

COMMENTS AND RESPONSE TABLE:**FIRST ROUND OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION****FOR THE PROPOSED REMOVAL AND REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING ROAD AND CULVERT INFRASTRUCTURE LOCATED ALONG DIVISION ROAD (DR) 1602 KM 8.48, KLEINPLAAS ROAD, CROSSING FARM 338 AND PORTION 6 OF FARM 220 IN MOSSEL BAY LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, GARDEN ROUTE DISTRICT**

COMMENTS RECEIVED DURING THE (30 DAYS) PUBLIC PARTICIPATION FOR THE DRAFT BASIC ASSESSMENT REPORT DRAFT BASIC ASSESSMENT REPORT FOR THE PROPOSED REMOVAL AND REPLACEMENT OF THE EXISTING ROAD AND CULVERT INFRASTRUCTURE LOCATED ALONG DIVISION ROAD 1602 AT KM 8.48, KLEINPLAAS ROAD, CROSSING FARM 338 AND PORTION 6 OF FARM 220 IN MOSSEL BAY LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, GARDEN ROUTE DISTRICT

N r	Comment Received	Date and format Received	I&AP	Company / Representin g	Email Response
1.	SES Distribution: DEADP Reference Number: 16/3/3/1/D6/29/0022/26 Date 14/05/2026 Please see the Sharples Environmental Services SharePoint folder for the: DRAFT BASIC ASSESSMENT REPORT FORM FOR THE PROPOSED REMOVAL AND REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING ROAD AND CULVERT INFRASTRUCTURE LOCATED ALONG DIVISION ROAD (DR) 1602 KM 8.48, KLEINPLAAS ROAD, CROSSING FARM 338 AND PORTION 6 OF FARM 220 IN MOSSEL BAY LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, GARDEN ROUTE DISTRICT SharePoint Folder Link: DDM REGION 3 - Documents - 16.3.3.1.D6.29.0022.26 Draft BAR for the Proposed Removal and Replacement of Existing Road & Culvert Infrastructure DR1602 - All Documents Please find the attached proof of uploads to the SharePoint folder. Please note that the 30-day public participation process will begin on Friday, May 15th, 2026, and the final day for comments will be June 15th, 2026.	14/05/2026 E-mailed comments		SES to DEADP	Not applicable.

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2.	SES Distribution: RE: NOTIFICATION OF THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE 30-DAY PUBLIC PARTICIPATION COMMENTING PERIOD OF THE PROPOSED REMOVAL AND REPLACEMENT OF THE EXISTING ROAD AND CULVERT INFRASTRUCTURE LOCATED ALONG DIVISION ROAD (DR) 1602 KM 8.48, KLEINPLAAS ROAD, CROSSING FARM 338 AND PORTION 6 OF FARM 220, MOSSEL BAY LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, GARDEN ROUTE DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY. (DEADP REF NO: 16/3/3/1/D6/29/0022/26). Sharples Environmental Services cc (SES) has been appointed by HATCH engineering, on behalf of Western Cape Government Department of Infrastructure, to undertake the environmental assessment, in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998) and the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations of 2014, as amended (GNR 326 of 2017; GNR 517 of 2021), for the proposed removal and replacement of the existing road and culvert infrastructure, located along Division Road 1602 km 8.48 (DEA&DP Ref Nr: 16/3/3/1/D6/29/0022/26). This email serves as a reminder that the Draft Basic Assessment Report (DBAR) and its associated appendices will be available for download and viewing until Monday, the 15th of June 2026. A hard-copy of the document has been made available at the Ellen van Rensburg Library, 24 Long Street, Great Brak River, Mossel Bay, 6525. The document is also available for download from our website https://sescc.net/eia-report/deadp-ref-16-3-3-	14/05/2026 E-mailed commen ts	Distribute d to all I & APs	SES to all I & APs	Not applicable.

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	1-d6-29-0022-26-30-day-public-participation-commenting-period-on-the-draft-basic-assessment-report-for-the-proposed-removal-and-replacement-of-existing-road-and-culvert-infrastruct/ Public Participation Commenting Period: 15th of May 2026 – 15th of June 2026. You have been identified as a registered Interested & Affected Party (I&AP), providing you with the opportunity to review and comment on the Draft Basic Assessment Report. Should you no longer wish to be registered as an I&AP for this project, indicating that you no longer wish to be included in future communications regarding this process, please notify this office in writing. If you are receiving this mail, and you are the landowner/landlord of the property, you are requested to notify ALL occupiers on your property of the details of this mail and public participation period. Alternatively, you may request that the EAP undertake this notification on your behalf, by supplying the EAP with the occupiers' contact details. If you are the occupier, you are requested to notify the landowner/landlord of the details of this mail and public participation period. Alternatively, you may request that the EAP undertake this notification on your behalf, by supplying the EAP with the landowner/landlord contact details. Please Note: Choosing to be registered as an I&AP or by submitting a comment, you consent to the lawful processing of				

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	your personal information in relation to the intended purposes, as described by the Protection of Personal Information Act, 2013 (Act no. 4 of 2013). Your personal information will be utilized for all processes relevant to this specific project, in compliance with the POPI Act, 2013. You also provide consent to having your contact details being made available, and to be reflected in our regulated reports. The DBAR is available for comment until the 15th of June 2026. Comments on the DBAR and proposed activity must therefore be submitted in writing on or before the 15th of June 2026, by means of the following: email: jessica@sescs.net or postal address: PO Box 443, Milnerton, 7435.				

					
4	The South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA) hereby acknowledges receipt of your email dated 14 May 2026 regarding the removal and replacement of the existing road and culvert infrastructure located along Division Road (DR) 1602 at kilometre 8.48. SACAA is an entity of the Department of Transport (DoT), established in terms of the Civil Aviation Act, 2009 (Act No. 13 of 2009). The Authority is mandated to regulate, promote, support,	22/05/2026 6 Emailed comment		South African Civil Aviation Authority	SES Emailed response 22/05/2026: Thank you for your email and for confirming that the Aviation Environmental Protection Department of SACAA has reviewed the proposed development.

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	develop, enforce, and continuously improve safety and security in the civil aviation industry in accordance with the Civil Aviation Regulations (CARs) (Civil Aviation Act, 2009). The Aviation Environmental Protection (AEP) Department has reviewed the proposed development and, at this stage, has no comments on the project.				We appreciate SACAA's consideration of the project and note that there are no comments from your side at this stage. Should you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.
5	Please can you provide me with HWC reference number for me to provide you with a comment. I noted the report by Dr. Nilssen	25/05/2026 Emailed comment		Heritage Western Cape	SES Emailed response 25/05/2026: The appointed Heritage Consultant confirmed that the proposed activities do not trigger Section 38 of the National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act No. 25 of 1999). As a result, it is not necessary to submit a NID to Heritage Western Cape. This information is included in the Heritage Statement. Please see the attached Heritage Statement for the proposed project. (Attached: G4 Heritage Statement for DR1602).

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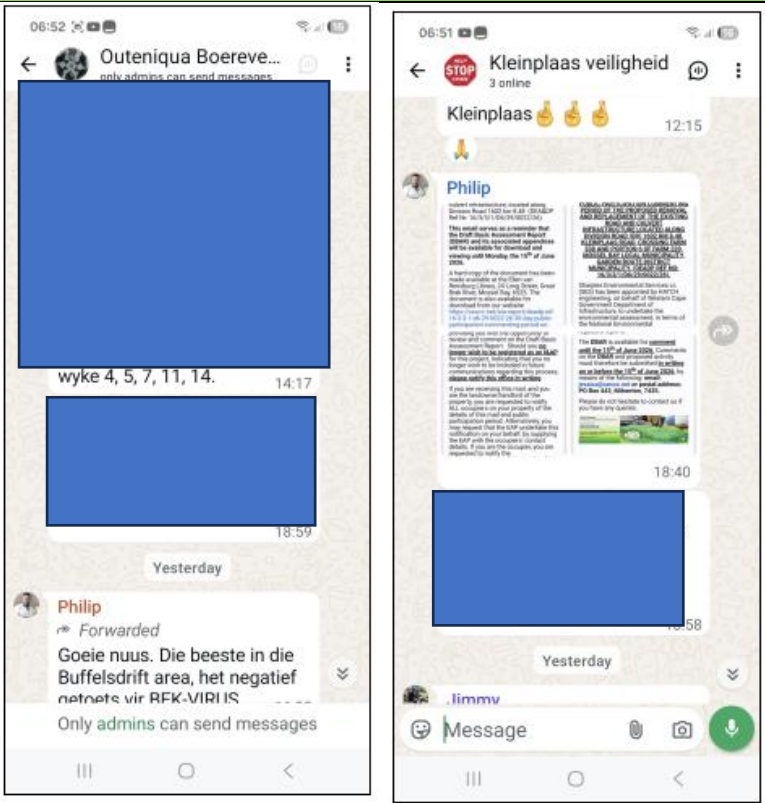
N r	Comment Received	Date and format Received	I&AP	Company / Representin g	Email Response
6	Correspondence Reference: 44892201 File Reference: 16/3/4/1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT / ONTVANGSERKENNING We acknowledge receipt of your letter regarding the abovementioned matter and wish to confirm that the matter is receiving attention. Ons erken ontvangs van u skrywe in bogemelde verband en bevestig dat die saak aandag geniet. Yours faithfully / Die uwe MOSSEL BAY MUNICIPALITY MOSSELBAAI MUNISIPALITEIT	25/05/202 6 E-mailed Comments	Mossel Bay - Admin	Mossel Bay Municipalit y	Thank you for your acknowledgement of receipt.

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7 .	 Attached screenshots of post on Whatsapp groups.	26/05/2026 E-mailed comments		Private Affected landowner	Thank you, for sharing the proof of the project on the Kleinplaas veiligheid and Outenique Boereve Whatsapp groups.
8 .	SES Distribution: REMINDER: NOTIFICATION OF THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE 30-DAY PUBLIC PARTICIPATION	01/06/2026	SES distribute	SES to all I & APs	Not applicable.

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	period-on-the-draft-basic-assessment-report-for-the-proposed-removal-and-replacement-of-existing-road-and-culvert-infrastruct/ Public Participation Commenting Period: 15th of May 2026 – 15th of June 2026. You have been identified as a registered Interested & Affected Party (I&AP), providing you with the opportunity to review and comment on the Draft Basic Assessment Report. Should you no longer wish to be registered as an I&AP for this project, indicating that you no longer wish to be included in future communications regarding this process, please notify this office in writing. If you are receiving this mail, and you are the landowner/landlord of the property, you are requested to notify ALL occupiers on your property of the details of this mail and public participation period. Alternatively, you may request that the EAP undertake this notification on your behalf, by supplying the EAP with the occupiers' contact details. If you are the occupier, you are requested to notify the landowner/landlord of the details of this mail and public participation period. Alternatively, you may request that the EAP undertake this notification on your behalf, by supplying the EAP with the landowner/landlord contact details. Please Note: Choosing to be registered as an I&AP or by submitting a comment, you consent to the lawful processing of your personal information in relation to the intended purposes, as				

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	described by the Protection of Personal Information Act, 2013 (Act no. 4 of 2013). Your personal information will be utilized for all processes relevant to this specific project, in compliance with the POPI Act, 2013. You also provide consent to having your contact details being made available, and to be reflected in our regulated reports. The DBAR is available for comment until the 15th of June 2026. Comments on the DBAR and proposed activity must therefore be submitted in writing on or before the 15th of June 2026, by means of the following: email: jessica@sesc.net or postal address: PO Box 443, Milnerton, 7435.				
9 .	Please can you provide me with HWC reference number for me to provide you with a comment. If there was no NID trigger, please note that HWC cannot comment on matters that do not form part of our mandate.	02/06/2026 Emailed comment		Heritage Western Cape	Thank you for confirming that no comment will be provided based on there being no NID trigger.
10 .	We have no further comments on the proposal, as the proposed site is not located within our jurisdiction. For ease of reference, please see the attached map indicating the site location.	03/06/2026 Emailed comment		SANRAL	SES email response: 03/06/2026 Thank you for your response. Should you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

