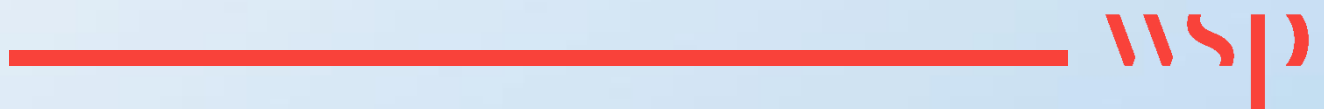


Appendix H

PRE-APPLICATION MEETING MINUTES



Strong, Ashlea

From: Lunga Dlova <LDlova@dfre.gov.za>
Sent: Friday, 15 March 2024 11:49
To: Govender, Megan; Bathandwa Ncube
Cc: Strong, Ashlea; Shabalala, Londiwe; Maharaj, Jashmika; Martha Malefane; Masina Morudu
Subject: Re: 2024-01-0019 | Minutes of Pre-Application Meeting for Approval

Dear Megan,

The pre application meeting minutes are approved and you may proceed with the EIA process (i.e. lodging the application to the DFFE)

Kind Regards

Mr Lunga Dlova

Directorate: Integrated Environmental Authorisation
473 Steve Biko Road | Arcadia | Pretoria | 0001
Cell: 072 762 6691 / 012 399 8524 | E-mail: LDlova@dfre.gov.za
Call Centre: 086 111 2468 | Website: www.dfre.gov.za



From: Govender, Megan <Megan.Govender@wsp.com>
Sent: Friday, 15 March 2024 10:06
To: Lunga Dlova <LDlova@dfre.gov.za>; Bathandwa Ncube <BNcube@dfre.gov.za>
Cc: Strong, Ashlea <Ashlea.Strong@wsp.com>; Shabalala, Londiwe <Londiwe.Shabalala@wsp.com>; Maharaj, Jashmika <jashmika.maharaj@wsp.com>; Martha Malefane <mmalefane@dfre.gov.za>; Masina Morudu <memorudu@dfre.gov.za>
Subject: FW: 2024-01-0019 | Minutes of Pre-Application Meeting for Approval

Good Day

I am following up on the approval of the minutes from the Verkykerskop WEF Cluster Pre-Application Meeting. Please refer to the email below and minutes attached.

Kind Regards,



Megan Govender
Principal Consultant

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M +27 083 228 5288

From: Govender, Megan
Sent: Wednesday, February 28, 2024 12:02 PM
To: 'bncube@dfre.gov.za' <bncube@dfre.gov.za>
Cc: Strong, Ashlea <Ashlea.Strong@wsp.com>; Shabalala, Londiwe <Londiwe.Shabalala@wsp.com>; Jessie Yuill <jessie@mulilo.com>; 'mmalefane@dfre.gov.za' <mmalefane@dfre.gov.za>; Masina Morudu

<memorudu@dffe.gov.za>

Subject: 2024-01-0019 | Minutes of Pre-Application Meeting for Approval

Good Day

Please find attached the minutes of the pre-application meeting that took place on 06 February 2024 for the Verkykerskop WEF Cluster.

Please may you approve the minutes as required by the DFFE Application Form for Environmental Authorisation.

Kind Regards,



Megan Govender
Principal Consultant

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M +27 083 228 5288



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WSP is a proud Level 1 B-BBEE contributor and is internationally certified for ISO 9001, 14001 & 45001

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AGENDA

DATE	06 February 2024
VENUE	MS Teams
MEETING TITLE	Verkykerskop WEF Cluster – DFFE Pre-Application Meeting
PROJECT NO	41106427
ATTENDEES	Jessie Yuill (JY) - Mulilo Cameron Matthew (CM) – Mulilo Andrew Pearson (AP) – Mulilo Ashlea Strong (AS) –WSP Megan Govender (MG) – WSP Londiwe Shabalala (LS) – WSP Lunga Dlova (LD) – DFFE Bathandwa Ncube (BN) –DFFE Martha Malefane (MM) – DFFE
APOLOGIES	Masina Morudu

