



**COMMENTS AND RESPONSE REPORT**  
**FINAL BASIC ASSESSMENT REPORT FOR THE**  
**PROPOSED UPGRADE OF THE MOORDKUIL RAW WATER PUMP STATION ON PORTIONS 15, 24**  
**AND 25 OF THE FARM KLIPHEUVEL NO. 143, KLEINBRAK RIVIER, MOSSEL BAY MUNICIPALITY,**  
**WESTERN CAPE.**

**(COMMENTING PERIOD: 3 NOVEMBER 2025 – 5 DECEMBER 2025)**

COMMENT	NAME/ORGANISATION	RESPONSE	
<p>This letter serves to inform you that the following information must be included in the Final BAR:</p> <p>(a) Listed Activities &amp; other specific comments            (i) Please ensure that all relevant listed activities are applied for, are specific and can be linked to the development activity or infrastructure (including thresholds) as described in the project description.</p>	<p>Dr. Sabelo Malaza             Chief Director:            Integrated Environmental Authorisations             Department of</p>	<p>All relevant Listed Activities applied for are specific and can be linked to the development activity or infrastructure as described in the project description. Please refer to Table 22-24, from page 128-129.</p>	<b>1</b>
<p>(ii) The relevant authorities with jurisdiction in respect of geographically designated areas in terms of GN R. 985 (Listing Notice 3) Activities must be continuously involved throughout the environmental impact assessment process. Written comments (or proof of consultation) must be obtained from the relevant authorities and submitted to this Department. In addition, a graphical representation of the proposed development within the respective geographical areas must be provided. Please also ensure that the potential impacts on the affected Critical Biodiversity Areas, Sensitive Areas and Protected Areas indicated in Listing Notice 3 are fully assessed in the BAR.</p>	<p>Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment             1 December 2025</p>	<p>Please refer to Appendix E1 for the I&amp;AP List which includes the list of authorities consulted as part of this proposal.</p>	<b>2</b>
<p>(iii) The final BAR must provide an assessment of the impacts and mitigation measures for each of the listed activities applied for.</p>		<p>The listed activities applied for will be included in the relevant impact tables in the Final BAR to show how the assessed impacts relate to the activities.</p>	<b>3</b>
<p>(iv) In addition to the location coordinates provided in the draft BAR, coordinates for the new cement access road and any other major infrastructure upgrade must be provided in the BAR.</p>		<p>Location coordinates for the new cement access road and other major infrastructure are included in the Final BAR.</p>	<b>4</b>



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<p>(v) Note that this Department does not make use of templates for the submission of BARs. The BAR must be in accordance with Appendix 1 of the EIA Regulations and removed from the current template.</p>		<p>The Final BAR has been restructured.</p>	<b>5</b>
<p>(vi) Please ensure that the full name of contact person for applicant is provided in the application form and not just an initial.</p>		<p>Revised Application Form has been submitted with the Final BAR and the full name of the contact person for the applicant will be provided.</p>	<b>6</b>
<p>(vii) For the name of the contact person in the Environmental Section for the local municipality, the same contact person as the applicant was provided. Kindly note that details of a different contact person are required, particularly if they will be providing comments on the draft BAR regarding the proposed development.</p>		<p>The details of Mr. Ruddle Minnie is included in the Revised Application Form which was submitted with the Final BAR.</p>	<b>7</b>
<p>(b) Specialist Assessments (i) Please note that the Department considers a 'no-go' area, as an area where no development of any infrastructure is allowed; therefore, no development of associated infrastructure including access roads is allowed in the 'no-go' areas.</p>		<p>The no-go areas definitions are aligned.</p>	<b>8</b>
<p>(ii) Should the specialist definition of a 'no-go' area differ from the Department's definition, this must be clearly indicated. The specialist must also indicate the 'no-go' area's buffer if applicable.</p>		<p>The no-go areas definitions are aligned.</p>	<b>9</b>
<p>(iii) Should the appointed specialists specify contradicting recommendations, the EAP must clearly indicate the most reasonable recommendation and substantiate this with defensible reasons; and where necessary, include further expertise advice.</p>		<p>No contradicting recommendations were made by any of the appointed specialists.</p>	<b>10</b>



