

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT: PROPOSED COAL FIRED POWER STATION IN THE WITBANK AREA
ISSUES TRAIL FOUR**

SUMMARY OF ISSUES AND CONCERNS RAISED VIA WRITTEN COMMENTS

No.	Individual	Organisation	Issue or Concern	Response
1.	John & Cecilia Latilla	Ptn 64 Eenzaamheid Submitted via email; 30/11/2006	1. It is a tragedy that alternative power generating options were not more seriously considered. Another coal fired power station in this area is an environmentally high impact option in this area.	Alternative power generating options are considered In the National Integrated Resource Plan (NIRP) developed by the Department of Minerals and Energy, and the Integrated Strategic Electricity Plan (ISEP) which is an Eskom planning tool aligned to NIRP. EIAs are specifically regulated to evaluate projects and sites. This EIA is therefore limited to the project-level proposal for a new coal-fired power station. See Section 1.2.4 of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR).
			2. Construction phase impacts have not been taken seriously enough. Due to the high influx of workseekers SA Police are unlikely to be willing or be able to provide sufficient protection to people living in the area. This is Eskom's responsibility and they should pay for 24 hour private security or install free electricity for a high-powered electric fence system for us.	The security risk in the area is likely to increase with the influx of people and increased activity. To mitigate this, an investigation is required to determine the potential risk and pro-actively address these. Security and policing of the area surrounding the power station site is not within Eskom's mandate. However, since their activities are likely to contribute to the risk, Eskom propose to engage with the SAPS and other relevant community forums prior to the start of construction and ensure that such risks are anticipated and addressed.
			3. How does Eskom plan to ensure that a squatter settlement will not be established nearby?	Acknowledging the anticipated risk of informal settlements developing near where Eskom would be building, Eskom believes such developments need to be addressed via a multi-stakeholder forum. The stakeholder forum will have to comprise of all the parties that have a stake and an interest or a solution to resolving the anticipated challenge. The recruitment of staff will not take place on site and this will hopefully reduce the likelihood of informal settlements developing.
			4. Heavy construction vehicles will result in noise and dust impacting significantly on adjacent landowners daily.	Impacts associated with noise and dust for both construction and operational phases have been investigated. Sections 5.4.2.d) and 5.4.2.g) of the EIR describe the control measures recommended and these will be specified in the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).

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			5. None of the decision makers or their families have to live in close proximity to the construction or operational power station and undervalue the significance of the impact on locals. I would have never bought this land if I had known that a power station would be built here.	An objective of an EIA is to understand the impacts on local inhabitants. The social impact assessment identified both positive and negative impacts. The negative impacts are anticipated and will as far as possible be mitigated.
			6. Visual and noise impacts will be unbearable during the construction phase as well as the operation of the power station.	Impacts associated with noise and visual for both construction and operational phases have been investigated. See Sections 5.3.1 and 5.4.2.d) of the EIR for a description of the control measures recommended and note that these will be specified in the relevant Environmental Management Plans (EMP).
			7. What is the source of the building stone, aggregate and sand for the Power Station?	Commercial sources or borrow pits in the vicinity of the construction site would be considered and utilised.
			8. Where will the access roads be positioned to get the material to site?	Figure 2.7 of the EIR shows the envisaged road access route alternatives to the preferred Site X, either from the north-west or north-east.
			9. Why does Eskom not build two power stations in a less populated area, or build another power station next to Kendal power station where there is already environmental damage and negative effect on nearby populations?	The proximity to a coal supply and avoiding further concentrations of pollutants were the major informants. There are also technical reasons why two dry-cooled power stations could not be located in proximity to each other.
			10. This development significantly affects our future prospects on our land and we may have to sell our property. The property value has dropped due to this development. Will Eskom make up any loss we incur due to their proposal?	The principle in such cases is that no one should be financially disadvantaged by a development. Eskom subscribes to and practices the principle of a "willing buyer – willing seller".
		Submitted via email; 08/12/2006	11. In the Transport Planning Study, it appears that Site X is the preferred site, and the distance from Pretoria and Bronkhorstpruit is taken into account but not the distance to Ogies / Phola and Delmas which are probably closer to Site Y. Site Y is as close to the N12 as Site X is to the N4.	Noted.

