



**A SCOPING AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND WATERUSE LICENCE
APPLICATION FOR THE PROPOSED WILDEALSKLOOF MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT IN
BLOEMFONTEIN, FREE STATE PROVINCE.**

INVITATION TO COMMENT AND REGISTER

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

Purpose of this document

The purpose of this document aims to:

- Provide all interested and affected parties (I&APs) with information about the proposed establishment of a Wildealskloof Mixed Use development in Bloemfontein, Free State Province.
- Invite all I&APs to comment on the proposed project by raising issues of concern and/or suggestions for enhanced benefits/alternatives on any aspect related to the proposed development.

Who is doing the work?

Ideal Consulting has appointed Envirolution Consulting (Pty) Ltd, an independent environmental consultant, to conduct the Scoping and Environmental Impact Assessment, including the public participation process for the proposed development.

Introduction and background

Ideal Consulting proposes the establishment of a mixed use development as well as associated infrastructure in Bloemfontein, Free State Province. The total study area proposed for development is approximately 587 hectares located within the boundary of Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality.

The Wildealskloof Mixed Use Development entails the construction of the following land uses: Single Residential Units, Apartments and "flat" Units, Retirement facility, School Housing (Boarding Houses), Offices, a Regional Shopping Centre, Industrial Land Uses, Memorial Park (Cemetery), Parks, Conservation areas, Municipal land uses, Hotel and Spa, Churches, Schools and Creches.

Based on a pre-feasibility analysis, site identification and environmental screening process undertaken by Ideal Consulting, a favourable site has been identified for consideration and evaluation through an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process.

Motivation for the project

The idea of the Wildealskloof development was born from the need of an all-inclusive socio-economic mixed-use development to the north of the Bloemfontein CBD. TAs the CBD of Bloemfontein is under great pressure for development, the idea of creating a new economic hub to the north of Bloemfontein is an exciting new possibility.

Tenure options will range from fully subsidised, to higher income residential units. The reality of a mixed land use development will bring the "new urbanism" idea of life to Bloemfontein. Giving life to a development that will change the face of Bloemfontein for the future and relieving pressure from the Bloemfontein CBD. Development around cities and towns are necessary to accommodate an ever growing population. This development is imperative to Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality as it addresses the need of basic services, housing, economic growth, job opportunities and in turn reduces poverty levels within the metropolitan

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Location

The Wildealskloof Mixed Use Development is proposed to be developed on the remaining extent of the Farm Olrig No. 1710 & Portion 4 of the Farm Wildealskloof No. 1205, Bloemfontein, Free State Province. The site is adjacent to the Provincial Road R700 and the National Road N1 and is approximately 10 km North of Bloemfontein CBD. The site geographical coordinates are: 29°01'26.76"S: 26°13'48.64"E: The site falls within the jurisdiction of Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality. Refer to **Figure 1** for the Locality Map.

