

**PROPOSED NCAMBEDLANA BULK SEWER PIPELINE
MTHATHA KSD MUNICIPALITY
OR Tambo District Municipality, Eastern Cape
EIA BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT**

INTRODUCTION

In 2012 the President of South Africa announced the rejuvenation of the City of Mthatha and stated that this programme was a key Presidential Intervention Project (PIP).

This rejuvenation process includes the “Breaking New Ground” (BNG) housing initiative, which seeks to deliver some 36,000 primarily low income housing units in Mthatha over a number of phases and sub-phases.

In order to meet the bulk sewage requirements for this rejuvenation intervention, the OR Tambo District Municipality propose the phased refurbishment and/or upgrading of the existing bulk sewerage infrastructure as well as the phased installation of new sewerage infrastructure to accommodate the proposed new housing developments. Various sewer lines are currently under construction.

A new sewer line with pump stations is required to serve the Ncambedlana area, some 5km North of Mthatha.

Indwe Environmental Consulting has been appointed as an independent Environmental Assessment Practitioner to undertake an application for environmental authorisation via a Basic Assessment (BA).

The Basic Assessments will conform to the requirements of the National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998), (NEMA) as amended EIA Regulations (2014), as published in Government Notice No. R. 982 - 985.

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 for the above Basic Assessments.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

According to the Preliminary Design Report prepared by Aseza Project Managers (2015), the sewer pipeline will have the following pertinent features:

- The new pipeline will be 5.5 km long, constructed along the southern bank of the Ncambedlana River.
- The pipe sizes will vary in size relevant to the quantity of flow in that section of pipe. Preliminary calculations indicate that the minimum pipe diameter will be a 200 mm and the maximum a 500 mm diameter pipe.
- New sewer pump stations will be constructed.
- The sewer will ultimately connect into the new Maydene Farm sewer main (currently under construction) and convey sewerage to the main existing Mthatha Waste Water Treatment Works.

PROJECT LOCATION

The project area is located approximately 5km North of Mthatha, falling to the East and to the West of the N2 National Road leading to Kokstad in the KSD Municipality, OR Tambo District Municipality Eastern Cape Province. The Northern boundary of the project is the Ncambedlana River. The development area is the Ncambedlana Smallholding farms just outside of the Mthatha CBD.

