

NEED AND DESIRABILITY STATEMENT – POOLE'S BAY CONNECTION PATH, HERMANUS

The following points relate to need and desirability as considered in the DEA Guideline on Need and Desirability (2017):

- The site falls below the high watermark and will not impact on biodiversity or conservation targets.
- It is located inside an urban area, surrounded by existing urban development on the one side and the sea on the other and the proposed path would support the land use in the surrounding area.
- There is no recorded ecological sensitivities of significance on or in the immediate site surrounds. The Walker Bay whale sanctuary borders onto the site, but it would not be affected by the proposed development.
- The existing Cliff path in the area, and the fact that the proposed development would enhance this resource.
- The exclusion of the site from identified / mapped biodiversity areas.
- Waste management specifications that take account of the prevent, reduce, reuse, recycle, dispose hierarchy are included in the Environmental Management Programme.
- typical impacts associated with such developments are generally known and easily managed. This Basic Assessment served to contextualise these impacts to the site specifics. There were no apparent gaps in knowledge to suggest that impact identification and assessment were not based on a risk averse/cautious approach.
- Negative impacts associated with the development are limited and of low significance, and most can be avoided altogether or limited to acceptable levels.
- All positive and negative direct, indirect and cumulative impacts on the biophysical and social environment have been clearly documented in Section H of the Basic Assessment Report.
- There will be no unacceptable opportunity costs or any impact of significance that would negatively affect the health and/or wellbeing of the surrounding community.
- A thorough public participation process is being undertaken to inform the assessment.
- The development will serve to support local land users in the area, as well as non-locals. The popularity of the existing cliff path is testament to the need and desirability for completion of it in this location.
- The site is located on public coastal property and not subject to land use applications. There are no known restrictions in existing land use rights that prohibit the development of a path, subject to landowner consent (Department of Land Affairs)
- The Western Cape Provincial Spatial Development Framework (2009) (PSDF) does not extend to project level, however the proposal does not conflict with any of the spatial goals and objectives of the PSDF.
- Overstrand Integrated Development Plan (2017-2021) regards tourism as a key economic driver. Connecting the existing Cliff path would support a landmark tourism attraction in the area. Since the development of the path would not be financed through municipal resources, it would not put pressure on municipal revenue. Certain ward priorities are also for upgrading the Cliff path (Voelklip), thus a connection would support such initiative.
- The attraction of visitors to the area necessitates the need for supporting infrastructure, such as the proposed pathway through a more rugged area of the coast line in Hermanus. As indicated, the proposed connection path would be an enabler in this regard.
- The Overstrand Integrated Development Plan includes the Environmental Management Framework for the local area and notes the effects of climate change which includes mean sea level changes, as well as the frequency of storm events, consideration of which has been included in the design to provide for a more robust and durable structure.

- Findings and recommendations from Specialist Screening studies that were undertaken during 2019 were incorporated into the mitigation measures in the Basic Assessment Report and Environmental Management Programme and it informed the formulation of the preferred layout alternative.
- The area through Poole's bay is already informally used by hikers. As such, it is believed that this proposal constitutes a development that would optimise use of the area and add value to the existing cliff path.

The above factors as well as the congruence of the proposal with coastal management policy clearly demonstrates the activity as appropriate at this point in time (i.e. there is a need for the activity), and that the activity is appropriate in the context of its environmental setting (i.e. the activity is desirable in this location).