



PROPOSED POWER STATION AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE WITBANK AREA

Notes of Public Meeting

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Venue</i>
29 November 2006	18:00 – 20:00	Protea Hotel Witbank

An open house was held between 16h00 and 18h00 in the same venue. **An attendance register for the open house and meeting is shown on the last page of the minutes.**

1. Welcome and Introduction

Ms Karen Shippey (KS) welcomed everybody and introduced the Eskom representatives and the Ninham Shand team members. The purpose of the meeting was explained as being to describe the EIA process undertaken this far, to present the draft Environmental Impact Report and to provide an opportunity to identify issues, questions and concerns raised by the public. Mr Stanley Dumisani Mahlomuza (SDM) noted a team member was ill and enquired whether his section of the agenda would not be covered because of this. KS responded that all aspects would be covered in the presentations and that the additional team members were only present to answer questions should it be required.

2. Overview Electricity Supply and Demand

Mr Tony Stott (TS) presented an overview of electricity supply and demand in the country.

The presentation covered the following points:

- The demand and required growth into the future was discussed
- The renewable energy research and pilot projects as well as the available coal, gas and nuclear technologies being used were outlined
- Three areas were identified for new coal-fired power stations by Eskom's strategic planning namely: Lephalale (EIA completed), Witbank (EIA process in progress) and Vaal South (EIA process in progress)
- The meeting was advised that these three projects are not alternatives if electricity demands were to be met. The areas were selected based on a number of factors, particularly the availability of the coal resource and the time lines associated with accessing this resource.

SDM noted that the presentation indicated that there would be a 4% growth in terms of electricity demand, and wanted to know whether that demand would have an impact on employment and retrenchment.

TS replied that the 4% was based on government projections of a 6% growth in the GDP. He said that Eskom aims to contribute to economic growth and job creation. Furthermore Eskom supports the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (ASGISA).

Mr Malcolm Sutill (MS) noted that pump-storage was a very useful and beneficial technology. Furthermore, he noted that it could be utilised for equalisation during low demand periods. TS agreed and provided an explanation of the advantages of the pump storage scheme and noted that Eskom was looking at two schemes currently. He added that it was a useful tool as electricity was stored and released when the demand increased.

3. Overview of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR)

Mr Brett Lawson (BL) explained the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process being followed and reminded the meeting of the finding of the Scoping phase which included the investigation of alternatives and the identification of impacts. The presentation highlighted:

- Purpose of the Scoping Report
- Alternatives
 - Activity alternatives~ outside this scope
 - Location alternatives ~ Sites X & Y
 - Layout alternatives ~ informed primarily by technical considerations and natural features
 - Process alternatives
 - Combustion technology
 - Cooling technologies
 - Ash disposal
 - Emissions- sulphur oxides, Nitrogen oxides and particulates
- Utility corridors
 - Water supply pipeline from Kendal power station
 - Coal conveyor alignment
 - Road access alignments
 - Sorbent supply options

Mr Ashwin West (AW) then proceeded to present the findings of the Draft EIR. The presentation highlighted the following:

- No clear distinction between Sites X & Y
- Site X (marginally) preferable ~Groundwater, Wetlands, Noise, Heritage & Agriculture
 - Site Y would require refinement to avoid wetlands but is constrained by space
 - Site X would also require refinement to avoid wetlands but more space is available
- Cooling Technology
 - Indirect dry cooling = towers & larger footprint
 - Direct dry cooling = no towers, smaller footprint but higher noise levels
 - Direct dry cooling preferable since noise abatement possible
- Air Emissions

Sulphur Oxides ~ Eskom committed to FGD

- 90% removal efficiency
- Predicted magnitude, frequency & spatial extent of non-compliance of future ambient air quality limit values appears to be unchanged from estimated future baseline conditions

Nitrogen Oxides ~ Eskom committed to low NOx technology (low NOx burners)

- magnitude of power station contribution to NOx concentrations low
- Particulates ~ Eskom committed to controls (bag filters / electrostatic precipitators) magnitude of impact of particulate release considered low

- Ash Disposal

- Surface ashing larger footprint than other forms of ash disposal but lower potential for groundwater contamination
- Sub-surface ash disposal – may be considered in the future but will require collaboration between Eskom and mining house

