

Grahamstown Aerodrome, Infrastructure Concerns and its effect on Makhanda (28 October 2025)

Dear Stakeholders,

We write to you on behalf of the Grahamstown Flying Club (GFC) to raise an important concern regarding infrastructure developments that pose a serious threat to the continued safe operation of the Grahamstown Aerodrome (FAGT) and, by extension, to the broader accessibility and growth of Makhanda. The project will also change the visual landscape surrounding Makhanda significantly.

The first is the proposed windfarm development to the north-west of the aerodrome, with turbines reaching heights of up to 187 meters. The second is the Grahamstown 400/132kV Substation Integration Project, which includes electricity infrastructure traversing or encroaching upon the RW34 and RW30 thresholds. Together, these developments risk sterilising the aerodrome's approach environment and undermining its long-term viability.

Consider emergency medical evacuations; flight services supporting tourism, movement of, lecturers, farmers, government officials, lawyers and judges, pupils and parents; flight schools doing operations at the airstrip or cross countries, and commuters. All of these will be affected.

Information on these developments is contained in the annexure to this letter.

Why This Matters

Safety Risk: Analysis shows that several turbines lie within the critical $\pm 15^\circ$ visual approach sector, with vertical clearances under 300 ft. Furthermore, the intended placement and apparent size of the electricity turbines are very close to the threshold of the runways. This compromises current operations as we all the continued growth of airfield to include commercial operations.

Loss of Strategic Access: As outlined above, the aerodrome is Makhanda's only registered airfield. Its ability to support tourism, education, medical evacuations, disaster relief, and scheduled or charter operations is at risk.

Economic Impact: These developments jeopardise future growth and investment in the region, contradicting national and provincial policies that prioritise strategic transport infrastructure.

Visual Impact: The visual impact (187m turbines and industrial style electricity lines), whilst not central to our concerns, will affect tourism in the area.

The Grahamstown Flying Club

Established in the late 1930s, the Grahamstown Flying Club is a community flying club serving the Makana Municipality and general aviation in the Eastern Cape. We operate under a lease from the Municipality and are dependent on member fees, hangar levies, landing fees and contributions to maintain the airfield and the facility. Further information can be obtained here: www.fagt.info.

Our Position

We are not opposed to development. We support progress that is balanced, sustainable, and compliant with aviation safety standards. However, the current trajectory of these projects threatens to permanently degrade the aerodrome's operational envelope which affects all stakeholders. Regarding the Windfarm project we have objected repeatedly since 2023, yet somehow the project is going ahead.

How You Can Help

You can:

1. Submit your own objection to the relevant authorities during the public comment period for the **Grahamstown 400/132kV Substation Integration Project** which ends on **29 October 2025**; or
2. Contribute to support our independent review of the ATNS approval for the Windfarm project; or
3. Join the Grahamstown Flying Club thereby supporting the Club as well as having access to the clubhouse facility for events. You do not have to be involved in aviation.

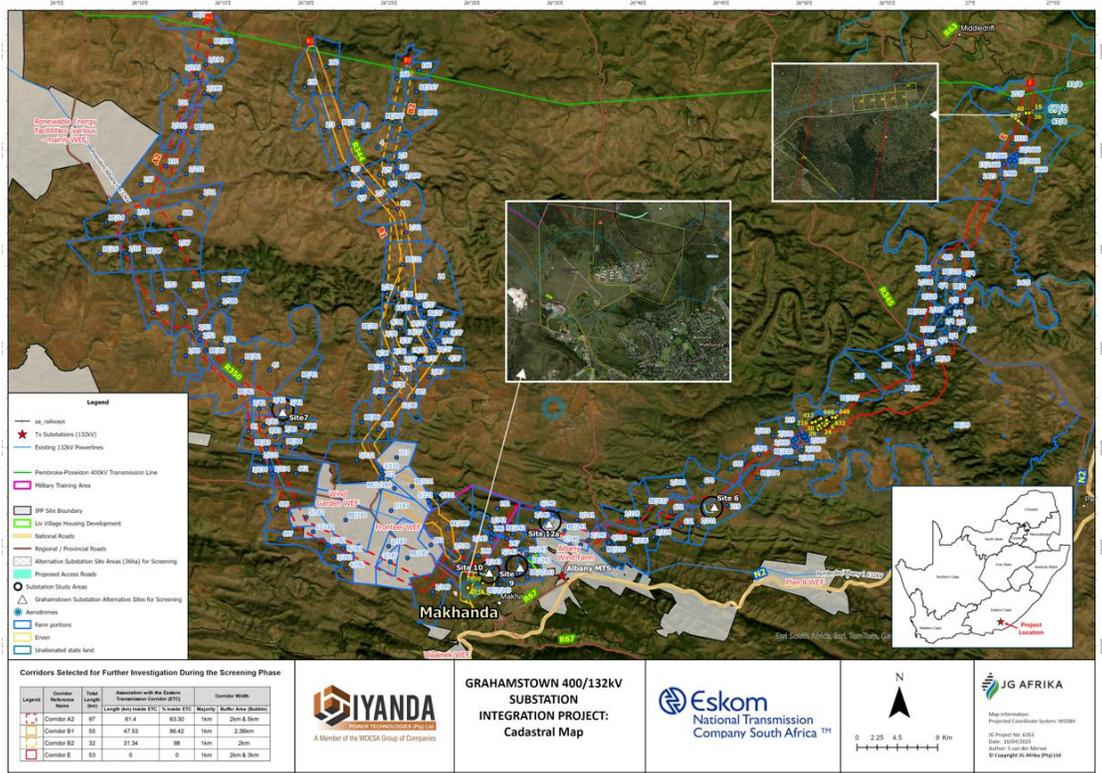
Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

