

PROPOSED NEW LINK ROAD AND BOX CULVERT WITHIN WARD 46 OF BCMM, EAST LONDON.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) PROCESS

Background Information Document

INTRODUCTION

Indwe Environmental Consulting has been appointed by Sontinga Consulting Services on behalf of Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality as an independent Environmental Assessment Practitioner to undertake a Basic Assessment Process for in terms of the National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998), for the proposed new road and box culvert within ward 46 of BCMM in East London.

The activities to be undertaken include:

- G.N. R. 327 Activity 19 – The infilling or depositing of any material of more than 10 cubic metres into, or the dredging, excavation, removal or moving of soil, sand, shell grit, pebbles or rock of more than 10 cubic metres from a watercourse.

This document is intended to provide background information to stakeholders, authorities and other interested and affected parties and forms a key component of the public participation process being undertaken as part of the Basic Assessment process.

PROJECT LOCATION

The proposed ward 46 culvert and link road is situated within the Siyakha area on Erf RE/58981 (Farm 2/1216) and Erf RE/44771 and will utilize some of the existing gravel single car road and informal footpath for the footprint of the proposed road (See figure 1). The site is located approximately 1.3km from the R72 – IDZ turn-off on Chester Road. The proposed roads' specific coordinates are at 33° 02' 45.80"S and 27° 50' 51.07"E.



Figure 1: Aerial locality of the proposed road and box culvert within ward 46 site.

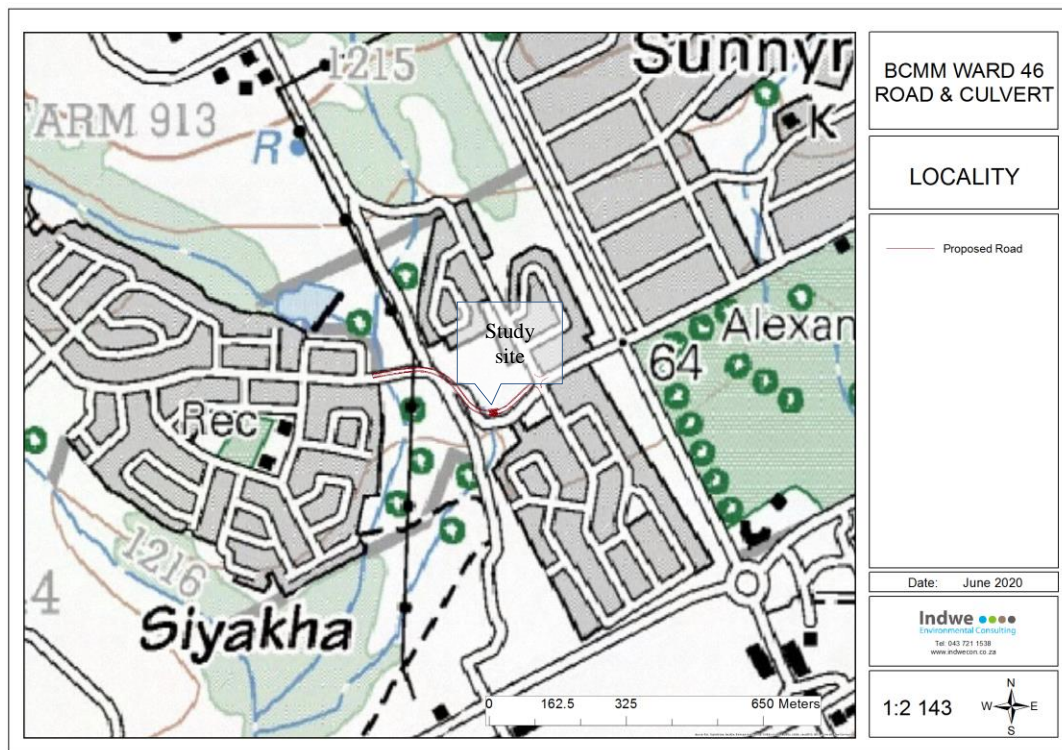


Figure 2: Topographical locality of the road and box culvert within ward 46

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality has the intention to formalise the Umtongothi/ Clovelly road, situated within ward 46, to provide safe access between the Siyakha township areas in East London. At current the movement corridor is partially a gravel single car road and informal footpath through which connects the areas and crosses a non-perennial watercourse (a tributary of Mvubukasi River).

