

BASIC ASSESSMENT AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

WESTON HOUSING PROJECT

Residential and Mixed Use development of Erf 17, Erf 1480 and Erf 1508
Weston, Hankey, Kouga Local Municipality

APPLICANT: Kouga Local Municipality

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT: May 2015



Public Process Consultants

Environmental Impact Assessment and
Public Participation Management

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The Kouga Local Municipality (the applicant) have appointed Public Process Consultants as the independent Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) to undertake a Basic Assessment for the proposed residential and mixed use development, including associated infrastructure on Erf 17, Erf 1480 and Erf 1508, Weston, Hankey, in the Kouga Municipal area. The associated infrastructure includes; internal roads and stormwater; water and effluent reticulation. The attached locality map indicates the locality of the area under assessment.

In terms of the National Environmental Management Act (Act no 107 of 1998), as amended (NEMAA), and the EIA Regulations, 2014, published in Government Gazette No 38282, which came into effect on 8 December 2014 the need for a Basic Assessment is triggered by the inclusion of Activity No 27. in GN R 983, namely: "*The clearance of an area of 1 hectare or more, but less than 20 hectares of indigenous vegetation...*"

WHAT DOES THIS DOCUMENT TELL YOU?

This document provides you, as an interested and/or affected party, with background information on the proposed project, the Basic Assessment as well as Public Participation process that will be undertaken. It indicates how you can become involved in the project, receive information and raise issues that may interest and/or concern you. The sharing of information forms an important component of the Public Participation Process and provides you with the opportunity to become actively involved in the environmental process from the outset. Public Participation is an important component of the Basic Assessment process and together with scientific investigations assists the competent authority, in this instance the Department of Economic Development Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEDEAT) with their decision-making.

REQUEST FOR COMMENT/S AND REGISTRATION

In terms of regulation 40 (2) of Government Notice R 982 the public participation process, which forms part of the Basic Assessment process must provide access to all information that reasonably has or may have the potential to influence any decision with regard to an application. This Background Information Document forms the first step in the public participation process for the Basic Assessment. All interested and affected parties are requested to register on the project database by completing the comment and registration form attached to this correspondence and/or submit your contact details (via fax, mail or email), stating your full name, address and contact numbers to the consultant indicated in this documentation. You are requested to include with this correspondence any concerns that you may have regarding this Basic Assessment and the scope of the specialist studies proposed which may influence any decision with regards to this application.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Kouga Local Municipality intends to undertake a residential and mixed use development including the provision of associated infrastructure on Erf 17, Erf 1480 and Erf 1508, Weston, Hankey.. Associated infrastructure includes roads and stormwater management infrastructure (concrete stormwater v-drains), effluent reticulation and water reticulation). The affected erven are located south of the town of Hankey and are currently zoned Agriculture 1 (Erf 17), Undetermined (Erf 1480) and Public Open Space (Erf 1508) respectively.

The area proposed for development, which is approximately 6.02 ha (60 194 m²) in size, is currently vacant and has groundcover that ranges from intact indigenous vegetation to highly degraded natural remnants. A portion of the area proposed for development appears to be currently utilised by some in the local community for subsistence agriculture. The development footprint is adjacent to residential housing and community infrastructure on the south eastern and north eastern boundary; while land further west of erf 17 is used for farming (citrus, fallow grazing). The area south and north of the development footprint is undeveloped. The site is accessible from the R330 between Hankey and Humansdorp, via existing access and internal roadways serving the existing Weston Settlement.

The provisional project layout will entail the rezoning and subdivision of the affected erven, to provide for the following proposed components:

- 189 Residential Erven (totalling ~ 3.99 ha) (Residential 1)

- One site for business use (~0.12 ha) (Business 1)
- One site for Institutional use (~0.12 ha) (Institutional 3)
- Internal roads with widths ranging from 8, 10 to 12 metres (totalling ~1.35ha) (Transportation Zone 2)
- Two Public Open Space sites (totalling ~0.42 ha) (Public Open Space 1)

Water for the proposed development will be served by the existing 0.5 Ml Weston Concrete Reservoir situated to the west of the development footprint. The proposed water reticulation pipeline diameters from the reservoir are assumed to vary between 75 mm and 110 mm.

A new **waste water treatment works** (WWTW) is currently under construction on the eastern edge of Weston and has been designed to service the entire settlement of Weston, including this proposed development. The diameter of the proposed sewer reticulation pipelines for this application are 160 mm.