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<p>(iv) All specialist studies must be final, and provide detailed/practical mitigation measures for the preferred alternative and recommendations, and must not recommend further studies to be completed post-EA.</p>		<p>All specialist studies in the Final BAR are in their final format.</p>	<b>11</b>
<p>(v) Please note that if any of the specialist studies and requirements/protocols recommended in the Department's Screening Tool are not commissioned, a motivation (including site sensitivity verification reports and specialist compliance statements in certain instances) must be provided in the report per the requirements of the Protocols.</p>		<p>A Site Sensitivity Verification report has been attached as Appendix G8 to the Final BAR.</p>	<b>12</b>
<p>(vi) Please note that the protocols require certain specialists to be SACNASP registered. As such, the Specialist Declaration of Interest forms must also indicate the scientific organization registration/member number and status of registration/membership for each specialist.</p>		<p>The specialist Declaration of Interest Forms have been attached to their corresponding reports.</p>	<b>13</b>
<p>(vii) It is brought to your attention that Procedures for the Assessment and Minimum Criteria for Reporting on Identified Environmental Themes in terms of Sections 24(5)(a) and (h) and 44 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998, when applying for Environmental Authorisation, which were promulgated in Government Notice No. 320 of 20 March 2020 (i.e. "the Protocols"), and in Government Notice No. 1150 of 30 October 2020 (i.e. protocols for terrestrial plant and animal species), are now in effect. Please note that specialist assessments must be conducted in accordance with these protocols. Please note further that the protocols require the specialists to be registered with SACNASP.</p>		<p>The specialist Terms of Reference included this requirement and the reports were therefore compiled to comply with "the Protocols".</p>	<b>14</b>



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<p>(viii) It was noted during the review of the draft BAR and the Specialist Studies that no Site Sensitivity Verification Report(s) were included as is required by the Protocols, for any of the themes as identified by the Screening Tool, either as individual verification reports for each theme or as a single SSVR with each theme addressed. The Protocols are clear in that prior to commencing with a specialist assessment, the current use of the land and the environmental sensitivity of the site under consideration identified by the national web based environmental screening tool (screening tool), where determined, must be confirmed by undertaking a site sensitivity verification. As such the lack of Site Sensitivity Verification Reports for the themes is considered as non-compliance with the requirements as set out in the Protocols.</p>		<p>A Site Sensitivity Verification report has been attached as Appendix G8 to the Final BAR.</p>	<b>15</b>
<p>(ix) You are therefore required to provide SSVRs for the above themes that comply with the site sensitivity verification and minimum report content requirements, and these must be submitted with the BAR to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Protocols and those of the EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended. Please make sure that the photographic evidence that is provided with the site sensitivity verification report is recent and time stamped. No Google images must be provided as photographs. Should a single Site Sensitivity Verification Report be compiled, please ensure that each and every theme is individually addressed with the findings documented.</p>		<p>A Site Sensitivity Verification report has been attached as Appendix G8 to the Final BAR, and will comply with the Protocols and EIA Regulations, 2014.</p>	<b>16</b>