ITEM	ACTION
NOTE: These notes constitute a summary of the key discussion points and decisions made during the meeting They are not intended to reflect the exact discussions held.	
1.0 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION Meeting was recorded by LD. AS welcomed everyone and stated that the purpose of the meeting was to have a pre-application meeting for the proposed Verkykerskop Wind Energy Facility Cluster, a Mulilo development. The attendees introduced themselves. Apologies were noted for Masina Morudu.	
2.0 PROJECT PRESENTATION MG presented the project which covered the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">— Introduction;— Overview of the Project;— Permitting Process;— Public Participation Plan;— Timeframes; and	

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www.wsp.com \\corp.pbwan.net\za\Central_Data\Projects\41100xxx\41106427 - Verkykerskop WEF Cluster EA\41 PA\01-Reports\01-Pre-App Meeting\Minutes\41106427_Verkykerskop WEF Cluster_DFFE Pre-App Meeting Minutes_Final.docx

AGENDA

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarification Questions and Discussion. <p>A copy of the presentation is included in Appendix A.</p>	
<p>2.1 Key Points</p> <p>MG highlighted the following key points during the presentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The overall project is referred to as the Verkykerskop Wind Energy Facility (WEF) cluster. The project is made up of four WEF facilities and four associated grid projects making a total of eight applications. The WEF capacities range from 240MW to 600MW. The proposed project is located in the Free State Province. The proposed project is still in the development stage. Typical infrastructure includes up to 50 wind turbines for the Groothoek and Kromhof WEFs, up to 100 wind turbines for the Normandien WEF and up to 45 turbines for the Markgraaff WEF. The rotor diameter will be up to 200m, the hub height will be up to 140m, per turbine hard standing dimensions will be up to 0.8ha per turbine. There will be excavations for the turbine foundations of up to 4m deep which will be covered with soil once the turbine tower is established. Each of the WEFs will have an onsite substation of up to 2ha in size. The environmental authorisation (EA) application process for the proposed project will follow 4 separate Basic Assessment (BA) processes for the Grid Connections and 4 Scoping and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) (S&EIA) Processes for the 4 WEFs. It was agreed that the competent authority (CA) for the project is the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE). The results from the DFFE Screening Tool were presented. The Screening Tool indicated that the following themes were of Very High Sensitivity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aquatic Biodiversity; Flicker; Landscape; Palaeontology; Noise; and Terrestrial Biodiversity. Preliminary investigations were done by The Biodiversity Company to highlight key areas identified as "no-go" zones concerning the CBA status. AP indicated that Avian pre-construction monitoring is now nearing the first year of monitoring and indicated that guidelines on bird monitoring have been considered and are in alignment with the EIA process. The Bat pre-construction monitoring started 7 months ago as part of the project preparation. A Consolidated Public Participation Process was proposed for all applications to avoid stakeholder fatigue and was agreed upon by the CA. The applicant will be pursuing a Strategic Integrated Project (SIP) sub-status for the project. 	
<p>3.0 SPECIFIC CLARIFICATION</p> <p>MG enquired if it will be possible to undertake 4 combined applications and reports for the WEF and the Grid and receive 8 EAs due to the proximity of the project.</p> <p>BN indicated that an application in terms of Regulation 11(4) of the EIA regulations, 2014, will need to be submitted to the DFFE for approval before submitting combined application forms.</p> <p>BN advised that a letter must be sent to EIA Applications requesting the combination of Applications in terms of Regulation 11(4) of the EIA regulations. The letter must clearly state the number of applications and EAs required and a response will be provided within 30 days.</p> <p>It was confirmed that should the Regulation 11(4) request be approved specialists will also be permitted to submit 4 reports for each of the projects which will include impacts for the Grid Application and the WEF Application.</p>	<p>WSP to compile a letter to for the combination of Applications in terms of Regulation 11 and submit to EIA Applications.</p> <p><i>Post meeting clarification:</i></p> <p><i>It was decided outside of this meeting that the combination of Applications in terms of Regulation 11(4) of the EIA</i></p>

AGENDA

	<i>Regulations will not be pursued.</i>
4.0 WAY FORWARD WSP will compile the meeting minutes and agenda to send to DFFE for review and comment prior to finalisation.	LS to compile and distribute the meeting minutes.