- Construction Impacts

- No construction phase impacts of high impact significance
- Many construction phase impacts of medium significance
- require mitigation measures
- framework Environmental Management Plan (fEMP) compiled
- More detailed & contract-specific EMP to follow, to address both construction & operation

- Way forward and comment period for Draft Environmental Impact Report

SDM noted three questions. Firstly, what guarantees the community had that clean water would be available as he had concerns that the Kendal pipeline would negatively impact the community's water quality. Furthermore, he also asked whether Eskom would provide clean water to the community. Secondly, whether measures would be implemented by Eskom to ensure that less diseases, relating to contaminated water, arise. He added that he was concerned about health issues relating to dust and particulates and wanted reassurance that it would not impact on the community. Lastly, he wanted to know whether once the Record of Decision (RoD) was issued, who exactly had the power to appeal.

KS replied that any registered Interested and Affected Party (I&AP) had the right to appeal. Furthermore, she added that the Environmental Authorities required substantiation of appeals i.e. that the I&AP needed to provide or "motivate" the reason for appeal.

KP noted that the water transported to the power station from Kendal was not potable water but instead was classified as a raw water resource and therefore water from this source could not be provided to any community nor did Eskom have any plans to supply water to the communities. Furthermore, he noted that as the water entered

the power station it would undergo treatment to enable the water to be utilised inside the power station. In addition to this, he added that no liquids were discharged from the power station, as they operated on the concept of zero liquid effluent discharge. All water was treated inside the power station.

SDM clarified his first question by stating that he was actually referring to the effect of the chemicals on the community and the polluted water that was drunk by the community.

BL replied that the specialist studies that had been carried out indicated that there were no implications on human health downstream due to water consumption, but that leachate from the ash dump could possibly contaminate groundwater. He said that leachate however was fairly limited as the slopes of the dump would be rehabilitated and re-vegetated which would control the runoff. He further added that control measures would be put in place which reduced the risk to human health and that the Environmental Management Plan (EMP) would provide specified measures, in terms of construction and operational activities, which would eventually become part of the contract and fines would be applied for parties not conforming. He noted that this was controlled by audits, the establishment of Environmental Monitoring Committees (EMCs) or Environmental Liaison Committees (ELCs) which allowed community members to be involved in the process. This would enable the sharing of information in terms of air quality and dust pollution and it was noted that certain diseases, that SDM had mentioned as being a concern (e.g. Tuberculosis), was not carried by particulates, but that various other respiratory ailments such as asthma could be triggered or exacerbated by air pollution. Ms Yvonne Scorgie (YS) (Airshed Planning Professionals) also noted that exposures to particulates in the area were in excess of the South African standards as indicated in the specialist studies, but the power station contributed very little to the particulate matter concentrations.

Furthermore YS also added that a power station was in fact a small source of dust pollution and that most of the dust in the area could be accounted for by the mining, agricultural and veld burning activities which resulted in the standard limits being exceeded.

Mr Johan Raath (JR) wanted to know whether the layout alternatives were available in the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR). BL confirmed that they were. Furthermore JR wanted to know whether the timeframes were also available in the EIR or whether they were still the same as in the previous round of presentations. BL replied that the EIA process was expected to be completed in early 2007 and that a few months should be expected to obtain a decision from the environmental authorities. Should Eskom get authorisation they would be able to be on site during late 2007, but land acquisition negotiations would ultimately determine this.

JR noted that he has had no responses to his e-mails and wanted to know whether other I&APs had gotten any responses. KS replied that all issues were captured in an issues trail with answers from the team, and that this was included in the Draft EIR but that it had not yet been posted to registered I&APs.

JR added that he had requested a map previously which he still hadn't received, and KS apologised for the error on the consultants' side. A detailed map was handed to JR at the end of the meeting.

MS had a query regarding what the best way was for I&APs to send their issues to the consultants, by letter or to raise the issues at a public meeting. KS responded that it was entirely up to the I&AP, but it would be better to receive written comments which could be reflected in their own wording in the documents.

