



Draft Issues Trail for the Solids Removal and Treatment Facilities Upgrade at the Southern Waste Water Treatment Works, Merewent, KwaZulu-Natal EIA and WML

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Water and Sanitation

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SWWTW EIA and WML

ISSUES TRAIL

SUMMARY FOR
CONCERNS AND SUGGESTIONS RAISED BY INTERESTED AND/ OR
AFFECTED PARTIES

Comments dated from 01 January 2014 to 30 April 2014

Stakeholders who made contributions to various matters and raised certain issues range across all sectors of society. This list of issues does not focus solely on a specific area. Instead, it lists all the issues raised by Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) throughout the study area. In many instances, an issue raised about a particular focus area, is also applicable to other circumstances.

The issues have been arranged into groups of similar content, and are listed in each group more or less in the order in which they were received. The name, affiliation and date of the commentator are also indicated. Comments made during public meetings are included, as well as comments received in other languages.

Contents

1	<u>EIA PROCESS</u>	4
2	<u>OPERATIONS</u>	6
3	<u>ODOUR</u>	7
4	<u>NOISE</u>	7
5	<u>AIR QUALITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE</u>	7
6	<u>INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES</u>	8
7	<u>SOCIO-ECONOMIC</u>	10
8	<u>TOURISM SECTOR</u>	10
9	<u>BIODIVERSITY AND ECOLOGY</u>	10
10	<u>HERITAGE</u>	11
11	<u>OTHER</u>	11



TABLE 1: COMMENTS AND RESPONSE TABLE

SCOPING PHASE		
ISSUE	RAISED BY	RESPONSE
1 EIA PROCESS		
1.1. Digesters were taken off 7 years ago, the CSIR reports state that the sea is getting worse (degrading) therefore why is there is a new project when the digesters there, why do we need consultants to refurbish? The EWS engineers should have picked this is up, EIA and consultants are not needed. This is a waste of rate payer's money.	Attendee at the Introductory meeting 14.04.2014	EWS is the proponent and hence did pick up the need for the project but the legislation requires that an independent EAP is appointed because refurbishments (not only expansions) require an EIA. Hence the need for consultants. There are also design consultant engineers because the EWS is under capacitated and furthermore specialist design is required.
1.2. Why are the EIA and WML processes combined?	Attendee at the Introductory meeting 14.04.2014	<p>The November 2013 amendments to regulations saw wastewater moved to the mandate of the provincial Department of Agriculture and Environmental Affairs (DAEA). With one department as the Competent Authority (CA) an “up-scaling” was requested to assess the WML and EIA as an integrated process, for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Listing Notice 2 activities are triggered for the development and Category A impacts will in addition to these activities be assessed. There is therefore a situation whereby a full EIA is already required. ✦ As is evident in the Scope of Works, Waste Water Treatment Works projects are very complex, which must be properly assessed during an EIA process, therefore, by incorporating the Category A activities into the Scoping and EIA process, an in depth assessment of these activities will be given effect to. ✦ Undertaking one application process will optimize the Environmental Impact Assessment and result in reduced administrative load on the Department. ✦ Less report writing would also have a limited impact on the

ISSUE	RAISED BY	RESPONSE
		<p>project budget and will allow the applicant to responsibly spend public funding as required by the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA).</p> <p>✳ Two (2) separate public participation processes (PPP) meeting, or one integrated process which tries to explain to the Interested and/or Affected Parties (I&APs) the nature of two (2) separate permitting processes being run together, may lead to confusion or stakeholder fatigue. Further, by keeping the BAR-specific activities still on the table during the second iteration of the PPP, it allows the I&APs the opportunity to make comments thereon for the duration of the overall process.</p>
<p>1.3. Why are the specialists not independent? It was stated that their rights to request further studies by independent specialists will be observed.</p>	<p>Attendee at the Introductory meeting 14.04.2014</p>	<p>Internal specialists are according to the National Environmental Management (NEMA) EIA Regulations GN R.543, allowed, however the national Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) stipulates that an independence declaration must be signed and an external peer review be done. This will be followed for this EIA process.</p> <p>Furthermore, it is imperative that the definition if “independence” is noted: According to GN R.543, “independent” means: “ <i>In relation to an EAP (Environmental Assessment Practitioner) or a person compiling a specialist report or undertaking a specialised process or appointed as a member of an appeal panel, means –</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) <i>That such EAP or person has no business, financial, personal or other interest in the activity, application or appeal in respect of which that EAP or person is appointed in terms of these Regulations other than fair remuneration for work performed in connection with that activity, application, or appeal; or</i> (b) <i>That there are no circumstances that may compromise the objectivity of that EAP or that person in performing such work.”</i> <p>It can therefore be justified why the DEA accept that specialists from the same company as the EAP conduct the specialist studies required, provided the assessments are peer reviewed.</p>