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		Submitted via email; 08/12/2006	12. Road A in figure A - 2 is marked as passing right through our house. Eskom must come and discuss this with me as I am not interested in living next to a road where there would be so much traffic and noise.	See response to #8 above. Eskom will open discussions in this regard in due course. The proposed road access routings generally follow existing roads, servitudes and farm boundaries (for which servitudes have to be obtained). Final routings will be in consultation with the roads authorities and affected landowners.
			13. I am against this proposed development.	Noted.
			14. The socio economic study did not highlight that Site Y is very much closer to the poorer Delmas area.	The variety and nature of commercial and employment opportunities would suggest that this is not a critical factor.
			15. The likelihood of increased crime and violence during both the construction and operational phases has not been investigated sufficiently.	See response to #2 above.
2.	J.D Saunders	Emalahleni Local Municipality Councillor Submitted via fax 30/11/2006	1. Emalahleni Local Municipality existing water, sewage, roads and refuse removal infrastructure is insufficient to accommodate the Power Station. How will Eskom ensure any additional requirements can be met?	Bulk water supply would be derived from the regional DWAF system (VRESAP), whereas sewage would be treated on-site in a sewage/effluent treatment plant. Roads have been addressed by a specialist study and the EIR includes comment from the relevant authorities (SANRAL as well as roads agencies for both Gauteng and Mpumalanga) and refuse would be managed by purpose-designed facilities on-site. The Delmas Local Municipality should therefore not be required to provide additional civil services. However, the local municipality has been identified as an I&AP, and as such, consultations have been held with officials from the municipality.
			2. Eskom and the associated mine will make a considerable contribution to the revenue of the Municipality.	Noted.

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3	John Byrne	Kendal Poultry Farm (Pty) Ltd Submitted via email; 30/11/2006	1. Annexure 3, Section I, Page H2 of the DEIR comments relating to poultry respiration and sulphur dioxide effects are insufficient. Please attach data/ statistics and any recent research available regarding dust pollution containing by-products from a coal fired power station and the effects on livestock, particularly poultry or birds.	Due to the importance of this issue, a focus group meeting was held on 12/01/2007. See Annexure U of the EIR for minutes of the meeting.
			2. Poultry farming have been totally excluded from your investigation into agriculture (Annexure 3 Section Q). This is of great concern because poultry is the biggest economic sector within agriculture.	The agricultural specialist study was restricted to the demarcated alternative sites, to determine their relative agricultural potential in determining a preferred site. No commercial poultry farming operations occur within the two sites. See Annexure U of the EIR for minutes of the meeting on 12/01/2007 that also addressed this issue.
			3. Accurate minutes of the meeting should be forwarded to us as many comments made need careful analysis. We were not able to express our concerns fully at the public meeting.	Draft minutes were distributed to all meeting attendees on 14/12/2006. It is important to understand that the role of the public meeting is to allow all participants to engage with the information provided. Detailed technical debates which are significant to only a few present at the meeting are best dealt with in a specific meeting arranged for the purpose or in writing. A separate meeting was held with representatives of Kendal Poultry and a landowner, Mr Cherry, on 12/01/2007 to allow further detailed discussion of the Draft EIR findings.
			4. At the public meeting it was stated several times that Ninham Shand is not legally required to consult I&APs on an individual basis (see your detailed minutes). Eskom must be aware that involving the public in their process requires dealing with the affected parties in a reasonable, educational and patient manner.	The EIA process is designed to allow all interested and affected parties to comment on a proposed development. Immediate neighbours are required to be notified of this opportunity and provided with all relevant documentation. This was done. In addition, a separate meeting was held with representatives of Kendal Poultry and a landowner, Mr Cherry, on 12/01/2007 to allow further detailed discussion of the Draft EIR findings.