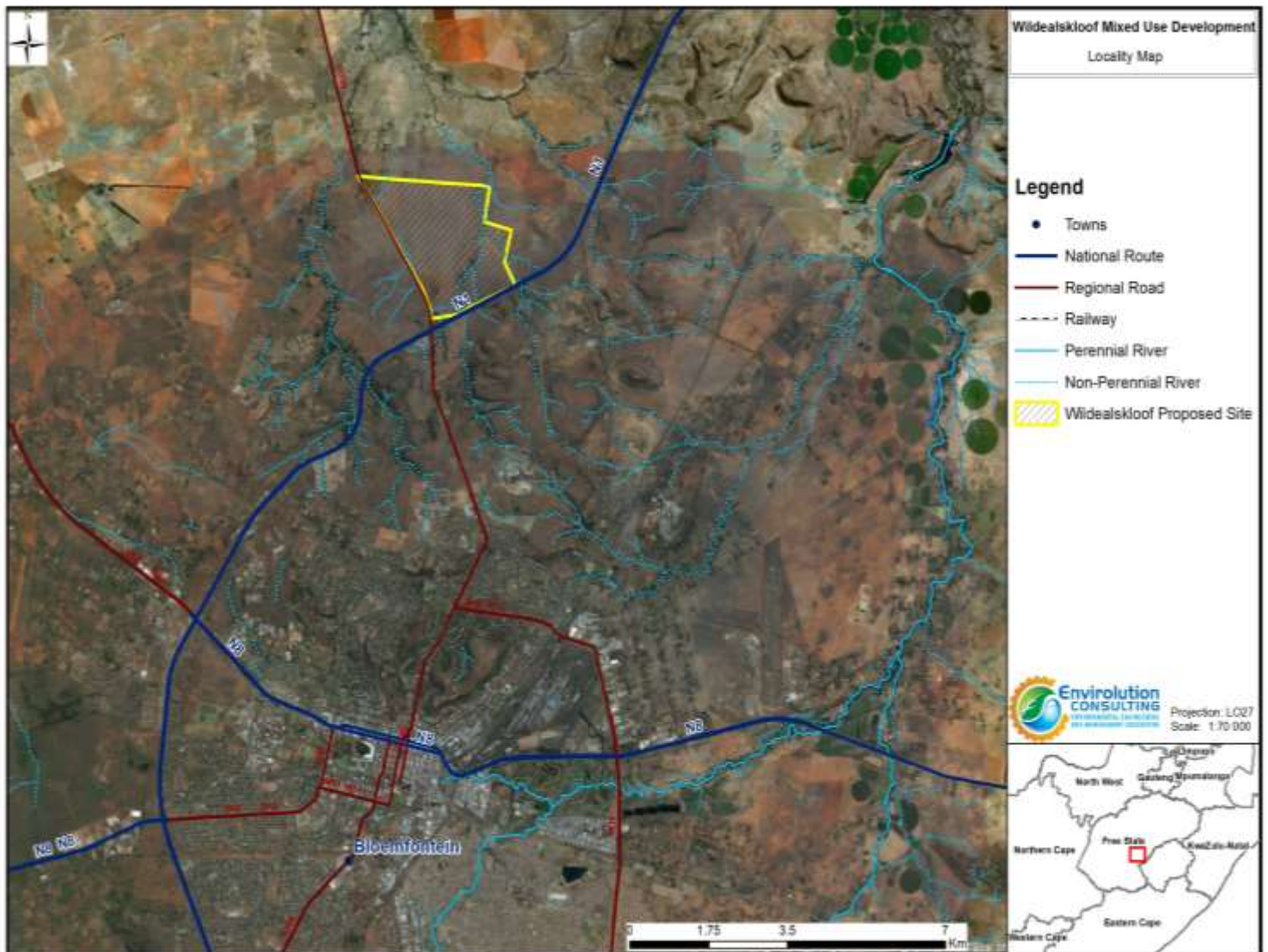


Figure 1. The map indicates the proposed study site

Legal requirements for this Scoping and Environmental Impact Assessment

Environmental Authorization

In terms of the EIA Regulations published in terms of Section 24(5) of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA, Act No. 107 of 1998, Ideal Consulting requires authorisation from Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs (DETEA) for the construction and operation of the proposed mixed-use development.

In terms of sections 24(2) and 24D of the National Environmental Management Act (No. 107 of 1998), as read with the 2014 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations of Government Notices R 982 to R985 (as amended), a Scoping and Environmental Impact Assessment is required be undertaken for this proposed project. In order to obtain an environmental authorisation, comprehensive, independent environmental studies must be undertaken in accordance with the EIA Regulations.

An EIA is an effective planning and decision-making tool. It allows the potential environmental consequences resulting from a proposed activity to be identified and appropriately managed during its establishment and its operation. It provides the opportunity for the applicant to be fore-warned of potential environmental issues, and allows for resolution of the issue(s) reported on in the EIA report as well as dialogue with I&APs.

Ideal Consulting has appointed **Envirolution Consulting**, as the independent environmental consultants, to undertake the required Scoping Phase and EIA to identify and assess all the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed project, and proposes appropriate mitigation and management measures in an Environmental Management Programme (EMPr). As part of these environmental studies, I&APs will be actively involved through the public involvement process.

The phases of an EIA are:



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Water Use Licence

In terms of the National Water Act No. 36 of 1998, a Water Use License is required for the development as per the following specific water uses:

- **Section 21(c):** Impeding or diverting the flow of water in a watercourse; and
- **Section 21(i):** Altering the bed, banks, course or characteristics of a watercourse.