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<p>(x) Furthermore, the Screening Tool identified the Landscape/Visual Impact Assessment, Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment, Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact Assessment, Hydrology Assessment, and Socio-Economic Assessment, as part of the specialist assessment studies to be undertaken for the proposed development. On review of the draft BAR, it was noted that the following assessments were undertaken and included: the Aquatic Impact Assessment, Botanical Assessment, Faunal and Avifaunal Compliance Statement, Agricultural Compliance Statement, and an Exemption from any Palaeontology Impact Assessment. However, the draft BAR does not make any reference to the assessments that were not undertaken, nor has it included them as separate specialist assessments studies, with no proper motivation provided.</p>		<p>The omission of these specialist assessments has been explained in the Site Sensitivity Verification Report (Appendix G8). A section has been added to the Final BAR to include these reasons, for your ease of reference the reasons are as follows:</p> <p><b>Landscape/Visual Impact Assessment:</b> We disagree with the Screening Tool's indication that a Visual/ Landscape Assessment is required. The proposed activities comprise the upgrading of an existing infrastructure, with the majority of the upgrades occurring in previously disturbed areas.</p> <p>No new above-ground structures of visual significance will be introduced, and the project will not alter the existing landscape character, which is already defined by the existing infrastructure, access roads, and disturbed vegetation. As such, the proposed development will not result in any change to the visual integrity, sense of place, or landscape quality of the area. A Visual Impact Assessment is therefore not warranted.</p> <p><b>Hydrology Assessment:</b> The screening tool report recommended that a Hydrology Assessment be conducted. We do not believe that it is required or that it will add any value to the Basic Assessment Report as no hazardous substances will be stored underground and most of the activities will be undertaken in the river and an Aquatic Specialist was appointed to conduct an Aquatic Impact Assessment.</p> <p><b>Socio-Economic Assessment:</b> We disagree that a Socio-Economic Impact Assessment is required. The proposed upgrade to the Moordkuil Pump Station will not alter land use,</p>	<p><b>17</b></p>
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		restrict access, displace communities, or affect livelihoods. Construction is short-term and small in scale, and socio-economic conditions will remain unchanged. No specialist socio-economic study is warranted.	
(xi) You are therefore requested to include in the BAR a table summarising all the specialist studies required by the Department's Screening Tool, and the sensitivity ratings of the Screening Tool (very high, high, medium, low), a column indicating the sensitivity of the site after the EAP/Specialist conducted the Site Sensitivity Verification Assessment (a dispute or confirmation of the finding by the Screening Tool), and a column indicating whether these studies will be conducted or if a compliance statement or motivation will be submitted, as per the requirements of the protocols.		A table summarising all of the specialist studies required by the Department's Screening Tool, and the sensitivity ratings of the Screening Tool (very high, high, medium, low), a column indicating the sensitivity of the site after the EAP/Specialist conducted the Site Sensitivity Verification Assessment (a dispute or confirmation of the finding by the Screening Tool), and a column indicating whether these studies have been conducted or if a compliance statement or motivation was submitted, as per the requirements of the protocols, is included in the Final BAR.	<b>18</b>
(xii) Please ensure that for the Aviation and Defence Themes, proper and detailed motivations are provided as there are no defined assessment criteria, and if the EAP has disputed or confirmed the sensitivity ratings that were identified by the Screening Tool for these themes.		This is included in the Final BAR.	<b>19</b>
(xiii) Please note that it is the responsibility of the EAP to confirm the list of specialist assessments/studies identified in the screening tool report and to motivate in the BAR, the reason for not including any of the identified specialist studies, including the provision of photographic evidence of the site situation. The site sensitivity verification reports for each of the recommended themes/studies, as per the protocols, must be compiled and attached.		This is included in the Final BAR.	<b>20</b>



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<p>(xiv) Specialist Declaration of Interest forms must be attached to the final BAR. You are therefore requested to submit original signed and dated Specialist Declaration of Interest forms for each specialist study conducted. The forms are available on the Department's website (please use the Department's template).</p>		<p>The DFFE Specialist Declaration of Interest Forms are attached to the Final BAR as Appendix I3.</p>	<b>21</b>
<p>(c) Layout &amp; Sensitivity Maps (i) A copy of the final preferred layout map. All available biodiversity information must be used in the finalisation of the layout map. Existing infrastructure must be used as far as possible e.g. roads. The layout map must indicate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear indication of the location and envisioned area of the proposed upgrades Moordkuil Raw Water Pumpstation and all supporting associated infrastructure mapped at an appropriate scale;</li> <li>• All supporting onsite infrastructure e.g., roads (existing and proposed); and</li> <li>• All existing infrastructure on the site;</li> <li>• Permanent and temporary laydown area footprints;</li> <li>• The location of sensitive environmental features on-site e.g. CBAs, heritage sites, wetlands, drainage lines, etc. that will be affected by the facilities and associated infrastructure;</li> <li>• Location of access and service roads;</li> <li>• Buffer areas; and</li> <li>• All "no-go" areas.</li> </ul>		<p>A copy of the final preferred layout map with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear indication of the location and envisioned area of the proposed upgrades Moordkuil Raw Water Pumpstation and all supporting associated infrastructure mapped at an appropriate scale;</li> <li>• All supporting onsite infrastructure e.g., roads (existing and proposed); and</li> <li>• All existing infrastructure on the site;</li> <li>• Permanent and temporary laydown area footprints;</li> <li>• The location of sensitive environmental features on-site e.g. CBAs, heritage sites, wetlands, drainage lines, etc. that will be affected by the facilities and associated infrastructure;</li> <li>• Location of access and service roads;</li> <li>• Buffer areas; and</li> <li>• All "no-go" areas.</li> </ul> <p>Is included in the Final BAR.</p>	<b>22</b>



