



## Background Information Document

**Proposed construction of 300 middle-income residential units across the properties described as Remainder of Erf 103, Bayview, Chatsworth.**

**14 June 2016  
eThekweni Municipality**

**Prepared for:** eThekweni Municipality, Department of Human Settlements

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### Purpose of this Document

- The Background Information Document (BID) is meant to provide an introduction to the proposal and the Basic Assessment Process.
- The BID invites you to register as an Interested and Affected Party (I&AP) and outlines how you as an I&AP can be involved in the process.
- Details of the proposal and potential impacts will be investigated and discussed in the Basic Assessment Report.

### Proposal & Background

The applicant, eThekweni Municipality Human Settlements Unit, propose to construct 300 middle-income residential units across the two properties described as Remainder of Erf 103, Bayview, Chatsworth (Figure 1). For ease of reference these sites are referred to as “site A and site B”. Site A is located on Stork Place, Summerfield Road, Skylark Road and Floss Street and Site B is located on Floss Street, Viking Terrace, Fairmont Road and Summerfield Road. Both sites are zoned public open space. Each proposed housing unit will be fully serviced with potable water, sanitation, and electricity. The total combined targeted extent is 5.08 ha that is anticipated to yield approximately 300 middle-income residential units. The proposed project requires environmental authorisation and will be undergoing a Basic Assessment process in terms of the EIA Regulations, 2014.

Due to the potential presence of the Riversdale Stream through Site A (Figure 1) and possible wetlands on both sites A and B, a Water Use License is also being applied for in terms of 21(c) and (i) of the National Water Act (No 36 of 1998). The Water Use License (WUL) report will be made available for review by August 2016.



Figure 1: Aerial photograph showing sites A and B (orange thatch) (Source: eThekweni GIS).



### Brief Site Description

Sites A and B are zoned Public Open Space.

**Site A:** Site A is geographically located at S29°55'44.31"; 30°54'55.72"E. The proposed area covers approximately 2.08 ha. The site is currently vacant and is dominated by grass and a few trees; there is alien vegetation present along a portion of the western boundary (Figure 2). The site is bordered by Stork Place (to the south-east), Summerfield Road (to the south-west), Skylark Road (to the north-west) and Floss Street (to the north-east). There are middle-income units (block of flats with 4 – 8 units each) bordering the site with a few free-standing houses on Skylark Road. There is an unused camp present on the south-eastern portion of the site (accessed via Stork Place), and an informal pathway that serves as an access path directly behind the residential units located on Stork place. The site slopes in a south-easterly direction and the slope of the site appears gentle. The eThekweni GIS system indicates the presence of a stream on this site; however at the time of the site visit this stream was dry. The extent and characteristics of this stream will be further investigated by specialist studies. Two wetlands may occur on the eastern and south-western portion of this site; however this will be confirmed by a wetland delineation and functional assessment.

**Site B:** Site B is geographically located at 29°55'37.48" S; 30°55'01.55" E. The proposed area covers approximately 3.0 ha. As with Site A, the area is vacant and dominated by grass and scattered trees along the border (Figure 3). The site is flanked by Floss Street (to the west), Viking Terrace (to the north-west), Fairmont Road (to the north-east) and Summerfield Road (to the south). There are middle-income and free-standing residential units surrounding the site. There is presence of an informal pathway that serves as an access path directly behind the residential units located on Floss Street. The slope of the site appears gentle sloping in a south-easterly direction. Erosion was noted along the north-eastern portion of the site. A seepage wetland may be present on the northern portion of the site and will be confirmed by the wetland delineation and functional assessment.



***Figure 2: Site A (taken from Skylark Road, facing Stork Place in a south-easterly direction) – Take note of middle-income housing bordering the site, grass, trees and alien vegetation on the vacant land and the informal pathway.***



***Figure 3: Site B (taken from Floss Street, facing Viking Street in a north-easterly direction) – Take note of middle-income housing bordering the site and the grass and trees on the vacant land.***

## Specialist Studies

The following specialist studies will be undertaken and reviewed as part of the Basic Assessment process:

1. Geotechnical - The aim is to determine the stability of the site and to inform engineering specifications for development planning;
2. Heritage Impact Assessment – To identify items / areas of cultural or heritage significance that require protection and / or consideration.
3. Hydrological Assessment – To determine the potential impact of the proposed housing development on the local and regional catchment hydrology.
4. Wetland / Riparian Delineation and Wetland Functionality – The aim is to determine the extent and functionality of the wetland / watercourse on site.
5. Wetland Rehab and monitoring programme – To ensure the wetlands on site are conserved and monitored
6. Aquatic Assessment – To assess the impact on aquatic biodiversity on site and provide information on the quantity and quality of the resources.
7. Ecological / Vegetation Assessment – To identify and assess the vegetation and ecological features of the site as well as to assess the important resources on site that will require conservation and / or consideration.
8. Stormwater Management Plan & Engineering Services Report – The aim of the stormwater management plan is to ensure that post-development stormwater runoff approximates and does not exceed the pre-developed condition. The purpose of the Engineering Services Report is to identify the service needs for the development in terms of electricity, sewage and water and how these needs will be met.
9. Traffic Impact Assessment – To determine the traffic impacts of the proposed development as well as to identify the impact of the proposal on trip generation in the context of the existing traffic dynamics.

The proposed housing project will be located within 500m of a wetland and therefore requires a Water Use License (WUL) from the Department of Water Affairs as per section 21 (c) and (i) of the National Water Act (No 36 of 1998).

The following additional specialist studies / information will be reviewed as part of the WUL application:

1. Monitoring programme for surface and groundwater
2. Work method statements
3. Wetland rehabilitation plan
4. Biomonitoring programme

The WUL application will be included in the Basic Assessment report for authority and I&AP review. All specialist studies will be reviewed and investigated in the Basic Assessment Report.

## Potential Environmental Impacts

The Potential Environmental impacts (positive and negative) of the proposal will be assessed in the Draft Basic Assessment Report. A few of these impacts are listed below:

- Potential positive impact – provision of much needed housing in the Bayview area.
- Potential positive impact – Currently these vacant sites pose a safety risk to residents as it allows thoroughfare of vagrants. Development on sites A and B will potentially reduce some of these safety risks.
- Potential negative environmental impact on the possible wetlands, i.e. potential degradation of the wetland and loss of ecosystem services.
- Potential erosion and instability on construction on steep areas of the site.

## **Need and Desirability**

The general purpose of the proposed activity is to provide housing and associated infrastructure services to the existing Bayview community. The proposal aims to meeting the basic housing needs of the existing community.

## **What is a Basic Assessment?**

When Environmental Authorisation is required for a proposal, one of two legislated types of environmental assessments may be followed, i.e. a basic assessment (BA) or a Scoping & Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). The nature and scale of the proposal determines which type of assessment is to be undertaken. The BA process comprises of listed activities in the EIA Regulations, 2014, known as Government Notice, 983. Generally, but not always, where a proposal is less likely to cause significant environmental impacts, then a BA process is followed. For the current proposal, the BA will investigate the proposal against various parameters, such as ecosystem functioning, biodiversity, vegetation, traffic, site stability, etc. to ensure that the proposal follows the idea of sustainable development and that any potential negative environmental impacts are mitigated against. One of the outcomes of the BA process is an Environmental Management Programme (EMP) that manages the pre-construction, construction, rehabilitation and operational phases of the development to curtail any negative environmental impacts.

According to the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) (Act 107 of 1998), EIA Regulations 2014, [GNR 983], the proposed development requires Environmental Authorisation via a BA process, as per GNR 985, activity 14:

*14. The development of-*

- (x) buildings exceeding 10 square metres in size;*
- (xii) infrastructure or structures with a physical footprint of 10 square metres or more;*

*where such development occurs-*

- (c) if no development setback has been adopted, within 32 metres of a watercourse, measured from the edge of a watercourse;*

