

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The applicant Nkandla Local Municipality has identified the need to provide low cost rural subsidised housing throughout its area of jurisdiction. This process was initiated as a means to address the municipality's predominantly traditional/informal housing profile, and in doing so improve the living conditions and quality of life of its rural communities. The proposed Xulu Rural Subsidised Housing Project is aimed at providing suitable housing to beneficiaries residing on a portion of Wards 8 and 10 of the Nkandla Local Municipality.

## 2. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

The National Environmental Management Act (No. 107 of 1998) provides for the control of certain listed activities which "may have a detrimental effect on the environment." In terms of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations Listing Notice 1, Listing Notice 2 and Listing Notice 3 of 2014, such activities are prohibited until written authorisation is obtained from the Minister or his delegated authority.

The Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs was approached with regards to whether state funded rural housing projects on Ingonyama Trust Land such as that of the proposed development requires an Environmental Authorization. DEDTEA, after having considered the nature of this development determined that no environmental authorization for the proposed development will be required from the Department, as there are no listed activities which are triggered under the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (the EIA Regulations, 2014).

## 3. SITE DESCRIPTION

### 3.1 Location and demographics

The project area falls within a portion of Ward 8 and 10 of the Nkandla Local Municipality. The total extent of the project area is approximately 3 927.29Ha. The overall population of the Xulu Rural Housing project area is approximately 3 136 persons which resides in approximately 648 households within the project area.

#### a. Project Co-ordinates

Latitudinal Extent: 28° 38' 03.10" S

Longitudinal Extent: 90° 56' 33.52" E

### 3.2 Current and Surrounding Land Use

The project area is situated in relatively mountainous areas, most of which still hold pristine natural character despite being inhabited by rural settlements.

The current land use is predominantly rural with some subsistence crop production occurring within the homestead areas and on open spaces within the community. Surrounding land uses therefore include that of agriculture and low to medium density rural housing.

Figure 1: Image of the proposed Xulu project area



## 4. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTIVITY

The proposed housing development will consist of the construction of approximately 1 000 new top structures within the project area, and will therefore service approximately 1 000 beneficiaries and their associated families.

### 4.1 Bulk services:

The Nkandla Local Municipality has signed a service agreement regarding the provision of bulk services to the proposed housing development.

## 5. POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

1) Geophysical and biophysical (including biodiversity) issues include:

a. The proposed development will have limited environmental impacts, and any environmental impacts which do occur as a result of the proposed development will be limited to the construction phase of the proposed development. These may include site clearance (where necessary), and the excavation and digging of foundations, bulk earthworks and structural works, which pose risks with regards to soil erosion and storm water management.

b. Environmental impacts associated with the proposed development are expected to be limited as a result of development activities being restricted to occurring within the project area.

c. An Environmental Management Plan will be developed with which to monitor and mitigate any environmental impacts before they occur during the construction and operational phase of the proposed development.

- 2) Socio-economic issues:
  - a. The increased traffic volumes along the road networks during the construction phase of the proposed development may impact on other road users.
  - b. The provision of adequate housing within rural areas will greatly improve the lives of residents, resulting in increased standards of living and general well-being.
  - c. The construction phase of development will result in a number of temporary employment opportunities for unemployed members of the surrounding community
  
- 3) Cultural-historic issues
  - a. The developer is unaware of any archaeological sites on the property. Amafa aKwaZulu-Natali (KZN Heritage) will however be contacted to clarify this. The procedure to be followed in the occurrence of any cultural, historical or archeological artifacts (including graves) will be provided for within the developments Environmental Management Plan and will be enforced during the construction and operational phases of development

#### **DETAILS OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

##### **PRACTITIONER**

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