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BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT (BID):

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR THE PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF TELECOMMUNICATION TOWERS IN THE OSHANA AND OMUSATI REGIONS, NAMIBIA

November 2023

Proponent: PowerCom (Pty) Ltd

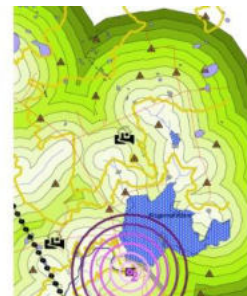


GCS Project Number: 22-1081

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PRACTITIONER: GCS (PTY) LTD

GCS Water Environmental Engineering (Pty) Ltd (GCS) is a fully integrated water, environmental, and earth science consulting services company based in the Republic of South Africa, with offices in Namibia, Botswana, and the Czech Republic. GCS provides a professional consulting service in the fields of environmental, water and earth sciences. GCS has a team of highly trained staff with considerable experience in the fields of environmental and water science.

GCS will act as the Independent Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP), as well as the Public Participation Practitioner for this environmental authorisation process.



ABBREVIATIONS	
BID	Background Information Document
CRR	Comments and Response Report
EAP	Environmental Assessment Practitioner
ESIA	Environmental and Social Impact Assessment
EMA	Environmental Management Act (No 7 of 2007)
EMP	Environmental Management Plan
I&AP	Interested and Affected Party
MEFT: DEAF	Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism: Department of Environmental Affairs and Forestry
MHz	Megahertz
PPP	Public Participation Process

1 INTRODUCTION

PowerCom (Pty) Ltd (PowerCom or the proponent hereafter) proposes to erect 2 telecommunication towers within the Oshana and Omusati Regions (**Figure 3**). The proposed project aims to strengthen the coverage for mobile services, inclusive of voice and data services within the subject area.

Under the Environmental Management Act (2007) and its Regulations (2012), an Environmental Assessment (EA) is required for:

10.1 The construction of (g) masts of any material or type and of any height, including those used for telecommunication, broadcasting, and radio transmission.

This Background Information Document (BID) has been compiled by GCS with the following aims:

- To introduce the proposed project and related activities to potential Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs);

- To provide information on the Environmental Impact Assessment and related processes;
- To inform I&APs on how to be involved in the Environmental Impact Assessment process;
- To invite all parties to register as I&APs on the Environmental Impact Assessment database; and
- To provide all I&APs with an opportunity to comment on the proposed project and associated process, including biophysical and socio-economic aspects, as well as any other issues of concern.

2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Proponent proposes to erect 2 telecommunication towers in the Oshana and Omusati Regions, which aims to strengthen the coverage for mobile services, inclusive of voice and data services within the subject area.

2.1 Need and desirability for the development.

Due to the constant growth in the use of mobile communication services in Namibia, the pressure to continuously expand the communications network is increasing. PowerCom identified the need for the new structures, which will provide capacity and improve the coverage in these particular areas. This proposed development will ensure that the quality of the service provided to the telecommunication users in the area is improved.

2.2 Description of Activity

2.2.1 Site Location

The site was selected with the aid of a radio planning tool and as instructed by the shareholder. There is currently poor network coverage at the proposed areas. The proposed site locations are detailed in the table below:

Table 1: Site Locations

Site Name	Site Coordinates	Region
Erf 7484 Omashaka Extension 1	17°54'17.15"S 15°59'43.78"E	Oshana
Erf 1909 Oshikuku Extension 7	17°40'2.31"S 15°28'22.94"E	Omusati

2.2.2 Site Design

There are different types of structures that can be utilised depending on the requirements. These different types of structures include:

- Camouflage towers are self-supporting structures. These towers are normally between 15-30m in height.
- Lattice towers are self-supporting structures that are generally made out of steel.
- Monopole towers consist of a single tubular mast.
- Guyed towers or lattice structures that has guyed ropes to stabilize it because of its height. These towers are normally between 60-240m in height.



Figure 1: Example of the proposed Camouflage Tower (<https://powercom.na/>)



Figure 2: Example of the Lattice Tower (<https://powercom.na/>)

It will also include the construction of an equipment room which will house the communication equipment. The site will be fenced in order to limit public access. The antenna size will differ depending on the frequency used as well as different types of antennae. The main frequencies that will be used is 900, 1800 & 2100 MHz. The proposed towers types and heights are detailed in the table below.

Table 2: Proposed Towers Type and Height

Site Name	Tower Type	Tower Height (m)
Erf 7484 Omashaka Extension 1	Camouflage tower	25
Erf 1909 Oshikuku Extension 7	Lattice tower	30

2.3 Infrastructure and Services

Water will only be used during the construction period, more specifically for the foundation works. The contractor will be responsible for the sourcing of water. Access to the site will be prohibited to anyone except the construction team and PowerCom representatives. 3 Phase 40 Ampere power will be required for the operation of the towers and will be connected to the respective electricity provider's grid.