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			5. Kendal Poultry Farm (Pty) Ltd has been in this area for over 20 years and we employ 120 – 160 people. Our facilities have expanded and are considered one of the finest in South Africa. Six months ago we had to discontinue our expansion programme due to this proposed development. We have invested millions of rands in this business.	Noted.
4	David P. Mngwevu	COSATU Submitted at Open House in Phola 29/11/2006	1. Dust from the ash is of concern. What measures will Eskom put in place to ensure the safety of health of the surrounding communities? What will be done if the communities' health is affected by the operation of the proposed power station? 2. Has a skills survey been done in Ogies and Balmoral? What will be done to skill these communities enabling them to get jobs from the proposed project?	Impacts from dust due to construction and operational activities have been considered in the EIA. See Sections 5.2.4.c) of the EIR for reference to the control measures recommended and note that these will be specified in the relevant Environmental Management Plans (EMP). Eskom is putting a system in place to address the issues of work seekers, skills availability and transfer, and commercial opportunity. Eskom will collaborate with the Dept of Labour in the region to ascertain the skills base and employment opportunities. Learnerships, bursaries and on-job training will be offered to ensure that the necessary skills are available for this project.
			3. Eskom should assist Ogies to develop shops, health care and education facilities as these services are currently over 30km away.	It is anticipated that the increased development in the area may contribute to an increase in opportunities in Ogies. This would be one of the issues raised in the multistakeholder forum since it is a Town Planning and development issue.
5	Leslie Ntethe	Zothe Construction & Cleaning Services Submitted via fax: 27/11/2006	Please register us on your service providers database	They should contact Musa Langa (Eskom Enterprises Commercial Dept) at 011-800 4505 to be assessed and included in the Eskom commercial database.
6	Geoff Byrne	Kendal Poultry Farm (Pty) Ltd Submitted via email; 08/01/2007	1. Eskom being unable to meet the growing National demand for electricity requires their management to make desperate decisions at short notice.	Opinion noted.

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			<p>2. Kendal Poultry is adjacent to the proposed Sites X and Y and will have an extremely serious effect on our business. We have five affected properties. These are highly developed properties with intensive agricultural production not just ordinary chicken farms. Further, we have permission to expand on our business. Our operations are integrated and consist of Pedigree breeding; Rearing, Egg production and grading, packaging and processing, Distribution and marketing and maize production. The Poultry industry is the largest sector within the Agricultural Economy in the area. These integrated Kendal operations form a leading company producing and marketing of eggs in South Africa under the well-known Fairacres brand and cannot easily be replaced. We are also the biggest supplier to the Catering Industry and the only Egg Pack Station to maintain 100% in an independent audit</p>	<p>The findings of the EIA generally suggest that the effects of the proposed power station on poultry farming will not be significant. However, Eskom will work together with the industry to ensure that all risks are appropriately measured and where necessary mitigated. For example the installation of a monitoring station could be considered. Due to the importance of this issue, a focus group meeting was held with Kendal Poultry on 12/01/2007. See Annexure U of the EIR for minutes of the meeting.</p>
			<p>3. The siting of the proposed power station will have socio economic implications as Kendal Poultry is one of the biggest employers in this area employing about 110 staff members who have many dependants. Their jobs and health will be affected by the proposed power station. Kendal Poultry also provides jobs indirectly to people through contractors i.e. building, electrics and maize harvesting.</p>	<p>While opportunities for employment in the area will be enhanced as a result of the proposed power station, this should not pose a threat to existing Kendal Poultry employees. The findings of the EIA indicate that the proposed power station would not pose increased impacts on human health in the area.</p>
			<p>4. The proposed power station will affect our water supply. We use in excess 1,000,000 litres of potable water per day mainly for poultry consumption also for spray cooling, sanitation, regular cleaning, building etc. Three large dams and many boreholes are used to meet this demand with reservoir and tank storage of approximately 1.4 million litres.</p>	<p>The proposed power station would operate under a “zero liquid effluent discharge” system and is unlikely to affect Kendal Poultry’s water supply. Impacts resulting from the coal mining activities in the area should be addressed by the EIA process currently underway on behalf of Anglo Coal.</p>
			<p>5. Business disruption is expected due to the siting of the proposed power station which will negatively affect consumers of eggs which are a high protein, low cost food.</p>	<p>With the prescribed control measures and mitigatory actions in place, a disruption of the Kendal Poultry business is not foreseen.</p>

