
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION REPORT

FOR THE BASIC ASSESSMENT (BA), WATER USE LICENSE APPLICATION AND A HERITAGE PERMIT FOR THE PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE OF NEW SYSTEM 1 AT RAND WATER VEREENIGING TREATMENT WORKS, INSTALLATION OF APPROXIMATELY 7 KM PHASE 2 SLUDGE PIPELINE IN VEREENIGING, 1.5 KM SLUDGE LINE IN PANFONTEIN AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE WITHIN THE JURISDICTION OF SEDIBENG DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY, GAUTENG PROVINCE

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**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION REPORT FOR THE PROPOSED
CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE OF NEW SYSTEM 1 AT
RAND WATER VEREENIGING TREATMENT WORKS,
INSTALLATION OF APPROXIMATELY 7 KM PHASE 2 SLUDGE
PIPELINE IN VEREENIGING, 1.5 KM SLUDGE LINE IN
PANFONTEIN AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE**

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List of Abbreviations

BA	Basic Assessment
BAR	Basic Assessment Report
C&RR	Comments & Response Report
DBAR	Draft Basic Assessment Report
DFFE	Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment
DMRE	Department of Minerals, Resources and Energy
DWS	Department of Water and Sanitation
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
FBAR	Final Basic Assessment Report
HPA	Heritage Permit Application
I&AP	Interested and or affected Party.
NEMA	National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998)
NWA	National Water Act (Act 36 of 1998)
PHRA-G	Provincial Heritage Resources Authority Gauteng
PPP	Public Participation Process
WULA	Water Use License Application

1 INTRODUCTION

The Public Participation Process (PPP) is a cornerstone of every Basic Assessment (BA), Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), Water Use License Application (WULA), and Heritage Permit Application (HPA) process. It forms a fundamental part of these procedures and is one of the most important components of the environmental authorisation process. The principles of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998), the National Water Act, 1998 (Act No. 36 of 1998), the National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act No. 25 of 1999), and the EIA Regulations of 2014 (as amended) govern the BA, WULA, and HPA processes, including public participation. These principles emphasise the provision of sufficient and transparent information on an ongoing basis to all stakeholders to allow for meaningful input, and they ensure the inclusion of previously disadvantaged individuals, women, and youth in the process.

The aim of the process is to provide Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) with clear, accurate, and comprehensive information about the proposed development, its alternatives, and the associated environmental impacts. Furthermore, it ensures that I&APs are given a fair opportunity to express their viewpoints, raise issues, and voice concerns regarding the proposal, its alternatives, and/or the decisions being made.

All inputs from the public and relevant stakeholders are taken into consideration during the project planning and development phase. As a result, a clear recording of all issues raised and comments made is maintained in the register of comments and responses. This register is updated as and when new comments and concerns are raised. The process culminates in the undertaking to present the proposed development to registered I&APs and to provide them with the opportunity to comment and raise issues and concerns with regard to the proposed development. These issues, concerns and comments as raised by the I&APs are then recorded and considered.

The EIA regulations emphasise the importance of public participation. In terms of the EIA regulations, the public –

- may participate in the application process.
- may comment on any written communication submitted to the competent authority by the applicant or environmental consultant.
- must comment within the timeframes.
- must send a copy of any comments to the applicant if the comments were submitted directly to the competent authority; and
- must disclose any interest that the person has in the application being granted or refused.

Further, in terms of the EIA regulations, the Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) –

- manages the application process.
- must be independent.
- undertakes the work objectively – even if this results in findings that are not favourable to the applicant.
- discloses information that may influence the decision; and

- conducts a public participation process.

1.1 Project Background

Rand Water proposes the Construction and Maintenance of the New System 1 at the Vereeniging Water Treatment Works, along with the Installation of an approximately 7 km Sludge Pipeline (Phase 2) in Vereeniging and a 1.5 km Sludge Pipeline in Panfontein. These developments are located within the jurisdiction of the Sedibeng District Municipality in the Gauteng Province and span across three distinct sites: the New System 1 at the Vereeniging Water Treatment Works (within Emfuleni Local Municipality), the Phase 2 Sludge Pipeline (also within Emfuleni Local Municipality), and the Panfontein Sludge Pipeline (within Midvaal Local Municipality).

The proposed development requires Environmental Authorization under the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA), Heritage Permit (NHRA) and the Water Use License Application and Appeals Regulations, 2017(amended) promulgated under the National Water Act – NWA (Act 36 of 1998) to ensure compliance with Environmental, Heritage, Water legislation and regulations, the Competent Authorities for all the required documentation are the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE), Provincial Heritage Resources Authority Gauteng (PHRA-G), and the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) respectively. All relevant legislation will be consulted and complied with during the Basic Assessment process.

