

Applicant	Eskom Holdings SOC Limited
Independent Environmental Assessment Practitioner	BKS (Pty) Ltd
Approving Environmental Authority	National Department of Environmental Affairs
Commenting Environmental Authority	Western Cape Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning



ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT PROCESS:

FOR THE PROPOSED 400/132kV HOUHOEK ESKOM TRANSMISSION SUBSTATION, INCLUDING THE BACCHUS-PALMIET LOOP-IN AND LOOP-OUT LINES, WESTERN CAPE PROVINCE (September 2012)

NEAS Reference No: DEA/EIA/0001397/2012

DEA Reference No: 14/12/16/3/3/2/401

PURPOSE OF THE DOCUMENT

The intention of this **Background Information Document (BID)** is to inform you about the proposed development of the **400/132kV Houhoek Eskom Main Transmission Substation (MTS)**, linking to the existing 132kV Distribution Substation and the loop-in and loop-out lines into the existing Bacchus-Palmiet 400kV Transmission power line.

Eskom Holdings State Owned Company (SOC) Limited (herein referred to as “Eskom”) is applying for an Environmental Authorisation (EA) from the National Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) for the proposed development of the substation. In order to be considered for an EA, an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process must be undertaken.

This EIA process is undertaken in terms of Government Notice Regulations (GNR) No. 543, 544, 445 and 546 of the EIA Regulations (2010). The EIA Regulations (2010) were promulgated in terms of the National Environmental Management Act (No. 107 of 1998) as amended (NEMA).

You, as an interested and/or affected party (I&AP), are invited to engage in the EIA process by submitting your viewpoint and constructive suggestions to the project team. Your participation will help in identifying potential environmental and social impacts to be assessed as part of the EIA process for this Transmission Substation.

Please forward your input to the following public participation team member:

Mamokete Maimane

BKS (Pty) Ltd

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project entails the construction of the 400/132kV **Houhoek Eskom MTS**, linking to the existing 132kV Houhoek Eskom Distribution Substation, and, the loop-in and loop-out connecting power lines into the existing Bacchus-Palmiet 400kV Transmission power line. The existing 132kV Houhoek Eskom Distribution Substation (marked as a purple star in **Figure 1**) is 4.5 hectares in area. The substation is located approximately 1km south-west of the town of Botrivier, Theewaterskloof Local Municipality in Western Cape Province.

The proposed project requires the following activities:

- A 2×500MVA, 400/132 MTS of approximately **14 hectares** in area, near the existing 132kV Houhoek Eskom Distribution Substation site. The following site and layout alternatives will be considered (see **Figure 1**):
 - **Site Alternative 1** is located ±200m to the west of the existing Houhoek Eskom Distribution Substation, across the R43 road. There are **two (2) layout alternatives** that will be considered (350×320m, and, 450×250m).
 - **Site Alternative 2** is located ±1.6km north of Site Alternative 1, and to the north-west of the existing Houhoek Eskom Distribution Substation. Due to the topography on the site, only **one (1) layout alternative** (350×320m) will be considered.
 - **Site Alternative 3** is located north and adjacent to the existing Houhoek Eskom Distribution Substation. There are **two (2) layout alternatives** that will be considered (350×320m, and, 450×250m).
- A 132kV Distribution power line that connects the proposed Houhoek Eskom MTS to the existing Houhoek Eskom Distribution Substation. The distances of these Distribution power lines depend on the location of the proposed Houhoek Eskom MTS.
- A loop-in and loop-out power line that connects the existing Bacchus-Palmiet 400kV Transmission power line to the proposed Houhoek Eskom MTS. This would entail a double-circuit 400kV Transmission power line of ±1.7km.
- The construction of the loop-in loop-out 400kV Transmission power line could require the construction of related access roads.