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			6. The construction and operation of a Power Station together with extensive open cast strip mining in very close proximity to Kendal Poultry Farms will have adverse affects on the future of this farm.	Noted. The principle in cases where a business is adversely affected by a development is that compensation could be provided, i.e. no one should be financially disadvantaged by a development. However, the specialist studies in the EIA process for the proposed power station did not reveal an impact on this operation due to the power station. .
7.	Moses B. Nhleko	Submitted via post 04/01/2007	1. The environmental impacts of the power station and the associated coal mine must be considered.	Environmental impacts are being considered for the power station in this EIA and for the mine in a separate EIA. .
			2. The availability of coal for the proposed power station must be considered. Is there sufficient supply?.	There is sufficient supply. The intention to source coal for the duration of the station operation from the New Largo coalfield was a fundamental informant in this project.
			3. How many machines will be used during the operation of the power station?	Clarity is required in terms of what machinery is being referred to. However, various types of machinery for electricity production will be utilised on site.
			4. How long will construction take and how long will the power station and mine operate for?	Construction: approximately 48 months to operation of the first unit and thereafter a unit will become operational every six months. Hence, total construction complete in 7 years. Commercial life of a power station: 50 years.
8.	Jennifer Kitto	South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA)	1. Photographs of all the identified sites (including graves/ cemeteries) must be provided.	The heritage specialist has revised his report to reflect the additional information required by SAHRA, and resubmitted it to them. Their comments have been received and are reflected in Annexure T of the EIR.
		Submitted via fax 08/01/2007	2. More information on the Prinsloo, Joubert and Van Dyk families associated with the local farmsteads and graves is required, as they are noted as having played a significant role in the history of the region.	
			3. Details of the oral history information collected during the HIA are required	

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			4. A final comment will be issued once the required information has been submitted. Please note that SAHRA Built Environment and Landscapes (BEL) Committee and the SAHRA Burial Grounds and Graves Unit (BGG) will have to access the information.	See previous response.
9	Joe McMahon	Petronet	1. Ninham Shand should be complimented on a good quality report.	Noted.
		Submitted via email 09/01/2007	2. The comment period was unreasonable since the report was issued just before the December holidays and the draft EIR contains substantial detail.	The draft EIR was made available on 20/11/2006. The comment period believed reasonable by the environmental authorities is 30 days. The 30 day period would have ended on 20/12/2006. However, in recognition of the fact that it was close to the Christmas period, the comment period was extended by 18 days to the 08/01/2007. One I&AP made a verbal request for additional time and this was granted. Comments received continued to be captured as they were received until the documents were finalised in early February 2007. See Chapter 3 of the EIR.
			3. Legal Context (Refer to 1.3) the National Environmental Management Act (No 108 of 1998) should read as 'National Environmental Management Act (No 107 of 1998)'.	Mistake noted and corrected.
			4. Limitations / gaps in knowledge (Refer to 1.5.2) "...EIA process, the EIA team <u>and</u> utilized information available to it at the time of study", the word <u>and</u> can be deleted as it does fit into this sentence. The last sentence of this paragraph in this section is presumptuous and should be removed.	Mistake noted and corrected. The last sentence has not been changed, since the intention is to illustrate that EIA processes need to be able to respond to a changing background.

