



BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

for

**The proposed reconstruction of the Alexandra Pedestrian Bridge,
Johannesburg, Gauteng. GDARD Ref No: Gaut: 002/12-13/E0236**

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INTRODUCTION

Johannesburg Road Agency (JRA) is proposing to reconstruct the new Alexandra Pedestrian Bridge situated over the Jukskei River in Alexandra Ext 6. The original bridge has been washed away by floods in May 2011, effectively cutting off convenient pedestrian crossing from the north east to southwest of Alexandra. The objective of the project is to reconstruct a new bridge in the same position with an improved waterway that will ensure that the bridge is not flooded by the 1:100 year return period flood. That is there will be minimum impediment of the current river flow conditions

In terms of the NEMA EIA Regulations, 2010: GN544 promulgated under Chapter 5 of the National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998) ("NEMA"), and published in Government Gazette 33306 on 18 June 2010; a Basic Assessment is required for this project. Therefore, in order to be able to develop the proposed parcel of land, application for environmental authorisation must again be obtained. After Authorisation has been obtained and before construction of the bridge commences, a Water Use License will also be applied for in terms of the National Water Act (NWA), 1998 (Act No.36 of 1998) under Section 21(c) and (i) Water Uses.

PURPOSE OF THE DOCUMENT

This Background Information Document (BID) provides information pertaining to the development of the Alexandra Pedestrian Bridge. It outlines processes that will be followed, as well as avenues for all key stakeholders to participate in the process.

The purpose of the BID is to provide background information about the proposed project, opportunity for various Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) to comment on the proposed project, information on how the EIA (Basic Assessment) process will be undertaken, and creates a platform for all key stakeholders and interested and affected parties to be involved in the project.

Public Participation Process

Public participation offers I&APs the opportunity to learn about the project and to raise issues they are concerned about and to make suggestions for enhanced project benefits. These contributions will then be evaluated by the environmental practitioner during the Basic Assessment process.

Your Role as an Interested and Affected Party

As a Stakeholder or Interested and Affected Party (I&AP), you are invited to participate in key stakeholder workshops, as well as Focus Group meetings to be held in the study area. You can participate in the following manner

- ❖ Review all project documentation provided to you;
- ❖ Attend focus group meetings and key stakeholder workshops;
- ❖ Contact the environmental practitioner if you would like further information on the project;
- ❖ Raise issues that you are concerned about, make suggestions for enhanced project benefits, and provide the project team with information on issues relevant to the proposed project

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Envirolution Consulting (Pty) Ltd was appointed by Themba Consulting on behalf of the Johannesburg Road Agency (JRA) to conduct the Environmental Impact Assessment Process for the reconstruction of the Alexandra Pedestrian Bridge. According to the NEMA Regulations, (Act 107 of 1998) as amended, the proposed development is a listed activity and therefore need Environmental Authorisation before it can go ahead. The development triggers activities as per Listing Notice 1 and therefore a Basic Assessment Process is required.

WHO ARE THE I&APs?

The I&APs include all the people that will be directly or indirectly involved and / or affected by the proposed project. This includes adjacent landowners / tenants as well as the landowners within a 100m radius around the proposed project, homeowner associations, councillors and the relevant authorities. All persons identified / registered as an I&AP will receive the BID and will have a chance to participate in the process. It is important to register as an I&AP as this will ensure your name appears on a database for future information.

The proposed reconstruction of the Alexandra pedestrian bridge activities the following NEMA activity:

- GN No. R544- Activity 3

The construction of:

- (i) Bridges

Where such construction occurs within a watercourse or within a 32 metres of a watercourse, measures from the edge of a watercourse, excluding where such construction will occur behind the development setback line

- GN No. R544 – Activity 4

The infilling or depositing of any material of more than 5 cubic metres into, or the dredging, excavation, removal of soil, sand, shells, shell grit, pebbles or rock from

- (i) a watercourse

but excluding where such infilling, depositing, dredging, excavation, removal or moving

- (i) is for maintenance purposes undertaken in accordance with a management plan agreed to the relevant environmental authority; or
- (ii) occurs behind the development setback line

According to the National Water Act, this development requires a Water Use License as per the following regulations:

- 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.