The proposed ward 46 Culvert and link road is situated within the Siyakha area and will utilize some of the existing informal paths/ gravel road footprint. The project will consist of a 372m long 6m wide asphalt surfaced road. Concrete walkways of 1.5 m wide on both sides along the full length of the road. Seven kerb inlet structures and 4 pre-cast outlet structures. One 600mm diameter concrete pipe culvert. Eight barrels of rectangular portal/ box culvert (1.5 x 0.9m class 150S).

In terms of access both connection points of the link road are surfaced. There is no appropriate vehicle access through the non-perennial watercourse to Siyakha from Chester Road. Stormwater of the existing surrounding roads has been addressed up to where the surfacing stops.

The road is classified as an access collector to accommodate medium traffic volume, mainly for cars, light delivery vehicles and few heavy vehicles. Once the road has been upgraded the design speed of 40-60 km/h is applied to the road.

EIA REQUIREMENTS

The EIA Regulations promulgated in Gazette No 40772 of 7 April 2017- NEMA Section 24(5) stipulates that “listed activities” require environmental authorisation via a Basic Assessment process should the activities trigger Listing Notices 1 & 3. The following listed activities are assumed to be triggered in relation to this project:

Listing Notice No. and Activity No.	Listed Activity	Development Activity
Listing Notice 1 – GN 327: Activity 19	The infilling or depositing of any material of more than 10 cubic metres into, or the dredging, excavation, removal or moving of soil, sand, shell grit, pebbles or rock of more than 10 cubic metres from a watercourse	The proposed link road crosses an unnamed non-perennial watercourse. Due to the construction within this watercourse, a box culvert will be constructed in order to allow free flow of the watercourse waters. This will result in the excavation/ deposition of more than 10 cubic meters from a watercourse to be triggered.

BASIC ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The Basic Assessment process will involve the following project phases:

1. **Pre-Application:** This phase includes consultation with Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEDEAT), Amathole Region regarding the proposed development, potential triggers, outcome of the National Web Based Screening Tool Report for the site and the way forward in terms of the applicable EIA process.
2. **Application:** An application form for authorisation will be submitted to the Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEDEAT), Amathole Region.
3. **Draft Basic Assessment Phase:** The Basic Assessment process is followed which includes the undertaking of a public participation process including consultation with key stakeholders, detailed site investigations, planning and reporting. Specialist input will be sought for this phase of the project. This phase will culminate in the production of a Draft Basic Assessment Report and Environmental Management Plan (EMP) which will be submitted to DEDEAT and the circulated to all registered Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) and key stakeholders for a 30 day comment period.
4. **Final Basic Assessment Phase:** Following the receipt of comments, the Basic Assessment Report will be finalised and submitted to DEDEAT for their assessment and issuing of an authorisation.
5. **Appeal Period:** After receipt of the Environmental Authorisation all registered I&APs and key stakeholders will be notified of its availability and provided with the opportunity and details for submitting an appeal to the decision if required.

The project will include the following statutory approval processes:

- General Authorisation in terms of Section 21(c) and (i) of the National Water Act (Act No. 36 of 1998).

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

The public participation process is defined under Regulation No 41 of the 2014 EIA Regulations, as amended in 2017. However, as per the new “*Directions regarding measures to address, prevent and combat the spread of COVID-19 relating to National Environmental Management Permits and Licences*” published within gazette no. 43412 on Friday the 5 June 2020 regarding new regulations of conducting Public Participation, the following Public Participation process applies.

- Advertising in the local newspaper.

