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Executive Summary

Draft Scoping Report: Walmer Housing Development, Erf 11305, Port Elizabeth

1. Introduction

The Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality (NMBM) proposes to construct housing and associated facilities and infrastructure on erf 11305, in Walmer (see locality in Figure 3), to accommodate the overflow of residents from Gqebera. Authorisation was previously granted by the then Department of Economic Affairs, Environment and Tourism (DEAET) in April 2006 to a private developer for a change in land use and construction of housing units on erf 11305. This authorisation has since expired, the land has been purchased by the NMBM, and the nature of the development has changed, necessitating a new application for environmental authorisation

SRK Consulting (SRK) has been appointed by the NMBM, as the independent consultants, to conduct the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in terms of the National Environmental Management Act 107 of 1998 (NEMA), as amended, and the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations, 2010, for the proposed housing development.

In July 2014 an application to commence the current EIA process was submitted to the Department of Economic Affairs, Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEDEAT).

2. Approach to the Study

The proposed development is subject to environmental authorisation from DEDEAT in terms of the NEMA. As such, an EIA is required and this Draft Scoping Report (DSR) presents an important milestone in the EIA process.

The first step of the EIA process (see Figure 1) is the Scoping Study. The Scoping process is aimed at identifying the issues and/ or impacts that may result from the proposed activities, including the concerns of Interested and Affected Parties (IAPs), in order to inform the Impact Assessment phase of the EIA process. The Final Scoping Report (FSR) will form the basis of the Terms of Reference

(ToR) for specialist studies, and it is therefore important that all issues and potential impacts that may be associated with the proposed development be identified and recorded.

The EIA process thus far has focussed on developing a more detailed description of the development proposal, and on identifying the issues and concerns of stakeholders and IAPs. IAPs are encouraged to review the DSR to ensure that their comments have been accurately recorded and understood.

The following activities have been completed as part of the Scoping Study in accordance with the requirements of the NEMA EIA regulations:

- Advertisements of the development in “Die Burger” newspaper on 22 August 2014, and the placement of two on-site posters;
- Distribution of the Background Information Document (BID) from 22 August 2014 to identified IAPs, stakeholders and residents in the area;
- Collation of public and IAP comments on the BID and adverts, including responses to these issues;
- Inclusion in the DSR of issues that were raised (a summary of comments and responses is provided as Table 4.2 in the DSR) and original comment sheets as Appendix D;
- Preparation of a DSR;
- Distribution of the DSR to public venues for review by IAPs, and submission to authorities; and
- Distribution of an Executive Summary of the DSR (this document) to all IAPs registered for this project.

The following activities are still to be conducted in the Scoping Study:

- Provision of a 40 day comment period on the DSR;

- Compilation of all comments received on the DSR and integration of these comments into the Final Scoping Report (FSR); and
- Provision of a 21 day comment period on the FSR;
- Submission of the FSR and the Plan of Study for the EIA to DEDEAT for consideration and approval. Once approved, the EIA process can proceed to the detailed Impact Assessment phase.

An overview of the EIA process being followed, indicating opportunities for public comment, is provided below.