Gravel **roads** of 8, 10 and 12 m widths are proposed to serve the development, which will be constructed to tie-in with the existing gravel roads in the eastern portion of Weston. It is proposed that **stormwater** runoff volumes be transported via surface flow in internal concrete V-drains of varying widths. No underground pipelines will be constructed. This flow will be discharged into uncultivated land, and into existing road drainage. It is recommended that erosion protection measures in the form of energy dissipaters be constructed in 1.5m wide concrete V-drains on steep gradients. Four stormwater outlet discharge points are proposed, two of which will discharge in the open space on erf 1508 (outlet 1 and 2). These outlets are approximately 15 m long and 1.5 meters wide each (approximately 23 m² each, totalling 46m²). Stormwater will discharge into open space and return to natural watercourses.

BASIC ASSESSMENT AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

In terms of the EIA Regulations, 2014, GN R 982, 983 and 985, promulgated under Chapter 5 of the National Environmental Management Act (107 of 1998), as amended and, published in Government Gazette No 38282, on the 4 December 2014, a Basic Assessment and environmental authorisation is required prior to the commencement of any activities on site, in terms of the following:

| GN R 983 (Listing Notice 1) | |
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| Listed Activity | Description of Project Activity |
| 11. The development of facilities or infrastructure for the transmission and distribution of electricity — (i) outside urban areas or industrial complexes with a capacity of more than 33 but less than 275 kilovolts; or | The proposed development is deemed to fall outside of an urban area and electricity will need to be provided to the residential units, the capacity in kilovolts for the development/ installation of the infrastructure for the transmission and distribution of electricity requires confirmation. |
| 19. The infilling or depositing of any material of more than 5 cubic metres into, or the dredging, excavation, removal or moving of soil, sand, shells, shell grit, pebbles or rock of more than 5 cubic metres from — (i) a watercourse; | Two concrete V-drain stormwater discharge points are proposed on the south eastern boundary of the development which will discharge into the head of a drainage line. The construction of the V-drains will in all probability trigger this listed activity. This will be confirmed through the aquatic specialist assessment. |
| 24. The development of— (ii) a road with a reserve wider than 13,5 meters, or where no reserve exists where the road is wider than 8 metres; | The road widths for the proposed development vary from 8 to 12 meters wide, therefore triggering this listed activity. |
| 27. The clearance of an area of 1 hectares or more, but less than 20 hectares of indigenous vegetation, except where such clearance of indigenous vegetation is required for — | The proposed development footprint exceeds 6 ha and in all probability will result in the removal of more than 1 ha of indigenous vegetation, therefore triggering this listed activity. |
| 28. Residential, mixed, retail, commercial, industrial or institutional developments where such land was used for agriculture or afforestation on or after 01 April 1998 and where such development: (ii) will occur outside an urban area, where the total land to be developed is bigger than 1 hectare; | Erf 17 is zoned as agriculture and falls outside of an urban area. While it has not been farmed on a commercial basis there is evidence of livestock grazing and subsistence agriculture within the development footprint, the extent of which will be confirmed through the assessment process. The proposed development footprint exceeds 1 ha, therefore triggering this listed activity. |
| GN R 985 (Listing Notice 3) | |
| 4. The development of a road wider than 4 metres with a reserve less than 13,5 metres. (b) In Eastern Cape: ii. Outside urban areas, in: (ee) Critical biodiversity areas as identified in systematic biodiversity plans adopted by the competent authority or in bioregional plans; | The erven forming part of this development are within the Eastern Cape and in terms of the Eastern Cape Biodiversity Conservation Plan fall within an aquatic critical biodiversity area (ABLMC 2b). A south eastern portion of the development falls within a terrestrial critical biodiversity area (CBAT2). Roads to be constructed as part of the proposed development will trigger this listed activity. |