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			5. Please provide the details of the Independent Review Consultant	The review consultant is Mark Wood. He has spent most of the past 19 years leading EIAs for major development projects. Of these projects, many have involved installations that are hazardous and controversial in the absence of careful and effective environmental planning. He is currently a review consultant for the three largest transportation infrastructure project proposals in South Africa and he has extensive experience in both urban and rural environmental and social evaluation. Mr Wood has worked extensively with the World Bank, IFC and other European financiers and is familiar with the policy guidelines and requirements of the international finance community.
			6. Section 2.2.1 (d) on Process Alternatives of the DEIR refers– <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the method of disposal of the ash not been finalized? • Has the EIA process dealt sufficiently with other methods of disposal so that an informed decision can be made? 	It has been finalised. The recommended means of ash disposal is surface ashing, as described in Section 6.2.5 of the draft EIR. See also Sections 5.2.2 c), 5.2.4 c) and 5.3.1 c).
			7. Section 5.3.3 Page 107, kindly confirm whether the table reflecting the Impact of emissions on community health with emission controls for the Wet and Semi Dry FGD is complete.	The table is indeed complete, since the emission controls are the mitigation. It is acknowledged that the table could be more explicit and an appropriate note to this effect has been included in the finalised EIR.
			8. Section 6.2.3 – Cooling Technology Alternatives, a Direct Dry Cooling is recommended as an environmentally acceptable option despite the increased noise impact. Referring to Table 6.2, an informed decision cannot be made with this limited information. Table 6.2 must be completed so that the table can project a clear picture of all identified impacts.	Table 6.2 is a synthesis of all the significance ratings tabulated in Section 5 and should be read in conjunction with the text descriptions. Table 6.2 is complete and is designed to provide a graphic illustration of where significant impacts are likely to occur and where there are in fact no discernable impacts, i.e. neutral significance.
			9. It is also noted from Table 6.2 that the reference to the noise impact on the community health is recorded as N/A, is this correct?	Noise impact on humans is addressed in Section 5.3.2 of the EIR, and reflected accordingly in Table 6.2. Community health, reflected as neutral in Table 6.2 insofar noise from cooling is concerned, deals with air quality implications.

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10.	Bheki Innocent Ndhlela	ANC member Submitted via post 04/01/2007	1. Eskom should inform people how to apply for jobs as they become available	Eskom is putting a system in place to address the issues of work seekers, skills availability and transfer, and commercial opportunity. Local advertisements will be placed when recruitment starts and a local office will be established.
			2. The mine will alleviate poverty and is therefore supported.	Comment noted.
11.	Sidwell Nkosinathi Mahlangu	ANC member Submitted via post 04/01/2007	1. Thank you for engaging with the community. Please inform us when jobs are available	Noted. Eskom is putting a system in place to address the issues of work seekers, skills availability and transfer, and commercial opportunity. Local advertisements will be placed when recruitment starts and a local office will be established
12.	Richard Worthington	Earthlife Africa 09/02/2007	1. Is Earthlife properly registered? We have not been receiving documentation. We were not notified of the availability of the Draft EIR	Mr Nkosana Rakitla of Earthlife Africa is registered as an I&AP and we can confirm from our records that all project correspondence and documentation has been sent to him. On 12/12/2006 you contacted our offices requesting an extension on the comment period which was granted. It can be assumed from that teleconference that Earthlife Africa was aware of the Draft EIR and the comment period. There have also been several emails from Ninham Shand prompting Earthlife Africa for comment on the project. We therefore humbly refute the contention that Earthlife Africa was unaware of the availability of the draft EIR.