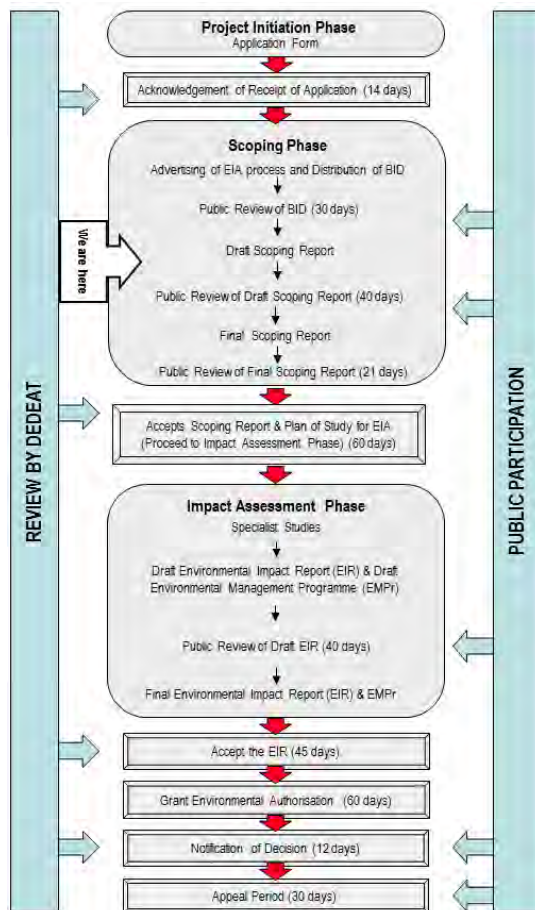


Figure 1: EIA Process

3. Motivation for the Proposed Development

Housing and service delivery is a key challenge facing the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality (NMBM). According to the NMBM's Integrated Development Plan (IDP) 2014/15 – 12th edition - the NMBM has a housing backlog of 47,442 units (15,752 units in informal areas and 30,202 backyard shacks) and has identified the provision of quality housing and the structured upgrading of informal settlements as one of its main objectives.

The area of Walmer was identified in the NMBM IDP as a restructuring zone for social housing and Walmer Gqebera was identified as a precinct where residential expansion

needs to take place. Ward 4 of the NMBM, of which Gqebera makes up the main residential area, has an estimated population of approximately 26,000 people (as per 2011 Census data), making up approximately 2% of the total population of the NMBM municipal area. The proposed development aims to alleviate the population pressure and to lower housing density in the township by providing formal housing and services. In order to achieve this, additional land outside of the current Walmer Gqebera footprint is required to accommodate the overflow of residents. Erf 11305 is one of a few undeveloped municipally owned plots in the vicinity of Walmer Gqebera, with relatively direct access to existing bulk services infrastructure connections.

4. Development Proposal

The NMBM proposes to construct a mixed typology housing development together with associated facilities and infrastructure on erf 11305, Walmer, to cater for the overflow of residents currently living in informal settlements in the Walmer Gqebera area. Approximately 1,700 residential units are proposed (see preliminary layout in Figure 4), along with associated community facilities and services infrastructure. The development will connect onto existing bulk services infrastructure in the area. The proposed site is 43.74 ha in size and located on municipally owned land which has been previously disturbed (through activities such as farming).

The project urban design is currently at Block Plan stage, which has as far as possible accommodated social sensitivities (relating to socio-economic differences between the adjacent affluent Walmer Heights residential area and the proposed development), forest identified on the site (as per the legal requirements) as well as low areas of the site where stormwater would accumulate. This plan may require further amendment based on input from the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) and any further information that emerges during the Scoping Phase.

Housing Typologies

The layout provides for the development of formal residential units to accommodate beneficiaries to be relocated from informal settlements in Walmer Gqebera. The beneficiaries will receive a formal structure (Free basic house/RDP, of which approximately 600 units are allowed for) to be built in accordance with NHBRC Standards and National Building Regulation. The remainder of the units (approximately 1,100) will be offered to beneficiaries who qualify for Socially Housing, GAP Housing and Open Market once the needs of the target groups are met.

A portion of the layout abutting the suburb of Walmer Heights has been set aside for either social housing or GAP housing (possibly Finance Linked Individual Subsidy Programme (FLISP) units) to allow for a transition area between the Free Basic House and Walmer Heights. Images of what the development is anticipated to look like

are provided in Figure 2, and descriptions of the proposed housing typologies are provided below.

Free Basic House/RDP

- Fully State Subsidised Housing;
- Beneficiaries will depend entirely on being housed by the state without any expectation of making financial contributions towards the house/services/ transfer/ registration costs for the property to be received; and
- Units will be free standing and semi-detached single storey units

GAP/FLISP Housing

- Partially subsidised housing. The state subsidy is

supplemented by private funding;

- For financially employed individuals who can afford mortgage loans of up to R300,000; and
- Semi-detached, single and/or double storey housing.