SITE LOCALITY AND ALTERNATIVE LOCATIONS (PAGES 4 & 5)
PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE ALTERNATIVE SITES (PAGE 3)

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

The public participation process gives **you** the opportunity to:

- Get clear, accurate and understandable information about the proposed project and the expected social and environmental impacts it may have.
- Have the chance to voice your concerns and to raise questions about the new Houhoek Eskom MTS and the EIA process.
- Suggest ways for reducing or mitigating any negative impacts of the new Houhoek Eskom MTS, and for potentially increasing its benefits.
- Provide the applicant, *Eskom Holdings SOC Limited*, with an opportunity to consider the needs, preferences and values of yourself and your fellow I&APs in your/their decisions.
- Be involved in the sharing of information. This sharing forms the backbone of public participation and offers you the chance to become actively involved in the project from the outset.
- Fully understand the intention of an environmental investigation, as your input ensures that all relevant issues are considered in the EIA process.
- Influence the decision making process by the environmental authority, the DEA, by ensuring that they have all relevant information at hand.

BENEFITS OF REGISTERING

As a registered I&AP you are entitled to the following:

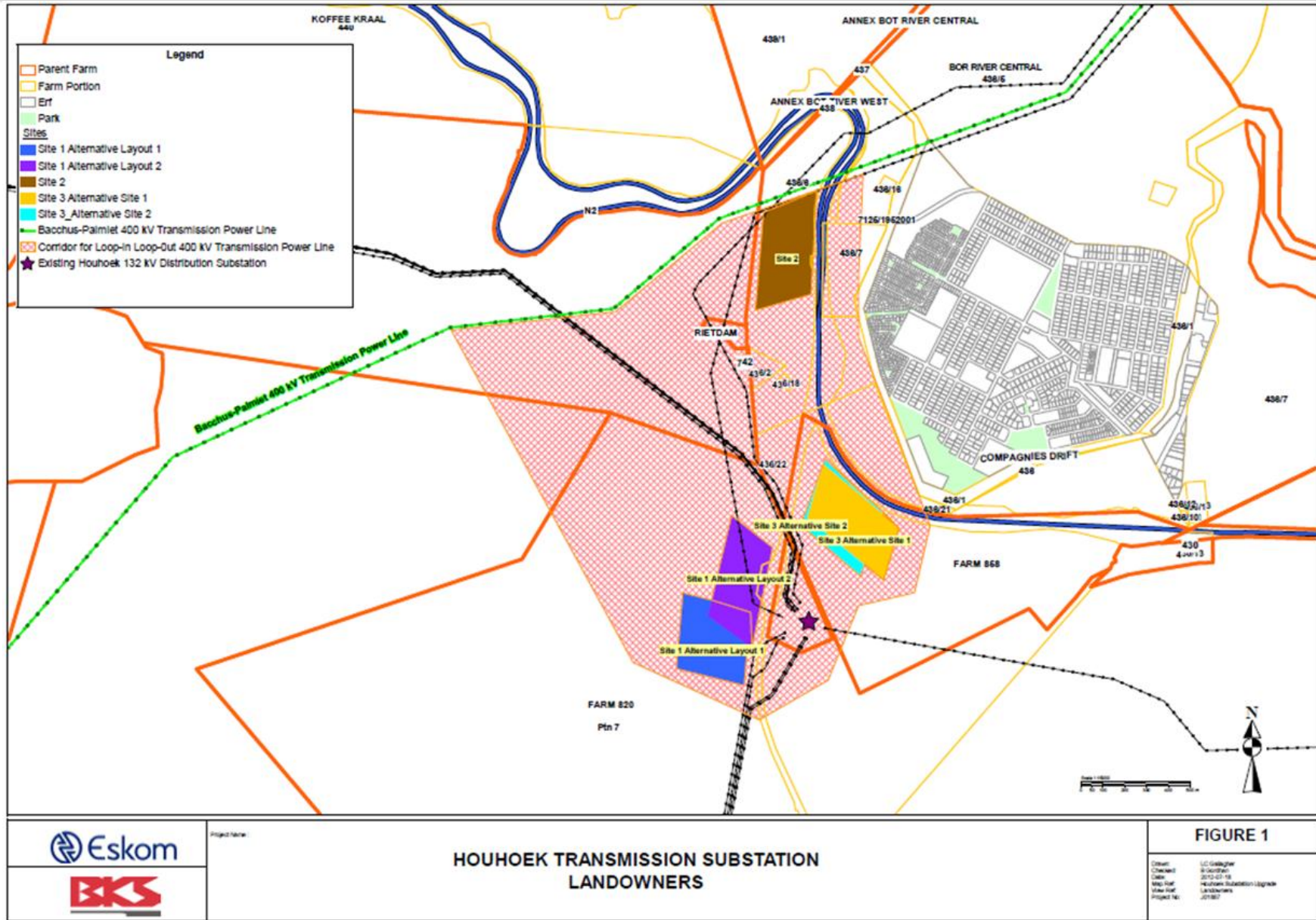
- Invitations to public events.
- Information on the project.
- An opportunity to participate in the EIA process.
- Access to information and reports that are available for public comment.