ISSUE	RAISED BY	RESPONSE
1.4. Knock and drops were requested and stakeholders and the greater public must be involved. Access to information was requested.	Attendee at the Introductory meeting 14.04.2014	Vibrant Direct was appointed to distribute 3000 BIDS to the communities surrounding the study area. These were places in the household post boxes and handed out at the Tara Road intersection. 10 Posters were also erected at conspicuous points. Furthermore, to reach the public an advertisement was placed in the Merebank Rising Sun and the Mercury.
1.5. As a resident of Merebank and also as an employee of Mondi Paper I would like more information explaining what are the impacts to the environment and which road routes will be affected and for how long. I would also like to have a copy of your MHIRA. Can you please include me on the Project Database.	Mr. Gordon Reddy Via Email 16.05.2014	Thank you for your enquiry. Please note that the draft Scoping Report which details the information which you requested below will be out for public review from 23 May till 2 July for the public to review and comment. Please also note that a public meeting will be held on 21 May at the Merebank Community Centre at 18h00, we hope you will attend. In the interim, the Background Information Document was provided via email. You have been added to the project database and will receive all project correspondence.
2 OPERATIONS		
2.1. Summer rains result in overflows and the flow goes directly out to sea without monitoring. What will be the response to this?	Attendee at the Introductory meeting 14.04.2014	While it is noted that overflows are not best practice, this is the reason why extra storage capacity is proposed. The current pump station storage is not enough and the pump cannot cope. The additional storage tank and new higher efficiency pumps proposed will mitigate against this.
2.2. Is the EWS monitoring Veolia Water?	Attendee at the Introductory meeting 14.04.2014	There is a Public Private Partnership between EWS and Veolia Water and a 10 year contract. Veolia are ISO accredited and not monitored by EWS. It is important to further note that Veolia Water is not responsible for the incidents of pollution which occurred.
2.3. Current capacity is 130MI, is there any plan to increase capacity due to development growth in the area?	Attendee at the Introductory meeting 14.04.2014	The catchment for this works is fairly developed, Umlazi, Chatsworth up to pavilion and therefore an increase is not envisaged to the works, and in fact the flow has shown a decrease in recent years. But with plans to densify and rural development, greater transport will be needed but not waste water.

ISSUE	RAISED BY	RESPONSE
3 ODOUR		
3.1. Concern was raised over the community affected by odour (smell) and the nuisance. The project was perceived to be a smoke screen to build capacity to deal with more sludge from other areas. Sludge was brought from KwaMashu previously without consultation. No figures are reported on. Studies show that there are high levels of asthma and other illnesses. Therefore this "expansion" will result in further impacts.	Attendee at the Introductory meeting 14.04.2014	This is noted as a valid concern. Please refer to the BID which presents the full scope of works proposed and explains the process. Historically, previous proposal did try for additional flows but the community was against this and therefore it was stopped. Sludge from Kwamashu WWTW was brought to the SWWTW previously as an emergency measure, EWS therefore apologise for this as Kwamashu did not have sufficient infrastructure at the time to deal with the problem.
3.2. Smell and odour was raised, there is a hotline which does not operate (telephone is not answered). Furthermore, the pump on Sylhiet Place often presents significant odour nuisances.	Attendee at the Introductory meeting 14.04.2014	This will be investigated by EWS. Regarding the Pumpstation, since the reporting of this issue, EWS Systems Branch have been to site to investigate and have provided the complainant with direct contact details.
3.3. Will the smell increase due to the digesters?	Attendee at the Introductory meeting 14.04.2014	Anaerobic digesters are fully enclosed and therefore will not increase odours, however, in order to address current odours, the air quality assessment will evaluate the extent of the impact and develop an odour abatement programme.
4 NOISE		
4.1. Will noise increase due to the pumps?	Attendee at the Introductory meeting 14.04.2014	The new pumps will be far more high-tech, more efficient and will be placed under water, and are hence more silent. Should it be found that noise will be significant then a specialist noise study will be conducted.
4.2. Noise pollution	Mr. Vishnu Naidu Via Email comment form 17.05.2014	Kindly note response to point 4.1 above. Should this not be the information you seek, kindly elaborate on your requirements and a detailed response will be provided.
5 AIR QUALITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE		
5.1. The quality of life in the surrounding area is very poor due to noise and odour.	Attendee at the Introductory meeting 14.04.2014	This is noted. The studies will evaluate these and propose odour abatement.