2 APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The overarching aim of the Public Participation Process (PPP) is not only to comply with the relevant legislative requirements, but also to ensure that all potential stakeholders and Interested and Affected Parties are given a fair and meaningful opportunity to participate. Therefore, Rand Water's approach to this process was to proactively identify the relevant I&APs, inform them of the proposed development and related procedures, involve them by affording them ample opportunity to raise issues and concerns about the proposed development and consolidate all those issues within the planning process.

Based on the above approach, the following methodology was used to ensure that a complete I&AP communication process was achieved:

- Consultation with Landowners, Stakeholders and the Organ of State.
- Draft a Background Information Document (BID), including all information and describing the process, including a map of the area affected by the proposed development.
- Advertise the project in the prescribed newspapers, put up site notices, identify all authorities and adjacent landowners, and send them a BID (according to the legal requirements).
- As I&APs respond to the advertisements and notices, register them on an I&AP database.
- Communicate relevant information to all registered I&APs throughout the process, in order for them to respond.

- List the issues raised in a Comment and Response Report (CRR).
- Determine the need for a public meeting and, if required, arrange, advertise, and hold public meetings, and record all issues raised; and
- Once the draft Report has been compiled, put the document out for public comment, and systematically inform registered I&APs of the opportunity to comment.
- This report provides a description of the methodology followed and includes detailed appendices as proof of the procedure followed.

3 OVERVIEW OF THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

The PPP for Basic Assessment, Water Use License Application and a Heritage Permit was initiated on Wednesday, 16 April 2025. The stages that formed part of the public participation process to date are reflected in the figure below:

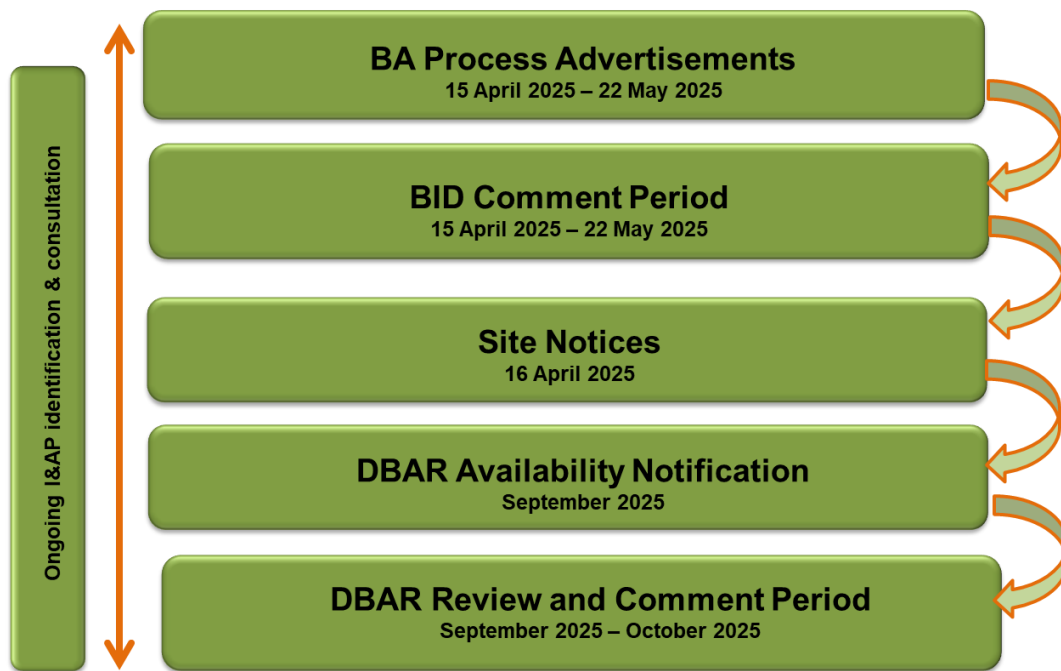


Figure 1: Public Participation Process to date.

Members of the public who wished to be registered on the database as an I&AP were able to do so via telephone and email.

On-going consultation with key stakeholders (e.g. local authorities, relevant government departments, local businesses etc.) and identified I&APs ensured that I&APs were kept informed regarding the Basic Assessment, WUL and Heritage Permit applications' processes and any key changes regarding the project. Networking with I&APs will effectively continue throughout the Basic

Assessment phases until the FBAR, WULA, HPA are submitted to the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE), DWS and PHRA-G. Where required, stakeholders and I&APs were engaged on an individual basis.