APPENDIX A: MEETING PRESENTATION

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DFFE Pre-Application Meeting

Verkykerskop Wind Energy Facility Cluster located in the Free State Province


06 February 2024



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Introductions



Developer	Mullio Renewable Project Developments (Pty) Ltd
EAP	WSP Group Africa (Pty) Ltd
Authority	Department of Forestry Fisheries and the Environment

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Agenda

1 Introduction Introductions	4 Public Participation Plan
2 Overview of the Project Project Background Typical Infrastructure Key Considerations	5 Timeframes
3 Permitting Process Environmental Authorisation Process Listed Activities DFFE Screening Tool Specialist Studies	6 Discussion Specific Clarification Questions and Comments

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Summary of the Project

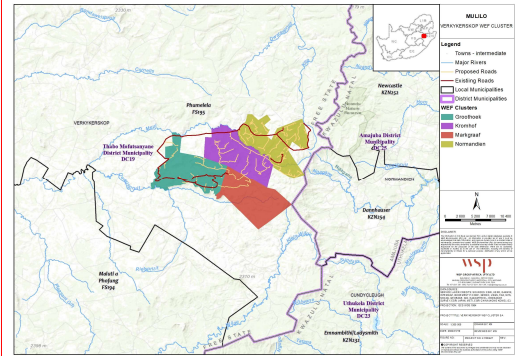
Project Background

- Develop four Wind Energy Facilities (WEF) and associated grid connections: Verkykerskop WEF Cluster
- The development will be divided into up to four WEF and four grid projects, namely:
 - WEF Projects:
 - Groothoek WEF (up to 240MW)
 - Kromhof WEF (up to 240MW)
 - Normandien WEF (up to 600MW)
 - Markgraaff WEF (up to 240MW)
 - Grid Projects:
 - Groothoek up to 132kV Grid Connection
 - Kromhof up to 132kV Grid Connection
 - Normandien up to 132kV Grid Connection
 - Markgraaff up to 132kV Grid Connection

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	Groothoek	Kromhof	Normamdien	Markgraaff
Project Extent	6 170 ha	5 721 ha	6 067 ha	5 856 ha
Export Capacity	Up to 320MW	Up to 320MW	Up to 600MW	Up to 260MW



Typical Infrastructure

	Groothoek	Kromhof	Normandien	Markgraaff
Number of Turbines	Up to 55	Up to 55	Up to 100	Up to 45
Rotor Diameter	Up to 200m			
Hub Height	Up to 140m			
Hard Standing Dimensions	Up to 0,8ha per turbine			
Turbine Foundations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area of 0,07ha per turbine and crane platform/pad – 0,5ha. Excavation up to 4m deep, constructed of reinforced concrete to support the mounting ring. Once tower established, footprint of foundation is covered with soil. 			
Substation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 x 33kV/132kV onsite collector substation (PP Portion), each being up to 2ha. 			
Powerlines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 33kV cabling to connect the wind turbines to the onsite collector substations, to be laid underground where practical. 			
Internal Roads	Up to 8m in width			

Typical Infrastructure

	Groothoek	Kromhof	Normandien	Markgraaff
Construction camp and laydown area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction compounds including site office inclusive of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concrete Batching plant of up to 1ha Site office of 4ha Laydown area of 5ha 			
O&M Building	O&M office of up to 1ha			
Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 200MW/800MWh Li-ion solid state batteries Export Capacity of up to 800MWh Total storage capacity 200MW Storage capacity of up to 6-8 hours The BESS will be housed in containers covering a total approximate footprint of up to 7ha 			