PROJECT DISCRPTION

The development entails the reconstruction of the new Alexandra Pedestrian Bridge situated over the Jukskei River in Alexandra Ext 6. The original bridge has been washed away by floods in May 2011, effectively cutting off convenient pedestrian crossing from the north east to southwest of Alexandra:

The reconstruction of the pedestrian bridge is anticipated benefit the Alexandra society by providing an easy crossing for residents/pedestrians to both side of the north east and south west of Alexandra. Society in general will benefit from the bridge infrastructure.

The associated infrastructure to this proposed bridge reconstruction includes:

- (ii) Construction of gabions to reduce erosion
- (iii) Construction of water channels.

PROJECT LOCATION

The proposed development is located in Alexandra Ext 6 on the eastern side of Alexandra between Ward 105 and Ward 76, Johannesburg. Please see Figure 1.

GIS Coordinates:

- Starting point of the activity: 26 ° 06 28.15”S and 28 ° 06 34.80”E
- Middle point of the activity: 26 ° 06 27.51”S and 28 ° 06 34.77”E
- End point of the activity: 26 ° 06 26.91”S and 28 ° 06 34.69”E

BASIC ASSESSEMENT PROCESS

Summary of the Basic Assessment Process including Public Participation:

Phase 1: Notification to Authorities and I&APs

The first stage in the process entails notification to the GDARD as well as interested and affected parties (I&APs) of the intention to proceed with the BAR. I&APs are required to register their interest on the project database and raise issues of concern.

Phase 2: Draft Basic Assessment (BAR) for Public Comment

The Basic Assessment is undertaken in order to identify and assess potential environmental impacts, both positive and negative, that may be associated with the proposed project. This includes mitigatory measures to reduce potential negative impacts and maximise positive benefits. The Basic Assessment will include an overview of the affected environment on which the activity is proposed to take place.

All I&APs on the project database will be notified in writing of the 30 day comment period for the Draft Basic Assessment, copies of the Draft Report and project information can be will be available at conspicuous places.

Specialist information for inclusion in the Draft Basic Assessment Report has been identified as follows:

- Biophysical Site Assessment (to include fauna and flora)
- Wetland Assessment

The Draft Basic Assessment, together with comments received from I&APs will be made available for a 30 day review period.

Phase 3: Submit Final Basic Assessment Report and Application

The comments received from I&APs will be included in the Final BAR before it is submitted to the GDARD for their decision making.

Phase 4: Notification from GDARD about their decision on the Final BAR

This process entails the approval or authorisation or rejection of the proposal. GDARD will notify the consultant if the BAR has received Authorisation or not. If Authorisations is received, this decision will be accompanied by conditions under which a project may proceed. GDARD may also request the consultant to submit additional information before granting or refusing Authorisation should they feel that there is outstanding information that may aid their decision making process.

Phase 5: Notification of Environmental Authorisation and Appeal Period

The final step in the process entails providing written notification to all I&APs on the project database of the issuing of the environmental authorisation and appeal period, including the manner of appeal. Project construction may only commence once approval has been received from the GDARD.