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N r	Comment Received	Date and format Received	I&AP	Company / Representin g	Email Response
1 1 .	Breede-Olifants Catchment Management Agency (BOCMA) hereby acknowledges receipt of your application dated 15 May 2026 for the aforementioned activity, which was received by this office on 15 May 2026. Based on an evaluation of the intended activity and the information provided, it has been determined that the proposed removal and replacement of the existing road and culvert infrastructure located along Division Road (DR) 1602 1602 KM 8.48, Kleinplaas road, crossing farm 338 and portion 6 of farm 220, Mossel Bay Local Municipality, Garden Route District Municipality will not have an impact on water resources. This office therefore supports the proposed project. 1. BOCMA does not object to the proposed development subject to compliance with the following condition: 1.1 The proposed removal and replacement of the existing road and culvert infrastructure located along Division Road (DR) 1602 1602 KM 8.48, Kleinplaas road, crossing farm 338 and portion 6 of farm 220, Mossel, located within the jurisdiction of the Mossel Bay Local Municipality, Western Cape. will trigger Section 21 (c) & (i) water uses of National Water Act ,1998 (Act No 36 of 1998) As amended	04/06/2026 Emailed comment		Water Use Officer: Breede- Olifants CMA	Thank you for providing comments for the proposed project. The proposed project has a Water Use License (WUL) in terms of Chapter 4 and Section 21 of the National Water Act No. 36 of 1998. Due to the low risk the activities pose, after mitigation, the project falls within the Ambit of General Authorisation for Section 21 (c) and (i) water uses. The WUL was obtained on the 8th of December 2025. All GA conditions apply to the proposed project. The project design and Environmental Management Plan (EMPr) include appropriate mitigation measures. These measures consist of erosion protection (page 10 and 27 of the EMPr), rehabilitation of disturbed areas (see Appendix H – Rehabilitation Plan from the EMPr), sediment control measures (refer to EMPr Outcome 1: Erosion, Earthworks, and Land Clearance, page

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	2. 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. 3. 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. 4. 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.				45), and efforts to limit the extent of disturbance within the watercourse (No-go areas – page 17 - 18. Aquatic impacts – Outcome 5 (EMPr page 56) addresses stormwater management.

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	5. 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. 6. All requirements as stipulated in the National Water Act, 1998 (Act No. 36 of 1998) regarding water use must be adhered to. 7. These comments do not exempt you from complying with other relevant legislations and requirements of other governmental Departments. BOCMA reserves the right to revise initial comments and request further information based on any additional information received.				
1 2 .	Correspondence Reference: 46322009 File Reference: 16/3/4/1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT / ONTVANGSERKENNING We acknowledge receipt of your letter regarding the abovementioned matter and wish to confirm that the matter is receiving attention.	05/06/2026 Email comment	Mossel Bay admin	Mossel Bay Municipality	Thank you for your acknowledgement of receipt.

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	Ons erken ontvangs van u skrywe in bogemelde verband en bevestig dat die saak aandag geniet. Yours faithfully / Die uwe MOSSEL BAY MUNICIPALITY MOSSELBAAI MUNISIPALITEIT				
13.	Please note that comment will be forwarded in due course. Kind regards	05/06/2026 Emailed comment		Department of Forestry, Fisheries and Environment	SES Emailed response 05/06/2026: Thank you for your notification. We look forward to receiving your comments. Should you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.
14.	SES Distribution: FINAL REMINDER: NOTIFICATION OF THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE 30-DAY PUBLIC PARTICIPATION COMMENTING PERIOD OF THE PROPOSED REMOVAL AND REPLACEMENT OF THE EXISTING ROAD AND CULVERT INFRASTRUCTURE LOCATED ALONG DIVISION ROAD (DR) 1602 KM 8.48, KLEINPLAAS ROAD, CROSSING FARM 338 AND PORTION 6 OF FARM 220, MOSSEL BAY LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, GARDEN ROUTE DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY. (DEADP REF NO: 16/3/3/1/D6/29/0022/26). Sharples Environmental Services cc (SES) has been appointed by HATCH engineering, on behalf of Western Cape Government	10/06/2026 Emailed comment	Distributed to all I & APs	SES to all I & APs	Not applicable.

COMMENTS AND RESPONSE TABLE:**FIRST ROUND OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION****FOR THE PROPOSED REMOVAL AND REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING ROAD AND CULVERT INFRASTRUCTURE LOCATED ALONG DIVISION ROAD (DR) 1602 KM 8.48, KLEINPLAAS ROAD, CROSSING FARM 338 AND PORTION 6 OF FARM 220 IN MOSSEL BAY LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, GARDEN ROUTE DISTRICT****COMMENTS RECEIVED DURING THE (30 DAYS) PUBLIC PARTICIPATION FOR THE DRAFT BASIC ASSESSMENT REPORT DRAFT BASIC ASSESSMENT REPORT FOR THE PROPOSED REMOVAL AND REPLACEMENT OF THE EXISTING ROAD AND CULVERT INFRASTRUCTURE LOCATED ALONG DIVISION ROAD 1602 AT KM 8.48, KLEINPLAAS ROAD, CROSSING FARM 338 AND PORTION 6 OF FARM 220 IN MOSSEL BAY LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, GARDEN ROUTE DISTRICT**

N r	Comment Received	Date and format Received	I&AP	Company / Representin g	Email Response
	Department of Infrastructure, to undertake the environmental assessment, in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998) and the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations of 2014, as amended (GNR 326 of 2017; GNR 517 of 2021), for the proposed removal and replacement of the existing road and culvert infrastructure, located along Division Road 1602 km 8.48 (DEA&DP Ref Nr: 16/3/3/1/D6/29/0022/26). This email serves as a reminder that the Draft Basic Assessment Report (DBAR) and its associated appendices will be available for download and viewing until Monday, the 15th of June 2026. A hard-copy of the document has been made available at the Ellen van Rensburg Library, 24 Long Street, Great Brak River, Mossel Bay, 6525. The document is also available for download from our website https://sescc.net/eia-report/deadp-ref-16-3-3-1-d6-29-0022-26-30-day-public-participation-commenting-period-on-the-draft-basic-assessment-report-for-the-proposed-removal-and-replacement-of-existing-road-and-culvert-infrastruct/ Public Participation Commenting Period: 15th of May 2026 – 15th of June 2026. You have been identified as a registered Interested & Affected Party (I&AP), providing you with the opportunity to review and				

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	comment on the Draft Basic Assessment Report. Should you no longer wish to be registered as an I&AP for this project, indicating that you no longer wish to be included in future communications regarding this process, please notify this office in writing. If you are receiving this mail, and you are the landowner/landlord of the property, you are requested to notify ALL occupiers on your property of the details of this mail and public participation period. Alternatively, you may request that the EAP undertake this notification on your behalf, by supplying the EAP with the occupiers' contact details. If you are the occupier, you are requested to notify the landowner/landlord of the details of this mail and public participation period. Alternatively, you may request that the EAP undertake this notification on your behalf, by supplying the EAP with the landowner/landlord contact details. Please Note: Choosing to be registered as an I&AP or by submitting a comment, you consent to the lawful processing of your personal information in relation to the intended purposes, as described by the Protection of Personal Information Act, 2013 (Act no. 4 of 2013). Your personal information will be utilized for all processes relevant to this specific project, in compliance with the POPI Act, 2013. You also provide consent to having your contact details being made available, and to be reflected in our regulated reports.				

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	The DBAR is available for comment until the 15th of June 2026. Comments on the DBAR and proposed activity must therefore be submitted in writing on or before the 15th of June 2026, by means of the following: email: jessica@sesc.co.net or postal address: PO Box 443, Milnerton, 7435.				
15	Kindly be advised that all applications should be directed to wayleave.applications@ntcsa.co.za. Submitting your application to this address guarantees that it will be properly logged and that an appropriate team member will be assigned to support your request. We appreciate your cooperation as we continue to enhance our processes to better serve you.	10/06/2026 emailed comment		Wayleave Managemen t NTCSA	SES Emailed response 11/06/2026: Good morning Lungile, Thank you for your email and clarification. Kindly note that I have included wayleave.applications@ntcsa.co.za in our I & AP list for this proposed project. Should you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me. * Notification was shared with 'wayleave.applications@ntcsa.co.za' 11/06/2026.

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N r	Comment Received	Date and format Received	I&AP	Company / Representin g	Email Response
1 6 .	Thank you for submitting your wayleave application. Your application has been successfully received and registered under the following reference number: Reference Number: [WL-2026-989] The application has been assigned to the following responsible person: Assigned Officer: Samke Ndlovu[] Email Address: [NdlovuSk@ntcsa.co.za] The assigned officer will be your point of contact and will engage with you should any additional information or clarification be required. Please note that this acknowledgement confirms receipt of your application and does not constitute approval. Kindly quote the reference number provided above in all future correspondence.	11/06/2026 Emailed comment		NTCSA - wayleave	Thank you for your acknowledgement we look forward to your comments for the proposed project.

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	For any enquiries, please contact: wayleave.applications@ntcsa.co.za Regards, Wayleave Management NTCSA				
17	Dear Applicant, Thank you for submitting your wayleave application. Your application has been successfully received and registered under the following reference number: Reference Number: [WL-2026-990] The application has been assigned to the following responsible person: Assigned Officer: Khayelihle Zulu[]	11/06/2026 Emailed comment		NTCSA wayleave	Thank you for your acknowledgement we look forward to your comments for the proposed project.

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	Email Address: [ZuluKC@ntcsa.co.za] The assigned officer will be your point of contact and will engage with you should any additional information or clarification be required. Please note that this acknowledgement confirms receipt of your application and does not constitute approval. Kindly quote the reference number provided above in all future correspondence. For any enquiries, please contact: wayleave.applications@ntcsa.co.za				
18	Correspondence Reference: 46346243 File Reference: 16/3/4/1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT / ONTVANGSERKENNING	11/06/2026 Emailed comment	Mossel Bay admin	Mossel Bay Municipalit y	Thank you for your acknowledgement of receipt.