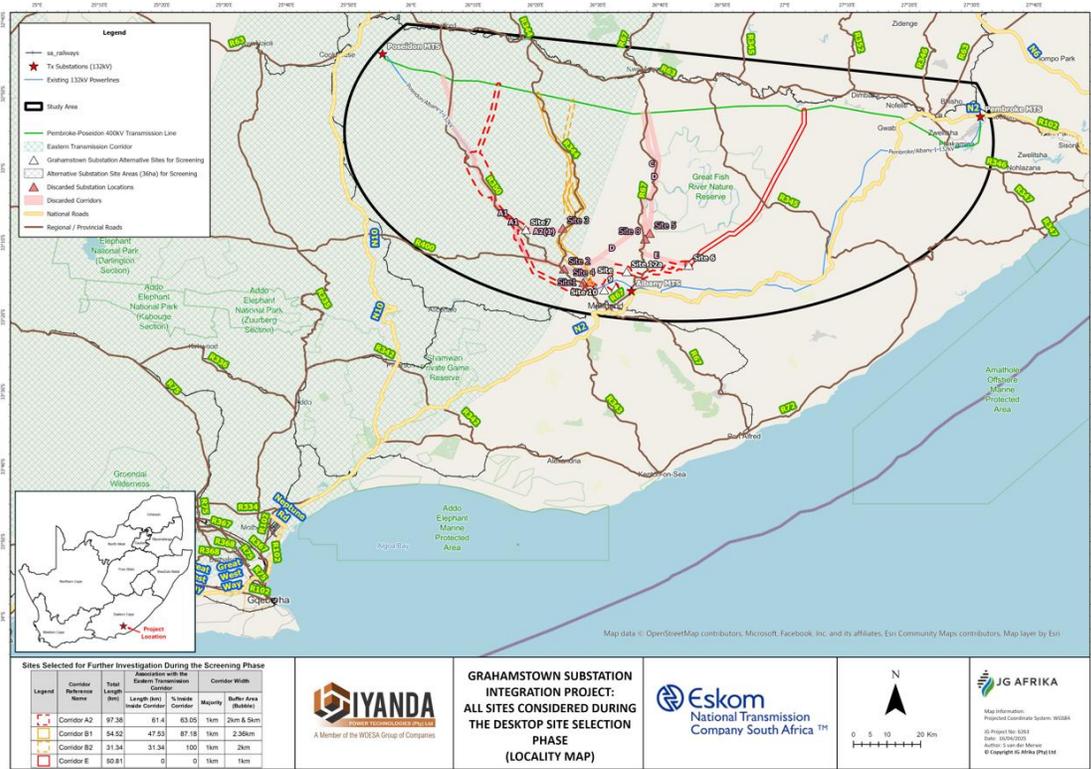
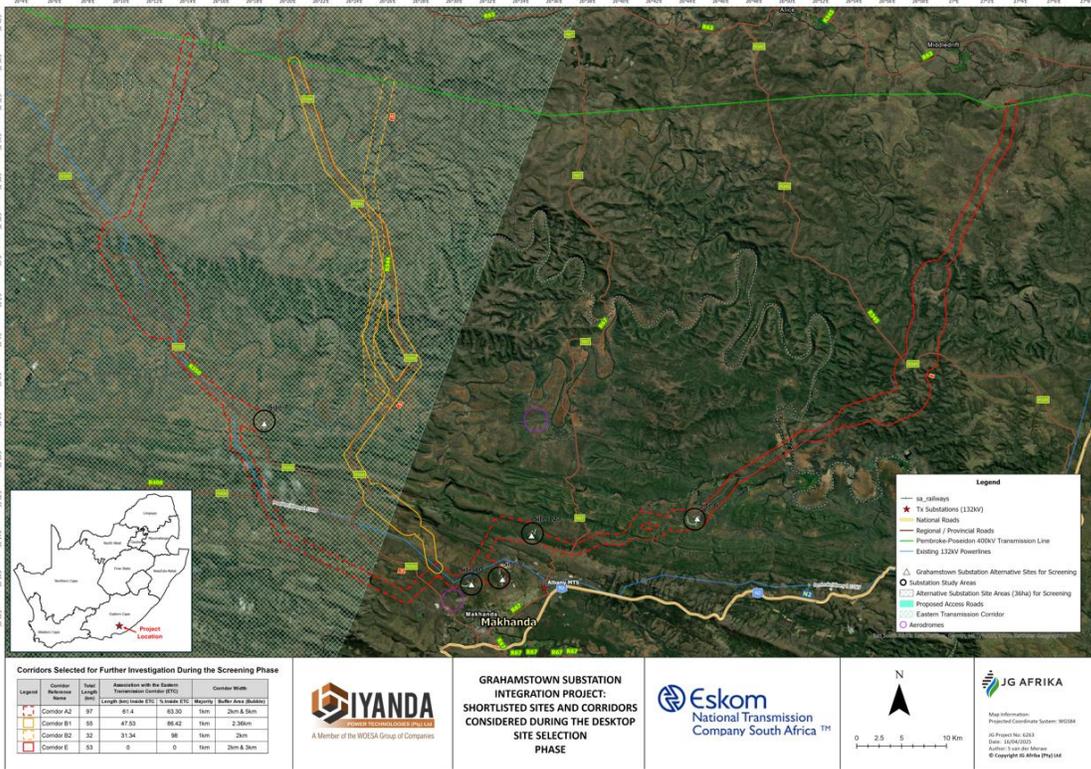
Kind regards,