MS noted that it was important for the two processes (mine & power station) to be integrated. Furthermore he noted that he was still concerned about the water usage, air pollution and cumulative impact that all the developments in the area would have on the community. He asked how air quality would be monitored over the long term, and what kind of assurance the community would have. Lastly, he wanted to know when the monitoring would begin and stated that he didn't need the issues to be addressed at the public meeting, but that he would send more written comments. Ms Deidre Herbst (DH) responded that air quality monitoring provided a guarantee to the community and added that before operation could commence Eskom had to obtain a provisional atmospheric emissions license and they also needed to comply with limits set out therein. She also added that water use was of great concern in South Africa and that as the older power stations became offline, they would be replaced with dry cooled power stations, which consume less water.

KP added that it was important to note that the entire process was based on a legal framework and that all outcomes of the process could be seen as legal requirements. He also noted that Eskom's annual reports went into great depth about their environmental issues and responsibility.

KS noted that all issues and comments would also be included in the EIR which would be submitted to the environmental authorities to aid in their decision making. She also urged I&APs to share their issues so that they could be addressed.

Mr Rudolph Raath (RR) asked what the land acquisition process was and how the farmers were supposed to plan their livelihood during this uncertain period. Furthermore, he also added a concern regarding the influx of people into the area which could result in increased crime.

Ms Goodness Ntuli (GN) responded that a valuation company had already been employed by Eskom and that the valuations were currently underway. She added

that landowners would be contacted within the first two weeks of December, continuing in January again and that negotiations to secure an "option to purchase" would then take place with the landowners.

SDM vocalised a concern regarding the negative impact on their houses from the surrounding mines, and the fact that no response has been received from the mine. He noted that he would like to have an open communication channel with Eskom should the same happen, to encourage engagement between the community and Eskom.

KS noted that all issues raised in the public meetings regarding the mining procedure, would be sent on to the EIA consultants running the process for Anglo Coal.

KP confirmed that Eskom would ensure that the correct contact persons and details were available to the community to ensure that submissions were handed to the right persons.

Dr LPJ Louw (LPJL) wanted to know when exactly the landowners had to evacuate their farms. KS stated that the rumours circulating about immediate landowner evacuations were false. KP clarified that in terms of Eskom's planning, they were looking at late 2007 to establish on site if authorisation was obtained. He said that this didn't necessarily refer to all farms and may only effect portions of certain farms. Furthermore, he added that non-intrusive works such as geotechnical and geohydrological investigations were planned for when the EIA process was complete. He also stated that people would not be moved off site unnecessarily and that he understood that negotiations were necessary as they're dealing with people's livelihoods. He added that with a project of this magnitude it takes a while to get all contracts in place and mobilise contractors. Lastly, he added that once negotiations were finalised and detailed information was available it would be shared with all I&APs.

Mr Jacob Siwela (JS) wanted to know what the daily coal consumption and main supply of the power station would be. KP replied that approximately 55 000 tons of coal would be consumed per day and that Eskom was in negotiations with Anglo Coal. He said that the two projects (power station and coal mine) were running in parallel and that a short conveyor belt would be constructed to transport the coal to the power station. BL indicated the probable location of the coal source on the map. KP explained that the closer the coal resource is, the better it was in terms of cost, but this also depended on the mine plan.

MS asked why Site X and Site Y were not the same size and BL explained that during the site selection process the centre point of the coal resource was used to identify possible sites. Site X was previously made up of two identified sites but were

combined because they had very similar characteristics.

MS asked which part of Site X would be used. BL indicated that the recommendation was to locate the power station centrally on the site, with the coal stockyard to the south of that and the ash dump to the south of the coal stockyard.

MS asked how the land acquisition process would work and BL indicated that once the RoD had been issued, all negotiations could be finalised, but initially an option to purchase was being pursued by Eskom.

SDM stated that the government required Eskom to provide 70% of power generation in the country, and wondered whether this would not push the authorisations irrespective of the environmental recommendations. TS replied that the 70% requirement does not exempt Eskom from following the legal route and added that the RoD could also be negative. He also noted that there are no guarantees just because Eskom is the applicant. Furthermore, he added that if a positive RoD was obtained, negotiations with landowners would follow a "willing buyer-willing seller" process. He noted that Eskom did not wish to simply expropriate land and that the tenants on the land would be relocated to a sustainable location and involved in negotiations. This process also would involve the Department of Land Affairs and the Department of Agriculture.