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<p>(ii) A sensitivity map indicating environmentally sensitive areas and features identified during the assessment process e.g., CBAs, heritage sites, wetlands, drainage lines, etc. that will be affected by the proposed upgrades to the Moordkuil Pumpstation.</p>		<p>Please refer to Appendix B2.</p>	<b>23</b>
<p>(iii) Please ensure that all the buffer zones recommended by the specialists are illustrated on the maps and the layout map must be overlain by all the sensitivities.</p>		<p>Please refer to Appendix B2.</p>	<b>24</b>
<p>(iv) It must be emphasised that the final BAR must include a final layout map which adheres to specialist recommendations as well as the identified no-go areas.</p>		<p>Please refer to Appendix B2.</p>	<b>25</b>
<p>(d) Public Participation Process (i) Please ensure that all issues raised, and comments received during the circulation of the draft BAR from registered I&amp;APs and organs of state which have jurisdiction (including this Department's Directorates: Biodiversity Mainstreaming &amp; EIA (BCAdmin@dffe.gov.za) in respect of the proposed activity are adequately addressed in the final BAR.</p>		<p>Please refer to the Comments and Response Report regarding comments received during the Public Participation Process. The Departments Directorates: Biodiversity Mainstreaming &amp; EIA (<a href="mailto:BCAdmin@dffe.gov.za">BCAdmin@dffe.gov.za</a>) was notified of the proposal and given the opportunity to comment on the proposal from the <b>8<sup>th</sup> of December 2025 – 2<sup>nd</sup> of February 2026</b>. Their comments have been received and are incorporated and addressed in this comments and response report.</p>	<b>26</b>
<p>(ii) Proof of correspondence with the various stakeholders must be included in the final BAR. Should you be unable to obtain comments, proof should be submitted to the Department of the attempts that were made to obtain comments. The Public Participation Process must be conducted in terms of Regulation 39, 40, 41, 42, 43 &amp; 44 of the EIA Regulations 2014, as amended.</p>		<p>Proof of all Public Participation Processes is attached as Appendix E2 to the Final BAR.</p>	<b>27</b>
<p>(iii) Please ensure that copies of original comments received from I&amp;APs and organs of state, which have jurisdiction in respect of the proposed activity and current</p>		<p>Please refer to Appendix E4 for all comments received.</p>	<b>28</b>



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<p>application, are submitted to the Department with the final BAR and must be incorporated into a Comments and Response Report (CRR).</p>			
<p>(iv) The CRR must be a separate document from the main report, and the format must be in the table format as indicated in Annexure 1 of this comments letter. Please refrain from summarising comments made by I&amp;APs. All comments from I&amp;APs must be dated, copied verbatim and responded to clearly. Please note that a response such as "noted" is not regarded as an adequate response to I&amp;AP's comments.</p>		<p>Please refer to the Comments and Response Report attached as Appendix E3.</p>	<b>29</b>
<p>(v) Please include the period for when the public participation period occurred i.e. when was the draft BAR circulated for comment for the current application.</p>		<p>The period is included at the top of the Comments and Response Report. For your quick reference the period was from 3 November 2025 – 5 December 2025.</p>	<b>30</b>
<p>General You are further reminded to comply with Regulation 19(1)(a) of the NEMA EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended, states that: "Where basic assessment must be applied to an application, the applicant must, within 90 days of receipt of the application by the competent authority, submit to the competent authority – (a) a basic assessment report, inclusive of any specialist reports, an EMPr, a closure plan in the case of a closure activity and where the application is a mining application, the plans, report and calculations contemplated in the Financial Provisioning Regulations, which have been subjected to a public participation process of at least 30 days and which reflects the incorporation of comments received, including any comments of the competent authority".</p>		<p>Thank you for your comments. Although some changes to the format of the BAR have been undertaken as per your request and including detail on the layout presented in the Draft BAR, no new information has been added to the application and as such an additional round of Public Participation will not be required.</p>	<b>31</b>



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<p>Should there be significant changes or new information that has been added to the BAR or EMPr which changes or information was not contained in the reports or plans consulted on during the initial public participation process, you are required to comply with Regulation 19(1)(b) of the NEMA EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended, which states: “the applicant must, within 90 days of receipt of the application by the competent authority, submit to the competent authority – (b) a notification in writing that the documents contemplated in subregulation 1(a) will be submitted within 140 days of receipt of the application by the competent authority, as significant changes have been made or significant new information has been added to the documents which changes or information was not contained in the original documents consulted on during the initial public participation process contemplated in subregulation (1)(a) and that the revised documents will be subjected to another public participation process of at least 30 days.”</p>			
<p>Please also ensure that the final BAR includes the period for which the Environmental Authorisation is required and the date on which the activity will be concluded as per Appendix 1(3)(1)(q) of the NEMA EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended.</p>		<p>This is included in the Final BAR, Section 11.3 (Page 136).</p>	<b>32</b>
<p>Should you fail to meet any of the timeframes stipulated in Regulation 19 of the NEMA EIA Regulations, 2014, as amended, your application will lapse.</p>			<b>33</b>