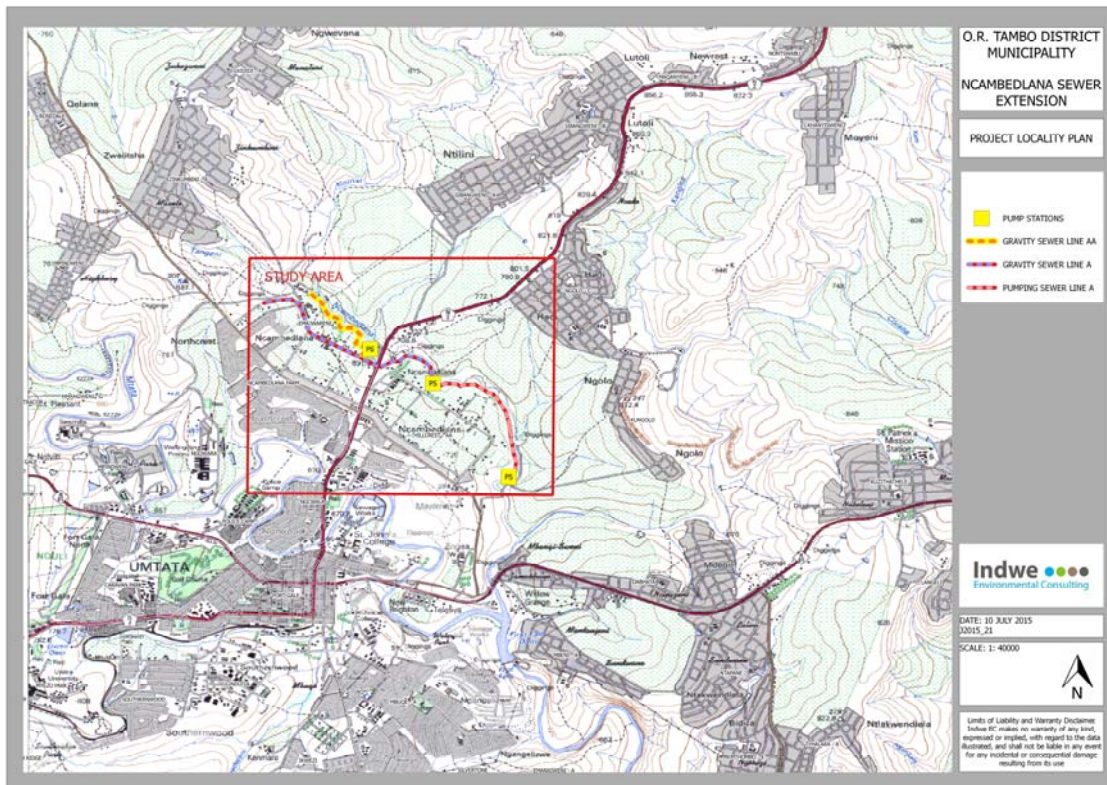


Figure 1: Topographical Plan illustrating the location of the proposed new Ncambelana Sewer Extension project.

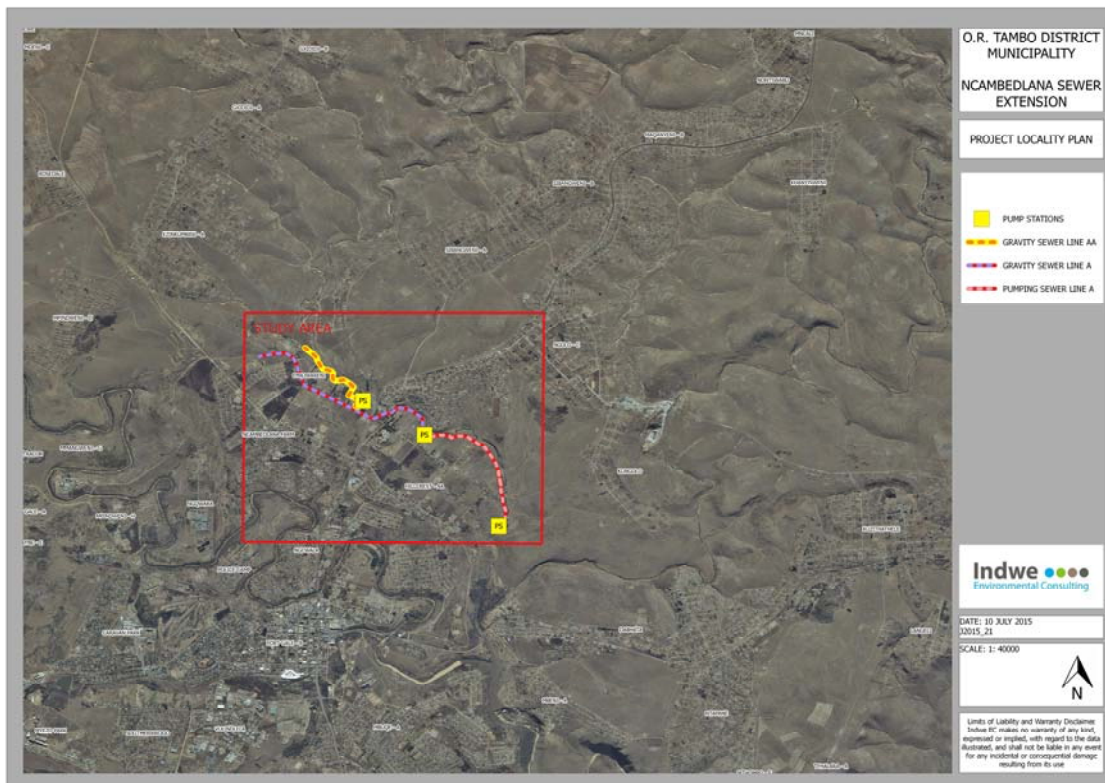


Figure 2: Aerial Plan illustrating the location of the proposed new Ncambelana Sewer Extension project.

PROJECT MOTIVATION

In terms of residential population growth, the City of Mthatha is one of the fastest growing cities within South Africa. This rapid inflow of people in search of improved economic opportunities has puts enormous pressure on the municipality to provide adequate formal housing and associated bulk infrastructural services.

The reality of the situation is that the influx of people has far outgrown the current municipal infrastructural capacity which has resulted in a mass of informal settlements being erected in and around Mthatha.

The nature and pace of this uncoordinated growth of informal settlements has in turn impacted on both the quality and quantity of the local water supply due to the disposal and leakages of untreated sewage into the Mthatha river system and poor waste management in the surrounding areas.

In terms of the current sewerage infrastructure, over 70% of the sewage pump stations are not operating due to lack of maintenance and there are frequent blockages and overloading of the existing antiquated sewage pipelines.

