

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

KwaTshatshu Pedestrian Bridge over the Yellow Woods River, near Breidbach, Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT & INVITATION TO COMMENT

Proposed by: Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality (BCMM)

Return address for comments:

EOH Coastal & Environmental Services

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Coastal & Environmental Services

AIM OF THIS DOCUMENT

The purpose of this document is to ensure that **people interested in or affected by the proposed project** are **provided with information about the proposal, the process being followed and provided with an opportunity to be involved** in the EIA process.

Registering as an **Interested and/or Affected Party (I&AP)** allows individuals or groups the opportunity to **contribute ideas, issues, and concerns regarding the project**. I&APs also have an opportunity to **review all reports and submit comments** on those reports. All comments received are included in the reports submitted to the Competent Authority.

BACKGROUND

Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality (BCMM) proposes to construct a pedestrian bridge over the Yellow Woods River, near Breidbach, in ward 44 of BCMM, Eastern Cape Province of South Africa (Figure 1 below).

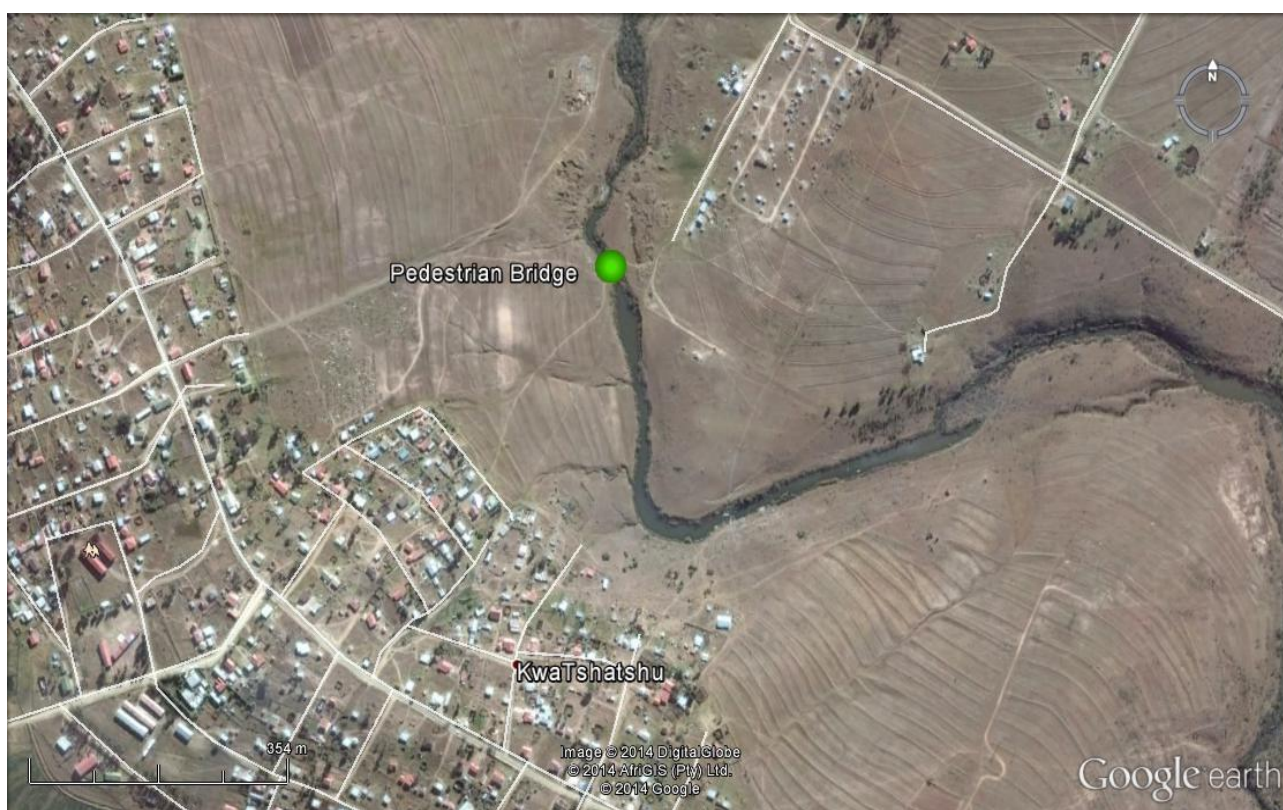


Figure 1: Locality map of the proposed pedestrian bridge and the surrounding areas.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PRACTITIONER

