. The plan must ensure compliance with applicable regulations and prevent off-site migration of contaminated storm water or increased soil erosion. The plan must include the construction of appropriate design measures that allow surface and subsurface movement of water along drainage lines so as not to impede natural surface and subsurface flows. Drainage measures must promote the dissipation of storm water run-off.
- An erosion management plan for monitoring and rehabilitating erosion events associated with the facility. Appropriate erosion mitigation must form part of this plan to prevent and reduce the risk of any potential erosion.
- An effective monitoring system to detect any leakage or spillage of all hazardous substances during their transportation, handling, use and storage. This must include precautionary measures to limit the possibility of oil and other toxic liquids from entering the soil or storm water systems.
- Measures to protect hydrological features such as streams, rivers, pans, wetlands, dams and their catchments, and other environmental sensitive areas from construction impacts including the direct or indirect spillage of pollutants.

Please ensure that Listing notice activities applied for are specific and can be linked to the development activity or infrastructure in the project description.

The applicant is hereby reminded to comply with the requirements of regulation 67 with regard to the time period allowed for complying with the requirements of the Regulations, and regulations 56 and 57 with regard to the allowance of a comment period for interested and affected parties on all reports submitted to the competent authority for decision-making. The reports referred to are listed in regulation 56(3a-3h).

Please ensure that the Final EIR includes at least one A3 regional map of the area and the locality maps included in the final EIR illustrate the PV positions, its associated infrastructure, different proposed alignments and the above ground storage of fuel. The maps must be of acceptable quality and as a minimum, have the following attributes:

- Maps are relatable to one another;
- Cardinal points;
- Co-ordinates;
- Legible legends;
- Indicate alternatives;
- Latest land cover;
- Vegetation types of the study area; and
- A3 size locality map.

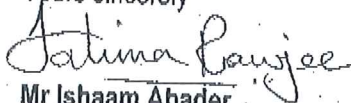
Further, it must be reiterated that, should an application for Environmental Authorisation be subject to the provisions of Chapter II, Section 38 of the National Heritage Resources Act, Act 25 of 1999, then this Department will not be able to make nor issue a decision in terms of your application for Environmental Authorisation pending a letter from the pertinent heritage authority categorically stating that the application fulfils the requirements of the relevant heritage resources authority as described in Chapter II, Section 38(8) of the National Heritage Resources Act, Act 25 of 1999.

You are requested to submit two (2) electronic copies (CD/DVD) and two (2) hard copies of both the Draft and Final EIR to the Department as per regulation 34(1)(b) of the EIA Regulations, 2010.

Please also find attached information that must be used in the preparation of the Environmental Impact Report. This will enable the Department to speedily review the EIAR and make a decision on the application.

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.

Yours sincerely



**Mr Ishaam Abader**

**Deputy Director-General: Environmental Quality and Protection  
Department of Environmental Affairs**

**Letter signed by: Ms Fatima Rawjee**

**Designation: Acting Director: Environmental Impact Evaluation**

**Date: 30/03/2012**

CC:	Mr Warren Morse	Mulilo Renewable Energy (Pty) Ltd	Fax: 021 935 0505
	Ms Anga Yaphi	Northern Cape DEA&NC	Fax: 054 311 1155

## A. EIA INFORMATION REQUIRED FOR SOLAR ENERGY FACILITIES

### 1. General site information

The following general site information is required:

- Descriptions of all affected farm portions
- 21 digit Surveyor General codes of all affected farm portions
- Copies of deeds of all affected farm portions
- Photos of areas that give a visual perspective of all parts of the site
- Photographs from sensitive visual receptors (tourism routes, tourism facilities, etc.)
- Solar plant design specifications including:
  - Type of technology
  - Structure height
  - Surface area to be covered (including associated infrastructure such as roads)
  - Structure orientation
  - Laydown area dimensions (construction period and thereafter)
  - Generation capacity
- Generation capacity of the facility as a whole at delivery points

This information must be indicated on the first page of any Scoping or EIA document. It is also advised that it be double checked as there are too many mistakes in the applications that have been received that take too much time from authorities to correct.