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Permitting Process

Environmental Authorisation Applications

Separate Basic Assessment (BA) Process:

- Grootshoek up to 132kV Grid Connection
- Kromhof up to 132kV Grid Connection
- Normandien up to 132kV Grid Connection
- Markgraaff up to 132kV Grid Connection

Separate Scoping and EIA (S&EIA) process:

- Grootshoek WEF (up to 240MW)
- Kromhof WEF (up to 240MW)
- Normandien WEF (up to 600MW)
- Markgraaff WEF (up to 240MW)

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Permitting Process

Competent Authority

Section 24C(3)(a) of NEMA

- The Minister must be identified as the Competent Authority (CA) if the activity has implications for international environmental commitments or relations.

Section 24C(3)(b)(ii) of NEMA

- The Minister must be identified as the Competent Authority (CA) if the activity is undertaken by a statutory body, excluding any municipality, performing an exclusive competence of the national sphere of government.

Section 24C(3)(b) of NEMA

- Agreement for DFFE to process Renewable Energy and Electricity Grid Infrastructure Projects located within the Free State Province (Specific to REDZ and STC however the Free State Department of Economic, Small Business Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs does not have capacity to handle shortened timeframes for EA Applications)

GN 779 of 01 July 2016

- Identifies the Minister as the CA for the consideration and processing of environmental authorisations and amendments thereto for activities related to the Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) 2010 - 2030

DFFE is therefore deemed to be the Competent Authority

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Permitting Process

Listed Activities – Listing Notice 1

Listed Activity	Description of Project Activity
Activity 11: The development of facilities or infrastructure for the transmission and distribution of electricity— (i) outside urban areas or industrial complexes with a capacity of more than 33 but less than 275 kilovolts; or (ii) inside urban areas or industrial complexes with a capacity of 275 kilovolts or more, excluding the development of bypass infrastructure for the transmission and distribution of electricity where such bypass infrastructure is— (a) temporarily required to allow for maintenance of existing infrastructure; (b) 2 kilometres or shorter in length; (c) within an existing transmission line servitude; and (d) will be removed within 18 months of the commencement of development.	Each facility will have a 132kV powerline grid connection, therefore this activity is considered applicable to the following projects: • Grootshoek up to 132kV Grid Connection • Kromhof up to 132kV Grid Connection • Normandien up to 132kV Grid Connection • Markgraaff up to 132kV Grid Connection
Activity 27: The clearance of an area of 1 hectares or more, but less than 20 hectares of indigenous vegetation, except where such clearance of indigenous vegetation is required for: (i) the undertaking of a linear activity; or (ii) maintenance purposes undertaken in accordance with a maintenance management plan.	The footprint of the onsite substations may be more than 1 ha but less than 20 ha. This activity therefore may be applicable to the following projects: Grootshoek up to 132kV Grid Connection Kromhof up to 132kV Grid Connection Normandien up to 132kV Grid Connection Markgraaff up to 132kV Grid Connection

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Permitting Process

Listed Activities – Listing Notice 2

Listed Activity	Description of Project Activity
Activity 1: The development of facilities or infrastructure for the generation of electricity from a renewable resource where the electricity output is 20 megawatts or more, excluding where such development of facilities or infrastructure is for photovoltaic installations and occurs: (a) within an urban area; or (b) on existing infrastructure.	The proposed energy generation technology (i.e. Wind) will generate more than 20MW of electricity output from a renewable resource. This activity is therefore considered applicable to the following projects: • Grootshoek WEF (up to 240MW) • Kromhof WEF (up to 240MW) • Normandien WEF (up to 600MW) • Markgraaff WEF (up to 240MW)
Activity 15: The clearance of an area of 20 hectares or more of indigenous vegetation, excluding where such clearance of indigenous vegetation is required for— (i) the undertaking of a linear activity; or (ii) maintenance purposes undertaken in accordance with a maintenance management plan.	Based on the information provided with regards to total project area, it is assumed that the facilities will result in the clearance of at least 20 hectares or more of indigenous vegetation. This activity is therefore considered applicable to the following projects: • Grootshoek WEF (up to 240MW) • Kromhof WEF (up to 240MW) • Normandien WEF (up to 600MW) • Markgraaff WEF (up to 240MW)