HOW TO REGISTER

To register and be involved you should do the following:

- Respond to the relevant newspaper advertisements.
- Complete and submit the comment sheet included in this BID.
- Provide us with your contact details.
- Attend the public participation events (if possible).
- Review project documentation when made available for comment (if possible).

FIGURE 1: LOCALITY MAP



An independent EIA process (in terms of Sections 26-35 of GNR 543) identifies and assesses possible impacts, and then provides possible mitigation measures to reduce the anticipated impacts of the Houhoek Eskom MTS on the receiving environment. Critically, the EIA process requires a comprehensive public participation process. Finally, the EIA process would recommend under what conditions the DEA should grant or refuse environmental authorisation to the new Houhoek Eskom MTS.

A typical EIA process includes these tasks:

1. The project team submits a formal application to the relevant environmental authority (the DEA) for this project.
2. Public participation starts (including registration of I&APs, that is, you).
3. The scoping phase starts.

The scoping phase identifies the potential issues related to the proposed development and its alternatives.

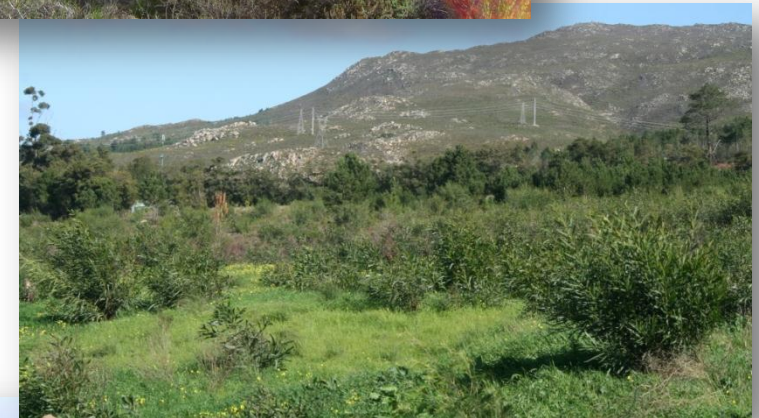
4. A Draft Scoping Report will be submitted for comment to all I&APs (i.e. you) for a period of **40 calendar days**. Once your comments have been considered, the Final Scoping Report will be submitted to the DEA, for their consideration.
5. EIA process starts.

The EIA process evaluates and assesses the potential issues identified during the scoping phase. Possible mitigation measures for the proposed new substation are then recommended.

6. The EIA process is captured in a comprehensive EIA Report, including an Environmental Management Programme (EMPr).
7. You will be given an opportunity to comment on the Draft EIA Report, which will be made available to all I&APs for a period of 40 calendar days.
8. The Final EIA Report is then submitted to the DEA, for its consideration.
9. The DEA reviews the documents and makes a decision on the proposed project. The DEA's decision will be to **grant** or **refuse** environmental authorisation (EA), and other what conditions.
10. A copy of the EA document will be made available to you to consider, along with the reasons for the decision made. If you disagree with the decision, you are provided with information on how to lodge an appeal.



SITE ALTERNATIVE 1



SITE ALTERNATIVE 2



SITE ALTERNATIVE 3