

# Basic Assessment Process for the proposed installation of Grid-Scale Battery Storage and the construction of associated infrastructure at the Graafwater Substation in the Western Cape Province

Notice is hereby given in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, No 107 of 1998 (NEMA), Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations 2014 (GN R982), as amended, of Eskom Holdings SOC Limited's intention to install Grid-scale Battery Storage and the construction of associated infrastructure at the Graafwater Substation in the Western Cape Province.

## Description of the Planned Activities

Eskom proposes to install grid-scale battery storage at the existing Graafwater Substation site, mainly as opportunity for capital deferment, which would otherwise require Eskom to embark on normal network strengthening through building new networks and major refurbishments. The proposed development will also include construction of the following infrastructure:

- Network integration equipment (e.g. power cables, control cables, isolators, circuit breakers, transformers, etc.) will be required to connect the new BESS to existing infrastructure at the substation.
- Additional fencing may be required, security equipment, lighting, and/or control room upgrades.
- Where possible, the BESS containers will be placed on the existing substation platform. Where there is insufficient space, the substation platform will be extended (compacted fill, earth protection layer and stone chip) to accommodate the BESS containers.
- Existing access roads to the substations may also need to be lengthened, realigned or upgraded to ensure easy access to the BESS, specifically for low-bed trucks during construction to deliver and install the BESS containers onto the platform.
- A temporary laydown area and site camp will be required during construction.
- Underground cables connecting the BESS to the substation and feeder bay extensions.
- Stormwater management measures to be implemented on site.
- Installation of lightning masts.

## Location of Proposed Installation

The Graafwater Substation is located on Portion 25 of the Farm Bueroskraal 220, which is situated near the town of Graafwater. The site falls within the jurisdiction of the Cederberg Local Municipality, Western Cape Province.

## Legislative requirements

The installation of the grid-scale battery storage will trigger several listed activities in terms of the EIA regulations, 2014 (as amended), Listing Notice 1 (GN R983) and Listing Notice 3 (GN R985), as amended; and will require a **Basic Assessment process to be undertaken**.

## Key Findings of Environmental Impact Assessment

During the field survey conducted, no Red Data Listed species were observed on site. The current ecological state of the proposed development footprint has already been subject to historical disturbances and therefore, the floral community structures have already been altered. The proposed development impacts are seen to be of minor significance due to the proximity of the site to existing industrial infrastructure. Although soil management is recommended the site is regarded as topographically flat, and stormwater run-off is not thought to be a significant concern. As long as the proposed mitigation measures are implemented on site during construction, the overall impacts associated with the proposed development can be managed to an acceptable level of low significance.

Overall, the impact of the proposed activity is expected to be LOW as the study site is already heavily impacted by the current and surrounding activities and land use. Impacts resulting from the proposed activities will further be mitigated to acceptable levels.

It should be noted that an Environmental Authorisation is required from January 2021. Commencement of construction is dependent on the date of EA issue and whether amendments or appeals are required.

## Overall Recommendation

The findings of the specialist study undertaken in support of this EIA application to assess both the benefits and potential negative impacts anticipated from the Project conclude that the significance levels of the majority of identified negative impacts can be reduced by implementing the recommended mitigation measures. As such the authorisation of the project for development will meet the objectives of sustainable development and is supported by the EAP.

Taking into consideration the findings and overall recommendations of the assessment and based on the nature and extent of the Project, the local level of disturbance predicted as a result of the construction and operation of the facility and associated infrastructure, and the understanding of the significance level of potential environmental impacts, it is the opinion of the EAP that the impacts associated with the development of the proposed BESS Project can be managed and mitigated to an acceptable level. The information provided as part of the BA processes sufficient to enable the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries (DEFF) to make an informed and defensible decision. The layout plan as presented in the Basic Assessment Report (BAR) has been informed by the findings of the specialist study and available information (refer to Appendix B in the BAR for the Layout Map). The facility in its current position results in an acceptable level of impact and is the preferred and most environmentally acceptable layout option.

The full Basic Assessment Report is available at the following public venues:

Public Venue	Address
Graafwater Public Library	Van der Stel Street, Graafwater, 8120
Graafwater Municipality Offices	Van der Stel Street, Graafwater, 8120

The report can also be viewed and downloaded on Zitholele Consulting's website: [www.zitholele.co.za/environmental](http://www.zitholele.co.za/environmental), under heading "Graafwater BESS EIA" or call the Public Participation office for further information. Comments can be sent to the contact details below.

## How to contact the Public Participation Process desk

I&APs may contact the PPP desk at the following detail below:

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**THIS SITE NOTICE WAS PLACED ON 01 September 2020**