ISSUE	RAISED BY	RESPONSE
<p>5.2. The odours around the site at present are unacceptable. Will the proposed additions improve or degrade even further the breathable air?</p>	<p>Mr. Vishnu Naidu Via Email comment form 17.05.2014</p>	<p>The current odour should be lessened as a result of the development of an odour abatement plan which forms part of this EIA. The proposed upgrades themselves will not lead to any increase in odours.</p>
<h2>6 INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES</h2>		
<p>6.1. Thank you for the email and invite. I will not be attending. However, please be advised of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  In order for the Department to ensure operational efficiency of the Provincial Road Network so as to ensure Road Safety is not compromised the Department maintains a level of control over Structures and Services, both within the declared or expropriated road reserve and in that portion of land immediately adjacent to the road reserve, known as the building restriction area, as defined in Section 13 (1) (a) & (b) of the Kwazulu-Natal Roads Act No. 4 of 2001.  No buildings or any structures whatsoever, other than a fence, hedge or a wall which does not rise higher than 2,1 meters above or below the surface of the land on which it stands, shall be erected on the land within a distance of 15 meters measured from the road reserve boundary of a Blacktop surfaced Main or District Road, or within a distance of 30 meters measured from the center line of a Gravel surfaced Main Road; or within a distance of 25 meters measured from the center line of a Gravel surfaced District Road. 	<p>Mrs. Schmidt (DoT) Via Email 19.05.2014</p>	<p>Noted and will be taken cognisance of in the design.</p>

ISSUE	RAISED BY	RESPONSE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ The road reserve boundary shall be determined in consultation with this Departments Road Information Services, (Tel: 033-355 8600). ✦ On Main Roads, no single pole power transmission line, telecommunication line, cable, or pipeline with a diameter of less than 100mm diameter should be placed within a distance of 13 metres of the Road centreline. Nor, in addition, should they be more than 2 metres inside the road reserve boundary. ✦ Except at approved crossings of the road reserve, the closest point a pipeline exceeding 100mm in diameter should be at least 17 metres from the centreline of a Main Road, carriageway or ramp. In addition, the closest point a pipeline should be located is at least 2 metres outside of the road reserve boundary. ✦ On District Roads and Local Roads, no single pole power transmission line, telecommunication line, cable, or pipeline with a diameter of less than 100mm diameter should be placed within a distance of 8 metres of the Road centreline. Nor, in addition, should be more than 2 metres inside the road reserve boundary. ✦ Except at approved crossings of the road reserve, the closest point a pipeline exceeding 100mm in diameter should be at least 12 metres from the centreline of a District Road or Local Road. In addition, the closest point a pipeline should be located is at least 2 metres outside of the road reserve boundary. ✦ All Structures and Services are to be 		

ISSUE	RAISED BY	RESPONSE
<p>approved and placed in consultation with and to the satisfaction of the relevant Cost Centre Manager.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ All costs incurred, as a result of these requirements shall be borne entirely by the developer. ✦ Upon receipt of the formal application with a layout plan, this Department shall assess and comment further. 		
<p>6.2. This department has no objection to the proposed development subject to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Building plans being submitted for scrutiny to this department. ✦ Compliance with Major Hazard Installation Regulations in case the proposed development is in close proximity to existing MHI's or the facility itself will be an MHI. ✦ Full compliance with other applicable Legislative requirements. <p>In terms of the remaining sludge being discharge to the sea, the Department of Water Affairs will comment on that.</p>	<p>Mr. Dlala eThekweni Fire Department via Email 14.05.2014</p>	<p>Noted. Building Plans will be submitted to your department in accordance with regulations. A Risk Assessment and MHI Study will be completed as part of the process with a baselines study as part of the Scoping Phase. Kindly refer to the draft Scoping Report.</p>
7 SOCIO-ECONOMIC		
8 TOURISM SECTOR		
9 BIODIVERSITY AND ECOLOGY		
<p>9.1. Will the proposed additions improve the discharge to the ocean? Does it conform to international regulations?</p>	<p>Mr. Vishnu Naidu Via Email comment form 17.05.2014</p>	<p>The upgrades which form the scope of this project are proposed primarily to improve the effluent currently disposed of to sea, by reducing the solids in the effluent. The disposal of effluent to sea conforms to the South African regulations as set out by the Department of Water Affairs and the SWWTW currently holds a Coastal Wasters Discharge Permit.</p>

ISSUE	RAISED BY	RESPONSE
10 HERITAGE		
11 OTHER		
<p>11.1. Please advise if this upgrade is successful will you been giving work out to local business</p>	<p>Mr. Naidoo Via Email 15.05.2014</p>	<p>Thank you for your enquiry.</p> <p>Kindly note that RHDHV has been appointed to conduct the Environmental Impact Assessment only. Our services to not involve construction, design or procurement.</p> <p>We are not certain of your area of expertise or business, however, should the upgrades be approved you may contact the Southern Waste Water Treatment Works directly with your query.</p>