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Planning Process

DDFE Screening Tool Identified Sensitivities – WEF

THEME	VERY HIGH SENSITIVITY	HIGH SENSITIVITY	MEDIUM SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY
Agriculture Theme		X		
Animal Species Theme		X		
Aquatic Biodiversity Theme	X			
Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Theme				X
Avian (Wind) Theme		X		
Bats (Wind) Theme		X		
Civil Aviation (Wind) Theme				X
Defence (Wind) Theme				X

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Planning Process

DDFE Screening Tool Identified Sensitivities – WEF

THEME	VERY HIGH SENSITIVITY	HIGH SENSITIVITY	MEDIUM SENSITIVITY	LOW SENSITIVITY
Flicker Theme	X			
Landscape (Wind) Theme	X			
Palaeontology Theme	X			
Noise Theme	X			
Plant Species Theme			X	
RFI (Wind) Theme				X
Terrestrial Biodiversity Theme	X			
Vulture Species Theme		X		

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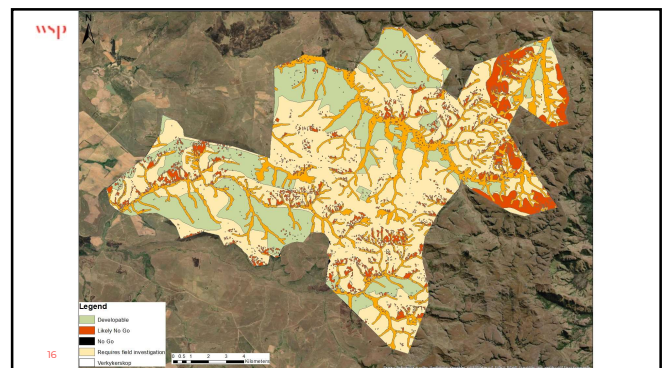
Planning Process

Specialist Assessments Identified by the DFFE Screening Tool

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural Impact Assessment • Landscape/Visual Impact Assessment • Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment • Palaeontology Impact Assessment • Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact Assessment • Aquatic Biodiversity Impact Assessment • Avian Impact Assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil Aviation Assessment • Defence Assessment • RFI Assessment • Noise Impact Assessment • Flicker Assessment • Traffic Impact Assessment • Geotechnical Assessment • Socio-Economic assessment • Plant Species Assessment • Animal Species Assessment
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Public Participation Phase

Public Participation Plan

- A Consolidated Public Participation Process is proposed for all applications
- Formally announce project via:
 - Adverts (English and a local language in local newspaper)
 - Site notices
 - Development and maintenance of a stakeholder database
- Compilation and management of I&AP Database
- Written notification:
 - Owners and occupiers on or adjacent to the proposed project site
 - Municipality Ward Councillor
 - District Municipality
 - Relevant State Departments
- Draft Reports Review for 30 days:
 - Online on the WSP website
 - Online on a data free website
 - Hard copies placed at local libraries

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Timeframes

Timeframes

- Authority Timeframes (without SIP Status)
 - Authority decision making timeframe is 107 days for S&EIA
 - Authority decision making timeframe is 54 days for BA

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Specific Clarification

Specific Clarification

- There are currently 4 S&EIA Applications and 4 BA Applications – would it be possible to undertake four combined Applications in terms of Regulation 11(4) for the WEF and Grid Applications and issue separate environmental authorisations in terms of Regulation 25(1) and (2) of the EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended
 - The reports will be clear as to which information is dedicated to which project
 - A summary of the applicable infrastructure and listed activities for each application can be submitted as an Appendix to the report
- Can the specialists submit combined specialist reports for each project (WEF and Grid) (4 reports instead of 8)

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Question



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