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	We acknowledge receipt of your letter regarding the abovementioned matter and wish to confirm that the matter is receiving attention. Ons erken ontvangs van u skrywe in bogemelde verband en bevestig dat die saak aandag geniet. Yours faithfully / Die uwe MOSSEL BAY MUNICIPALITY MOSSELBAAI MUNISIPALITEIT				
19.	Please receive comments from the Branch: Forestry Management, Directorate: Forest Resource Protection in the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) on the above-mentioned proposed Draft BAR. The mandate of the Forestry Branch in the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE), as a commenting authority, is to ensure control over developments that affect State forests, natural forests, forest nature reserves and protected trees. 1. The applicant must assess and quantify the anticipated impacts on the indigenous forests. The National Forests Act of 1998 (as amended) provides the strongest and	12/06/2026 emailed comment		DFFE	The comment is noted and accepted. A Plant Species, Animal Species and Terrestrial Biodiversity Theme Compliance Statement was undertaken by EnviroWorks for the proposed development. The specialist assessment confirmed that the site is highly disturbed and degraded due to the presence of the existing road infrastructure and extensive alien invasive vegetation. Although the DFFE Screening Tool identified several floral Species of Conservation Concern (SCCs)

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	most comprehensive legislation and mandate for the protection of all natural forests in South Africa. The principles of the Act in Section 3 state clearly that "...natural forests may not be destroyed save in exceptional circumstances where, in the opinion of the Minister, a proposed new land use is preferable in terms of its economic, social or environmental benefits". 2. Section 7 of the National Forest Act (NFA), act no 84 of 1998 as amended provides for the prohibition of the destruction of indigenous trees in any natural forest without a license. Under section 62 (1) of the NFA any person who contravenes the prohibition of certain acts in relation to trees in natural forests referred to in Section 7 (1) is guilty of a second category offence. A person who is guilty of a second category offence may be sentenced on a first conviction for that offence to a fine or imprisonment for a period of up to two years, or to both a fine and such imprisonment. Section 15 of the NFA, prohibits the destruction of protected trees without a license- "No person may cut, damage, destroy or remove any protected tree; or collect, remove, transport, export, purchase, sell donate or in any other manner acquire or dispose of any protected tree....."Anyone contravening this prohibition, is guilty of a first category offence, and can be sentenced to up to 3 years imprisonment, or a fine, or both.				as potentially occurring within the broader area, no floral SCCs were recorded within the proposed development footprint during the site inspection. Furthermore, the specialist concluded that the plant, animal and terrestrial biodiversity themes are all of Low sensitivity and that the site lacks the key vegetation characteristics associated with the mapped vegetation type. The specialist assessment further recorded that the species identified within the development footprint comprise common, non-threatened and non-protected indigenous species together with a high prevalence of alien invasive vegetation. No protected plant species or Species of Conservation Concern were identified within the proposed development footprint during the specialist survey. The EMPr contains measures to minimise impacts on vegetation and biodiversity during construction. These include limiting

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	3. Section 7 of the Act prohibits the cutting, disturbance, destruction or removal of any indigenous living or dead tree in a forest without a licence, while Section 15 places a similar prohibition on protected tree species listed under the Act, some of which are also forest species. 4. Cutting or disturbing an indigenous tree in a natural forest without a valid Forest Act Licence is a criminal offence and a transgression of the National Forests Act, 1998 (Act No. 84 of 1998) and carries a fine or imprisonment or both. 5. Indigenous trees with active bird nests or other significant biodiversity features may not be destroyed without a valid Fauna Permit from the provincial conservation authority, the Western Cape Department of Agriculture, Environmental Affairs, Rural Development and Land Reform ("DAERL"), if these would be affected. DFFE studied the supporting documents for the above-mentioned proposed Draft BAR report and the following points related to Forestry's mandate i.e. the implementation of the NFA are applicable 6. According to the information provided: "The existing low-level causeway was significantly damaged during the November 2021 flood events, resulting in structural failure, erosion of embankments, and compromised road safety. The proposed development forms part of a broader provincial flood damage				disturbance to the approved footprint (page 17), maintaining no-go areas outside the construction footprint (page 17 & 18), avoiding intact indigenous vegetation where possible, and implementing environmental awareness training for all personnel (Appendix I) . Furthermore, the EMPr requires that a pre-construction walk-through inspection be undertaken by the ECO to identify any fauna, avifauna or flora species of conservation concern that may be affected by the proposed works (page 55 of the EMPr). Should any protected tree species, indigenous forest vegetation, active bird nests, or other protected biodiversity features be identified during the pre-construction inspection or construction phase, these will be avoided where possible. Where avoidance is not feasible, the Applicant will engage with the relevant authorities and obtain the necessary permits, licences and approvals, including any authorisations required in terms of Sections 7 and/or 15 of the National Forests

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	repair programme aimed at improving infrastructure resilience, ensuring continued access, and reducing future risks to both ecological systems and transport infrastructure. The total development footprint is approximately 1,646 m². proposal is for the removal, replacement, and realignment of the existing causeway and associated road infrastructure along Divisional Road (DR) 1602 (Kleinplaas Road) at km 8.48, over the Varings River. The site is located on Farm 338 and Portion 6 of Farm 220 within the Mossel Bay. The site is located within a rural agricultural landscape and crosses the Varings River, which supports riparian habitat and associated ecological functions. The surrounding area includes indigenous vegetation classified as Garden Route Granite Fynbos, identified as sensitive in regional biodiversity planning frameworks". Forestry request that should protected trees occur according to the NFA, that these be rescued and relocated. Forestry has the following comments: i Forestry has a co-operative governance relationship with various Authorities as well as stakeholders, and thus will take their concerns into consideration if such should arise ii Forestry request the following: 1. Forestry request that protected trees be rescued and transplanted (where possible) of an offset should be looked into. 2. Forestry should be contacted timeously to apply for a Section 7 licence under the NFA should removal be required. Forestry may only issue such a licence with conditions under the NFA for the pruning of protected/				Act, 1998 (Act No. 84 of 1998), prior to any disturbance Included in page 55 of the EMPr. The Applicant acknowledges that any permits or licences required in terms of the National Forests Act and other applicable environmental legislation must be obtained prior to the commencement of construction activities

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	indigenous trees overhanging the footprint of the proposed development, once Building Plans are approved as well as all Municipal prescriptions are met. Applicant to comply with all Environmental Laws as well as Municipal prescriptions iii. Kindly note that this letter is not a NFA licence iv. Section 15 of the National Forest Act (NFA) (Act No. 84 of 1998) as amended prohibits the cutting, disturbing, damaging or destroying of protected tree species without a licence. Section 7 of the National Forest Act (NFA), act no 84 of 1998 as amended provides for the prohibition of the destruction of indigenous trees in any natural forest without a license. Note: The Department reserves the right to revise the initial comment based on any additional information that may be received Should you wish to correspond further on this matter, quote Reference EIA-WC-GR-0013-2026-27. Enquiries may be directed to Ms. TF Gwala at TGwala@dffe.gov.za, Cell 066 374 7795.				

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20	CapeNature would like to thank you for the opportunity to review the above report. Please note that our comments only pertain to the biodiversity related impacts and not to the overall desirability of the application. CapeNature wishes to make the following comments: According to the Western Cape Biodiversity Spatial Plan (CapeNature 2024)¹ the areas adjacent to the proposed repair areas are Critical Biodiversity Areas (CBA 1&2: Terrestrial and Aquatic). According to the Vlok and de Villiers (2007)² fine scale maps the vegetation are classified as Moordkuils Perennial Stream, Wolwedans Grassy Fynbos, and Wolwedans Thicket Forest. According to the updated South African Vegetation Map (Beta VegMap, 2024)³, the vegetation is mapped as Endangered Garden Route Shale Fynbos and Critically Endangered Garden Route Granite Fynbos (NEM:BA, 2022)⁴. The proposed project area traverses the Varings River, which is mapped as a channelled valley-bottom wetland ecosystem that is Critically Endangered and Poorly Protected (Van Deventer et al. 2019)⁵. Furthermore, the property falls within the Outeniqua National Strategic Water Source Area (SWSA) for surface water and the George and Outeniqua SWSA for 1. CapeNature notes that the proposed repair works are located within a highly sensitive landscape. While the proposed activity relates to the replacement of existing infrastructure, these	2026/06/19 email comments		Cape Nature	The comment is noted and accepted. CapeNature's comments regarding the biodiversity sensitivity of the area, including the presence of mapped CBAs, ESAs, Strategic Water Source Areas, sensitive wetland habitat and the Varings River, are acknowledged. Specialist assessments undertaken for the project confirmed that while the broader area contains important biodiversity features, the proposed development footprint is largely disturbed and degraded due to the existing road infrastructure, previous flood damage and the presence of alien invasive vegetation. No floral Species of Conservation Concern were identified within the proposed development footprint. The Applicant accepts and commits to implementing all specialist recommendations and EMPr requirements, including restricting disturbance to the approved footprint, demarcating no-go areas, implementing

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	biodiversity sensitivities require a precautionary approach and strict implementation of all specialist recommendations. Disturbance should therefore be limited to the minimum footprint required for construction, and all temporary disturbance areas must be rehabilitated following completion of the works. 2. Ongoing alien invasive vegetation clearing within disturbed areas and adjacent riparian habitat should be continuous throughout construction. The eradication of invasive alien vegetation must comply with the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (Act 10 of 2004)⁶ and its associated Alien and Invasive Species Regulations⁷. 3. The site falls within both a Surface Water Strategic Water Source Area for the Outeniqua region and a Groundwater Strategic Water Source Area. These areas are nationally important for water security and ecosystem functioning. Construction activities should therefore be undertaken in a manner that minimises impacts on hydrological processes, water quality, and wetland functioning. 4. CapeNature notes the freshwater specialist's recommendation that disturbance associated with the temporary bypass road be minimised on the upstream side of the crossing, as these areas are considered more intact and ecologically sensitive. Attention should be given to the identified No-Go areas, tributary confluences, intact wetland habitat, and riparian vegetation.				erosion and sediment control measures, preventing pollution of the watercourse, undertaking rehabilitation of disturbed areas, controlling alien invasive vegetation, and complying with all applicable Water Use Authorisation and/or General Authorisation requirements. An independent Environmental Control Officer (ECO) will remain appointed for the duration of construction and rehabilitation to monitor compliance with the Environmental Authorisation, EMPr and specialist recommendations.

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	These areas should be clearly demarcated prior to construction and monitored throughout the construction phase. 5. Construction activities within and adjacent to the Varings River pose a risk to surface water quality through sediment mobilisation, concrete wash water, and other construction-related pollutants. Appropriate measures must be implemented to prevent contamination of the watercourse and associated wetland habitats. 6. CapeNature supports the freshwater specialist's recommendation for ecological rehabilitation, including the stabilisation of eroded banks, formalisation of road drainage outlets, removal of invasive alien vegetation, and wetland rehabilitation interventions where feasible. 7. Given the very high soil erodibility associated with the site, together with the presence of a Critically Endangered wetland system, erosion and sediment control measures should form a key component of the Environmental Management Programme. Particular attention should be given to temporary diversion works, bypass road construction, excavation within the watercourse, stockpiling of material, stabilisation of disturbed banks, and rehabilitation of all disturbed areas immediately following construction.				

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	8. CapeNature understands that the proposed works within the watercourse will be authorised through the applicable General Authorisation in terms of Sections 21(c) and 21(i) of the National Water Act, 1998 (Act 36 of 1998)8. All conditions associated with the General Authorisation and specialist recommendations should be strictly adhered to. 9. An independent and suitably qualified Environmental Control Officer (ECO) must remain appointed for the full duration of construction and rehabilitation. CapeNature recommends that the ECO be familiar with all freshwater and botanical mitigation measures; oversee erosion management and sediment control measures; and monitor alien vegetation control and indigenous revegetation success. CapeNature reserves the right to revise initial comments and request further information based on any additional information that may be received.				
21	I refer to your Draft Basic Assessment Report dated 14 May 2026 and wish to inform you that National Transmission Company South Africa's (NTCSA) services are not affected by this proposed development.	23 June 2026 Emailed comment		ESKOM – National Transmission Company South Africa	SES emailed response: 23/06/2026 Good morning Khayelihle, Thank you for your clarification on the proposed DR1602 – Mossel Bay Road and Culverts Project.

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					Should you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.
22	RE: NOTIFICATION OF THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE 30-DAY PUBLIC PARTICIPATION COMMENTING PERIOD OF THE PROPOSED REMOVAL AND REPLACEMENT OF THE EXISTING ROAD AND CULVERT INFRASTRUCTURE LOCATED ALONG DIVISION ROAD (DR) 1602 KM 8.48, KLEINPLAAS ROAD, CROSSING FARM 338 AND PORTION 6 OF FARM 220, MOSSEL BAY LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, GARDEN ROUTE DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY. (DEADP REF NO: 16/3/3/1/D6/29/0022/26). The Garden Route District Municipality (GRDM) acknowledge receipt of the draft Basic Assessment Report (BAR), prepared by Sharples Environmental Services cc (SES) on behalf of the Western Cape Government Department of Infrastructure, dated 14 May 2026. We would like to thank you for providing the Municipality with the opportunity to comment on this application. After review of the draft BAR, we wish to provide the following comments and recommendations on the proposed activities: 1. Biodiversity	25 June 2026 Emailed comment		Garden Route District Municipality	Thank you for providing your review of the Draft Basic Assessment Report, as well as the comments from the Garden Route District Municipality. We appreciate your insights regarding biodiversity. Although the proposed development area is primarily disturbed and dominated by invasive alien vegetation, we have acknowledged the ecological sensitivity of the Varings River and its related Critical Biodiversity Areas (CBAs), Ecological Support Areas (ESAs), and wetland habitats in our assessment. The Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) outlines suitable mitigation measures, including: - Limiting disturbances to the approved footprint. - Protecting riparian areas.