This is a legislative process governed by Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) for the authorisation of all water used defined in Section 21.

Potential issues for investigation

A number of potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed project have been identified. These potential impacts will be assessed through the following specialist studies:

Ecology, avifauna, fauna and flora - the construction of the development and the associated disturbance of vegetation may affect the ecology and biodiversity of the site.

Soil and agricultural assessment - to determine the significance of loss of agricultural land and impacts relating to soil degradation and/or erosion.

Heritage sites and palaeontology - disturbance to or destruction of heritage sites and fossils may result during the construction phase through excavation activities.

Visual aesthetics - the construction of a mixed use development of this nature has the potential to affect the aesthetics within the area.

Social - the construction and operation of the facility may result in positive socio-economic opportunities in terms of local employment as well as negative impacts in terms of safety and security and land use characteristics.

Traffic Impact- the construction and operation of the facility may result in traffic impact as the development is near the National Road (N1) and Provincial Road (R700).

The EIA process will be separated into two distinct phases:

Scoping Phase Study - A desk-top study wherein potential issues associated with the proposed project are identified and those issues requiring further investigation through the EIA Phase are highlighted.

EIA Phase Assessment – A detailed study of the potentially significant impacts identified in the Scoping Phase. Specialist studies will be undertaken in order to determine the nature and significance of the potential impacts. These specialist studies will be informed by existing information, field observations and input from the public participation process. Practical and achievable mitigation measures will be recommended in order to minimise potentially significant impacts identified.

These recommendations will be included within an **Environmental Management Programme**

Public Participation Process

The sharing of information forms the basis of the public participation process and offers you the opportunity to become actively involved in the EIA Process from the outset. Comments and inputs from I&APs during the Scoping and the EIA Phases are encouraged in order to ensure that potential impacts are considered within the ambit of the study. The public participation process aims to ensure that:

- » Information that contains all the relevant facts in respect of the application is made available to I&APs for review.
- » I&AP participation is facilitated in such a manner that they are provided with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed project.
- » Adequate review periods are provided for I&APs to comment on the findings of the draft Scoping and EIA Reports.

- » In order to ensure effective participation, the public participation process includes the following:
 - » Distribution of this Background Information Document at the start of the process.
 - » Identification of I&APs including adjacent landowners and Organs of State.
 - » Placement of site notices at the affected properties.
 - » Placement of advertisements in newspapers.
 - » Compilation of an I&AP database which is updated throughout the EIA Process. All registered I&APs are personally notified at milestones in the EIA process through a stakeholder letter.
 - » Release of the Draft Scoping and EIA Reports for public review.
 - » Holding public meetings, and focus group meetings with I&APs to further facilitate the participation process.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS AN I&AP

In terms of the EIA Regulations, your attention is drawn to your responsibilities as an I&AP:

- » In order to participate in this EIA process, you must register yourself on the project database.
- » You must ensure that any comments regarding the proposed project are submitted within the stipulated timeframes.
- » You are required to disclose any direct business, financial, personal or other interest which that you may have in the approval or refusal of the application for the proposed solar energy facility.

HOW TO BECOME INVOLVED

1. By responding by phone, fax or e-mail to the invitation for your involvement which has been advertised in newspapers.
2. By returning the reply form to the relevant contact person.
3. By attending the meetings to be held during the course of the process. As a registered I&AP you will be automatically registered on the project database and you will be kept informed of this meeting.
4. By contacting the consultants with queries or comments.
5. By reviewing and commenting on the draft Scoping and EIA Reports within the stipulated 30-day review periods.

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If you consider yourself an I&AP for this project, we urge you to make use of the opportunities created by the public participation process to provide comment, raise issues and concerns which affect and/or interest you or request further information. Your input into this process forms a key element of the EIA process.

By completing and submitting the accompanying reply form, you automatically register yourself as an I&AP for this project, and are ensured that your comments, concerns or queries raised regarding the project will be noted.

Contact Information

COMMENTS AND QUERIES

You are invited to register as an Interested and Affected Party (I&AP) and/or submit your comments and queries to Envirolution Consulting, Attention: Jubilee Bubala at **Tel:** 0861 444 499; **Fax:** 0861 626 222, **E-mail:** jubilee@envirolution.co.za on or before **Monday, 19 March 2018.**