

# KATI-KATI HOUSING PROJECT, KATI-KATI, CATHCART

## Environmental Assessment

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT (BID)

#### INTRODUCTION

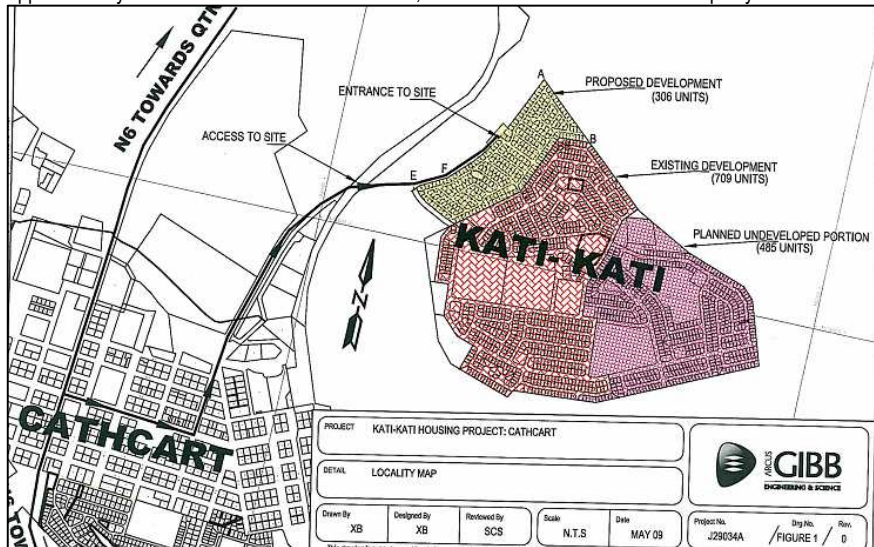
The Eastern Cape Department of Housing has proposed the construction of houses, together with the necessary services infrastructure as an extension to the existing Kati-Kati settlement.

This document constitutes the Background Information Document and is intended to provide background information on the proposed project and Environmental Assessment process.

Arcus GIBB (Pty) Ltd has been appointed as an independent environmental consultant to assist with the Environmental Authorisation Process and therefore to undertake an Environmental Assessment in the form of a Basic Assessment. A Basic Assessment Report will be prepared and will conform to the July 2006 Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations as promulgated in terms of the National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998).

#### LOCATION OF PROPOSED PROJECT

The proposed housing development is situated adjacent to the existing Kati-Kati township, approximately north-east of the town of Cathcart, within the Amahlathi Local Municipality.



#### SITE DESCRIPTION

The R351 abuts the northern and western boundaries of the proposed housing development, the southern boundary the access road to the existing portion of the Kati-Kati Township and eastern boundary the existing township. The proposed site is undeveloped vacant land with no municipal services. The site slopes towards the east but no drainage channels are evident. Site drainage therefore takes the form of sheet wash, in an easterly direction. Vegetation consists of grass lands with some small trees. Portions of the proposed site are being used for grazing.

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project consists of two main components: a housing development and relevant infrastructure. The main component entails the construction of 306 residential houses and associated internal and external access roads. The secondary component entails the development of service infrastructure comprising of the installation of a storm water management system, potable water distribution system and waterborne sewage system, from networks around the area.

The project site falls on Erf 633 which was originally zoned for farming but subdivided and re-zoned for residential use in November 2001. An environmental impact assessment was undertaken in 2003 under the ECA EIA regulations, from which the Environmental Authorisation was granted. This Environmental Authorisation has subsequently expired and therefore the Department of Economic Development and Environmental Affairs have requested a new application in accordance to the NEMA EIA regulations of 2006.

#### LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

The National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998) Section 24(5) stipulates that "listed activities" require environmental authorization by means of a Basic Assessment. Government Notice No. 386 (July 2006 EIA Regulations) identifies the following listed activities as requiring environmental authorization:

*Listed Activity No. 1 (k) – the construction of facilities or infrastructure, including associated structures or infrastructure, for the bulk transportation of sewage and water, including storm water, in pipelines with –*

- (i) *an internal diameter of 0,36 metres or more or*
- (ii) *a peak throughput of 120 litres per second or more.*

*Listed Activity No. 16 (a) – the transformation of undeveloped, vacant or derelict land to establish infill development covering an area of 5 hectares or more, but less than 20 hectares; or (b)- residential, mixed, retail, commercial, industrial or institutional use where such development does not constitute infill and where the total area to be transformed is bigger than 1 hectare.*

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#### ALTERNATIVES TO BE CONSIDERED

The EIA Regulations stipulate that realistic and feasible alternatives must be equally considered and evaluated in the Basic Assessment process. Alternatives can take the form of alternative sites, alternative development proposals and alternative designs.

The preferred site is adjacent to the existing settlement site and is shown with the yellow block on the locality map. No other viable alternatives have been identified. An application for an exemption of assessing alternatives was applied for and accepted by DEDEA on the basis that the project site and activity were authorised in terms of the previous EIA regulations.

#### STAGES IN THE BASIC ASSESSMENT

This Basic Assessment study will commence with a Public Participation Process in which Interested and Affected Parties will be given the opportunity to provide input and comment on the project.

All comments will be included in a Comments Report that will be attached to a Basic Assessment Report, to be prepared by Arcus GIBB. Interested and Affected Parties will be given the opportunity to view the Reports once complete.

The Basic Assessment Report will be submitted to the Eastern Cape Department of Economic Development and Environmental Affairs who will consider the application. Should the authorities grant approval via an environmental authorisation, all registered Interested and Affected Parties will be notified accordingly and given the opportunity to appeal against the decision should they wish to do so.

#### KEY ISSUES

Key environmental issues that have emerged to date include:

**Potential Water Contamination:** River water contamination (Thorn River) from the project is possible. Groundwater contamination is also a factor due to the site geology. Waterborne sewerage is therefore required.

**Waste Disposal:** Solid waste collection and disposal systems will be required to avoid pollution.

**Visual Impact:** The proposed development will require clearing of the natural vegetation and this is likely to alter the visual status of the landscape at the site.

**Construction:** Impacts associated with the construction of the residential houses include local dust and noise impacts and erosion should heavy rains occur. Employment opportunities will be generated over the duration of the construction period.

**Compliance with relevant environmental policy and development guidelines:** The project should take into account relevant local planning and policy as well as Municipal Spatial Development Frameworks.

#### PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

Crucial to the Basic Assessment process is the input from Interested and Affected Parties and hence the public are encouraged to register as Interested and Affected Parties for this project.

**Interested and Affected Parties are encouraged to send comments regarding the proposed project in writing** so that a paper trail can be maintained throughout the Basic Assessment process. Registered Interested and Affected Parties will be kept informed of project progress throughout the Basic Assessment process.

#### REGISTRATION OF AN I&AP

In order to ensure that you are kept up to date with the project, **please ensure that you register as an Interested and Affected Party with Arcus GIBB**. To register as an Interested and Affected Party, kindly contact Pat Jennings or Richard Judge of Arcus GIBB at the following address:

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