- Giving written notice to: the occupiers of the site, the owner/ person in control of the site, adjacent landowners, the municipal ward councillor and rate payers, the relevant municipality and any organ of state that has jurisdiction in respect of any aspect of the activity.
- Maintaining an Interested and Affected Party Register.
- Uploading pertinent documentation on the Indwe website.
- Collecting comment on the project, in particular to the draft Basic Assessment Report.

Registered Interested and Affected Parties will be given the opportunity to review and comment on the Draft Basic Assessment Report over a 30 day period. All comments raised by I&APs will be included and responded to in the final reports which will be submitted to the competent authority (DEDEAT) to enable them to make an informed decision with regard to the development proposal.

Once an Environmental Authorisation is received, it will be distributed to registered I&APs who may appeal to the Minister or MEC of Environmental Affairs in opposition to the decision.

KEY ISSUES AND TYPICAL IMPACTS

Key issues and typical environmental impacts associated with the project identified to date include:

- Impacts to the watercourse affected (loss of riparian habitat, increased sedimentation, pollution into the watercourse)
- Potential employment opportunities during the construction phase
- Temporary dust emissions and spoil material during the construction phase
- Safety for pedestrians who previously used the existing informal path for movement, during construction
- Potential proliferation of alien vegetation
- Potential increase in dumping activities
- The application for a water use license will be required for the project

DETAILS OF THE EAP CONDUCTING THE BASIC ASSESSMENT

Indwe Environmental Consulting CC is a registered environmental consultancy that specialises in all facets of environmental management. Our focus is on project based environmental studies. Broadly the services offered are Basic Assessments, Full Environmental Impact Assessments, Rectification of Non-Compliance Activities and Applications, Strategic Environmental studies (State of the Environment Reporting, Strategic Environmental Assessments, Environmental Management Frameworks) and integrated waste management planning.

The Indwe Environmental Consulting team is headed up and overseen by Brendon Steytler and Megan Hugo. Together they have a vast amount of experience in the environmental consulting industry of South Africa. Brendon Steytler was the founding member of Indwe Environmental Consulting in 2010 and has been instrumental in growing the company into the trusted and quality driven organisation that it is today.

Megan joined Indwe Environmental Consulting in September 2017 and was made a main member of the company in April 2018. Megan is a Registered Environmental Assessment Practitioner with the Environmental Assessment Practitioners Association of South Africa (EAPASA) (Reg. No 2019/1530) and with the South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions (SACNASP) in the field of Environmental Science (Cand. Sci. Nat. No 118810) and has her Honours Degree in Environmental Science obtained through Rhodes University in Grahamstown. Megan is responsible for all company related operations and financial management as well as acquiring new projects. Megan has experience in all aspects of Integrated Environmental Management (Environmental Impact Assessments, Basic Assessments, Mining Permitting, Auditing, Strategic Environmental Planning), Ecological Reporting and General Project Management. Megan has undertaken a range Environmental Impact Assessments for projects in both the private and public sectors as well as various non-compliance applications for commercial, agricultural and residential project. Megan will supervise and review this application process.

Nicola joined Indwe Environmental Consulting in March 2019 following the completion of her Master of Science Degree in Geography (Environmental Wetland Management) from Nelson Mandela University. Nicola has also completed her Honours in Botany (Cum laude) from Nelson Mandela University which comprised of environmental management, geographic information systems and ecology. Nicola has completed various courses in water quality management and GIS mapping and analysis and is registered as a Candidate Natural Scientist with South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions (Reg No. 121556) in

addition to being registered as a Candidate Environmental Assessment Practitioner with the Environmental Assessment Practitioners Association of South Africa (EAPASA) (Reg. No 2019/743). Nicola is responsible and/ or assists in GIS mapping and analysis, technical report writing, ecological assessments, public participation and project management. Nicola will act as the designated EAP for this project.

YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO GET INVOLVED

Should you wish to express your views regarding this proposed development, please feel free to register as an I&AP by sending us your written comments. Please submit your name, contact information and written comments to the contact person below. A written comments form is supplied at the back end of this notice for your convenience.

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