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	The proposed development footprint is located in a sensitive biodiversity context, including mapped aquatic and wetland Critical Biodiversity Areas associated with the Varings River. The broader vegetation context includes Garden Route Granite Fynbos, which is identified in the draft BAR as Critically Endangered, although the terrestrial specialist also indicates that the actual footprint is highly disturbed and dominated by alien invasive species. The fact that the site is disturbed does not remove the need for strict biodiversity management. Disturbed CBAs and ESAs still require rehabilitation and careful management, especially where the disturbance is associated with a watercourse, wetland habitat, riparian vegetation and invasive alien vegetation. The draft BAR records alien invasive species including Eucalyptus, Black Wattle, Port Jackson and Beefwood, and it also recognises that alien tree removal can destabilise riverbanks if not undertaken carefully. Recommendation: All areas outside the approved construction footprint and working corridor must be treated as no-go areas. The final BAR and EMPr must include a clear rehabilitation plan, a search-and-rescue plan where applicable, and an alien invasive plant management plan. Alien invasive removal along the riverbanks must be phased and combined with bank stabilisation, erosion protection and replanting with locally appropriate indigenous				- Implementing control measures for invasive alien plants. - Carefully removing alien trees to prevent destabilization of the riverbank. - Rehabilitating disturbed areas with indigenous vegetation. All areas outside of the development footprint are designated as no-go zones (refer to the Basic Assessment Report (BAR), page 76, and EMPr, page 17). This includes measures outlined in the Environmental Impact Management during the pre-construction phase to identify and mark both no-go and working areas. A rehabilitation plan is described in the EMPr within the Environmental Impact Management section for both the post-construction and operational phases (see page 71). Key outcomes include: - Addressing aquatic impacts, such as erosion and changes in stream flow.

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	species. No vegetation clearing may take place outside the authorised footprint, and the final BAR must clearly quantify the actual extent of indigenous vegetation clearance.				- Clearing alien invasive species and rehabilitating the site. - Ensuring road safety by providing safer roadways. Please also refer to Appendix H of the EMPr for the rehabilitation program. Based on confirmations from the specialist assessments, we note that the construction footprint is significantly degraded and infested with alien plant species, making it unsuitable for indigenous fauna and flora. Therefore, as indicated in the EMPr, a sweep of the area by the appointed Environmental Control Officer (ECO) is required before any construction activities can begin, and a search and rescue operation will not be necessary. An alien invasive management program is included in Appendix G of the EMPr. Additionally, the final BAR has clearly quantified the extent of indigenous vegetation clearance. This information is detailed in the

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					tables provided on pages 60 to 63, which also include maps related to the Ecosystem Threat Status and the Western Cape Biodiversity Spatial Plan for the proposed area.
2 3	2. Aquatic Biodiversity, Wetlands and Watercourse Protection The main environmental risk relates to direct works within the Varings River and associated wetland/riparian habitat. The draft BAR identifies the aquatic sensitivity as Very High and confirms that the watercourse will be directly impacted during removal, excavation, infilling, temporary diversion road construction and culvert replacement. The aquatic assessment indicates that the Varings River has already been modified by the existing road crossing, narrow culvert openings, alien vegetation, sedimentation, erosion and agricultural encroachment. The Present Ecological State is described as Moderately Modified. The proposed works may improve long-term flow and sediment movement, but only if the design, temporary diversion, stormwater outlets, erosion protection and rehabilitation are implemented correctly. Poor construction in the river could worsen erosion, sedimentation and water quality. Recommendation:				The final EMPr will include the need for the final design, construction method statement, and disturbance footprint, all approved by a qualified aquatic specialist before construction begins. Pg 34, Environmental Impact Management: Planning and Design Phase page 34 of the EMPr. No stockpiles, refuelling, cement batching, chemical storage or concrete washout may occur within or immediately adjacent to the riparian zone has been included in the final EMPr pg. 46 – Construction phase – Outcome 1: Erosion, earthworks and land clearance. Furthermore, the rehabilitation phase will be followed. 'Disturbed areas, especially areas where excavations have taken place, must be shaped as appropriate (original topography must be restored where possible), and covered with a layer of stockpiled topsoil as

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	The final engineering design, construction method statement, temporary diversion design and disturbance footprint must be approved by the aquatic specialist before commencement. The smallest possible working corridor must be used. Construction in or near the watercourse should, where possible, be scheduled during the drier period. No stockpiles, refuelling, cement batching, chemical storage or concrete washout may occur within or immediately adjacent to the riparian zone. All temporary bypass material must be fully removed after construction, and the channel morphology, bed, banks and substrate must be reinstated as far as reasonably possible.				soon as possible.' (EMPr pg 31). The EMPr also has a post construction, Rehabilitation and operational phase that addresses the following: The impact management outcomes (goals) for this phase are: •Aquatic impact: Erosion and change in stream flow. •Alien invasive species clearance and rehabilitation. •Road safety: Provision of safer roadway. (from page 72 of the EMPr). Furthermore, all impact mitigations, and recommendations have been included throughout the EMPr to ensure compliance, and mitigation as far as reasonably possible.
2 4 .	3. Stormwater, Erosion and Sedimentation The project area is susceptible to erosion, and the draft BAR records that the soils are highly erodible. Stormwater, exposed soil, construction disturbance, bare banks and concentrated road runoff could cause sedimentation and further degradation of the Varings River if not controlled.				The EMPr has been updated to include that a site-specific Erosion and Sediment Control Method Statement must be prepared and approved prior to the commencement of construction Pg 45 EMPr. It also requires that stormwater outlets be formalised and stabilised using appropriate energy dissipation measures. Appropriate erosion and sediment

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	The existing causeway and drainage arrangements have contributed to sedimentation upstream and erosion downstream. The upgraded culvert system may improve hydraulic functioning, but the road-side drains, culvert outlets, wing walls, aprons, gabions, reno mattresses and energy dissipaters must be designed and installed to prevent concentrated high-velocity flows from scouring the channel and banks. Recommendation: The Environmental Authorisation should require a site-specific erosion and sediment control method statement before commencement. Stormwater outlets must be formalised and stabilised using appropriate energy dissipation measures. Silt fences, berms, geotextiles, sandbags, stabilised stockpile areas and exposed-slope protection must be available and implemented before major earthworks commence. High-rainfall contingency measures must be included, and no construction activity should continue during conditions where sediment-laden runoff is likely to enter the watercourse uncontrolled.				control measures, including silt fences, berms, geotextiles, sandbags, stabilised stockpile areas, and exposed-slope protection, must be in place before major earthworks commence as further confirmed by the engineer. The EMPr further includes high-rainfall contingency measures and stipulates that construction activities must be suspended during conditions where sediment-laden runoff is likely to enter the watercourse in an uncontrolled manner included within the EMPr page 45.
25	4. Aquatic Environment, Stormwater and Erosion The aquatic compliance statement indicates that no watercourse is present on the property and that the site falls outside the regulated area of watercourses for purposes of				The commented provided under this point appears to be for a different project as the study conducted was an Aquatic Impact assessment. The assessment concluded that the proposed project is located along the

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	Section 21(c) and (i) water use authorisation. However, the BAR also states that steep slopes, sandy soils, increased hardened surfaces and existing erosion create a material stormwater and erosion risk. The absence of a mapped watercourse does not remove the need for robust stormwater management. The BAR acknowledges that hard surfaces will increase runoff volumes and velocities and may exacerbate existing erosion. This is especially important because stormwater will be dispersed towards existing culverts and lower-lying areas, including infrastructure associated with the N2 corridor. Recommendation A final stormwater management plan based on Sustainable Drainage System principles is recommended. The plan must demonstrate pre-development versus post-development runoff, attenuation capacity, discharge points, erosion protection, downstream capacity, maintenance responsibilities, emergency overflow routes, water-quality controls, silt management during construction, and measures to prevent concentrated flow paths.				Varings River. The proposed project has a General Authorisation, and therefore all conditions stipulated in the General Authorisation are adhered to and included in the EMPr page 36 and 37 and page 74 and Erosion Control and Stormwater management are included in the EMPr on page 27 under general environmental management point 7.11. The recommendation is acknowledged. The need for a comprehensive stormwater management approach based on Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) principles has already been recognised and incorporated into the project documentation. The engineer further confirmed that the new bridge will have a negligible effect on the river flow once constructed. The Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) requires that stormwater be managed in accordance with the applicable Municipal Stormwater Management By-law and SuDS page 27 of the EMPr, under erosion control and stormwater management. The principles

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					to maintain, as far as practicable, natural hydrological processes, minimise erosion, and prevent the transport of pollutants into receiving watercourses. Furthermore, the EMPr requires the preparation of a site-specific Stormwater Management Plan, where necessary, addressing stormwater management during construction (EMPr pg 45 and 46), the installation of stormwater and erosion control infrastructure, and the management and maintenance of the infrastructure following construction. Additional measures include temporary drainage works, diversion channels, erosion protection, rehabilitation of disturbed areas, runoff monitoring, and sediment control measures to protect downstream receiving environments. In addition, the Aquatic Biodiversity Impact Assessment specifically identifies sedimentation, erosion, hydrological changes and deterioration in surface water quality as key potential impacts associated with the proposed works. The specialist concludes that

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					these impacts can be reduced to acceptable levels through the implementation of the prescribed mitigation measures, including strict erosion and sediment control, flow diversion during construction, protection of aquatic habitat, and adherence to the various sections in the EMPr. The assessment further notes that the replacement causeway design, incorporating improved hydraulic openings, is expected to improve long-term flow conveyance and reduce existing hydraulic constraints. Notwithstanding the above, the recommendation has been carefully considered. To ensure that all design-related stormwater aspects are comprehensively addressed, a final Stormwater Management Plan will be prepared by the appointed professional civil engineer as part of the detailed design phase, prior to construction. The plan will be based on Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) principles and will include:

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					• comparison of pre-development and post-development runoff characteristics; • confirmation of attenuation capacity and hydraulic performance; • identification of discharge points and verification of downstream capacity; • erosion protection measures at inlets, outlets and disturbed areas; • operation and maintenance responsibilities for stormwater infrastructure; • emergency overflow routing for extreme storm events; • water quality protection measures; • sediment and silt management during construction; and • measures to prevent the formation of concentrated flow paths and associated scour. Accordingly, the requested information will be incorporated into the final engineering design

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					documentation and implemented through the EMPr during the construction and operational phases. The engineer further confirmed that with the new bridge design, the drainage openings are significantly larger with only two piers in the river. This will nearly reinstate the natural drainage conditions to a time before there was any structure within the watercourse. Once the existing structure is removed, the riverbed and banks will return to an almost undisturbed natural condition over time.
26	5. Climate Resilience and Flood Risk The District Municipality supports the principle of improving flood-damaged public infrastructure, but the final BAR should demonstrate clearly that the proposed design is climate-resilient and appropriate for future flood events. The need for the project arose from flood damage, and the draft BAR links the project to improved infrastructure resilience. It is therefore not sufficient for the report to state generally that the new causeway will improve resilience. The final submission should				The Department's comments are noted. The Final BAR already considers climate resilience through reference to the Garden Route District Municipality Climate Change Response Strategy (2022 Update), the Western Cape Climate Change Response Strategy (2023 Update), and the climate change assessment contained within the BAR (pp. 26, 80 and 120). In addition, the EMPr includes specific climate change management outcomes relating to increased storm intensity, protection of water resources, fire risk, and the