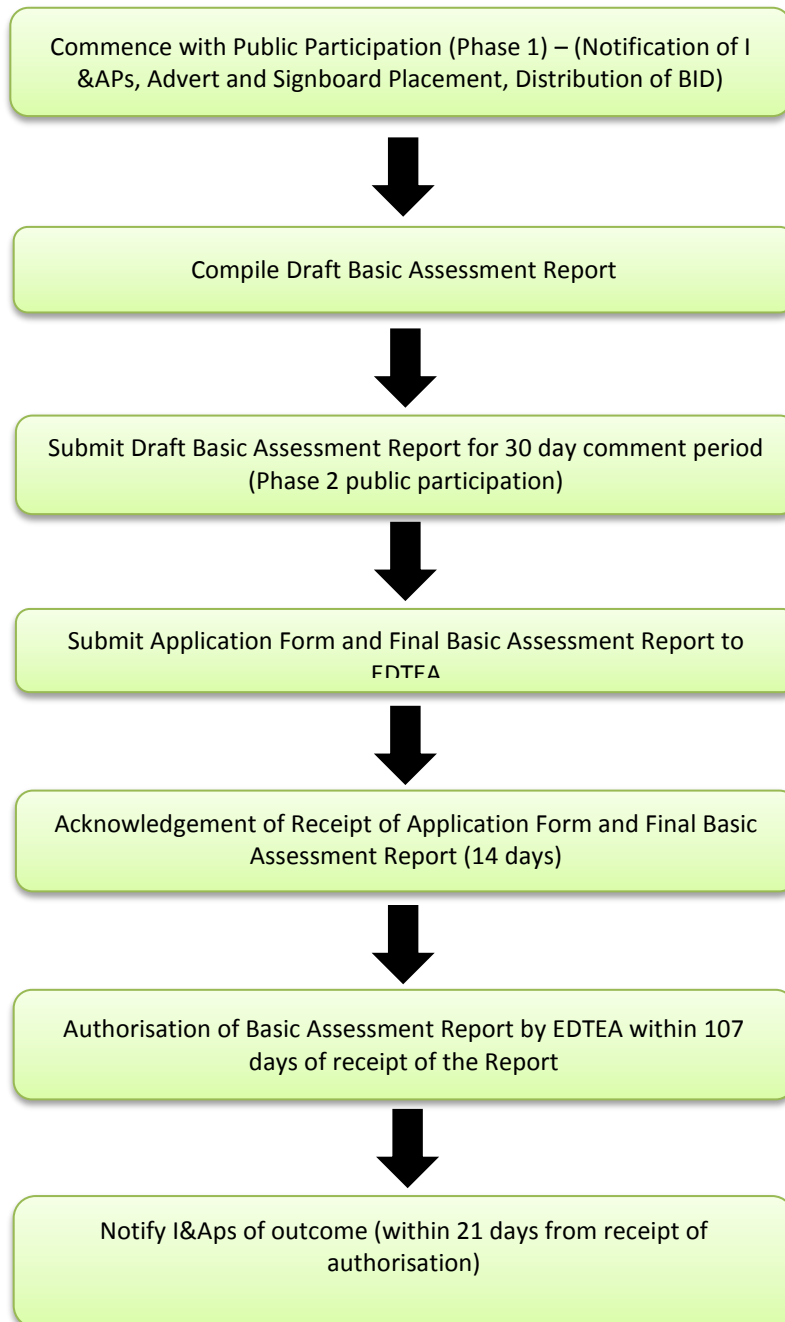
***(d) In KwaZulu-Natal:***

- (xi). In urban areas:*
  - (aa) Areas zoned for use as public open space;*

**This activity is applicable as Site A potentially contains a stream as well as possible wetlands on Sites A and B. Both sites are zoned as public open space.**

### Basic Assessment Process

The BA process will strictly follow the requirements of GNR 982, NEMA EIA Regulations (2014). In summary, the following steps will be taken:

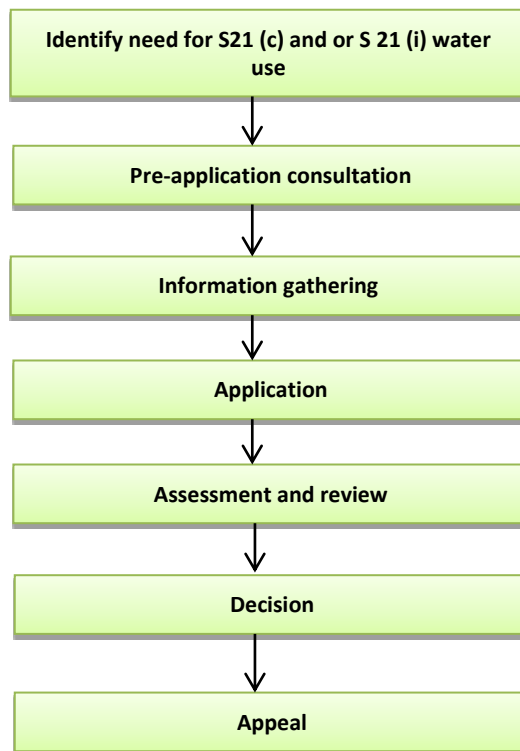


**Figure 4: Illustration of the BA process to be followed**

The competent authority that will either authorise or reject the BA is the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs (EDTEA).