### 2. Site maps and GIS information

Site maps and GIS information should include at least the following:

- All maps/information layers must also be provided in ESRI Shapefile format
- All affected farm portions must be indicated
- The exact site of the application must be indicated (the areas that will be occupied by the application)
- A status quo map/layer must be provided that includes the following:
  - Current use of land on the site including:
    - Buildings and other structures
    - Agricultural fields
    - Grazing areas
    - Natural vegetation areas (natural veld not cultivated for the preceding 10 years) with an indication of the vegetation quality as well as fine scale mapping in respect of Critical Biodiversity Areas and Ecological Support Areas
    - Critically endangered and endangered vegetation areas that occur on the site
    - Bare areas which may be susceptible to soil erosion
    - Cultural historical sites and elements
  - Rivers, streams and water courses
  - Ridgelines and 20m continuous contours with height references in the GIS database
  - Fountains, boreholes, dams (in-stream as well as off-stream) and reservoirs
  - High potential agricultural areas as defined by the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
  - Buffer zones (also where it is dictated by elements outside the site):
    - 500m from any irrigated agricultural land
    - 1km from residential areas

- Indicate isolated residential, tourism facilities on or within 1km of the site
- A slope analysis map/layer that include the following slope ranges:
  - Less than 8% slope
  - between 8% and 12% slope
  - between 12% and 14% slope
  - steeper than 18 % slope
- A map/layer that indicate locations of birds and bats including roosting and foraging areas (specialist input required)
- A site development proposal map(s)/layer(s) that indicate:
  - Positions of solar facilities
  - Foundation footprint
  - Permanent laydown area footprint
  - Construction period laydown 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)
  - River, stream and water crossing of roads and cables indicating the type of bridging structures that will be used
  - Substation(s) and/or transformer(s) sites including their entire footprint.
  - Cable routes and trench dimensions (where they are not along internal roads)
  - Connection routes to the distribution/transmission network (the connection must form part of the EIA even if the construction and maintenance thereof will be done by another entity such as ESKOM)
  - Cut and fill areas along roads and at substation/transformer sites indicating the expected volume of each cut and fill
  - Borrow pits
  - Spoil heaps (temporary for topsoil and subsoil and permanently for excess material)
  - Buildings including accommodation

With the above information authorities will be able to assess the strategic and site impacts of applications.

### 3. Regional map and GIS information

The regional map and GIS information should include at least the following:

- All maps/information layers must also be provided in ESRI Shapefile format
- The map/layer must cover an area of 20km around the site
- Indicate the following:
  - roads including their types (tarred or gravel) and category (national, provincial, local or private)
  - Railway lines and stations
  - Industrial areas
  - Harbours and airports
  - Electricity transmission and distribution lines and substations
  - Pipelines
  - Waters sources to be utilised during the construction and operational phases
  - A visibility assessment of the areas from where the facility will be visible
  - Critical Biodiversity Areas and Ecological Support Areas
  - Critically Endangered and Endangered vegetation areas
  - Agricultural fields

- Irrigated areas
- An indication of new road or changes and upgrades that must be done to existing roads in order to get equipment onto the site including cut and fill areas and crossings of rivers and streams

#### 4. Important stakeholders

Amongst other important stakeholders, comments from the National Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries must be obtained and submitted to the Department. Request for comment must be submitted to:

Mrs Anneliza Collett  
 Directorate: Land Use & Soil Management  
 Department of Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries  
 Tel: 012 - 319 7508  
 Fax: 012 - 329 5938  
 e-mail: AnnelizaC@nda.agric.za  
 www.agis.agric.za

In addition, comments must be requested from Eskom regarding grid connectivity and capacity. Request for comment must be submitted to:

Mr John Geeringh  
 Eskom Transmission  
 Megawatt Park D1Y38  
 PO Box 1091  
**JOHANNESBURG**  
 2000

Tel: 011 516 7233  
 Fax: 086 661 4064  
[John.geeringh@eskom.co.za](mailto:John.geeringh@eskom.co.za)

#### **B. AGRICULTURE STUDY REQUIREMENTS**

- Detailed soil assessment of the site in question, incorporating a radius of 50 m surrounding the site, on a scale of 1:10 000 or finer. The soil assessment should include the following:
  - Identification of the soil forms present on site
  - The size of the area where a particular soil form is found
  - GPS readings of soil survey points
  - The depth of the soil at each survey point
  - Soil colour
  - Limiting factors
  - Clay content
  - Slope of the site
  - A detailed map indicating the locality of the soil forms within the specified area,
  - Size of the site
- Exact locality of the site
- Current activities on the site, developments, buildings
- Surrounding developments / land uses and activities in a radius of 500 m of the site

- Access routes and the condition thereof
- Current status of the land (including erosion, vegetation and a degradation assessment)
- Possible land use options for the site
- Water availability, source and quality (if available)
- Detailed descriptions of why agriculture should or should not be the land use of choice
- Impact of the change of land use on the surrounding area
- A shape file containing the soil forms and relevant attribute data as depicted on the map