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	confirm the hydraulic capacity of the culverts, the design flood considerations, and whether climate change-related increases in flood frequency or intensity were considered in the design. Recommendation The final BAR should include or cross-reference the relevant engineering design information confirming that the culvert size, apron design, bank protection and road level are appropriate for the expected flood regime. The design should avoid increasing flood risk to neighbouring landowners, downstream users or adjacent agricultural land. Post-construction inspection of stormwater and erosion-control infrastructure should be required at least annually before the rainy season and after major rainfall events.				potential for storm events to damage infrastructure, together with the associated mitigation measures. With regard to the engineering design, the requested information is provided within Appendix L (Engineering Report and Engineering Drawings), which has been cross-referenced in the Final BAR. The Engineering Report confirms that the hydraulic design has been undertaken in accordance with the SANRAL Drainage Manual (6th Edition), with the design flood return period determined according to the applicable road class and hydraulic design criteria. The report also includes preliminary hydraulic information for the DR1602 crossing and confirms that standard inlet and outlet wing walls and apron slabs form part of the proposed design. Furthermore, the Engineering Drawings included in Appendix L illustrate the proposed causeway configuration, hydraulic openings, finished road level, apron and foundation layout, and associated structural protection

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					measures for the proposed replacement crossing. The Aquatic Biodiversity Impact Assessment concludes that the replacement crossing, incorporating improved hydraulic openings, is expected to improve long-term flow conveyance, reduce existing hydraulic constraints and sediment accumulation, and improve the ecological functioning of the Varings River, provided that the prescribed mitigation measures are implemented through the EMPr. The EMPr also requires the inspection and maintenance of erosion protection, stormwater infrastructure and rehabilitation measures during both the construction and operational phases. The Environmental Control Officer (ECO) is responsible for monitoring compliance during construction, while the responsible authority will undertake ongoing operational maintenance and inspections following significant rainfall events

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					to ensure that the infrastructure continues to function as designed.
27	6. Fauna and Avifauna The draft BAR records that the faunal and avifaunal sensitivities are low, with no Species of Conservation Concern recorded within the immediate footprint. This finding is accepted, subject to normal precautionary construction controls. Although the site is disturbed and no sensitive species were recorded, construction activities can still harm common fauna through vehicle movement, open excavations, fires, noise, habitat disturbance and poor waste management. The presence of low sensitivity does not mean that no management measures are required. Recommendation The EMPr must require environmental induction for all site personnel. No fauna may be trapped, fed, killed or harmed. Open excavations should be checked daily and made safe for small animals. Any fauna requiring relocation must be handled by a suitably competent person or specialist. Fires must be prohibited, and vehicles must remain within demarcated access and work areas only.				The Department's comments are acknowledged. The Final BAR confirms that the proposed development footprint has a Low faunal and avifaunal sensitivity, with no Species of Conservation Concern (SCC) recorded within the immediate construction footprint. The Terrestrial Biodiversity Compliance Statement concludes that the site is highly disturbed, supports limited faunal diversity and that the proposed development is expected to have a negligible impact on fauna, provided that the recommended mitigation measures are implemented. Similarly, the Avi-faunal Compliance Statement confirms that anticipated avifaunal impacts are Low due to the disturbed nature of the site (Final BAR, pp. 117–120). The EMPr requires that all personnel receive Environmental Awareness Training prior to

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					commencing work on site, and an Environmental Awareness Booklet has been included as Appendix I of the EMPr to support environmental induction and ensure that all personnel understand the environmental sensitivities of the site, applicable mitigation measures and their environmental responsibilities. The ECO is responsible for undertaking the environmental awareness training prior to construction commencing (EMPr, pp. 37 and Appendix I). Specific fauna protection measures are incorporated under Section 7.6 – Protection of Fauna of the EMPr (EMPr, pp. 24–25). These measures include prohibiting the harming, killing, capturing or keeping of fauna, prohibiting the feeding of wild animals, maintaining good housekeeping to avoid attracting fauna, requiring that any fauna encountered during construction be reported immediately to the ECO or Site Manager, and ensuring that rescued fauna are released into suitable nearby habitat. The EMPr further requires that contact details for appropriate

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					animal rescue services or suitably competent persons be available on site should relocation be required. The Final BAR further incorporates the recommendations of the Terrestrial Biodiversity Specialist, requiring that all personnel undergo environmental inductions, vehicles remain within clearly demarcated roads and work areas, no fauna may be caught, trapped or harmed, no feeding of fauna is permitted, and that any fauna requiring translocation be handled by a suitably qualified faunal or avifaunal specialist. Construction activities are restricted to the approved project footprint, with all areas outside the footprint regarded as no-go areas (Final BAR, pp. 117–120). In addition, the EMPr prohibits uncontrolled fires on site, requires construction activities to remain within the approved working areas, and includes vegetation clearing, housekeeping and site management measures that minimise habitat disturbance

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					and reduce risks to fauna throughout the construction phase (EMPr, pp. 25, 45 and 54). With regard to open excavations, the EMPr includes management measures for excavations and earthworks and requires the ECO to undertake regular site inspections and monitor compliance with the EMPr throughout the construction phase (EMPr, pp. 28, 33–37 and 86). The Contractor is required to implement all prescribed mitigation measures under the supervision of the ECO to minimise environmental impacts throughout construction.
28	7. Heritage Resources The draft BAR states that the heritage specialist concluded that Section 38 of the National Heritage Resources Act is not triggered and that no demolition permit is required, even though the structures are described as being older than 60 years. This is an area that should be clearly explained in the final BAR because structures older than 60 years can potentially raise heritage permitting questions. The District Municipality does not				The comments from the Municipality are noted. The Final Basic Assessment Report has been amended to include the complete Heritage Statement as Appendix G4, and the findings and recommendations of the heritage specialist have been incorporated into the specialist summary and heritage sections of the Final BAR (Final BAR, pp. 120–121; Appendix G4).

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	dispute the specialist finding, but the reasoning should be clear and supported by the relevant specialist statement. Recommendation The final BAR must include the complete heritage statement and must clearly explain why no Heritage Western Cape process or Section 34 demolition permit is required. A chance-find protocol must be included in the EMP. Should any archaeological, palaeontological or heritage material be uncovered during construction, work in the immediate area must stop and the relevant heritage authority or specialist must be contacted.				The Heritage Statement prepared by Dr Peter Nilssen (ASAPA Professional Member No. 097) concludes that the proposed works do not trigger Section 38 of the National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act 25 of 1999) and therefore do not require a Notification of Intent to Develop (NID) to Heritage Western Cape. As stated by the specialist: "The scope and nature of the proposed activities do not trigger the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999) nor the requirement for a Notification of Intent to Develop (NID) application to Heritage Western Cape (HWC)." The specialist explains that this conclusion is based on the limited nature of the proposed works, which comprise the replacement of flood-damaged road and culvert infrastructure within an already transformed environment. The affected areas occur within existing road reserves and previously disturbed river crossings associated with existing transport infrastructure, and therefore do not

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					impact identified heritage resources (Appendix G4 – Heritage Statement). With regard to Section 34 of the NHRA, the Heritage Statement specifically notes that although the existing road and causeway structures are likely older than 60 years, they were substantially damaged during the 2023 flood events and no structural, architectural or cultural heritage significance was identified. Consequently, the replacement of the existing damaged infrastructure does not constitute the demolition of a protected heritage resource, and a Section 34 demolition permit is therefore not required (Appendix G4 – Heritage Statement). The Heritage Specialist further concludes that: "On heritage grounds it is recommended that the proposed activities may proceed in full and without limitations or conditions," and that "a Notification of Intent to Develop application to Heritage Western Cape is not required and that no further heritage studies,

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					mitigation or management measures are needed." (Appendix G4 – Heritage Statement). Notwithstanding the above, the EMPr has been strengthened through the inclusion of a Heritage Chance-Find Protocol. The EMPr requires that should any archaeological, palaeontological, burial or other heritage material be uncovered during construction, all work within the immediate vicinity must cease immediately, the discovery must be secured from further disturbance, and the ECO must notify the relevant heritage specialist and/or Heritage Western Cape before work recommences. The protocol also incorporates the Heritage Western Cape Fossil Finds Procedure, as recommended by the Heritage Specialist (EMPr, Heritage Resources, p. 29, and Construction Phase/Chance-Find Protocol, where applicable).
29	8. Waste, Pollution and Hazardous Substances Although the draft BAR states that no listed waste management activity is triggered, the construction phase will still generate				The Municipalities comments are acknowledged.

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	general construction waste and presents a risk of hydrocarbon, cement, chemical and sediment contamination. Works within a watercourse have a higher pollution risk than ordinary roadworks. Cement wash water, contaminated stormwater, leaking plant, fuel, oil, litter and poorly managed waste can enter the Varings River and cause localised water-quality impacts. Recommendation The EMPr must include a practical waste and pollution prevention plan. All waste must be stored in designated containers and removed to an appropriately licensed facility. Proof of disposal should be kept on site. Fuel, oil and chemicals must be stored in bunded areas away from the watercourse. Spill kits must be available at all times. No concrete batching or washout may occur on unprotected ground or within the riparian zone. Portable toilets must be placed away from the watercourse and serviced regularly.				The proposed project adopts an Integrated Waste Management Approach, which is incorporated into the Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) under Section 7.10 (EMPr, p. 26). The EMPr requires that waste be minimised, appropriately segregated, stored within designated waste receptacles and removed from site to a registered/licensed waste disposal facility. Waste disposal receipts are required to be retained within the Environmental File for auditing and compliance purposes (EMPr, pp. 26 and 45). The EMPr further includes comprehensive pollution prevention measures for the storage and handling of hazardous substances. Fuel, oils, chemicals and other hazardous materials must be stored within designated bunded areas, refuelling must take place on impermeable surfaces or over drip trays, and emergency spill response equipment, including spill kits, must be available on site. Any spills must be contained and cleaned up

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					immediately in accordance with the EMPr (EMPr, pp. 23–24 and 66). In addition, the EMPr specifically prohibits stockpiling, refuelling, cement batching, chemical storage and concrete washout within or immediately adjacent to the riparian zone, and requires that erosion and sediment control measures be implemented prior to earthworks to prevent contaminated runoff entering the Varings River (EMPr, pp. 49 and 55–66). With regard to sanitation facilities, the EMPr requires that portable toilets be located at least 32 m from any watercourse, secured to prevent overturning, maintained in a clean and sanitary condition, and serviced on a regular basis to prevent pollution of the surrounding environment (EMPr, pp. 20 and 41). Furthermore, waste management requirements continue through the Site Closure and Rehabilitation Phase to ensure

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					that all waste, surplus materials and temporary facilities are removed from site and that disturbed areas are rehabilitated in accordance with the EMPr (EMPr, pp. 30–31 and 71–74). Accordingly, the Final BAR and EMPr incorporate a comprehensive waste management and pollution prevention framework that addresses waste handling, hazardous substances, pollution prevention and watercourse protection throughout all phases of the project.
30	9. Report Corrections Required in the Final BAR The draft BAR contains several weaknesses, internal inconsistencies and drafting errors that should be corrected before the final BAR is submitted. A final BAR must be clear, internally consistent and decision-ready. Ambiguities in authorisations, mitigation commitments, monitoring intervals, impact areas and appendix status can make enforcement difficult and may create uncertainty for the				The Municipalities comments are acknowledged. The inconsistency identified in the Draft BAR regarding the extent of the aquatic/CBA encroachment has been corrected in the Final BAR. The disturbance footprint has been reviewed against the specialist mapping, and the Final BAR now consistently reports that the proposed development footprint will encroach on 12 m² of Very High Aquatic Sensitivity associated with the aquatic Critical