SDM noted that he was referring to the impact on individual members of the community potentially losing out financially. KP responded that the actual valuations were done by external consultants who determined the values of farms by investigating the agricultural potential, condition of land, improvements, relocation costs etc., which could be disputed by landowners. He added that professionalism was key in this process and that consistent methodologies were applied to reach accurate values.

JS noted that he understood that the EIA for the power station is a separate process, but indicated that the coal source will also have the same environmental impacts. He wanted to know whether the responsibility for the mining impacts would be shared between Eskom and the mine, or whether responsibilities would be separated.

KS re-iterated that the mining EIA is a different process and that Eskom does not mine, thus the responsibility would be separated.

MS noted that the mining process was run poorly and that the attendance at their public meetings was very low. Furthermore, he wanted to know whether the sites fall in Mpumalanga or whether they overlapped into Gauteng. BL responded that Site Y overlapped the provinces and Ninham Shand was dealing with authorities in Gauteng and Mpumalanga.

4. Way Forward and Closure
<p>KS reminded the meeting where the documents could be obtained and of the opportunities for input. She encouraged everyone to submit their comments to Ninham Shand by 8 January 2007.</p>
<p>JS enquired whether Eskom had a socio-economic development plan in place and TS responded that a process would be followed for procurement where Eskom would look to local municipalities, councils and Departments of Labour for skills and services needed. He added that Eskom would also find out what skills were available in the area and in that way they aimed to assist with local economic development. In addition to this he also noted that Eskom had a department that attempted to maximise community benefits on Eskom projects.</p> <p>JS felt that if the Department of Labour was contacted just before the construction period it might be too late for community members to become involved. TS explained that the process started well in advance of the construction period and the operational phase. He noted that Eskom would start looking for expertise years in advance, facilitating training, providing bursaries etc. so that local skills were utilised and that Eskom compiled a plan indicating what skills were needed. Furthermore, he stated that linkages with the Department of Labour had been established and that they have been contacted. BL noted the present of two Dept of Labour representatives at the meeting.</p>
<p>MS noted that in general there was little experience of electricity Demand Management in the area and commented that he would like to work in conjunction with Eskom to develop an initiative in this regard.</p>
<p>KS thanked everybody for their attendance and closed the meeting at 19:45.</p>

ATTENDANCE REGISTER (OPEN HOUSE AND PUBLIC MEETING)

NAME	ORGANISATION
Sharon Clark (SC)	BHP Billiton
Len Govender (LG)	Petronet
Ernest Grunewald (EG)	Eskom Transmission
Bengati Kapowo (BK)	BWS Processing
John Latilla (JL)	PTN 64 Eenzaamheid
LPJ Louw (LPJ)	Klipfontein Landowner
Stanley Dumisani Mahlomuza (SDM)	Ogies Phola Youth Forum
Muzi Manzi (MM)	Private Capacity
Dingaen Mkhize (DM)	Department of Labour
Peter Molapo (PM)	Department of Labour
Leslie Ntethe (LN)	Zothe Construction
Johan Raath (JR)	Klipfontein Landowner
Radolph Raath (RR)	Klipfontein Landowner

Jan Hendrick Roos (JHR)	Roodepoortjie Landowner
Hennie Scholtz (HS)	Martins Funeral
Lindiwe Simelane (LS)	Phola Youth Forum
Jacob Siwela (JS)	Department of Economic Development & Planning
F Snyders (FS)	Kamara
Malcolm Sutil (MS)	WESSA
Timothy Tlou (TT)	Eskom Kendal
Nana Wessels (NW)	Eskom Kendal
Eskom Team	
Deidre Herbst (DH)	ESKOM
Tony Stott (TS)	ESKOM
Tobile Bokwe (TB)	ESKOM
Krish Pillay (KP)	ESKOM
Linda Nduna	ESKOM
Ernest Groenewald (EG)	ESKOM
Goodness Ntuli (GN)	ESKOM
Environmental Team	
Brett Lawson (BL)	Ninham Shand
Ashwin West (AW)	Ninham Shand
Karen Shippey (KS)	Ninham Shand
Natanya Bezuidenhout (NB)	Ninham Shand
Gift Maganganye (GM)	Bohlweki Environmental

Apologies

NAME	ORGANISATION
Koos Pretorius	EEPOG
Nontsikelelo Letsosa	Gauteng Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Environment
Suren Rajaruthnam (SR)	ESKOM