

Hopefield Solar Projects PPP Comments			
No	Aspect	Comments	Responses
1	Traffic Impact	Increased traffic volumes through construction vehicles	Increased traffic volumes cannot be avoided during construction phase as they form significant role in getting all the project components to site. However, scheduling can be planned such that peak hours are avoided, resulting in less disruptions and frustration.
		Will the current road network be upgraded to cater for the increased volumes	The anticipated increased traffic volumes will only be limited to construction phase, no heavy traffic is expected during operation phase. The road network remains the responsibility of SANRAL
		Traffic & noise pollution will negatively affect the residents	The work schedules will be limited to day time hours, no work will be undertaken afterhours.
2	Biodiversity Impacts	the biodiversity report was conducted over 24hr period, this must be extended to include day and night as some of the wildlife is nocturnal	Specialist has been contacted to review this and submit an Addendum to the report for review. This was undertaken and findings are included in the report
		natural landscape and biodiversity will be negatively affected	The proposed project components are approximately 1m from the ground and the colors will blend in with the natural environment. Minimal vegetation clearance is done prior to construction phase, except for areas with taller trees and shrubs. This means that the roots and seed bank is retained. As seen with other projects, vegetation regrowth happens naturally and is managed to avoid shading of the solar modules.
			Based on experience from other solar facilities, fauna general move away due to drilling during construction phase. However, evidence has shown that these animals do return when the construction fields are less busy
		Potential increase in crime due to influx of people from out of town looking for jobs at the facility. The SAPS cannot handle the current situation in Hopefield, they will be overstretched when the project starts	A proper vetting system will be implemented to sieve out unpleasant individuals. The project team will also work closely with the SAPS to ensure that none of our construction team engages in criminal activities.

3	Health & Safety	potential fire hazard associated with the solar project. Emergency preparedness must be prioritised	Emergency preparedness forms an integral part of the project. This includes suitable fire fighting equipment and fire breaks are in place
		risk of lithium & hydrogen explosion	BEES will be built according to internationally recognised standards with early warning systems. Battery units shall be housed in purpose-designed, containerised enclosures with built-in fire detection and suppression systems. A site-specific Emergency Response Plan shall be developed in consultation with the local fire services
		The proposed project is located too close to town, raising concerns for resident safety and well-being	The project poses no danger to the community. The proposed project is not the only project close to towns; De Aar, Upington, De Doorns, etc all have solar projects less than a kilometer from the edge of the town and nothing has ever happened. Solar energy facilities are safe and precautionary measures are in place to detect and prevent any possible dangers
4	Water Resources	where will water be sourced	PV Solar energy facilities use minimal water, during both construction and operation phase. The main water use during construction is dust suppression and water is sourced from external service providers and trucked into site. Concrete is sourced from pre-mix silos and almost no concrete mixing takes place on site. The option of ramming posts into the ground using a ramming machine is considered favourable at this point. The main water use during operation is domestic use and solar panel cleaning. Compressed air has been used in other sites to successfully clean solar panels and this method is the main method to be used.
		potential negative impact on water resources and surrounding farmers	An underground water management plan will be developed to monitor certain points around the site to detect any potential pollution. No hazardous herbicides will be used on site. Oil spill kits will be made available on site to urgently deal with potential oil spills from construction vehicles. Induction and Toolbox talk will emphasize the importance of pollution prevention.
		clarity on whether the solar facility will connect to the grid or solely to the hydrogen facility	Initially connection to the grid was not considered but at this point, this is being looked into. However, the powerline routes and size will be subject to a different EIA process as corridor negotiation can take long.

5	Technical	Hydrogen plant is mentioned briefly, more information required.	This EIA is for a solar energy facility, the information on the green hydrogen campus will be discussed in detail during its EIA process. All interested and affected parties will be notified when that process commences as required by the environmental regulations
		project location is an issue, its too close to the town	There is no safety issue with a solar facility
		Is the project 900MW or 2000MW?	its 1600MW or 1.6GW
		The spatial framework meeting emphasized keeping Hopefield rural,safe and a flower town	the proposed project will balance the need for eeconomic development and environmental protection. Improving people's lives by creating job opportunities is also critical for the Municipality and this project will serve that purpose.
		Will one phase be completed before starting a new phase?	Yes that is the plan
		Estimated time to complete each phase	approximatel 12 months
		will the water required for hydrogen production impact local farmers	This will be discussed in a separate EIA
		will there be enough water required for the proposed facility	Yes
		How many ships will be used to export hydrogen to Europe and what is the estimated tonnage per shipment?	that information is not available in the EIA process for the solar facility
6	Accommodation	where will out of town workers be housed	they will be bused in and out of Hopefield town. This is great business opportunity for bus operators in and around Hopefield. Aibnb, hotels, guest houses and b&b's will benefit positively through this project
		there is a rumour that 2500 workers will be brought in for construction phase, along with temporary housing, can this be confirmed?	
		What happens to those workers after project completion?	
		not enough accommodation in town to accommodate workers. Squatters will be allowed	
7	Jobs	Any temporary structures planned to house these workers? What happens to those structures after the construction Is completed	No temporary strycture will be erected, workers from out of town will be bused in and out of town.

		will priority be given to locals?	Yes priority will be given to local communities and businesses
8	Sense of Place		
		The project will change the quiet & peacefulness sense of place of the town, this is not supported	The mitigation measures in place will screen the project site as detailed in the VIA study. The need for jobs and better standards of living for the poor community of Saldanha Bay Municipality is also a critical factor to consider
		Potential impacts on the tourism industry that is based on the rural nature of the town	The need to balance development and preservation of the sense of place was not taken lightly, many factors were considered. The new solar facilities in the area presents a unique local tourism opportunity on their own. School trips from within the District to site for learning purposes, open days, etc are evident in other towns where solar facilities are built.
		Concerned about the town's biggest employers which rely on clean and healthy natural environment, which is at risk with the proposed development	The solar energy facility is also a green project with no emissions into the environment like coal fired power plants, no negative impacts is anticipated for the sunflower farm. Dust emission plans will be in place to reduce the dust nuisance