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	competent authority, commenting authorities and the applicant. Recommendation The following matters must be corrected or clarified in the final BAR: The report must reconcile the stated aquatic/CBA encroachment figures. In one section, the CBA aquatic/wetland encroachment is stated as 8 m², while another section refers to 12 m² of Very High Aquatic Sensitivity within the development footprint. The final BAR must provide one clear, mapped and quantified disturbance figure. The National Water Act authorisation status must be clarified. The report refers in places to a General Authorisation that "will be applied for", while elsewhere it states that a WUL/General Authorisation was obtained on 8 December 2025. The final BAR must clearly state whether the project is covered by a General Authorisation or a Water Use Licence, must use the correct terminology, and must attach the relevant DWS documentation. The monitoring requirements must be made consistent. The report refers to monitoring every second day during river works, weekly monitoring during river works, bi-weekly or fortnightly post-construction monitoring, and monthly or two-weekly erosion				Biodiversity Area (CBA). This quantified disturbance is applied consistently throughout the Final BAR, including the biodiversity assessment and the overlay of the specialist no-go map (Final BAR, pp. 60–63 and p. 128, Figure 42). Regarding the National Water Act, the EMPr and BAR have been updated to reflect the correct terminology that the proposed project is General Authorisation, General Authorisation No. 4167 dated 8 December 2025. The GA is available within Appendix N – Existing Approvals. In respects to the monitoring requirements, the Aquatic Impact Assessment recommendations: •Monitoring should be conducted before commencement to confirm demarcations are in place, every second day during construction within the river, and bi-weekly post-construction for a

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	monitoring. The final EMPr must adopt one clear monitoring schedule, and for instream construction the stricter aquatic specialist monitoring requirement should apply. The alternatives section must be cleaned up. The report states that four road alignment alternatives were investigated, but later states that no other design or layout alternatives were investigated. This should be reconciled so that the competent authority can clearly understand which alternatives were considered and why the preferred alternative was selected. The final BAR should remove cut-and-paste errors. Some wording appears to refer to "pipelines" or other project types, and one section refers to socio-economic alignment with the Bitou SDF and IDP, although this project is located in the Mossel Bay Local Municipality. These drafting errors should be corrected to avoid confusion. The report should clarify the geotechnical and foundation design uncertainty. The DBAR indicates that the final foundation approach may change depending on whether bedrock is confirmed during construction. The final BAR should explain whether any foundation design change could increase the footprint or environmental impact. Any design change that increases the footprint or affects sensitive areas should be				period of three months or until fully rehabilitated according to ECO - Pg 77. This section has also been updated in the BAR on pg 130. In regard to the alternatives section: The statement that four road alignment alternatives were investigated refers specifically to the engineering alignment options assessed during the project planning phase. The statement that no other design or layout alternatives were investigated refers to alternatives beyond the selected road alignment, as the engineering design and infrastructure layout are constrained by the objective of replacing the existing flood-damaged road crossing and maintaining a safe and functional road connection. Accordingly, the alternatives assessment distinguishes between alignment alternatives, which were evaluated and comparatively assessed, and additional design or layout alternatives, which were not feasible given the site-specific engineering, hydraulic and safety requirements. The preferred alternative was

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	referred back to the EAP, aquatic specialist and competent authority before implementation. Appendix J and Appendix K are marked as not attached, although the impact/risk assessment and need-and-desirability information are important for decision-making. The final BAR must either attach these appendices or clearly state where the required information is fully included in the main report. The Heritage section must clearly explain why no Heritage Western Cape process or demolition permit is required, given the statement that the structures are older than 60 years.				selected based on technical feasibility, environmental considerations and the ability to achieve the project objectives while minimising environmental impacts. This section of 'pipes' have been removed from the BAR and EMPr. The Bitou reference was removed on page 29 of the FBAR. The Final BAR has been amended to clarify the geotechnical design assumptions and the potential implications of confirming bedrock during construction. As described in the engineering design (Appendix L), the current environmental assessment has assessed the worst-case geotechnical scenario, which assumes the construction of a raft foundation slab together with apron slabs and cut-off beams. This represents the maximum anticipated permanent foundation footprint assessed as part of the Basic Assessment process. The Engineering Report further indicates that, should competent bedrock be confirmed at

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					the proposed crossing during construction, the foundation design may be refined to utilise smaller pad footings beneath the piers and abutments, thereby omitting the raft foundation slab, apron slabs and cut-off beams. Such a refinement would reduce the extent of permanent in-stream infrastructure and would therefore not increase the assessed disturbance footprint or environmental impacts. Notwithstanding the above, should site conditions require a foundation design that differs from the assessed worst-case design and results in any increase to the approved disturbance footprint or affects sensitive environmental features, the proposed design change will be referred to the Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP), the Aquatic Specialist and the Competent Authority for review prior to implementation. Any additional environmental assessment or authorisation required as a result of such changes will be undertaken in accordance with the applicable legislative requirements.

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					Accordingly, the Final BAR assesses the maximum anticipated environmental footprint associated with the proposed foundation design, and any future design refinement resulting from geotechnical investigations will either reduce the disturbance footprint or, where this is not the case, be subject to further environmental review before implementation Pages 18, 34 and 72 of the FBAR. Appendix J and Appendix K have not been provided as separate appendices because the required information is comprehensive incorporated into the body of the Final Basic Assessment Report. The Need and Desirability Assessment, prepared in accordance with the Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning (DEA&DP) Guideline on Need and Desirability (March 2013) and the DEA Integrated Environmental Management Guideline, is contained within Section E: Planning Context and Need and Desirability,

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					including the dedicated assessment under Question 12 (Final BAR, pp. 33–46, specifically pp. 45–49). The Impact and Risk Assessment for the preferred alternative is incorporated within Section H: Alternatives, Methodology and Assessment of Alternatives and Section I: Findings, Impact Management and Mitigation Measures, which include the impact assessment methodology, significance rating criteria, assessment of alternatives, and detailed impact and risk assessment tables for all identified environmental aspects (Final BAR, pp. 67–127). The Final BAR has been amended to include the complete Heritage Statement as Appendix G4, and the findings of the appointed Heritage Specialist have been incorporated into the relevant sections of the report.

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31	10. Concluding Remarks The Garden Route District Municipality supports the need to repair and upgrade damaged public road and culvert infrastructure at the DR1602 Varings River crossing, provided that the project remains limited to the assessed footprint and is implemented strictly in accordance with the EMPr, specialist recommendations and applicable water-use authorisation. Failure to adequately address the above concerns in the Final BAR may result in long-term environmental degradation. The comments provided above aims to complement the specialist inputs by ensuring practical accountability, policy alignment, and transparent decision-making. We appreciate the efforts made by Sharples Environmental Services cc and the applicant to ensure responsible and legally compliant development activities. The Garden Route District Municipality reserves the right to provide comment/s or to amend initial comment/s.				The Garden Route District Municipality's support for the proposed development is acknowledged and appreciated. The comments received have been carefully considered to address the issues raised. The Municipality's reservation of the right to submit additional comments or amendments is noted.
32	COMMENT ON DRAFT BASIC ASSESSMENT REPORT FOR THE PROPOSED REMOVAL AND REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING ROAD AND CULVERT INFRASTRUCTURE LOCATED ALONG DIVISIONAL ROAD (DR) 1602 KM 8.48, KLEINPLAAS ROAD, CROSSING FARM	26 June 2026 Emailed	Francois Naude	DEA &DP Regi on 3	Noted. The project description accurately reflects the proposed activities and associated infrastructure. The Basic Assessment Report clearly defines the scope of

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	338 AND PORTION 6 OF FARM 220 IN MOSSEL BAY LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, GARDEN ROUTE DISTRICT. 1. The Draft Basic Assessment Report ('DBAR'), dated May 2026, compiled and submitted by your appointed registered Environmental Assessment Practitioner ('EAP'), Ms. Betsy Ditchm (EAPASA REG: 2020/1480) and assisted by candidate EAP, Ms. Jessica Gossman (EAPASA REG: 2022/6154) of Sharples Environmental Services CC ("SES"), as received by this Directorate: Development Management (Region 3) ('this Directorate'), on 29 April 2026, refers. 2. This Directorate has reviewed the DBAR and provides the following comments: 2.1 Proposed Development The proposed development entails the removal and replacement of the existing flood-damaged causeway and associated road infrastructure along Divisional Road (DR) 1602 (Kleinplaas Road) at km 8.48, where the route crosses the Varings Rivier on Farm 338 and Portion 6 of Farm 220, within the Mossel Bay Local Municipality, Western Cape. The proposed project forms part of a larger scope of work that is not included in the DBAR. The proposed project forms part of the overarching project of flood damage repairs on Main Road 355 (Seven Passes). This DBAR is only concerned with proposed removal and	comme nts			the application, confirms that it relates only to the removal and replacement of the existing road and culvert infrastructure at DR1602 km 8.48, and distinguishes it from the broader flood damage repair programme. No changes to the BAR are considered necessary in response to this comment.

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	replacement of existing road and culvert infrastructure located along DR 1602 KM 8.48, Kleinplaas Road. The proposed development involves the construction of a new, realigned bridge and approach road section positioned immediately south of the existing crossing. The total length of the realigned section, including the causeway and its approach roads, will be approximately 100 – 150 meters. The roadway width will be approximately 6.2 meters and the bridge structure 4 meters between guide blocks, overall development footprint width of the bridge will be approximately 15 meters. The current road reserve is 20 meters wide, with the construction working corridor extending 3 meters beyond the road footprint on either side for machinery access and material handling. To maintain traffic during construction, a temporary deviation road will be established north of the new alignment. The proposed temporary deviation road will be approximately 42 meters in length and 4 meters in width. The footprint of the temporary deviation road within the watercourse is estimated at approximately 180m² and 3 meter working buffer will be applied around the working area. Total working area for the proposed project will be approximately 1 646m², which will extend approximately 233m² out of the existing road reserve.				

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33.	2.2 Carrying out listed activities without obtaining an Environmental Authorisation: During early May 2026 the Western Cape Province was subject to heavy rainfall which led to flooding throughout the Garden Route District and flood damage to property, structure and infrastructure. As you are aware, the Western Cape Government: Department of Infrastructure notified this Department on 9 June 2026 about damage to road and drainage infrastructure between km 0-km 21.56 on DR01602, Grootbrakrivier and requested the competent authority to issue a Verbal Directive in terms of Section 30A (1) of National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act no. 107 of 1998) ("NEMA"). As such, a verbal directive was issued to the DOI by the Competent Authority on the 9 of June 2026 to carry out listed activities without obtaining an Environmental Authorisation. The proposal which was communicated to this Department was/is to reinstate the damaged infrastructure, reinstate the watercourse(s) and flow paths and to provide erosion protection to protect infrastructure from future damages along this section of DR01602. As this application (DEADP Ref. 16/3/3/1/D6/29/0022/26) has yet to be decided and the written confirmation of the request for the				No physical works associated with the proposed permanent removal and replacement of the existing road and culvert infrastructure at DR1602 km 8.48 have commenced (See photos included in Appendix C – Site Photographs). To date, no activities requiring Environmental Authorisation have been undertaken at this site. This proposed project requires an Environmental Authorisation before any works may commence, and that this DR1602 project is not subjected to a 30 A emergency directive. 