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<p>You are hereby reminded of Section 24F of the National Environmental Management Act, Act No. 107 of 1998, as amended, that no activity may commence prior to an Environmental Authorisation being granted by the Department.</p>			
<b>COMMENT</b>	<b>NAME/ORGANISATION</b>	<b>RESPONSE</b>	
<p>1. Breede-Olifants Catchment Management Agency (BOCMA) acknowledges receipt of your application 31 October 2025 for the aforementioned activity, which was received by this office on October 31 2025. Based on an evaluation of the intended activity's impact on water resources, this office support the proposed upgrade of the Moordkuil raw water pump station on portions 15, 24 and 25 of the farm Klipheuvél no. 143, Klein Brak River, Mossel Bay municipality, Western Cape. This office would like to comment on the document.</p>	<p>Mr. Jan van Staden Chief Executive Officer (Acting)  Breede-Olifants Catchment Management Agency (BOCMA)</p>		<b>34</b>
<p>2. BOCMA does not object to the proposed upgrade subject to compliance with the following condition: 2.1 The proposed upgrade of the Moordkuil raw water pump station on portions 15, 24 and 25 of the farm Klipheuvél no. 143, Klein Brak River, Mossel Bay municipality, Western Cape. will trigger Section 21 (c) &amp; (i) water uses of National Water Act ,1998 (Act No 36 of 1998) As amended</p>		<p>An Aquatic Specialist has been appointed by the applicant, and the General Authorisation process is currently underway.</p>	<b>35</b>
<p>3. Please note no abstraction of surface or groundwater may take place or storage of water be created without prior authorisation from this office, unless it is a Schedule 1 or Existing Lawful Use as described in Section 32 of the National Water Act, 1998 (Act No. 36 of 1998) as amended.</p>		<p>An Aquatic Specialist has been appointed by the applicant, and the General Authorisation process is currently underway.</p>	<b>36</b>



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4. Please ensure that no waste or water containing waste is disposed in a manner which may detrimentally impact on a water resource without authorisation from the National Water Act, 1998 (Act 36 of 1998) and other related legislations.			<b>37</b>
5. The applicant should be aware that according to Section 19 (1) of the National Water Act, 1998 (Act No.36 of 1998), "an owner of land, a person in control of land or a person who occupies or uses the land on which (a) any activity or process is or was performed or undertaken; or (b) any other situation exists, which causes, has caused or is likely to cause pollution of a water resource, must take all reasonable measures to prevent any such pollution from occurring, continuing or recurring". Any pollution incident(s) resulting from the discharge of treated effluent or any activity from the plant must be reported within 24 hours to the relevant authority.			<b>38</b>
6. No stormwater runoff from the application premises containing waste, or water containing waste emanating from any activity may be discharged into a water resource without prior treatment.		The potential impact will be mitigated by implementing the EMPr during the construction phase.	<b>39</b>
7. All requirements as stipulated in the National Water Act, 1998 (Act No. 36 of 1998) regarding water use must be adhered to.			<b>40</b>
8. These comments do not exempt you from complying with other relevant legislations and requirements of other governmental Departments.			<b>41</b>
<b>COMMENT</b>	<b>NAME/ORGANISATION</b>	<b>RESPONSE</b>	