During the environmental studies, consultation was undertaken with individuals, businesses, institutions and organizations, and the following sectors of society have been identified and are afforded an opportunity to comment on the Draft Basic Assessment Report (DBAR), WULA and the HPA:

- National Authorities (DFFE)
 - Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE)
- Provincial Authorities (GDEnv, DWS, Public works etc.)
 - Provincial Heritage Resources Authority Gauteng (PHRA-G)
 - Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS)
- Organ of states
 - Midvaal Local Municipality
 - Emfuleni Local Municipality
 - Sedibeng District Municipality
 - Department of Public works
 - Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD)
 - Department of Water and Sanitation
 - Gauteng Provincial Heritage Resources Authority
 - South African Heritage Resources Agency
 - Gauteng Department of Defence Force
 - Gauteng Department of Environment
 - South African Civil Aviation Authority
- Community representatives; and
- Adjacent landowners

The figure below indicates the next steps to be undertaken during the continuation of the PP process.

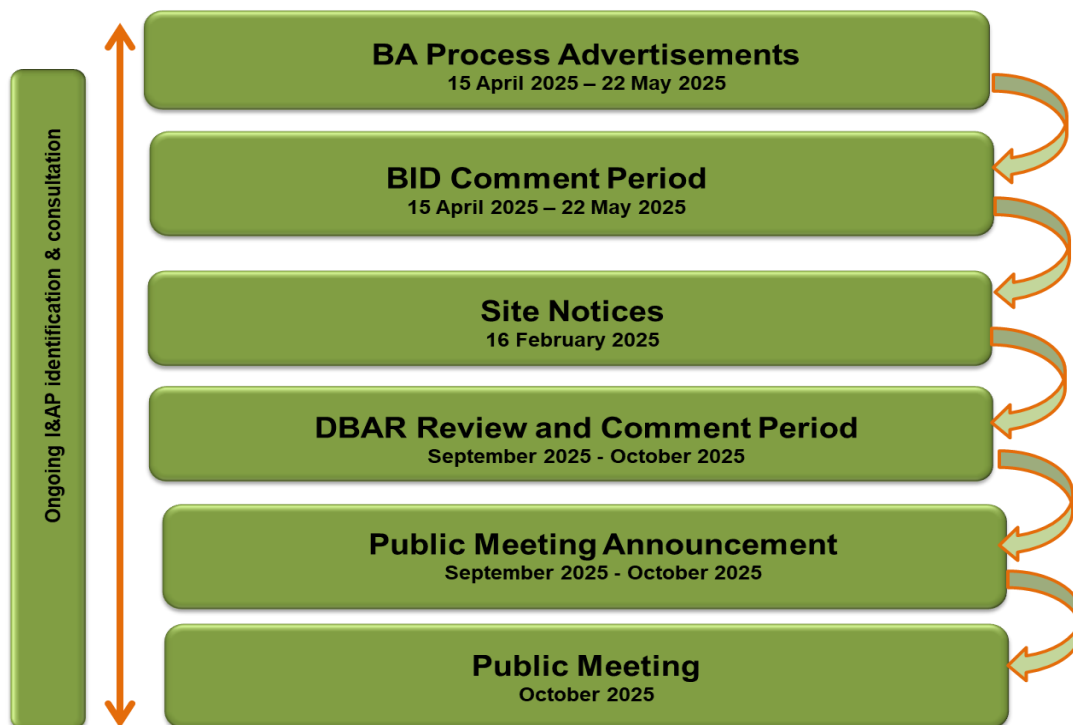


Figure 2: Public Participation going forward

3.1 Consultation and Public Involvement

The consultation process is still underway, and it will involve correspondence with both Organs of State and I&APS. A public meeting with the community will be held upon request. All information that will be received at the meeting will be addressed and recorded in the Comments and Response Report (CRR) and included in the Final Basic Assessment.

4 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ANNOUNCEMENT AND THE OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE

The opportunity to participate in the BA, WULA and HPA Processes was announced in **April 2025** in the following ways:

- Distribution of flyers inviting I&APs to become involved, accompanied by a Background Information Document, including maps of the project location and a Registration Form (Appendix F).
- A Newspaper Advertisement was placed in both the **STER North and STER South Newspapers** on Tuesday, **15 April 2025**, inviting I&APs to register and submit their comments to Selahle Consultancy & Projects (SCP) (Appendix B).
- Site Notices informing the surrounding communities and immediately adjacent landowners of the proposed development were placed within the boundaries of the study area on **Wednesday, 16 April 2025**. Please refer to Appendix C.
- The I&APs Database is included in Appendix G.

4.1 Review of Draft Basic Assessment Report and Public Comments

The DBAR will be made available for public review for a 30-day comment period as stipulated in the EIA Regulations, 2014(as amended). The comment period commenced is anticipated to be from **September 2025 to October 2025**. Registered I&APs will be sent written notification of the availability of the DBAR through emails.