Grahamstown Flying Club

Grahamstown Flying Club Committee
071 606 5544

Annexure





Dear Stakeholders,

RE: Grahamstown 400/132kV Substation Integration Project - Availability of Draft Screening Report for Review and Comment

Thank you very much for your participation to date.

The Draft Screening Report for the above-mentioned project is now available for Public and Commentary Authority review and comment. The Report can be reviewed or downloaded from the JG Afrika (Pty) Ltd website (www.jgafrika.com). A link is provided below:

<https://www.jgafrika.com/public-participation/grahamstown-makhanda-400-132-kv-substation-integration-project-eastern-cape/>

Attached are also some information previously shared.

During the Public Open Day Sessions / Meetings held, suggestions were made by various parties to realign proposed Corridor A2, as well as Corridor E. Since the meetings, we were also informed of various other developments in the area which further restricts Corridor A2. Additional recommendations for the deviation of Corridor E were also made, and a potential new location for Substation Alternative Site 6 is being investigated.

The Draft Screening Report contains the proposed Alternative Substation Sites and Alternative Powerline Corridors as was discussed and presented at the Public Open Day Sessions. While the Screening Report, and associated Specialist Reports are out for Public Review, the project team will investigate the alternatives suggested and Screening Processes for those will be undertaken. Details of the deviations and alternatives proposed will be made available to all Stakeholders once available, for comment, and will also be included into the Environmental Screening Report, which will be made available to the Public for comment.

The initial Draft Screening Report review period will end on 29 October 2025.

Please contact me should you require any additional information, or should you have any queries. Please also submit all comments, issues, concerns or suggestions to me.

Kind Regards,




JG AFRIKA
EXPERIENCE QUALITY INTEGRITY

Sonja van der Merwe
Pr Sci Nat

Senior Environmental Scientist

t +27 11 231 2200 | c +27 82 708 5014

PUBLIC NOTICE:

ENVIRONMENTAL SCREENING ASSESSMENT PUBLIC CONSULTATION PROCESS AND AVAILABILITY OF THE DRAFT SCREENING REPORT FOR THE GRAHAMSTOWN 400/132 KV SUBSTATION INTEGRATION PROJECT, MAKHANDA, EASTERN CAPE

JG Afrika (Pty) Ltd Project Reference Number: 6263

PROPOSER AND PROJECT OVERVIEW: The National Transmission Company South Africa (NTCSA) is in the process of planning the establishment of a new 400/132 KV substation and associated loop-in and loop-out power lines within proximity to the town of Makhandu, Eastern Cape. The NTCSA appointed Iyanda Power Technologies as the Owner's Engineer for this proposed Grahamstown 400/132 KV Substation Integration Project. Iyanda appointed JG Afrika (Pty) Ltd to undertake the Environmental Screening Assessment Process.