Coastal & Environmental Services (CES) was established in 1990 as a specialist environmental consulting company. Recently **EOH Group** of Companies acquired the shares in CES. EOH is the largest provider of enterprise applications, technology, outsourcing, cloud and managed services. The group is active in South Africa, Africa and the United Kingdom and has a strong Black Economic Empowerment profile. This integration will allow CES to combine EOH's great reach and

reputation with CES’s recognised excellence in environmental and social advisory services, thus maximising CES’s strengths and comprehensive offerings in the environmental and social fields.

CES specialises in impact assessments and environmental management, with considerable specialist experience in terrestrial, marine and freshwater ecology, the Social Impact Assessment (SIA) process, state of environment reporting (SOER), Integrated Waste Management Plans (IWMP), Spatial Development Frameworks (SDF), public participation, as well as the management and co-ordination of all aspects of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) processes. CES has been active in all of the above fields, and in so doing have made a positive contribution towards environmental management and sustainable development in the Eastern Cape, South Africa and many other African countries.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT PROCESS

EOH Coastal and Environmental Services have been appointed by Element Consulting Engineers to undertake the necessary environmental investigations for the proposed pedestrian bridge, and to apply for approval from the Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs & Tourism (DEDEAT). Details of the relevant laws, and an overview of the environmental impact assessment process, are provided below.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

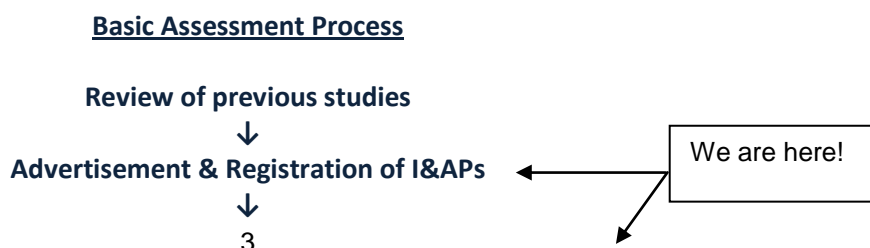
According to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) regulations, promulgated under the National Environmental Management Act (No. 107 of 1998) as amended in 2010, listed activities need to be assessed. In this case the identified activity requires a Basic Environmental Assessment. The proposed access roads upgrade will trigger the following listed activities:

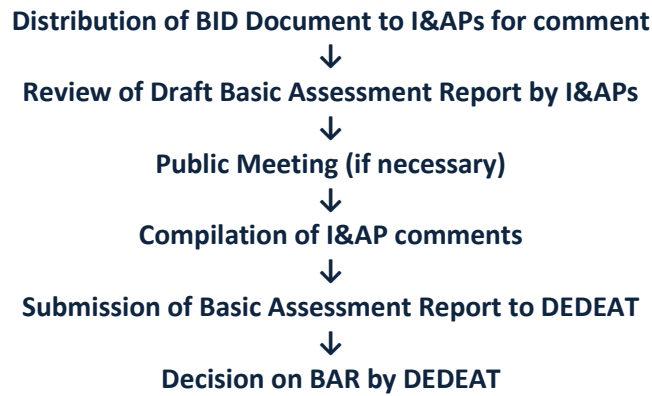
Listed Activity	Activity Description
GN. 544 No 11 (iii)	The construction of a bridge within a watercourse
GN. 544 No 18 (i)	The infilling or depositing of any material of more than 5 cubic meters into, or the dredging, excavation, removal or moving of soil, sand, shells, shell grit, pebbles or rock from (i) a watercourse.

A Basic Assessment (BA) will be conducted following the procedure outlined in the EIA regulations (2010) GN 543 Section 21-24. Furthermore, the EIA process will require a water use licence from the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS).