### Water Use License Application

The Water Use License application process will strictly follow the requirements of the National Water Act. Figure 5 summarises the steps to be taken:



**Figure 5: Illustration of the Water Use License process to be followed**

### Public Participation

A key part of the BA process is public participation, whereby authorities, residents, neighbours and any organisation that may be interested in or affected by the proposed activity, are notified of the proposal so as to provide an opportunity for expression of comments/concerns throughout the BA process. Public participation is a legislated requirement according to the EIA Regulations, 2014. As the independent Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP), ECA Consulting is required to involve the public in the following way (as per Chapter 6 of the EIA Regulations, 2014):

- Provide written notice to adjacent occupiers of the site, the municipal ward councillor, ratepayers association, and any organ of state having jurisdiction in respect of any aspect of the activity;
- Place an advert in one local newspaper, and at least one provincial or national newspaper if the activity has or may have an impact that extends beyond the boundaries of the metropolitan or local municipality in which it is or will be undertaken;
- Fix a notice board (minimum size 60cm x 42cm) at a place conspicuous to the public at the boundary or on the fence of the site or any alternative site mentioned in the application.

Further to the public notification, the public may register as an I&Ap to obtain further information and partake in the BA process by way of comment.

Any comment / concern / query received from an I&Ap and/or authority will be addressed and considered in the environmental assessment process.

### **What is your role as an I&Ap?**

According to Section 43 of the EIA Regulations, 2014 (GNR 982), as a registered I&Ap you are entitled to comment in writing on all written submissions, including draft reports made to the competent authority (i.e. DAEA&RD) and to bring to the attention of the competent authority and EAP any issues which you believe may be of significance to the consideration of the application. These issues must be submitted within the timeframes approved or those as set by the competent authority.

As an I&AP you are legally required to disclose any direct business, financial, personal or other interest which you may have in the approval or refusal of the application.

You will have the opportunity to comment on the following documents:

1. **Background Information Document (BID)** – Due date for comments 29 June 2016.
2. **BA Report and all specialist studies** – Due date for comments: 30 days from the date of receipt of the report / notification of availability of the report.
3. **Environmental Management Programme** – Due date for comments: 30 days from the date of receipt of the report / notification of availability of the report.

You may provide written comment at any time during the BA process; however comments on documents must follow timeframes as set by the competent authority and/or EAP.

The following Authorities and I&Aps have been notified of this application and will continue to receive notifications and / or reports on this application:

- Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife (Planning)
- Department of Water Affairs
- Department of Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries
- Amafa
- Department of Transport
- eThekweni Municipality
- Ward Councillor
- Department of Human Settlements
- Department of Health

An English advert has been published in the local newspaper, The Rising Sun, Chatsworth, on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2016. An English and Zulu advert will be published in the eThekweni Metro on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2016. Adjacent landowners were notified via A5 flyers in English and Zulu on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2016. Six signboards (60cm x 42cm) boards – 4 English and 2 Zulu – were placed around the site on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2016. Authorities were notified via email on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2016.

### **Who is ECA Consulting?**

ECA Consulting is an independent environmental consultancy that provides professional consulting expertise in accordance with legislative requirements and global environmental trends. ECA Consulting provides experienced handling and management of all aspects of Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs), Basic Assessments (BAR), Scoping & EIA and Environmental Management Programmes (EMPr) in accordance with the National Environmental Management Act (107 of 1998). ECA Consulting also manages Water Use License as per the National Water Act (No 36 of 1998) and Waste License applications as per the requirements of the National Environmental Management Waste Act (59 of 2008).

ECA Consulting has been appointed as the independent EAP to undertake and manage the Basic Assessment process. Leena Ackbar is the lead consultant on the project; all comments / queries can be submitted to:



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