PROJECT NEED: An assessment was conducted to evaluate the integration of renewable energy generation facilities within the Grahamstown supply area. The existing distribution network is unable to connect current and future proposed renewable energy facilities due to capacity limitations at both the transmission and distribution levels. Hence, there is a need to establish the Grahamstown 400/132 KV Substation. The proposed project will consist of the following: a) The proposed construction of a new substation (Grahamstown 400 KV Substation); b) The proposed construction of two (2) 400 KV powerlines to connect the proposed new substation to the planned Pembroke – Poseidon 400 KV Powerline, which is situated approximately 40 km to the north of the town of Makhandu; c) The proposed construction of associated access roads.

ALTERNATIVES PROPOSED: Based on desktop assessments, five (5) alternative sites which could potentially be feasible for the construction of the new substation have been selected for further investigation during the Environmental Screening Assessment. In addition, four alternative corridors with the potential to accommodate the two (2) proposed 400 KV powerlines have been determined for further investigation during the Environmental Screening Assessment.

APPLICABLE LEGISLATION: The main pieces of legislation being considered for this project include:

- The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations, 2014, as amended, as promulgated in terms of Section 24(5) and Section 44 of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA), Act 107 of 1998.
- Government Notice (GN) 113 of 16 February 2018: Notice of identification in terms of section 24 (5) (a) and (b) of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 of the procedure to be followed in applying for environmental authorisation for large scale electricity transmission and distribution development activities identified in terms of section 24 (2) (a) of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 when occurring in geographical areas of strategic importance.
- Government Notice No. 2313 of 27 July 2022: Standard for the Development and Expansion of Power Lines and Substations within Identified Geographical Areas.
- Government Notice 6201 of 16 May 2023: Consultation on the Intention to Adopt a Substation Exclusion Norm and to Exclude the Development and Expansion of Transmission and Distribution Substations from the requirement to Obtain Environmental Authorisation.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCREENING PROCESS: The Environmental Screening Process considers the biophysical, socio-economic, tourism, and cultural environments, amongst others, at the screening level, to determine the most suitable substation site and powerline corridor for detailed assessments and future environmental authorisation purposes. The Environmental Screening Process involves the following phases:

1. Determining suitable alternative sites and corridors, at the desktop level, for the potential establishment of the substation and associated powerlines.
2. Identification of all landowners situated within the determined study area, and notification of these parties regarding the proposed project.
3. Announcement of the proposed project to the general public and relevant commentary authorities, and the distribution of project information and maps.
4. Undertaking an initial 30-day public consultation process during which the general public, stakeholders, affected landowners, etc., will have the opportunity to obtain more information about the project, to provide input into the alignment of the alternative proposed sites and corridors, and to provide input into the selection process of a preferred corridor and site.
5. Undertaking various specialist investigations to determine fatal flaws and no-go areas within the proposed alternative corridors and sites.
6. Compilation of an Environmental Screening Report which will take the outcome of the public and authority consultation process, as well as the findings and recommendations of the various specialist reports, into consideration.
7. Public and commentary authority review of the Draft Environmental Screening Report (30-day review period).
8. Compilation of the Final Environmental Screening Report, including details on the preferred site and corridor selected.
9. Submission of the Final Environmental Screening Report to the NTCSA.
10. This will conclude the Environmental Screening Assessment Process.

BECOMING INVOLVED AND MEETING WITH THE PROJECT TEAM: To receive detailed information on the project, such as project maps, affected properties, etc., kindly please register as an Interested and Affected Party (I&AP) with the JG Afrika (Pty) Ltd project manager. All queries, concerns or comments regarding the project must also be submitted to the JG Afrika (Pty) Ltd project manager. Should you wish to meet with the project team, kindly please also contact the JG Afrika (Pty) Ltd project manager in order to set up a virtual meeting.

The deadline for registration of an Interested and Affected Party, and submission of written communication to the JG Afrika (Pty) Ltd project manager is 30 October 2023.

REVIEW OF THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL SCREENING REPORT: The Draft Environmental Screening Report will be available for public review and comment for a 30-day public review period from 29 September 2023 – 29 October 2023. All Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs), as well as all ward councillors and key stakeholders, etc., will be informed of the availability of the report for review. The report will be available for review on the JG Afrika (Pty) Ltd website as well as in hard copy at places specified by the local ward councillor. Details regarding the venues where the hard copy report can be viewed will be shared with I&APs, local ward councillors, community groups, and affiliations, etc.

JG AFRIKA (PTY) LTD CONTACT PERSONS:

Project Manager:
Mrs Sonja van der Merwe
Pr. Sci. Not: 115689
Tel: 011 231 2200
E-mail: vandemerwes@jgafrika.com