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<p>The Directorate: Biodiversity Conservation reviewed and evaluated the report.</p>	<p>Mr. Seoka Lekota</p>		<b>42</b>
<p>It was noted during the review that the proposed project involves upgrading the existing Moordkuil Raw Water Pump Station and reinstating an access road within the existing footprint. The current infrastructure, operational since 1980, abstracts water from the Moordkuil River to the Klipheuwel Dam and forms part of the Mossel Bay water supply system. Due to the outdated axial pump design, maintenance limitations and mechanical wear, the upgrade to a modern, efficient and low maintenance system capable of operating at the original design capacity is supported in principle from an operational perspective.</p>	<p>Directorate: Biodiversity Conservation</p> <p>Department of Forestry, Fisheries &amp; the Environment</p>	<p>Thank you for indicating your support for the proposed upgrades.</p>	<b>43</b>
<p>Form a biodiversity perspective, the Directorate notes that the Project Area of Influence (POAI) is situated within two threatened vegetation types, namely Garden Route Granite Fynbos and Groot Brak Dune Strandveld.</p> <p>Although the study area is located within a highly transformed agricultural and infrastructure landscape with significant alien invasive plant encroachment, its proximity to the Moordkuil River and the potential presence of Species of Conservation Concern remain of ecological relevance. The site hosts potential habitat for one mammal, four avifaunal and one invertebrate Species of Conservation Concern.</p>		<p>According to the Botanical Impact Assessment (Appendix G2) the 2018 SA Vegetation Map has incorrectly mapped the vegetation type as Garden Route Granite Fynbos, with the pump station area encroaching on Groot Brak Dune Strandveld. The area should instead be mapped as Mossel Bay Shale Renosterveld, with strong elements of Albany thicket. The error is repeated in the 2024 beta version of the SA Vegetation Map.</p> <p>The site proposed for the project therefore lies inside transformed or degraded Albany thicket and Mossel Bay Shale Renosterveld. The latter is currently listed as Critically Endangered. The site is also partly located inside the Western Cape biodiversity network, with most of it mapped as terrestrial and aquatic critical biodiversity areas (CBA) or degraded critical biodiversity areas (CBA2). Two SCC were recorded on site, namely <i>Hermannia lavandulifolia</i> (VU) and <i>Freesia cf fergusoniae</i> (VU). Both observed occurrences can be avoided. Two protected tree species (<i>Sideroxylon inerme</i></p>	<b>44</b>



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		<p>&amp; <i>Pittosporum viridiflorum</i>) are also present on the site. Given the transformed or degraded state of the vegetation, the impact on terrestrial biodiversity and plant species is of medium-low significance, prior to mitigation. With mitigation, this impact can be lowered further.</p> <p>It is therefore recommended that the proposed project be considered for approval, but subject to the proposed mitigation measures listed above.</p> <p>According to the Terrestrial faunal and avifaunal Compliance Statement (Appendix G3) the project footprint and alternative site camp locations are limited to small and already cleared and modified areas with an extra-limital placement relative to the surrounding natural landscape. To this end, faunal and avifaunal movement over these parts is highly ephemeral with these parts supporting no permanent faunal subpopulations. From a terrestrial faunal and avifaunal perspective therefore, the project footprint and alternative site camp locations is of a "Low" sensitivity. The study area landscape harbours confirmed or likely subpopulations of at least three mammal and seven avifaunal SCC. Importantly, the project footprint and alternative site camp locations are spatially limited (&lt;1 hectare) and extra-limital to the natural habitats where these species occur. To this end, the presence of these SCC over the receiving environment is likely to be highly ephemeral, with the proposed project unlikely to impact on their subpopulations. All other SCC considered have either a "Low" or "Medium" likelihood of occurring in the study area landscape, either given their scarcity in confirmed sightings</p>
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		<p>or a lack of suitable habitat for these species. These SCC are not further considered during this assessment.</p> <p>The project footprints and site camp locations under both Preferred Alternative layout A and Alternative layout B are located in less sensitive areas from a terrestrial faunal and avifaunal perspective and are unlikely to impact on ecological processes or biodiversity patterns at either local or regional scales. Both these development layouts and associated activities are therefore supported from a terrestrial faunal and avifaunal biodiversity perspective.</p>	
<p>Furthermore, terrestrial biodiversity theme is rated as Very High sensitivity, attributable to the possible presence of a Critical Biodiversity Area (CBA1), a degraded Critical Biodiversity Area (CBA2) and a degraded Ecological Support Area (ESA2). In accordance with the Western Cape Spatial Plan (2023), these features represent areas of high conservation importance and play a critical role in maintaining biodiversity persistence, ecological connectivity and ecosystem functioning.</p>		<p>According to the Faunal and Avifaunal Species Compliance Statement (Appendix G3) the Terrestrial Biodiversity sensitivity is verified to be Low.</p> <p>The larger part of the project footprint currently overlaps with areas regarded as degraded terrestrial and aquatic CBA2, owing to the open and transformed nature of these parts. Only a small section of the northern access road is mapped as a terrestrial CBA1, owing to the previous presence of Garden Route Granite Fynbos which has subsequently been cleared to form a fire break.</p> <p>According to the Botanical Impact Assessment (Appendix G2), given the transformed or degraded state of the vegetation, the impact on terrestrial biodiversity and plant species is of medium-low significance, prior to mitigation. With mitigation, this impact can be lowered further.</p>	<b>45</b>