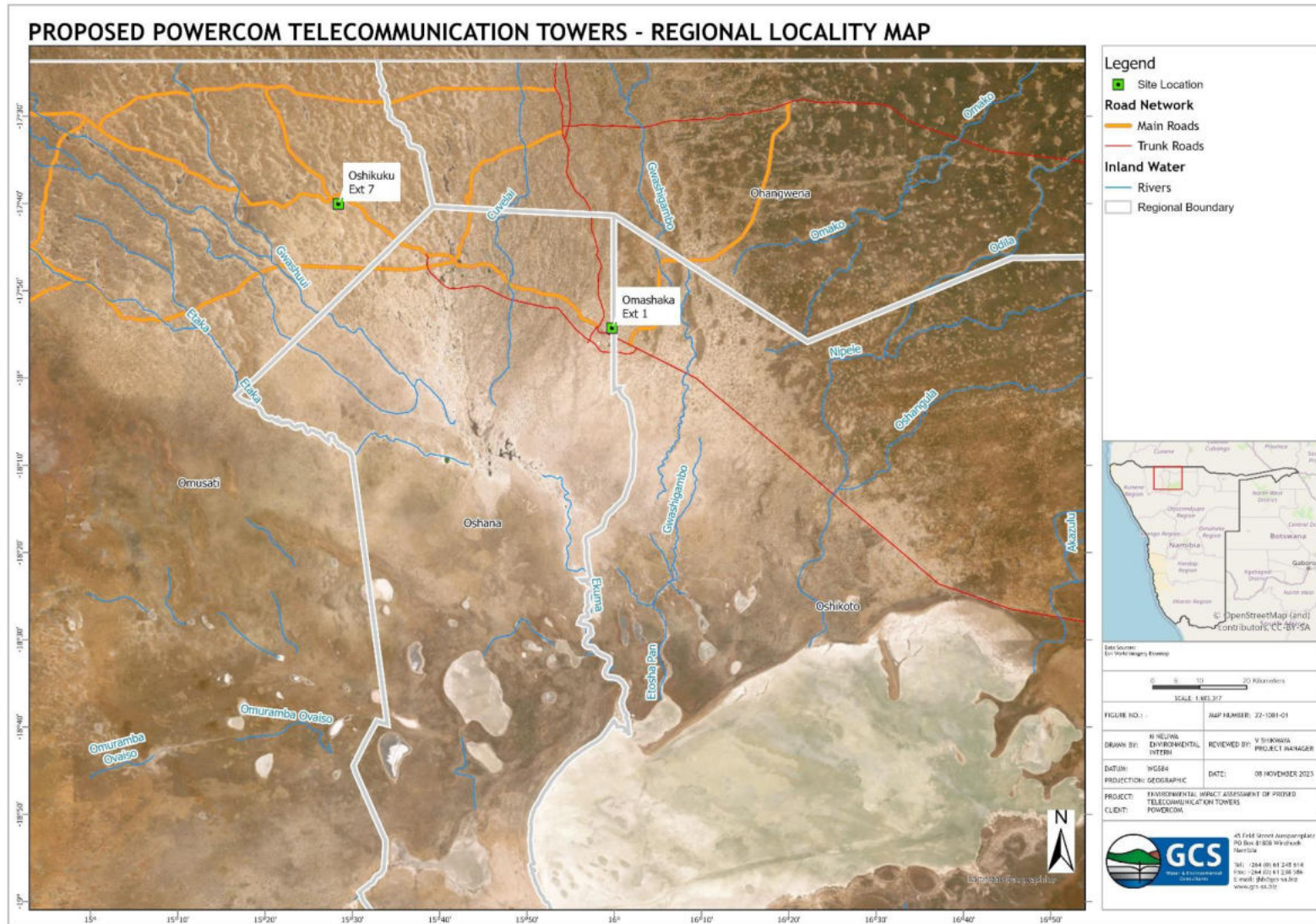


Figure 3: Locality Map of the proposed Telecommunication Towers

3 ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS

3.1 Environmental Management Act No. 7 of 2007

The Environmental Management Act (EMA) provides a list of activities, the development or execution of which require an Environmental Clearance Certificate (ECC) from the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism: Department of Environmental Affairs (MEFT: DEAF) prior to construction. Due to the nature of the proposed project, an ECC will be required prior to project commencement. Accordingly, an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process as per the requirements of EMA: Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (18 January 2012) must be conducted to inform the ECC decision.

3.2 Environmental Impact Assessment

The EMA defines EIA as a process of identifying, predicting and evaluating the significant effects of activities on the environment, the risks and consequences of activities, alternatives to these activities and options for mitigation of such activities. This is done with a view to minimise negative impacts, maximise benefits and promote compliance with the principles of environmental management. The figure below outlines the EIA process to be undertaken for the proposed project.