Social Housing

- Units offered for rent. Policy stipulates that the rentals paid should not exceed 30% of gross income. This would determine the size of unit allocated to the beneficiary. The units will be owned and managed by an accredited Social Housing Institution that will hold the stock for a minimum of 15 years, and may either re-finance for another 15 years or sell it off to tenants;

	
<p>Typical example of Semi-Detached Single Storey RDP house</p>	<p>Example of Semi-Detached Single Storey Social Housing</p>
	
<p>Typical example of social housing apartments - eg Walmer Link</p>	<p>View of gradient in housing typologies, with Walmer Heights on the left-hand side</p>
	
<p>View to the southeast over the development from Walmer Heights in the foreground</p>	<p>View over the development from the southeast</p>

Figure 2: Images of what the proposed development is anticipated to look like

- 3- 4 storey apartment buildings, in an access controlled complex, similar to Walmer Link.

The design has adopted the concept of a transition zone to buffer existing developments (e.g. Walmer Heights) as follows:

- The free basic houses/ RDP Units are located closer to Victoria Drive and further away from Walmer Heights. The last row is set back by approximately 100 m – 120 m from the eastern edge of Walmer Heights and 75 m – 150 m from the southern edge of the Golf Course;
- A buffer zone comprising Social Housing Units, a school site and public open space (forest clumps) is provided along the southern-edge of the Golf Course; and
- The buffer area between the RDP units and Walmer Heights is made up of FLISP/GAP housing and Open Market Housing.

The development will be an integrated settlement including different land use zones (in accordance with the Section 8 Scheme regulations, which are applicable to the area) in addition to the housing component.

No infrastructure is currently in place on site, however electricity, sewer and water will be connected onto existing bulk infrastructure currently servicing the surrounding areas.

5. Issues identified

The following potential impacts have been identified based on SRK's understanding of the receiving environment, typical impacts associated with developments of this nature, and concerns raised by IAPs:

Impacts on Heritage Resources: According to the Phase 1 Archaeological Study, the ruins of a farmstead, dwelling, and associated infrastructure were documented on the property. The ruins of the buildings may be older than 60 years, however, modifications to the buildings may have been made over time. A specialist historical structures assessment is required to assess the significance of the built environment structures.

Terrestrial Ecological Impacts: Habitat supporting faunal species will be lost and fragmented through vegetation clearing for the development, displacing these animals to adjacent areas and possibly placing them at higher risk of hunting as areas that previously were not easily accessible will be opened up. Clearing and disturbance of the soil during construction will also promote the growth and spread of invasive alien vegetation on the site. It is proposed that these impacts will be assessed by the Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP), and addressed via standard mitigation measures in the Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) for construction.

A number of protected tree species and forest clumps have also been identified on erf 11305 through a Forest Mapping survey, which has been approved by DAFF. Where possible, the layout has accommodated these forested areas so that destruction of forest will be minimised, and DAFF's comments in this regard have also been taken into account in the layout. Forest patches to be preserved will be accommodated as designated Public Open Space areas, and where destruction of forest or trees has been agreed to by DAFF (in what they deem to be 'exceptional' circumstances), permit applications in this regard will be submitted.

Socio-economic Impacts: The proposed project will impact positively on the current housing problem experienced in the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan area. Provision of formal housing as well as services will significantly improve the standard of living of the beneficiaries currently living in informal settlements, and people with different accommodation needs and income levels will have access to housing as different housing typologies are proposed.

The development may however also negatively impact on property values in the adjacent high income suburb of Walmer Heights. This may also be associated with a decrease in the NMBM's income from municipal rates in the area. In addition, there is widespread concern from IAPs in this area that the proposed development would result in an increase in crime associated with the positioning of low income housing adjacent to high income areas.