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	oral request for a Verbal S30A Directive was not specific about the exact works at km 8.48 on DR01602. You are required to provide clarity on the following: Whether any physical works have been commenced with at km 8.48. This must include recent photographic evidence of the site prior to any works which may have been undertaken after the recent May 2026 flood event; and comparative photo material of the works that have been undertaken since 9 June 2026 (*if any). *If no physical activities have been undertaken yet at km 8.48 on DR01602, this must be clearly communicated to this Department. What the specific extent of the works are that have been/will be undertaken in terms of the Section 30A Directive issued on 9 June 2026. Please demonstrate how this application should be integrated in this Basic Assessment process. It is acknowledged that where an Environmental Authorisation may have been issued for any of the sites in the Garden Route District, for which a Verbal Section 30A Directive was orally				The above image was taken in 2023.  The above image was taken in July 2026. It is confirmed that no works have commenced to this section of the DR1602 road and that the application is to follow the BAR process.

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	requested after the May 2026 flood damage, that the extent of such a Verbal Directive would be limited to the clearing the site of debris to make it safe and to re-establish access, including the development of a temporary bypass road within the road reserve to provide access. However, in this case the environmental authorisation has not been issued, and the oral request for the verbal Directive in terms of Section 30A(1) did not specify that the proposed development described in section 2.1 above, would be undertaken.				
3 4	2.3 Specialist Studies and Compliance Statements It is emphasised that the BAR and supporting specialist studies must comply with the legislated minimum information and reporting requirements. Therefore, all identified specialist studies must be complied with in full, meaning that each specialist study or compliance statement must be undertaken and comply with the minimum information requirements set out in the Protocol for the applicable Theme. It may be possible for a single person to undertake the entire specialist assessment and reporting for more than one Protocol, for example the Terrestrial Biodiversity, Terrestrial Plant Species themes. Please note that the partial assessment/reporting of a specific theme by two or more different persons in separate reports, will not be accepted, even if there may be a level of overlap in the different specialist disciplines. *The exception may				The comment is noted. The Applicant confirms that all specialist studies submitted in support of the Final Basic Assessment Report comply with the applicable Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Protocols and the legislated minimum information and reporting requirements for each identified environmental theme. The DFFE Screening Tool identified the need for specialist input relating to the Aquatic Biodiversity, Plant Species, Animal Species, Terrestrial Biodiversity and Heritage themes. In response, the following specialist studies were

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	be where two or more different specialists undertake the assessment of the different 'taxa' identified under the animal species theme. Where a single person will be undertaking more than one assessment of the themes identified in the screening tool report (STR), it must be ensured that— the person undertaking such specialist assessments and reporting, must be appropriately registered with SACNASP for each of the respective Protocols, and that he/she provides the necessary proof hereof in the BAR; the assessment and reports address all the minimum information requirements, as specified in the respective protocols for each of the relevant themes the person will be responsible for assessing and reporting on, and where a single report will be submitted (i.e., two themes are combined in a single report), such a document must clearly separate the information on the minimum information requirements of the respective protocols to avoid any ambiguity, and the report must clearly demonstrate how each aspect has been addressed. If the latter is not evident, the report will be rejected. It is recommended that each Protocol be dealt with as a separate 'chapter' in such a combined report. Where the Protocol requires that specialists with a field of practice relevant to the taxonomic group ("taxa") for which the				undertaken by suitably qualified and registered specialists: Aquatic Biodiversity Assessment prepared by Debbie Fordham (Upstream Consulting), SACNASP Registration No. 119102 (Ecology). The report contains a dedicated Protocol Index cross-referencing each requirement of the Aquatic Biodiversity Protocol with the relevant sections of the assessment, including the baseline environment, methodology, ecological sensitivity, impact assessment, mitigation measures, declaration of independence and curriculum vitae. Plant Species, Animal Species and Terrestrial Biodiversity Theme Compliance Statement prepared by Megan Smith (EnviroWorks), SACNASP Registration No. 130295. The report addresses the Plant Species, Animal Species and Terrestrial Biodiversity Protocols in separate sections and includes protocol-specific cross-reference tables demonstrating compliance with the minimum reporting requirements for each theme, including

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	assessment is required, and two or more different specialists (persons) must be appointed to undertake the assessment of that theme (i.e., animal species theme), the respective taxa reports may be combined in a single report; however, the information on the minimum information requirements of the protocol must be addressed by each specialist to avoid any ambiguity, and the report must clearly demonstrate how each taxa has been addressed and the specialist has signed off on the relevant information. If the latter is not evident, the report will be rejected. It is recommended that the report for each taxa rather be submitted as a separate document; however, where a combined document is submitted that each taxa is dealt with as a separate 'chapter' in such a combined report. Considering the above, the following comment is provided on certain specialist's studies.				specialist credentials, methodology, site verification, assumptions and limitations, impact assessment, mitigation measures and monitoring requirements. In addition, although the Animal Species Theme was addressed within the EnviroWorks compliance statement, the Screening Tool identified three high sensitivity bird species, necessitating a separate Avifaunal Compliance Statement. Accordingly, MORA Ecological Services was appointed to undertake this specialist assessment. The report was prepared by Mokgatla Molepo, SACNASP Registration No. 009509, and includes the specialist's qualifications, declaration of independence, curriculum vitae, methodology, field verification, findings and recommendations in accordance with the applicable protocol requirements. The assessment concluded that no sensitive avifaunal species were recorded within the development footprint and that the anticipated avifaunal impacts are low.

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					Heritage Statement prepared by Dr Peter Nilssen (ASAPA Registration No. 097) confirmed that the proposed activity does not trigger Section 38 of the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999), that no heritage resources occur within the development footprint, and that no further heritage studies are required. Furthermore, the Final BAR and EMPr identify each appointed specialist, their professional registrations and areas of expertise, and incorporate the findings, mitigation measures and recommendations of the respective specialist studies into the overall assessment (EMPr page 9). Summary of the specialist studies conducted for the project: <table><tr><th>Specialists Name:</th><th>Prof. Registration</th></tr><tr><td>(Aquatic) Debbie Fordham</td><td>Pr.Sci.Nat. Ecological Science</td></tr></table>	Specialists Name:	Prof. Registration	(Aquatic) Debbie Fordham	Pr.Sci.Nat. Ecological Science
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						(119102)
					(Avifaunal) Mokgatla Molepo	Pr.Sci.Nat. Ecological Science / Zoological Science (009509)
					(Plant, Animal & Terrestrial) Megan Smith	Pr.Nat.Sci. Ecological Science (130295)
					Dr Peter Nilssen (Heritage)	ASAPA professional member # 097
3 5	2.3.1 Site-Specific Verification Report ("SSVR") A combined Site Specific Verification Report ("SSVR") (SES Ref: CT6/SSVR/04/26) dated April 2026), was submitted together with the DBAR, as stipulated in the respective Protocols. The SSVR for the certain of the themes do not fully comply with the minimum report content requirements set out in the applicable Protocol. Certain discrepancies have been identified between the SSVR and the actual reports. The Protocol requires that the site sensitivity verification must be undertaken by an environmental assessment practitioner (EAP) or a specialist. The combined SSVR				The Site Sensitivity Verification Report (SSVR) has been comprehensively revised to address the identified discrepancy and to clearly distinguish between the respective specialist responsibilities relating to the Animal Species Theme. The original SSVR did not adequately explain that the Animal Species Theme was informed by two separate specialist investigations, namely:	

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	which has been appended to the DBAR is incomplete as it does not address all the respective themes in full by the relevant specialists. It is noted that the Animal Species Sensitivity Rating was identified as "High" within the Screening Tool Report. The specialist who was appointed to undertake the site sensitivity verification for the Animal Species theme (faunal and avifauna) was Mr. Mokgatla Molepo of MORA Ecological Services (Pty) Ltd., Mr Molepo disputed the sensitivity rating and confirmed it to be "Low" and found that a compliance statement will suffice for the assessment of this theme. However, although the specialist, Mr. Molepo undertook the ground-truthing inspection for the site sensitivity verification on 29 and 30 October 2023 for the theme in it entirety, only an avi-faunal assessment has been submitted by Mr Molepo, there is no Animal species report from him on the other applicable taxa appended to the DBAR corroborating Mr. Molepo's findings in the site sensitivity report. Therefore, it is questionable that the sensitivity rating was correctly disputed for all animal species taxa. It is noted that a compliance statement assessment was undertaken by Ms. Megan Smith and Ms. Edmari Lewis of Enviroworks (dated November 2023). No SSVR was provided by Ms Megan Smith for the animal specie taxa not assessed by Mr. Molepo (i.e., avifauna).				the Avifaunal Site Sensitivity Verification undertaken by Mr Mokgatla Molepo of MORA Ecological Services (Pty) Ltd, who verified the avifaunal component of the Animal Species Theme through field investigations conducted on 29 and 30 October 2023; and the Plant Species, Animal Species and Terrestrial Biodiversity Theme Compliance Statement undertaken by Ms Megan Smith (Pr.Sci.Nat.) of Enviroworks (Pty) Ltd, which assessed the terrestrial animal species component and verified the Animal Species Theme in accordance with the Terrestrial Animal Species Assessment Protocol. The revised SSVR now expressly identifies both specialists, their respective companies, the dates of their field investigations, and provides separate summaries of their findings under the Faunal Theme. The avifaunal summary confirms that none of the sensitive bird species identified by the DFFE Screening Tool were recorded during the field assessment and that the likelihood of occurrence of the listed

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	This discrepancy must be explained and addressed in the BAR.				avifaunal Species of Conservation Concern is low to very low. The terrestrial faunal summary confirms that the project footprint comprises a disturbed road reserve with limited suitable habitat for terrestrial Species of Conservation Concern and that no terrestrial SCCs were recorded during the site verification. Consequently, the Animal Species Theme was verified as Low Sensitivity, with an Animal Species Compliance Statement being considered appropriate. It is further clarified that the Enviroworks Compliance Statement constitutes the specialist assessment for the terrestrial Animal Species Theme and is not intended to reassess the avifaunal component already verified by MORA Ecological Services. Accordingly, the two specialist reports are complementary rather than contradictory, with each addressing different components of the broader Animal Species Theme required by the DFFE Screening Tool and associated Protocol.

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3 6 .	2.3.2 Plant Species, Animal Species and Terrestrial Biodiversity Theme Compliance Statement A combined report for the three themes has been prepared by Ms. Megan Smith and Ms. Edmari Lewis of Enviroworks (dated November 2023) and is appended as Appendix G2 to the DBAR. To reiterate, the specialist who has completed the specialist input on these theses has not undertaken the SSVR or provided an SSVR which complies with the minimum information requirements of the Protocol together with their reports. The following concerns/shortcomings are highlighted: The relevant reports do not comply with the minimum information requirements set out in the respective Protocols for the Animal Species Theme or Plant Species Theme (i.e., refer to Government Notice No. 1150 in Government Gazette No. 43855 of 30 October 2020, as amended by Government Notice No. 3717 in Government Gazette No. 49028 of 28 July 2023. Note: The Protocol was amended prior to the date of the site inspections and the compliance assessment report being compiled. The amended Protocol has introduced specific requirements which must be addressed. The cross-reference checklist for specialist assessment included in the reports are incomplete.				The Department's comments are acknowledged. With regard to the Site Sensitivity Verification (SSVR), it is noted that the appointed specialist, Ms Megan Smith (Pr.Sci.Nat.) of Enviroworks (Pty) Ltd, undertook a site verification of the Plant Species, Animal Species and Terrestrial Biodiversity Themes during the field assessment conducted on 30 October 2023. The site sensitivity verification is incorporated within Section 6.5 – Site Sensitivity Verification of the Environmental Themes of the Plant Species, Animal Species and Terrestrial Biodiversity Theme Compliance Statement and therefore forms part of the specialist assessment, rather than being submitted as a separate stand-alone SSVR. The specialist report also includes protocol cross-reference checklists for the Animal Species, Plant Species and Terrestrial Biodiversity Themes. Accordingly, the specialist did undertake a site sensitivity verification; however, the Final BAR and revised SSVR have been amended to better explain the