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		All mitigation measures recommended by the specialists have been incorporated into the EMPr to ensure a low impact significance is achieved.	
The Directorate supports Option 3 which offers the lowest capital and operational costs, best operational reliability, and an acceptable environmental impact, and is therefore confirmed as the preferred alternative.			<b>46</b>
To minimize further impacts the Directorate recommends the following measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No further loss of natural habitat should occur within CBAs, ESAs, and IBAs. Rehabilitation of disturbed areas must use locally indigenous species.</li> </ul>		No further loss of habitat will occur other than what is proposed within the construction footprint. Areas outside the construction footprint will be regarded as No-Go, and no disturbance or loss of natural habitat will occur within these areas. As indicated in Section 11 and 12 of the EMPr, non-invasive and indigenous species will be used will be used for rehabilitation.	<b>47</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An Alien Invasive Plant Management Plan should be developed and implemented to control Ricinus communis, Opuntia spp., and other invasive species.</li> </ul>		<p>Alien Management is included in the EMPr, under Sections 11 and 12, specifically with regards to prevent alien establishment post construction in areas that were disturbed within the construction footprint. It is important to note that all areas outside the construction footprint are regarded as No-Go and in accordance with this department's definition of a No-Go, no movement into the No-Go is allowed. Alien clearing for the development proposal will therefore be limited to the construction footprint and is covered in the EMPr.</p> <p>The Mossel Bay Municipality is responsible for clearing aliens on municipal land and currently has an Alien Management Plan to control alien species on municipal land. This Alien Management Plan is outdated, however the Mossel Bay Municipality has confirmed that an EAP has been appointed and is currently amending and drafting the new Alien Management Plan for the</p>	<b>48</b>



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		<p>Mossel Bay Municipality. This Alien Management Plan will be implemented by the relevant Directorates within the municipality responsible for alien clearing on municipal land, once the plan is approved. Please refer to Appendix F3 for confirmation of the Mossel Bay Municipality are currently in the process of updating their Alien Invasive Species, Monitoring, Eradication and Control Plan, from Mushfiqah Abrahams (Senior Environmental Officer of the Mossel Bay Municipality).</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All activities within or near the Moordkuil River must comply with DWS requirements; buffer zones and erosion control measures must be maintained.</li> </ul>		<p>Erosion control measures as provided by the Aquatic Specialist will be adhered to and are included in the EMPr (Section 11 and 12). The General Authorisation to be issued by BOCMA will also be adhered to during construction. DWS has been involved with and overseen the designs of the facility to ensure the facility complies with DWS requirements.</p>	<b>49</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An draft Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) must be updated to include biodiversity conservation, water protection, and rehabilitation measures, with clear monitoring and reporting mechanisms.</li> </ul>		<p>The current EMPr deals with biodiversity conservation, water protection, and rehabilitation measures in detail and with input from the appointed specialists. Clear monitoring and reporting mechanisms are also provided.</p> <p><b>Biodiversity Conservation</b> - General Environmental Management Procedures are included in Section 8 of the EMPr that contribute to biodiversity conservation. Section 8.2 of the EMPr provides detailed instruction regarding the Site Demarcation, and clearly outlines the procedure regarding the No-Go Areas. Section 8.4 of the EMPr clearly outlines the procedure regarding the clearing of vegetation and emphasized that no vegetation outside of the construction footprint shall be cleared. Section 8.5 clearly outlines the procedure regarding the management of topsoil and subsoil. Section 8.7 clearly outlines the procedure regarding hazardous substances and fuels. Section 8.8 clearly outlines the procedure</p>	<b>50</b>