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| <p>14. The development of—</p> <p>(ii) channels exceeding 10 square metres in size;</p> <p>(vi) bulk storm water outlet structures exceeding 10 square metres in size;</p> <p>(x) buildings exceeding 10 square meters in size.</p> <p>(xii) infrastructure or structures with a physical footprint of 10 square metres or more;</p> <p>where such development occurs—</p> <p>(a) within a watercourse;</p> <p>(c) if no development setback has been adopted, within 32 metres of a watercourse, measured from the edge of a watercourse;</p> <p>(xii) infrastructure or structures with a physical footprint of 10 square metres or more;</p> <p>(c) In Eastern Cape:</p> <p>ii. Outside urban areas, in:</p> <p>(ff) Critical biodiversity areas or ecosystem service areas as identified in systematic biodiversity plans adopted by the competent authority or in bioregional plans;</p> | <p>The site falls within the Eastern Cape within an aquatic critical biodiversity area (CBAT2) in terms of the Eastern Cape Biodiversity Conservation Plan (ABLMC 2b). A south western portion of the site falls within a terrestrial critical biodiversity area (CBAT2). Stormwater outlet structures (concrete V-Drains with dissipaters) proposed as part of the development may fall within 32 meters from a watercourse. There is a drainage line on the south eastern and south western boundary of the development. The distance of buildings and infrastructure (stormwater outlet structures) to the watercourses will be determined by the aquatic specialist assessment.</p> |
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The listed activities require authorisation from the Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEDEAT). The Basic Assessment needs to show the competent authority (DEDEAT), the project proponent (Kouga Local Municipality) and other affected organs of state, what the consequences of their choices will be in biophysical, social and economic terms. Public involvement forms an important component of this process, by assisting in the identification of issues and alternatives to be evaluated as part of the assessment process. The following specialist studies are proposed to form part of the Assessment Process:

- Aquatic Assessment
- Biophysical Assessment (fauna and flora)
- Engineering Assessment (roads, stormwater, effluent and water reticulation)
- Phase 1 Heritage Assessment (Archaeological and Palaeontological)

The Basic Assessment Process including Public Participation can be summarised into the following stages:

Stage 1: Notice to Authorities and I&APs (30 days)

The first stage in the process entails notification to the DEDEAT as well as interested and affected parties (I&APs) of the intention to proceed with the Basic Assessment Process. I&APs are required to register their interest on the project database and raise issues of concern for inclusion in the Specialist Studies to be undertaken.

Stage 2: Application Form and Consultation Basic Assessment Report (BAR) (30 days)

At the commencement of this stage of the process an **Application Form for Environmental Authorisation** will be submitted to the competent authority (DEDEAT). The Basic Assessment is undertaken in order to identify and assess potential environmental impacts, both positive and negative, that may be associated with the project activity. This includes mitigatory measures to reduce potential negative impacts and maximise positive benefits as well as the consideration of alternatives. The Consultation Basic Assessment Report (CBAR) will include an overview of the affected environment in which the activities are to take place. The Consultation BAR, together with comments received from I&APs will be made available for a 30 day review period. Reasonable and feasible alternatives identified to date and to be included in the Consultation BAR are:

- No-go Option – not to develop
- Alternative Layouts
- Go Option: Detailed assessment of the preferred layout
- Reasonable and feasible alternatives as raised by I&APs

Stage 3: Final Basic Assessment Report

Where Basic Assessment is applied to an application the applicant must within 90 days of receipt of the application by the competent authority, submit to the competent authority, a Basic Assessment Report, including specialist studies, which have been subject to a 30 day public participation process (Stage Two above). This Basic Assessment Report should include all the comments received during the 30 day comment period.

Stage 4: Decision on Basic Assessment and Appeal Period

The competent authority must within 107 days of receipt of the Basic Assessment report grant or refuse environmental authorisation. All registered I&APs will be notified of the outcome of the decision in writing and within 14 days of the date of the decision. Any appeals lodged must be done so in terms of the National Appeals Regulations, 2014.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

All project information will be made available on the website www.publicprocess.co.za. I&APs will be notified in writing of the various stages of the Assessment process and opportunity for comment.

WHAT IS YOUR ROLE AS AN I&AP?

1. I&APs are required to respond to the letters of notification and/or newspaper advertisements; register their interest on the project database; and raise any issues of concern for inclusion in the specialist studies to form part of this Basic Assessment process.
2. I&APs must state their area of interest and/or concern in the matter
3. Contact the Environmental Assessment Practitioner (details below), via email, fax or telephonically if you have a query, comment, or require further project information at any stage of the Assessment process.
4. Review the Consultation BAR, including specialist studies and submit any comments within the 30-day comment period.

WHO SHOULD YOU CONTACT?

Sandy Wren, Public Process Consultants, PO Box 27688, Greenacres, 6057
Phone 041-374 8426 Fax 041-373 2002 Email sandy@publicprocess.co.za

Information on the project can be downloaded from the following website: www.publicprocess.co.za