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			<p>2. The report shows no correlation between the assessment of likely emissions and the quality of coal being burned. Extent of emissions is partially dependent on mineral content (incl. heavy metals), ash and sulphur content, extent of pre-combustion treatment etc.</p> <p>A qualification is required regarding the consistency of quality of the coal. At Majuba for example the coal quality is not consistent.</p>	<p>The design of the power station and emission abatement equipment is specific to the range in the qualities of coal to be burnt over the proposed life of the power plant. Technology will be installed to remove in excess of 99% of particulates and 90% of sulphur dioxide.</p> <p>The New Largo coal resource has previously been utilised for the previous Wilge Power station. The knowledge of the coal quality is therefore quite sound, and the mining plan, as proposed by Anglo Collieries, makes provision for the mining process to maintain the qualities as steady as possible over the life of the mine. Mining will be conducted in two different areas of the reserve at any one stage, to ensure that the required qualities are met. The Eskom contract with the mine will set quality standards. Coal qualities approaching, or deviating from, the standards will cause penalties to be levied against the mine.</p>
			<p>3. Pre-combustion treatment options appear not to have been considered, yet they may offer more efficient pollution reduction or mitigation options.</p>	<p>The coal being considered for this power station does not require beneficiation prior to combustion, as the boiler plant will be fitted with flue gas desulphurisation (wet scrubbing facilities).</p>
			<p>4. Alternative combustion technologies should have been included within the EIA process.</p>	<p>Alternative combustion technologies are discussed namely pulverised fuel, fluidised bed and coal gasification technologies. Fluidised bed boilers are only technologically proven for up to 400 MW capacity units, and are commercially proven for 900 MW units as proposed for this power station. Coal gasification technology is being investigated on a pilot plant scale near Majuba power station in the form of Under Ground Coal Gasification, but is not technologically proven for a 5400 MW power station. Consequently, pulverised fuel combustion was chosen as the alternative for further investigation. See Section 2.2 and 5.2.5 of the EIR..</p>

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13	Paul Meulenbeld	14 /02/2007	<p>1. Rainfall patterns can change due to increase of raindrop nuclei caused by pollution. How will the rainfall be affected? General observations (Bronkhorstspuit & Matimba).show that areas in the immediate vicinity of an operating power station are drier than those slightly further away.</p>	<p>It is recognised that particulates from air pollution can form the basis of droplet formation. However, an opinion sought by the air quality specialist is that the effect on regional and local rainfall resulting from pollution from a coal-fired power station is likely to be insignificant. The scale of the weather systems at work over eastern South Africa are such that localised conditions are unlikely to have an influence.</p>
			<p>2. Sulphate pollutants are likely to cause rust of metal objects (fences, equipment) within a 20km radius. Eskom should compensate annually for the depreciation/damage of equipment.</p>	<p>The air quality specialist study identified metal corrosion as a possible consequence of high SO₂ concentrations. However, with emission controls in place, as recommended and accepted by Eskom, the likelihood of this impact will be reduced to a low significance. See Section 5.2.7 of the EIR. Eskom has carried out studies to determine the impact of their emissions on fencing and in all studies completed, the results have indicated that Eskom emissions have an insignificant impact on the corrosion of fences. Compensation would be considered if the deterioration of fences results from Eskom emissions. Monitoring of fenced areas before and after operation would be required to determine this. In order to do this, landowners would be required to make contact with Eskom with their concerns and a joint monitoring initiative could be implemented. However, it would be required that the quality of fencing installed is carefully monitored, to ensure that it is not normal corrosion taking place but in fact the addition of Eskom emissions.</p>

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			3. What will the water pollution impact be on the clean Wilge River?	The proposed power station would operate under a “zero liquid effluent discharge” system and is unlikely to affect the Wilge River. No runoff from the proposed power station is expected and even in episodic circumstances, runoff would not be polluted. This is due to episodic runoff being derived from the last of the settlement/ treatment dams on the power station precinct and its quality would thus be the same as a farm dam. In addition to this, the Environmental Management Plan also includes a number of appropriate mitigation measures, in order to minimise or prevent pollution of both surface and groundwater.