Traffic Impacts: It is anticipated that this development will increase the traffic on nearby roads and intersections, both during construction and operation. Although most of the housing beneficiaries will not own cars and will rely on public transport (as per the current situation, as they are already resident in the Gqebera area), changes in traffic flow in certain areas are expected. The most significant change is likely to be to traffic flow in the Walmer Heights area, as vehicles from the proposed development use interconnecting roads in this area to connect onto the already congested Buffelsfontein road. Pedestrian traffic in these areas could also be expected to increase. The increased traffic and pedestrians may have impacts on traffic safety and wear and tear on roads.

Impacts on Aquatic environments: No aquatic environments - man-made or natural - were observed on or within 500 m of the site by specialist, and therefore further assessment of impacts on aquatic environments is not proposed. Standard mitigation measures to manage minor impacts resulting from pollution of water resources (through contaminated stormwater) during construction will be provided in the EMPr in the impact assessment phase.

Stormwater and Erosion Impacts: Vegetation clearing and disturbance of soils during construction will leave them vulnerable to erosion by water and wind. This could lead to increased sediment load in stormwater runoff, potentially clogging the receiving stormwater infrastructure. Loss of

topsoil and erosion will also limit the potential for vegetation growth in these areas, leading to further erosion.

Concern has been raised about stormwater management in the general area, which is subject to large volumes of stormwater from the surrounding developed areas. The increase in hardened surfaces associated with the operation of development will result in less infiltration of stormwater into the soil and increased runoff, potentially exacerbating stormwater impacts.

Stormwater management planning by the design engineers has been included in the project design to limit erosion and damage to infrastructure. Impacts in this regard will be assessed by the EAP, and standard mitigation measures to manage erosion and stormwater will be included in the EMPr for both construction and operation.

Waste management Impacts:

Lack of adequate waste management during construction could result in spread of litter, illegal dumping, contamination of soil and water resources, and increased prevalence of scavengers at the site.

During operation, waste generated by the residences/businesses and facilities proposed on the site could result in similar impacts as those mentioned above for construction if not adequately managed. Waste entering the stormwater system may also result in blockages and downstream contamination. The area will be included in the NMBM's standard weekly waste collection routine.

Impacts relating to waste management will be assessed by the EAP, and if necessary additional mitigation measures will be provided in the EMPr to manage waste related impacts on the site and surrounding area during construction and operation.

Visual Impacts: The site is currently undeveloped, and clearing and development of the site, as well as lighting at night, will change its visual character, which may be perceived negatively by residents of adjacent areas overlooking the site. Being largely residential, the development is however consistent with that of the broader area, and being formalised, the housing design will conform with architectural and design standards. The forested areas that will remain on the site are also expected to provide some degree of visual shielding. During construction, dust resulting from vegetation clearing and earthworks may also be visible from a distance. It is proposed that visual impacts are assessed by the EAP and managed through standard mitigation measures provided in the EMPr.

Impacts Related to Construction: Impacts during the construction phase may potentially include the following:

- Sanitation and water supply;
- Nuisance dust impacts;
- Noise impacts;
- Safety and security;

- Chemical pollution of soils and stormwater due to spills or leaks;
- Damage to other infrastructure (e.g. underground cables and pipelines);
- Veld fires and fire management; and
- Interruption to services supply

Fire Safety Risks

As the development will entail the clearing and development of areas currently overrun with invasive alien trees (which are prone to burning), the risk of veld fires in the area is anticipated to decrease. This is further supported by the fact that the proposed houses will be electrified and wood or paraffin will therefore not be the main energy source.

However, the development itself may be at risk of fire resulting from spread of bush fires from surrounding undeveloped areas (due to the prevalence of invasive alien trees in the area, fires are not uncommon). This impact will be assessed by the EAP and management recommendations to control spread of fires will be included in the EMPr.

6. Draft Terms of Reference for Specialist Studies

The following specialist studies have already been completed (full reports for each study are included as Appendices I – L in the DSR), and impact assessments relating to these studies will be included in the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and mitigation recommendations in the EMPr:

- Archaeological Impact Assessment (Phase 1);
- Palaeontological Impact Assessment (letter of exemption);
- Wetland and aquatic environment Impact Assessment; and
- Forest mapping survey.