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		<p>regarding cement and concrete batching. Section 8.9 clearly outlines the procedure regarding erosion control and stormwater management. Section 8.10 clearly outlines the procedure for construction near a watercourse. Section 8.12 clearly outlines the procedure regarding site closure and rehabilitation. Section 10 of the EMPr lists site specific Impact Management Objectives regarding the Demarcation of no-go areas and working areas, the establishment of the site camp and associated site facilities, and a pre construction ECO visit. Each of these Impact Management Objectives have specific Impact Management Actions that must be adhered to and are to be used for monitoring and reporting. These Impact Management Actions are there to prevent unnecessary loss or damage and to protect biodiversity. Section 11 of the EMPr lists site specific Impact Management Objectives which are to limit the impact on terrestrial biodiversity, to limit the loss of indigenous vegetation, and to prevent direct mortality of, or displacement of fauna. Each of these Impact Management Objectives has specific Impact Management Actions that were compiled with input from the botanical specialist and the terrestrial biodiversity and animal species specialist. These Impact Management Actions are there to limit disturbance to the construction footprint, and to prevent unnecessary loss of biodiversity. They also outline the rehabilitation processes to ensure that indigenous species revegetate disturbed areas. Section 12 of the EMPr lists site specific Impact Management Objectives associated with the post construction rehabilitation phase which are to limit the impact on terrestrial biodiversity, reduce the loss of indigenous flora and SCC. Each of these Impact Management Objectives has specific Impact Management Actions which were compiled</p>
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		<p>with input from the specialists. These Impact Management Actions are there to ensure that all the areas that were disturbed within the construction footprint are rehabilitation with indigenous vegetation and that alien infestation in these areas does not occur post construction.</p> <p><b>Water Protection</b> - General Environmental Management Procedures are included in Section 8 of the EMPr that contribute to water protection. Section 8.2 of the EMPr provides detailed instruction regarding the Site Demarcation, and clearly outlines the procedure regarding the No-Go Areas. Section 8.7 clearly outlines the procedure regarding hazardous substances and fuels. Section 8.8 clearly outlines the procedure regarding cement and concrete batching. Section 8.9 clearly outlines the procedure regarding erosion control and stormwater management. Section 8.10 clearly outlines the procedure for construction near a watercourse. Section 8.12 clearly outlines the procedure regarding site closure and rehabilitation. Section 10 of the EMPr lists site specific Impact Management Objectives regarding the Demarcation of no-go areas and working areas, the establishment of the site camp and associated site facilities, and a pre construction ECO visit. Each of these Impact Management Objectives have specific Impact Management Actions that must be adhered to and are to be used for monitoring and reporting. These Impact Management Actions are there to establish the working area and prevent unnecessary disturbance to the river. Section 11 of the EMPr lists site specific Impact Management Objectives which are to limit the impact on prevent contamination of groundwater through chemical spills or leaching of chemicals, to prevent/limit geomorphological</p>
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		<p>changes from erosion and sedimentation, to prevent/limit changes to the hydrological regime, to prevent/limit disturbance to the aquatic habitat, to prevent/limit water quality deterioration. Each of these Impact Management Objectives has specific Impact Management Actions that were compiled with input from the aquatic specialist. These Impact Management Actions are there to protect the Moordkuil River and limit the impact on the Moordkuil River during construction. They also outline the rehabilitation processes to ensure that indigenous species revegetate disturbed areas. Section 12 of the EMPr lists site specific Impact Management Objectives associated with the post construction rehabilitation phase which are to prevent/limit changes to the hydrological regime, and to prevent/limit geomorphological changes from erosion and sedimentation. Each of these Impact Management Objectives has specific Impact Management Actions which were compiled with input from the aquatic specialist. These Impact Management Actions are there to ensure that all the areas that were disturbed within the construction footprint are rehabilitated and that disturbance to the Moordkuil River are minimized during flooding events and maintenance activities post construction.</p> <p><b>Rehabilitation Measures</b> - General Environmental Management Procedures are included in Section 8 of the EMPr, specifically Section 8.12 clearly outlines the procedure regarding site closure and rehabilitation. Section 11 of the EMPr deals with the Impact Management Objectives associated with the construction phase of the project. As outlined above, botanical and terrestrial impacts, and aquatic impacts, have specific Impact Management Actions to mitigate these impacts. These Impact</p>
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		Management Actions under Section 11 of the EMPr include rehabilitation measures which are to be adhered to, monitored, and reported on by the ECO during construction. Section 12 of the EMPr deals specifically with the post construction rehabilitation phase of the project, and here the Impact Management Objectives are all associated with rehabilitation of the project area. All of the Impact Management Actions were compiled along with the appointed specialists, and these are to ensure successful rehabilitation of the disturbed areas. These Impact Management Actions are to be monitored and reported on.	
The Directorate reserves the right to revise initial comments presented here should additional information becomes available.			<b>51</b>
In conclusion, all Public Participation Process documents related to biodiversity EIA for review and queries should be submitted to the Directorate: Biodiversity Conservation at Email: <a href="mailto:BCAdmin@environment.gov.za">BCAdmin@environment.gov.za</a> for the attention of Mr. Seoka Lekota.			<b>52</b>