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	The date on which the site was inspected is more than two and a half years ago (31 months). It is unclear whether the report is still fully applicable to site as no confirmation cover letter has been appended. The report includes data for two sites namely: Site 4 - DR1633 km 3.35, Varings River – Jonkershoek and Site 8 - DR1602 km 8.5, Varings River. It is understood that the information for Site 8 corresponds to this application. The reports fail to demonstrate which species were indeed found on the site, and only provide a list of species which potentially may occur on the reference sites or close to the site itself. Although there is a certain level of distinction between the two sites in the report, the information in Appendix B: Table 7 Plant species recorded on the reference sites and Appendix C: Table 8 Potential animal species that can be found on the reference site and immediate surrounds, do not highlight which information is applicable to the site on DR01602 (km 8.48).				relationship between the specialist assessment and the combined SSVR. An addendum to the Terrestrial Compliance Statement has been compiled confirming that the findings of the original statement remain valid. With regard to the inclusion of Site 4 (DR1633 km 3.35), this site was intentionally included within the specialist assessment because, at the time the study was commissioned, the project scope included multiple flood-damaged sites that were being considered as part of the same programme of works. The specialist therefore assessed both sites as a matter of due diligence and in accordance with the precautionary approach to ensure that all potentially affected sites were adequately assessed should they proceed through the environmental authorisation process. Following refinement of the project scope, Site 8 (DR1602 km 8.48) is the only site forming part of this Basic Assessment application. The Final BAR and revised SSVR

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					have therefore been updated to clearly identify that the findings applicable to this application relate specifically to Site 8. With regard to the species tables contained in Appendices B and C, these tables present desktop-derived reference information and potential species that may occur within the reference localities and surrounding area. They were not intended to represent exhaustive lists of species observed within the development footprint. The specialist conclusions and verified sensitivity ratings were based on both the desktop assessment and the specialist field verification undertaken during the site inspection. The Terrestrial Compliance Statement has been revised to address the comments received from the Department and provide further clarity where required.
37	Furthermore, the information on sensitive species has not been provided to the Competent Authority and the report merely states that it is "classified". Please note that the Screening Tool Report (appended as "Appendix I" to the DBAR) provides clear				The Department's comments are acknowledged.

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	guidance that where only a sensitive plant unique number or sensitive animal unique number is provided in the screening report and an assessment is required, the environmental assessment practitioner (EAP) or specialist is required to email SANBI at eiadatarequests@sanbi.org.za listing all sensitive species with their unique identifiers for which information is required. The name has been withheld as the species may be prone to illegal harvesting and must be protected. SANBI will release the actual species name after the details of the EAP or specialist have been documented. It appears that the specialist has failed to follow this process as no information is provided in the report, or whether the specific species have been found. Only providing generalised statements/conclusions without substantiating the data, is not deemed to comply with the protocol. (A similar procedure must be followed for the animal species for which a unique number has been assigned). The Animal Species section of the report fails to demonstrate to which taxonomic group ("taxa") the assessment applies, and whether the person has the relevant experience in the field of practice relevant to the taxa. It is acknowledged that Appendix B and C do provide a list of taxa (animal species) which may potentially occur on reference sites. This does not adequately address the requirements of the Protocol to demonstrate that the person has the relevant experience, more specifically in the field				The Site Sensitivity Verification Report (SSVR) has been comprehensively revised to address the comments received and to ensure that the Animal Species Theme is fully aligned with the requirements of the Environmental Impact Assessment Protocols. The revised SSVR now clearly includes the names of the sensitive species. Both specialists are SACNASP registered under Ecological Science. With regard to the preparation of the specialist report, the Plant Species, Animal Species and Terrestrial Biodiversity Theme Compliance Statement was signed by Ms Megan Smith (Pr.Sci.Nat., SACNASP Registration No. 130295), who is registered in the field of Ecological Science, being one of the recognised fields of practice prescribed by the applicable Environmental Assessment Protocols for the

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	of practice relevant to the taxonomic groups ("taxa") for which the assessment is being undertaken. Requirements of the Specialist The compliance statement must be prepared by a SACNASP registered specialist under one of the two fields of practice (Zoological Science or Ecological Science). The report has been signed off by Ms. Megan Smith (SACNASP No.130295 Pr.Nat.Sci – Ecological Science) and "co-authored" by Ms. Edmari Lewis (Candidate Nat. Sci No. 47171 – Environmental Sciences), at the time of completing the report. The Natural Sciences Professions Act No. 27 of 2003 ("NSPA") the SACNASP provides that only Professional Natural Scientists may undertake and sign off on the submission of a specialist report. Whereas a Candidate Natural Scientists can only perform work under the supervision and control of a registered Professional Natural Scientist. This has been confirmed in the SACNASP's Legal and Compliance Practise Note (SAC20225/001PN). However, the relevant Protocols specify that the compliance statement must be prepared by a SACNASP registered specialist in specific fields of practise, namely—				Plant Species and Animal Species Themes. Although Ms Edmari Lewis is identified as a co-author, the specialist report was prepared under the supervision of, reviewed by and signed off by the registered Professional Natural Scientist, who accepts professional responsibility for the contents and conclusions of the report. The Candidate Natural Scientist did not independently certify or approve the specialist assessment. This is confirmed in the Declaration of the Assistance Specialist included in the revised Terrestrial Biodiversity Report.

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	Animal species theme – within the field of practice in the Zoological Science or Ecological Science; Plant species theme - within the field of practice in the Botanical Science or Ecological Science. Even though the SACNASP must still finalise their formal document on the "Identification of Work" to regulating the practice of natural scientific professions, ensure public protection, and maintaining high standards of professional and ethical conduct, the Protocols clearly restrict the work to specifically registered professionals. It is not apparent that the Candidate undertaking the specialist assessments and reporting, under the supervision of the Professional Scientist, is/was appropriately registered with SACNASP for either of the respective Protocols. It is apparent that the field of practise in Environmental Sciences is different to the requirement and not permitted by the Protocols. It is also unclear from the report to what extent the Candidate has undertaken the work or compiled the report, which raises the question if they can be accepted. For the Department to accept the respective reports, the registered Professional Natural Scientist must clarify the above,				

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	update the report where necessary and demonstrate that the reports comply with the regulatory requirements.				
38	2.3.3 Animal Species (Avifauna) Compliance Statement It is noted that Mr. Mokgatla Molepo of MORA Ecological Services (Pty) Ltd., undertook the ground truthing for the site sensitivity verification on 29 and 30 October 2023 for this theme. The compliance statement only addresses an avifauna study and not a complete faunal study as per the SSVR undertaken by Mr Molepo. The following concerns/shortcomings are highlighted: The report does not comply with the minimum information requirements set out in the Protocols for the Animal Specie Theme (i.e., in Government Notice No. 1150 in Government Gazette No. 43855 of 30 October 2020, as amended by Government Notice No. 3717 in Government Gazette No. 49028 of 28 July 2023). The cross-reference checklist for specialist assessment included in the report is incomplete. The report includes data for two sites namely: Site 4 - DR1633 km 3.35, Varings River – Jonkershoek and Site 8 - DR1602 km 8.48,				The Department's comments are acknowledged. With regard to the sensitive species information, it is acknowledged that the identities of sensitive plant and animal species are intentionally withheld from the publicly available DFFE Screening Tool and represented only by unique identifiers to prevent the disclosure of sensitive biodiversity information. In accordance with the guidance contained within the Screening Tool, detailed information relating to classified sensitive species is not included within publicly circulated environmental assessment documentation. Where required by the Competent Authority, the relevant sensitive species information can be provided directly to the Competent Authority as part of the environmental assessment process and will not form part of the publicly available BAR.

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	Varings River. It is understood that the information for Site 8 corresponds to this application The date on which the site was inspected is more than two and a half years ago (31 months). It is unclear whether the report is still fully applicable to site as not confirmation cover letter has been appended. The specialist is required to update the report, address the above matters and demonstrate that the report complies with the regulatory requirements.				To address the Department's comments a revised Compliance Statement has been compiled, including a letter confirming that the finding of the initial Compliance Statement remain valid.
39	2.4 Environmental Management Programme ("EMPr") In accordance with Section 24N of NEMA and the EIA Regulations, 2014, the applicant is required to submit an Environmental Management Programme ("EMPr") with the BAR. The contents of such an EMPr must meet the requirements outlined in Appendix 4 of the EIA Regulations, 2014. The EMPr must address the potential environmental impacts of the activity throughout the project life cycle, including an assessment of the effectiveness of monitoring and management arrangements after implementation (auditing). It must be submitted together with the BAR. When compiling the EMPr.				The Department's comments are acknowledged. An Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) has been prepared and submitted together with the Final Basic Assessment Report in accordance with Section 24N of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998) and Appendix 4 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014 (as amended).

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					The EMPr identifies the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed development and prescribes mitigation, monitoring and management measures for the planning and design, pre-construction, construction, rehabilitation, operational and site closure phases of the project. The EMPr further identifies roles and responsibilities, monitoring and auditing requirements, environmental awareness training, incident reporting procedures and corrective actions to ensure the effective implementation of the prescribed mitigation measures throughout the project life cycle. The EMPr has been reviewed and updated, where applicable, to incorporate the recommendations of the specialist studies and comments received during the public participation process, thereby ensuring compliance with the requirements of Section 24N of NEMA and Appendix 4 of the EIA Regulations, 2014.

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40	3. Submission of Basic Assessment Report The BAR must contain all the information outlined in Appendix 1 of the EIA Regulations, 2014, and must also include and address any information requested in any previous correspondence in respect of this matter. Please be reminded that in accordance with Regulation 19 of the EIA Regulations, 2014, the Department hereby stipulates that the BAR (which has been subjected to public participation) must be submitted to this Department for decision within 90 days from the date of receipt of the application by the Department. However, if significant changes have been made or significant new information has been added to the BAR, the applicant/EAP must notify the Department that an additional 50 days (i.e. 140 days from receipt of the application) would be required for the submission of the BAR. The additional 50 days must include a minimum 30-day commenting period to allow registered I&APs to comment on the revised report/additional information. In light of the comments provided, the EAP must demonstrate in the "comment & responses report" how Regulation 19(1)(b) has been considered. If the BAR is not submitted within 90 days or 140 days, where an extension is applicable, the application will lapse in terms of Regulation 45 of the EIA Regulations, 2014 and your file will be				The Department's comments are acknowledged. The Final Basic Assessment Report (FBAR) has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Appendix 1 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014 (as amended), and all information requested in previous correspondence has been incorporated where applicable. The FBAR has been updated to address the comments received during the public participation process, and the Comments and Responses Report demonstrates how Regulation 19(1)(b) has been considered. The FBAR has been submitted within the prescribed timeframes of the EIA Regulations, 2014. Furthermore, all registered Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs), including the identified commenting authorities, have been notified of the submission of the FBAR and the report has

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	closed. Should you wish to pursue the application again, a new application process would have to be initiated. A new Application Form would have to be submitted. NOTE: Furthermore, in accordance with Environmental Impact Assessment best-practice, the EAP is required to notify all registered Interested and Affected Parties including the authorities identified in the Public Participation Plan of the submission of the FBAR and to make the document available to them. This will provide such parties an opportunity to review the document and how their issues were addressed.				been made available for review in accordance with EIA best practice.
4 1 .	4. Please note that it is an offence in terms of Section 49A of the NEMA for a person to commence with a listed activity unless the competent authority has granted an environmental authorisation for the undertaking of the activity. A person convicted of an offence in terms of the above is liable to a fine not exceeding R10 million or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding 10 years, or to both such fine and imprisonment. 5. Kindly quote the above-mentioned reference number in any future correspondence in respect of this matter.				Noted. No listed activities associated with the proposed permanent works have commenced. The proposed development is subject to this Basic Assessment process, and no permanent construction activities will commence prior to the granting of an Environmental Authorisation, where required.

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	6. The Department reserves the right to revise initial comments and request further information based on the information received.				