ToR for the additional specialist studies required to address the main concerns outlined in Section 5 above (where it is proposed that these are addressed by a specialist) are provided below.

6.1 Historical Structures Impact Assessment

Based on the outcome of the Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) mentioned above, a historian or built environmental specialist should be appointed to determine the significance of the impact on historical buildings and structures identified in the AIA. The ToR for the Historical Structure Impact Assessment are as follows:

- Determine whether the structures documented within the proposed development area are older than 60 years;

- Assess the sensitivity and significance of the structures within the proposed development area and the impact on local communities (if any); and
- Determine whether a permit is required from the ECPHRA to demolish these structures for development purposes.

6.2 Traffic Impact Assessment

A traffic impact study is planned as part of the engineering design for the project, and as such will not form part of the EIA, however the findings of the study will be used to inform the impact assessment. The ToR for the traffic study are proposed to include the following:

- Determine existing and predict additional vehicular traffic volumes (including peak volumes) resulting from the proposed development on the following roads (and any other relevant access roads):
 - Buffelsfontein Road;
 - Beethoven Avenue;
 - Victoria Drive;
 - Schubert Road;
 - Sibelius Street;
 - Titan Road;
 - Haydn Street
- Evaluate the adequacy of the existing roads to accommodate increased traffic volumes resulting from the proposed development; and
- Make recommendations and provide advice to the team regarding appropriate management of the traffic flows and how best to incorporate these into the proposed development.

6.3 Socio-economic Impact Assessment

The primary aim of the socio-economic study would be to address concerns raised by IAPs of the adjacent more affluent neighbourhoods, while also recognising the broader socio-economic context of the area and the NMBM as a whole.

While it is recognised that due to the subjective nature of socio-economic impacts of this nature, it may not be possible to adequately and objectively assess all concerns raised, the proposed ToR for the Socio-economic Specialist Study are as follows:

- Define the area potentially directly affected either socially or economically by the proposed project;
- Describe the baseline socio-economic conditions and character of this area, including property values;
- Comment on the appropriateness of the location of the development in light of the social and economic

gradients of the area, as well as policy and other relevant considerations;

- Assess the potential impacts of the development proposal on socio-economic conditions in the surrounding areas including:
 - Projected effect on property value of adjacent neighbourhoods, and the associated impact on municipal rates in the area; and
 - Projected effect on security, crime and social ills in adjacent neighbourhoods
- Address comments raised by IAPs from surrounding areas relating to the above;
- Make recommendations and provide advice to the team regarding appropriate management of impacts identified and how best to incorporate these into the proposed development.

7. Way Forward

The Draft Scoping Report is not a final report and will be amended in response to the comments received. The Final Scoping Report will be submitted to DEDEAT, together with a Plan of Study for EIA, for their approval. Comments on the Draft Scoping Report will assist in focussing the EIA and will be used to refine the Terms of Reference for specialist studies. The public is therefore urged to submit comments, as these could influence the recommendations of the Final Scoping Report and the decisions taken by DEDEAT.

The public participation programme has given IAPs an opportunity to assist with the identification of issues and potential impacts, and further opportunities are provided as indicated below.

The Executive Summary (this report) of the Draft Scoping Report has been distributed to all registered IAP's. A printed copy of the report will be made available at **Walmer Public Library** (Main Road, Walmer, Port Elizabeth). The report can also be accessed as an electronic copy on SRK Consulting's webpage via the 'Public Documents' link: <http://www.srk.co.za/en/za-walmer-housing-development-erf-11305-port-elizabeth>

The public are encouraged to review the Draft Scoping Report and send written comment by **12h00 on 13 May 2015** to:

SRK Consulting
 PO Box 21842, port Elizabeth, 6000
 Email: portelizabeth@srk.co.za
 Fax: (041) 509 4850

