

13 May 2016
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Our Ref: F008-15

Swellendam Municipality
Mr. Ron Brunings
49 Voortrek St,
Swellendam,
6740

Email: rbrunings@swellenmun.co.za
Tel: 028-514 8635

Dear Mr Brunings,

RE: DRAFT SCOPING REPORT FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF THE ESKOM VRYHEID NETWORK STRENGTHENING: AGULHAS 400/132kV 2X500 MVA TRANSMISSION SUBSTATION AND LOOP-IN LOOP-OUT LINES

Your email dated 10 May 2016 bears reference.

Thank you for the comments made on the Draft Scoping Report, please see below the response.

- Comment:** *As a Municipality we are concerned about the cumulative visual impact on the landscape of the various infrastructures that is being proposed along the R319 of late. It is noted that the municipality recently approved 2 wind farms in the region, with a third in process, and that each of these are also now proposing new power-line infrastructure, even though they were initially motivated on the basis of utilising existing reticulation systems.*

Response: The visual aspect and associated impacts has been identified by the EAP as impacts that will be looked into during the impact assessment phase. As part of the EIA, a visual impact assessment study for this project will be commissioned to thoroughly and cumulatively assess the impact on the environment.

- Comment:** *It is our position that the construction of the new transmission substation and loop-lines should not be proposed / presented / and indeed, assessed, in isolation but rather put forward with full disclosure and illustration of all related existing and recently approved infrastructure in the region.*

Response: The positioning of the proposed new substation and associated power lines has taken into consideration Eskom's 10 year plan that focuses on provision and development of electrical infrastructure in the Cape region. Further consideration of future developments including renewable energy has been considered.

3. **Comment:** *There should be evidence of efforts made to minimise the visual impact of the development, be it through collaboration with existing infrastructure, or installing the loop-lines underground etc.*

Response: The Scoping phase of the project has identified various alternatives that will be assessed further during the EIA phase. The advantages and disadvantages of such have been put forward. Such will include consideration of underground cables or overhead lines as well as consideration of various structures that will reduce the visual impact.

4. **Comment:** *The report does not address the possibility of augmenting the use of the existing Vryheid Substation.*

Response: During the preliminary study, augmentation of the existing substation was considered and from a technical perspective it proved not to be the most viable option. Environmentally, the area around the existing substation was assessed and it also proved not to be the most favourable. Augmentation would not have been a solution to the current constraints that the region is facing.

5. **Comment:** *As a Municipality we are not in favour of the development of further infrastructure such as power-lines and substations along the eastern side of the R319, as we would like to maintain the views and vistas in that direction as far as possible.*

Response: Noted. The study will look deeper into the visual impacts raised and proposed possible mitigation measures to ensure that the Municipality's mandate to provide electricity is put forward without compromising the environmental quality.

Please note that you will be kept informed as the Environmental Impact Assessment process progresses.

Should you have any queries related to the project, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Kind Regards



Munyadziwa Rikhotso
Executive Director



Rejoice Aphone
Environmental Consultant