APPROACH TO THIS BASIC ASSESSMENT

The process required for the proposed project is a Basic Assessment. This process serves primarily to inform the public and relevant authorities about the proposed project and to determine and assess associated impacts.





PROJECT DESCRIPTION

BCMM is proposing the construction of a pedestrian bridge over the Yellow Woods River approximately 2.5 km south of Breidbach.

There is currently no formal crossing that links Breidbach and Qualasha to KwaTshatshu and Zwelitsha. The respective communities are separated by the Yellow Woods River. Currently, rocky outcrops in the river bed are being used as crossing points. In times of rain this crossing is submerged and unsafe for use. There are no designated pedestrian crossing points in the immediate vicinity of the respective settlements. When the river is in flow, the only way for pedestrians to cross the river is to make use of the N2 road bridge, some 4 km upstream. This detour over the N2 road bridge increases a typical walking trip from Qualasha to KwaTshatshu significantly from 0.8km to 7.5km.

POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND BENEFITS

Site-specific assessments will be undertaken as part of the EIA process in order to confirm the feasibility of the proposal in terms of the environment, and to delineate any areas of environmental sensitivity within the study area.

The following specialist studies will be conducted for the proposed pedestrian bridge construction, to identify and assess any potential impacts, positive and negative, that may occur as a result of the potential authorisation of the project:

- Heritage Impact Assessment
- Aquatic and Riparian Assessment

Potential Benefits of the pedestrian bridge.

The current river crossing is inadequate and unsafe for its users. In times of flood the residents north of the river are cut off from access to schools, clinics and employment opportunities south of the river in Zwelitsha and KwaTshatshu. Therefore, the proposed pedestrian bridge will ensure a safer crossing, and a significantly shorter distance between the settlements.

HOW CAN YOU BE INVOLVED?

A Public Participation Process (PPP) is being conducted as part of the EIA. The aim of the PPP is to allow everyone who is interested in, or likely to be affected by, the proposed development to provide input into the process.

The Public Participation Process will include:

- Advertisements in the Daily Dispatch;
- Notice Boards on site;
- Circulation of the BID (this document) to all I&APs and stakeholders
- Community and focus group meetings (as required);
- Review of all reports by registered I&APs and stakeholders.

If you consider yourself an interested and/or affected person/party, it is important that you become and remain involved in the PPP. In order to do so please follow the steps below in order to ensure that you are continually informed of the project developments and will ensure your opportunity to raise issues and concerns pertaining to the project.

STEP 1: Please **register** by responding to our notification and invitation, with your name and contact details (details provided on cover page and below). As a registered I&AP you will be informed of all meetings, report reviews and project developments throughout the EIA process.

STEP 2: Attend meetings that will be held throughout the EIA process. As a registered I&AP, you will be invited to these meetings.

CES is required to engage with all private and public parties that may be interested and/or affected by the proposed road upgrades, in order to distribute information for review and comment in a transparent manner.

In the same light, it is important for I&APs to note the following:

1. In order for CES to continue engaging with you, please **ENSURE** that you register on our database by contacting the person below.
2. As the EIA process is regulated by specific review and comment timeframes, it is your responsibility to submit your comments within these timeframes.

Contact person for enquiries and/comments:

**Ms Nande Suka
16 Tyrell Road
Berea
East London 5241
P.O Box 8145
Nahoon, 5210
Tel: (043) 726 7809/8313
Fax: (043) 726 8352
Email: n.suka@cesnet.co.za**

**I hereby wish to register as an Interested and Affected Party (I&AP) for the
Proposed construction of a pedestrian bridge over the Yellow Woods River near
Breidbach: EIA process**

Name:

Organisation:

Postal address:

Email:

Phone #: _____ Fax #: _____

My initial comments, issues or concerns are:

Other individuals, stakeholders, organisations or entities that should be registered are:

Name:

Organisation:

Postal address:

s _____

Email:

Phone #: _____ Fax #: _____

Please return details to: Ms Nande Suka: P.O. Box 8145, Nahoon, 5210
Telephone: (043) 726 7809 Fax: (043) 726 8352 Email: n.suka@cesnet.co.za