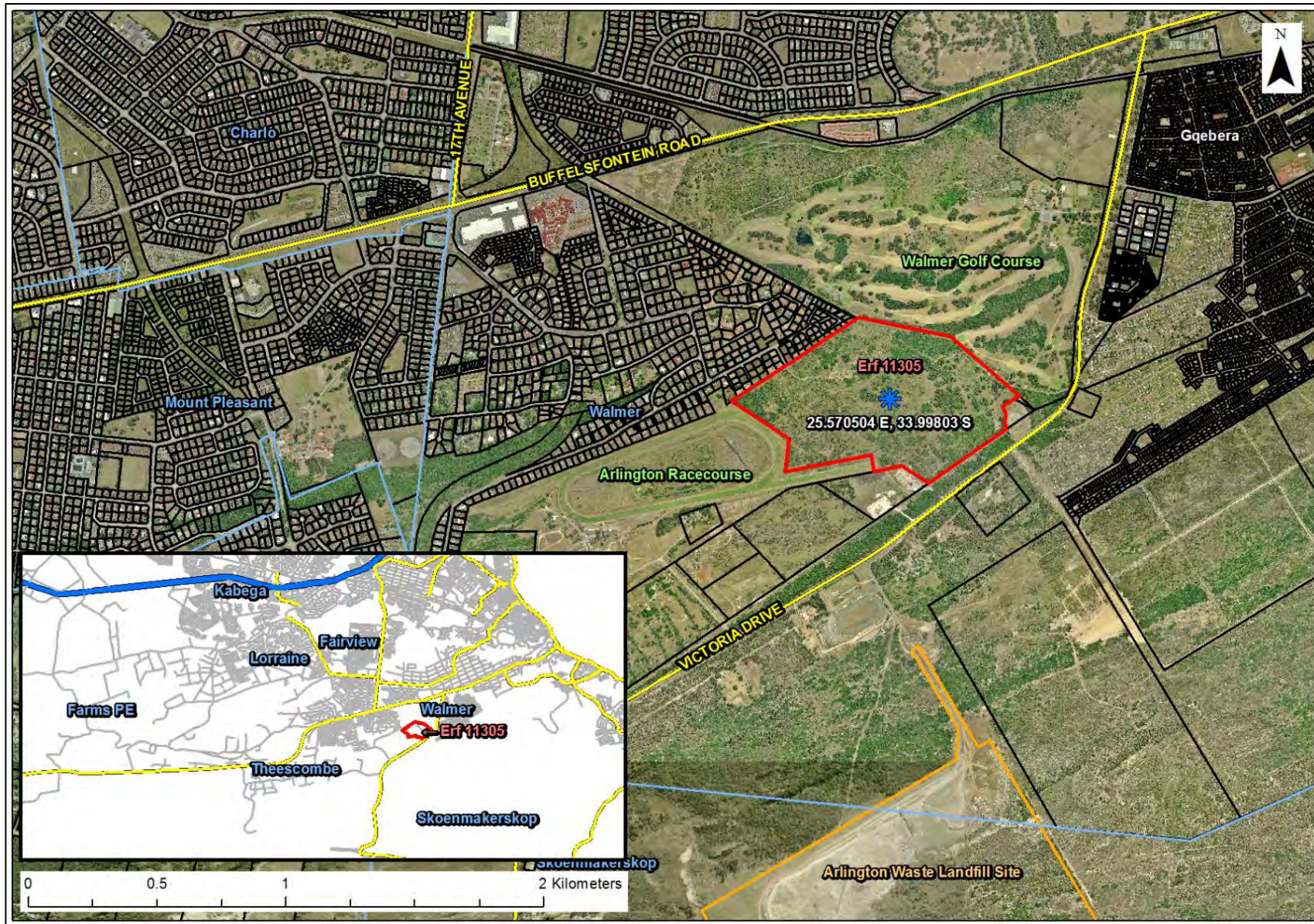


Figure 3: Site locality plan for the proposed Walmer Housing Development