The objective of this project is therefore to provide bulk sewerage infrastructure to accommodate the proposed housing developments in the Ncambedlana area of Mthatha.

KEY PROJECT ISSUES

Key project issues associated with the project identified to date include:

- The disturbance of Indigenous vegetation and associated biodiversity impacts through the linear installation of the sewer pipelines
- The disturbance of wetland and riparian vegetation and associated biodiversity impacts through the linear installation of new sewage infrastructure along the Ncambedlana River
- Health and safety of people due to unsanitary conditions as a result of aging and poorly functioning sanitation infrastructure.
- The prevention of eutrophication of surface water due to uncontrolled overflowing sewage spillages and inadequate sewer infrastructure.
- Obtaining General Authorisation in terms of the National Water Act (Act 56 of 1998) for work within floodlines
- Disturbances to residents during linear pipeline installation
- Rehabilitation of trenches, cleared areas, access roads and subsequent erosion control.
- Potential heritage (cultural, archaeological and paleontological) impacts.

EIA REQUIREMENTS

The Basic Assessment will conform to the 2014 EIA Regulations, as published in Government Notice No. R. 982 - 985, as promulgated in terms of the National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998), as amended.

NEMA Section 24(5) stipulates that the following "listed activities" require environmental authorisation via a Basic Assessment process.

Listing Notice Number	Activity No.	Development Activity
983, 4 Dec 2014	10	The development and related operation of infrastructure exceeding 1000 metres in length for the bulk transportation of sewage, effluent, process water, waste water, return water, industrial discharge or slimes: (i) with an internal diameter of 0,36 metres or more; or (ii) with a peak throughput of 120 litres per second or more; excluding where- (a) such infrastructure is for bulk transportation of sewage, effluent, process water, waste water, return water, industrial discharge or slimes inside a road reserve; or (b) where such development will occur within an urban area.

Listing Notice Number	Activity No.	Development Activity
983, 4 Dec 2014	12(xii) (c)	The construction of: (xii) infrastructure or structures with a physical footprint of 100 square metres or more; where such development occurs- (c) if no development setback exists, within 32 metres of a watercourse, measured from the edge of a watercourse.
983, 4 Dec 2014	46	The expansion and related operation of infrastructure for the bulk transportation of sewage, effluent, process water, waste water, return water, industrial discharge or slimes where the existing infrastructure- (i) has an internal diameter of 0,36 metres or more; or (ii) has a peak throughput of 120 litres per second or more; and (a) where the facility or infrastructure is expanded by more than 1000 metres in length; or (b) where the throughput capacity of the facility or infrastructure will be increased by 10% or more; excluding where such expansion- (aa) relates to transportation of sewage, effluent, process water, waste water, return water, industrial discharge or slimes within a road reserve; or (bb) will occur within an urban area.

ADDITIONAL STATUTORY APPROVALS

The project will include the following statutory approval processes:

- General Authorisation in terms of Section 21(c) and (i) of the National Water Act 36 of 1998 should any infrastructure be constructed within a riparian zone or within the 1:100 year flood line.
- Approval in terms of Section 38 of the National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999.

BASIC ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The Basic Assessment process will involve the following project phases:

1. **Notice of Intent:** A Notice of Intent to submit an application will be submitted to the Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEDEAT), OR Tambo District Office.
2. **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. A specialist Heritage Impact Assessment study will be undertaken. 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.
3. **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.
4. **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.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

The public participation process is defined under Regulation No 41 of the 2014 EIA Regulations. This includes:

- Advertising in the local newspaper.

- Fixing a notice board at the site.
- 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 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 environmental 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.

DETAILS OF THE PROFESSIONAL TEAM

INDWE ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTING

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, Strategic Environmental studies (State of the Environment Reporting, Strategic Environmental Assessments, Environmental Management Frameworks) and integrated waste management planning.

Brendon Steytler is the principal member of Indwe Environmental Consulting. Brendon is a professionally registered Environmental Scientist (Pr.Sci. Nat. No. 400304/06) and holds a Masters Degree in Environment and Development. Brendon has been involved in many diverse EIA's and other environmental studies within the Eastern Cape for the last twelve years. Brendon is the lead Environmental Impact Assessment Practitioner for this project.

Aseza Project Managers

Aseza Project Managers are appointed as the Consulting Engineers who will undertake all engineering designs associated with this project and manage the tender and construction process.

Amatola Water Board

Amatola Water Board are the appointed implementing agents on behalf of the OR Tambo District Municipality.

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.

Contact

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