Phases of EIA	
APPLICATION PHASE	
Review of project against EMA listed activities to determine the need for an EIA Process	
Compile and submit an ECC application to DEA	
SCOPING PHASE WE ARE HERE	
Identify and consult with Interested and Affected Parties (IAPs) and conduct baseline studies to determine the sensitivity of the receiving environment and population to the proposed project	
Identify potential environmental and social impacts based on the baseline studies and consultation with IAPs	
Determine the Terms of Reference for further study during EIA/EMP (if required).	
Compile Draft Scoping Report and Draft EMP detailing the above process and outcomes, and circulate to IAPs for review and comment.	
Finalise Scoping Report and Draft EMP with IAP review outcomes and submit to DEA for adjudication.	

Figure 3: The EIA Process

3.3 Competent Authority

The competent authority administering the EIA process and deciding on the issue of an ECC is the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism’s Department of Environmental Affairs and Forestry (MEFT: DEAF). As such, the application for an ECC and all reports and documentation associated with the EIA process will be submitted to the MEFT: DEAF.

PURPOSE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The Environmental Management Act, 2007 (Act No. 7 of 2007), and supporting Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulation of 18 January 2012, prescribes the processes to be followed when conducting the Environmental Clearance Certificate (ECC) Application and associated Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process.

In broad terms, the purpose of the EIA process is to assess the current environment (including the socio-economic and cultural setting) in which a proposed activity will take place and assess all potential impacts.

The process aims to ensure that all relevant factors are considered when evaluating the potential impacts of a project, as well as developing appropriate environmental management measures (in the form of an Environmental Management Plan – EMP) to mitigate these impacts.

The EMP describes the goals and objectives for impact management to minimise or eliminate potential negative impacts; the action plans to bring effect to those goals and objectives; the procedures to be implemented to ensure integration of environmental management into the daily operations; as well as a plan to raise awareness of employees and the surrounding community with regards to environmental management.

4 REGISTRATION OF I&APS AND THEIR COMMENTS/CONCERNS

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

Public involvement is an essential part of any Environmental Assessment process. Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) include any person or organisation that will be directly or indirectly involved and/or affected by the project.

You have been identified as a potential I&AP who may want to receive information regarding the above-mentioned project and/or provide input into the Environmental Impact Assessment process. To be recognised as an I&AP and to be kept informed of the proposed project and EIA process going forward, one must register with GCS to be added to the Stakeholder Database for the project. You may communicate via fax, email, or telephone to obtain further information or comment on the proposed project.

Registered I&APs will be kept informed of the Public Participation Process throughout the EIA process, will be given the opportunity to review and comment on the EIA reports and documents, will receive feedback on how comments have been taken into account, and will be informed of the outcome of the assessment. All comments will be recorded and presented to the project team and competent authority by means of the Project Comments and Responses Register (CRR).

Attached to this BID is a comment form which you can complete and record any comments you may have with respect to the proposed activity. The contact details of the EAP to whom the comments can be addressed are outlined to the right.

The general public as well as any I&APs are hereby invited to attend the public meeting during which the potential environmental and social impacts of the project will be presented for comments and inputs from the public. The meeting is scheduled to take place as follows:


Omashaka Extension 1:
Date: 22 November 2023
Time: 17h30
Venue: Erf 7484 Omashaka Ext 1

Oshikuku Extension 7:
Date: 23 November 2023
Time: 17h30
Venue: Erf 1909 Oshikuku Ext 7

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - CONTACT DETAILS

Contact Person:	Victoria Shikwaya
Tel:	+264 61 248 614
Fax:	+264 61 238 586
Email:	victorias@gcs-na.biz
Postal Address:	PO Box 81808 Windhoek

5 REGISTRATION OF I&APS AND THEIR COMMENTS / CONCERNS

		ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR THE PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF TELECOMMUNICATION TOWERS IN OSHANA AND OMUSATI REGION, NAMIBIA <u>I&AP Comments Form</u>					
Name:		Surname:					
Organisation / interest:							
Postal / Residential address							
		Area:			Code:		
Contact details		Tel:	()				
		Fax:	()				
		Mobile:	()				
		Email:					
Please mark with an X to indicate whether you would like to participate in the process:							
Yes, I would like to participate in this process and receive periodical updates					<input type="checkbox"/>		
No, I am not interested in participating and do not wish to receive further information					<input type="checkbox"/>		
Preferred method of communication		Email	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fax	<input type="checkbox"/>	Post	<input type="checkbox"/>
Date commented		(DD / MM / YYYY)					
Please indicate any issues, comments and concerns with regards to the proposed project (feel free to use the additional space or attach additional pages, as required)							
Please indicate in which aspects you would require more information							
Please indicate the contact details of any IAPs whom you think should be contacted							
Name:		Surname:					
Tel:		()		Fax:		()	
Mobile:		()					
Email:							
In order to be registered as an IAP for this project, fax, mail, or e-mail the completed registration form before or on 30 November 2023 to:							
Contact Person: Victoria Shikwaya Tel: +264 61 248 614 Fax: +264 61 238 586 Email: victorias@gcs-na.biz Postal Address: PO Box 81808, Windhoek							