The DBAR will be made available at the following venues:

Table 1: Venues of where the DBAR will be available

Venue	Address and Contact Details	Working Hours
PANFONTEIN		
Panfontein Intermediate school	01 Itumeleng St, Bantubonke Vereeniging 1930 Tel: 016 100 2002	Monday - Friday 07h30am-16h00pm
VEREENIGING		
Vereeniging Civic Theatre	Performing arts theatre Joubert St Vereeniging 1939 Tel: 016 450 3024	Monday - Friday 07h00am - 17h00pm Saturday to Sunday: 6h00am - 21h30pm
General Smuts High School	Van Riebeeck St Vereeniging 1930 Tel: 016 421 4130	Monday - Friday 07h30am-14h30pm

The DBAR will also be made available on USB upon written request during the review period. Furthermore, all identified Organs of State will also be offered an opportunity to review and comment on the Draft BAR. A hard copy and/or soft copy (email) of the DBAR will be submitted to all Organs of State for review and comment.

The report will be delivered to the following Organs of State:

- 1) Midvaal Local Municipality
- 2) Emfuleni Local Municipality
- 3) Sedibeng District Municipality
- 4) Department of Public Works
- 5) Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD)
- 6) Department of Water and Sanitation
- 7) Gauteng Provincial Heritage Resources Authority

- 8) South African Heritage Resources Agency
- 9) Gauteng Department of Defense Force
- 10) Gauteng Department of Environment
- 11) South African Civil Aviation Authority

4.2 Public Meetings

One (1) public meeting will be scheduled upon request by the Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) or the competent authority during the review and comment period of the DBAR. This will take place two (2) weeks from the date the DBAR will be released for public review.

The aim of the public meeting is to provide I&APs with information regarding the proposed development and invite I&APs to raise any comments and/or concerns that they may have. All comments and concerns made during the public meeting will be recorded and appended to FBAR. A Comment and Response Report (CRR) which includes all issues raised and corresponding responses will also be appended to the FBAR and submitted to the competent Authority.

5 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT DONE TO DATE

Over and above, Newspaper Advertisements were placed in both **STER North and STER South Newspapers on the 15 April 2025** and **Site Notices** were erected on **Wednesday, 16 April 2025**. All key stakeholders, Landowners and the organs of State were contacted before the **22 May 2025**.

- On-going consultation with key stakeholders (e.g., local authorities, relevant government departments, local businesses etc.) and identified I&APs will be kept informed regarding the Basic Assessment process and any key changes regarding the project. Networking with I&APs will effectively continue throughout the Basic Assessment phase until the FBAR is submitted to the DFFE. Stakeholders, Organs of State, and I&AP that were consulted are via email:
 - **National Authority:**
 - Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE)
 - **Provincial Authority:**
 - Provincial Heritage Resources Authority Gauteng (PHRA-G)
 - Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS)
 - **Organs of State:**
 - Midvaal Local Municipality
 - Emfuleni Local Municipality
 - Sedibeng District Municipality
 - Department of Public works
 - Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD)
 - Department of Water and Sanitation

- Gauteng Provincial Heritage Resources Authority
 - South African Heritage Resources Agency
 - Gauteng Department of Defence Force
 - Gauteng Department of Environment
 - South African Civil Aviation Authority
- **Registered Interested and Affected Parties:**
 - Vereeniging and Panfontein Community Members

6 COMMENT AND ISSUE RESPONSE REPORT

A Comment and Issue Response Report (CRR) would be developed during the Draft Basic Assessment Report public review period. All comments, issues, and concerns that would be raised by the I&APs will be recorded and duly responded to by the EAP and project managers should the queries be too technical. The I&APs will also be afforded to review these comments during the Final Basic Assessment (FBAR).

7 CONCLUSION

Public Participation Process for a Basic Assessment process is usually done in four (04) phases, namely:

- i. Project Announcement – in accordance with Regulation 41
 - a) Erection of Site Notices
 - b) Publication of Newspaper Advert
 - c) Distribution of Background Information Document (BID)
- ii. Draft Basic Assessment Public Review – in accordance with Regulation 43
 - a) All registered and identified Interested and Affected Parties, Organs of State, Stakeholders and communities are afforded an opportunity to review, comment and raise concerns about the project
 - b) Public Meetings and Focus Group Meeting are usually held during this phase.
- iii. Final Basic Assessment Report submission announcement – in accordance with Regulation 44
 - a) This is done to just inform all I&APs, Organs of State, Stakeholders and Communities of the submission of the Final Basic Assessment to the Competent Authority.
- iv. Environmental Authorisation Decision from the Competent Authority - in accordance with Regulation 4
 - a) All registered and identified Interested and Affected Parties, Organs of State, Stakeholders and communities get notified about the decision and are further granted 14 days to appeal the decision directly to the Competent Authority.

Selahle Consultancy and Projects Pty Ltd has duly completed phase 1 of the public participation process and will be commencing with the second phase in August 2025. All registered and

identified Interested and Affected Parties, Organs of State, Stakeholders and communities will be contacted and afforded an opportunity to review and comment.

The project database will be kept active until the end of the project life cycle.