

Annexure 1: Reasons for Decision

1. Information considered in making the decision

In reaching its decision, the Department took, *inter alia*, the following into consideration -

- a) The listed activities as applied for in the amended application form received on 03 May 2016.
- b) The information contained in the amended EIAr dated September 2016.
- c) The comments received from organs of state and interested and affected parties as included in the amended EIAr dated September 2016.
- d) Mitigation measures as proposed in the amended EIAr dated September 2016 and the draft EMPr;
- e) The information contained in the specialist studies contained in the amended EIAr dated September 2016 and as appears below:

Title	Prepared by	Date
Ecology assessment	Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd. (Marianne Strohbach) and Simon Todd Consulting (Simon Todd)	September 2015
Avifauna assessment	Birds Unlimited Environmental Consultants (Dr. Rob Simmons)	March 2015
Agricultural potential	HydroPedological Solutions (J.J. van Tol)	November 2014
Surface and Groundwater Assessment	Future Flow Groundwater & Project Management Solutions (M. Prinsloo; T. Mgwebi & I. Phalane)	January 2015
Heritage assessment	Heritage Contracts & Archaeological Consulting (J. van der Walt)	August 2015
Visual assessment	NuLeaf Planning and Environmental (Pty) Ltd. and MetroGIS (Pty) Ltd. (M. van der Westhuizen)	March 2015
SKA assessment	ITC Services (Pty) Ltd. (CFH Fouche & J.J. Joubert)	March 2015
Palaeontological assessment	Natura Viva cc (J.E. Almond)	March 2015
Social assessment	Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd. (Neville Bews - External reviewer)	October 2015

Noise assessment	Enviro-Acoustic Research cc (M. De Jager)	March 2015
Traffic assessment	Siyazi Gauteng (Pty) Ltd. (P. van der Westhuizen)	October 2014
Economic assessment	Urban-Econ Development Economists (C. Hunter)	January 2015
Draft EMPr	Savannah Environmental (Pty) Ltd. (Karen Jodas, Steven Ingle)	April 2016

- f) The objectives and requirements of relevant legislation, policies and guidelines, including section 2 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act 107 of 1998).

2. Key factors considered in making the decision

All information presented to the Department was taken into account in the Department's consideration of the application. A summary of the issues which, in the Department's view, were of the most significance is set out below.

- a) Details provided of the qualifications of the Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP).
- b) The findings of all the specialist studies conducted and their recommended mitigation measures.
- c) The need for the proposed project stems from the provision of electricity to the national grid in terms of the Renewable Energy Independent Power Producers Procurement Programme (REIPPPP) as required by the Department of Energy.
- d) The amended EIAr dated September 2016 identified all legislation and guidelines that have been considered in the preparation of the EIAr.
- e) The description of the environment that may be affected by the activity and the manner in which the physical, biological, social, economic and cultural aspects of the environment may be affected by the proposed activity.
- f) The methodology used in assessing the potential impacts identified in the amended EIAr dated September 2016 and the specialist studies have been adequately indicated.
- g) A sufficient public participation process was undertaken and the applicant has satisfied the minimum requirements as prescribed in the EIA Regulations, 2010 for public involvement.

3. Findings

After consideration of the information and factors listed above, the Department made the following findings -

- a) The identification and assessment of impacts are detailed in the amended EIAr dated September 2016 and sufficient assessment of the key identified issues and impacts have been completed.
- b) The procedure followed for impact assessment is adequate for the decision-making process.
- c) The proposed mitigation of impacts identified and assessed adequately curtails the identified impacts.
- d) The information contained in the EIAr dated September 2016 is deemed to be accurate and credible.
- e) EMPr measures for the pre-construction, construction and rehabilitation phases of the development were proposed and included in the EIAr dated September 2016 and will be implemented to manage the identified environmental impacts during the construction phase.

In view of the above, the Department is satisfied that, subject to compliance with the conditions contained in the environmental authorisation, the authorised activity will not conflict with the general objectives of integrated environmental management laid down in Chapter 5 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 and that any potentially detrimental environmental impacts resulting from the authorised activity can be mitigated to acceptable levels. The environmental authorisation is accordingly granted.