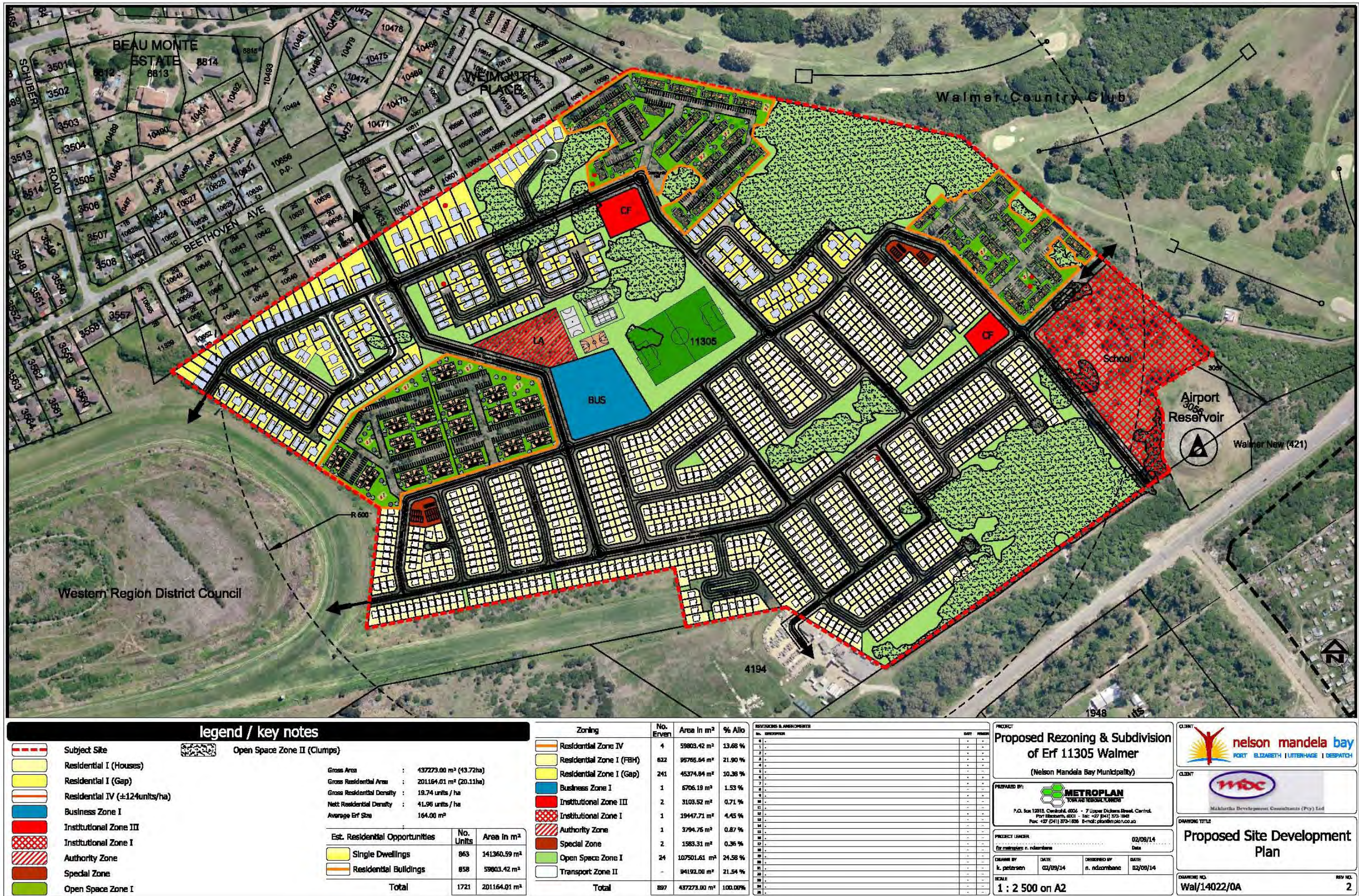


Figure 4: Preliminary site development plan for Walmer erf 11305 housing development