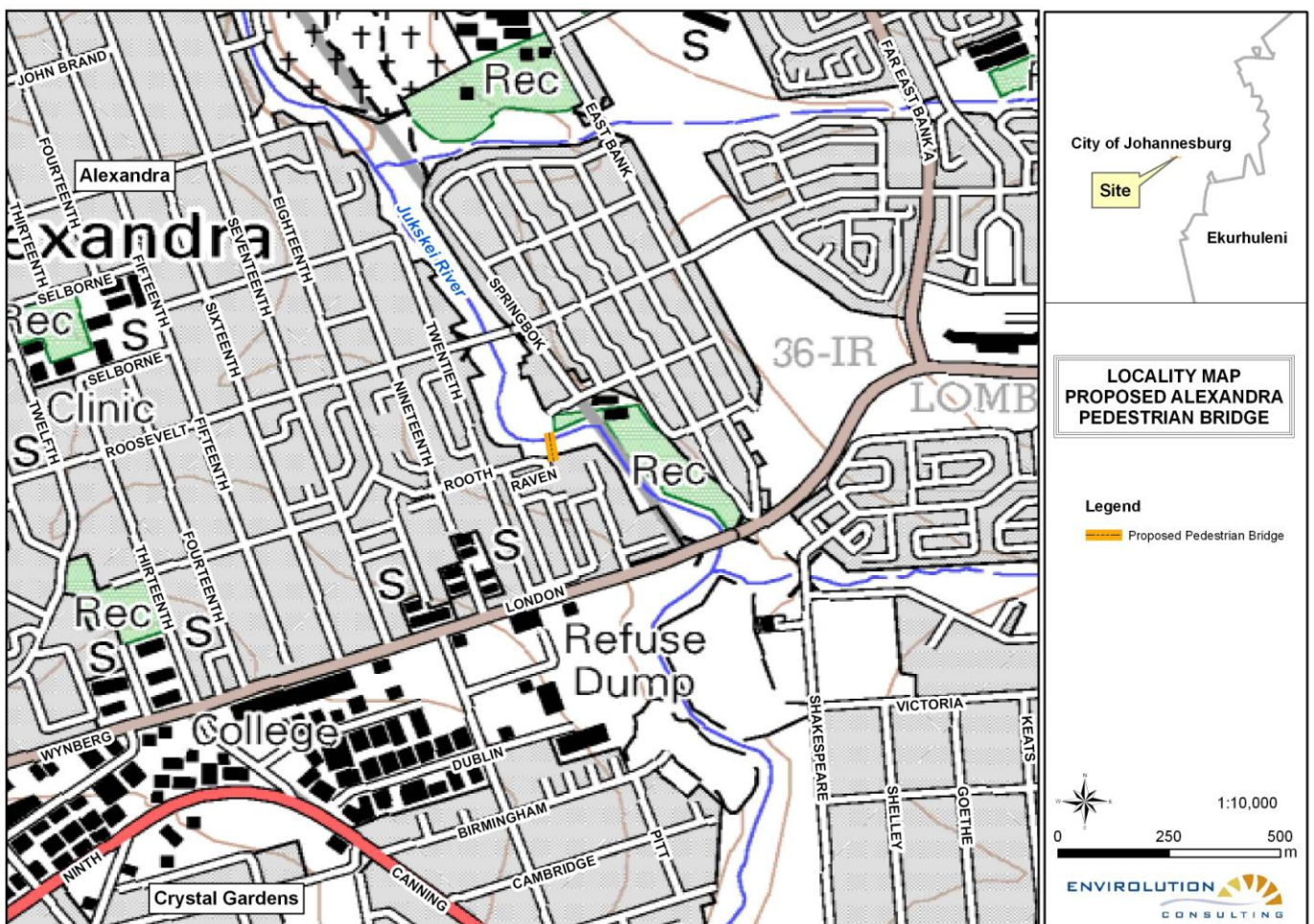


Figure 1: Locality Map – Proposed Alexandra Pedestrian Bridge

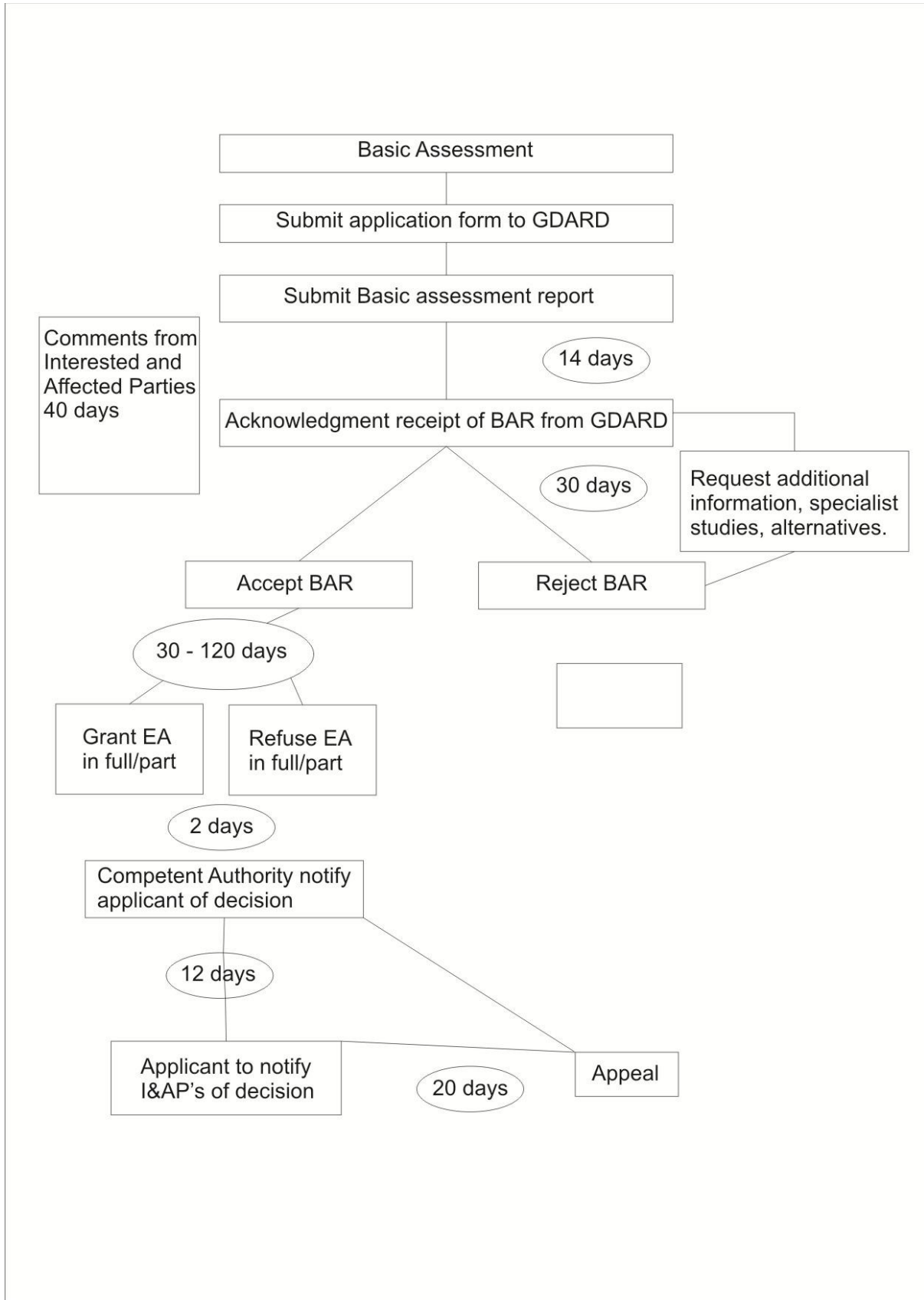


Figure 2: Basic Assessment Process as provided by GDARD 2010

WHO SHOULD REGISTER

All the people who will be directly or indirectly involved and / or affected by the proposed reconstruction of the Alexandra Pedestrian Bridge Development.

If you would like to register as an I&AP you can:

- fill out the attached comment form and fax / email or mail it to Envirolution Consulting (Pty) Ltd;
- directly contact Envirolution Consulting (Pty) Ltd;
- send comments via fax / email or mail or
- by attending the public meetings.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANT

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