

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT (BID)

The purpose of this document is to inform Interested and Affected Parties (I & APs) of the proposal and to provide information on the roles and responsibilities of registered I & APs. This document provides introductory information on the potential impacts of the proposal which will be described in the basic assessment report. Please note that comments on the BID are not required, however should you have any initial comments or queries please submit to the contact person listed on the last page.

Project Title:	The Proposed Upgrade of Mahedeni Bridge within iLembe District and Ndwedwe Local Municipalities, KwaZulu-Natal.
Application Type:	Basic Assessment/WULA
Competent Authority:	Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs and Department of Water and Sanitation
Location of Activity:	Ndwedwe Local and iLembe District Municipalities, KwaZulu-Natal.
Public Participation Commencement date:	February 2017
Contact in Order to Register as an I & AP:	Kavilan Naidoo Fax : 086 535 5281 Tel: 031 769 1578 KSEMS@ksems.co.za
Environmental Consultants for Project:	Kerry Stanton Kavilan Naidoo
Applicant:	Ndwedwe Local Municipality
Release Date:	February 2017

The Proposal

The proposed development involves the upgrade of an existing bridge to a three-span concrete slab bridge measuring 17.5 m x 4.6 m, including the two (2) approach slabs. Two (2) support piers and two (2) abutments will also be required. The proposed development is primarily aimed at upgrading a dilapidated bridge to one more suited to accommodate an appreciable rainfall event. The vehicle bridge upgrade will provide year-round access to basic services which are located on the other side of the river, by providing improved access to transport networks, for all members of the local community.

Site Description

The Mahedeni Vehicle Bridge upgrade is situated approximately 4.5km south west of the town of Mkomazi within the Ndwedwe Local and iLembe District Municipalities, KwaZulu-Natal. The proposed development is located within the U30A Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) Quaternary Catchment, in the Mvoti sub-Water Management Area (WMA) within the Mvoti to Umzimkulu WMA. The area around the proposed development site is dominated by informal road infrastructure, informal housing, subsistence agriculture (current and historical) and subsistence livestock farming.

The geographic co-ordinates for the proposed development are: 29° 29'53.15" S 30° 50'39.0" E



Figure 1: The location of the proposed upgrade of the Mahadeni Bridge within the iLembe District and Ndwedwe Local Municipalities (Google Earth, 2017).

Potential Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

A number of potential environmental issues have already been identified to assist I&APs to better understand the investigations to be undertaken as part of the environmental assessment process. Where mitigation measures have already been identified, these have also been provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Potential Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Construction Phase	
Soil degradation and groundwater contamination	There is potential for soil degradation and groundwater contamination to occur during the construction phase as a result of accidental spills or leaks, resulting in product seeping into the ground and potentially moving into the soil, groundwater and run-off into the water body. Impacts will be mitigated against control measures outlined in the Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) as well as the spill response procedure to follow in the

	event of an accidental spill. Regarding seepage of construction-based effluent into the soil and ground, mixing of cement will be done on an impervious surface and construction vehicles and machinery must be well maintained and must be provided with drip trays at all times to prevent seepage of oil and fuel.
Impacts on surface water (watercourses, water bodies or drainage).	Contamination of the Mahedeni River could be a potential impact as a result of the construction activities. The impacts will be confirmed and recommendations and mitigation measures made by the /Wetland Specialist will be incorporated into the Basic Assessment Report to reduce the impacts on the watercourses.
Impacts on flora and fauna	The proposed Mahedeni Vehicle Bridge will be constructed over the Mahedeni River therefore creating a potential for habitat destruction, disruption of faunal and floral activity.
Impacts associated with waste generation including the improper disposal of solid waste, hazardous and non-hazardous waste.	All solid waste generated during the construction process must be placed in a designated waste collection area within the construction camp and must not be allowed to blow around the site, be accessible by animals, or be placed in piles adjacent to the skips / bins. All solid waste must then be disposed of at the nearest licensed landfill and safe disposal certificates must be obtained and kept on site at all times during construction.
Noise generated by construction workers, machinery and construction vehicles disturbing surrounding residents.	Noise pollution is expected to be minimal and temporary; however, should excessive noise pollution occur, all nearby residents must be notified prior to the activity commencing. Noise must be kept to working hours (07h00 to 17h00) on weekdays and (08h00 to 13h00) on Saturdays. No construction is permitted on Sundays or public holidays.
Operational Phase	
Impacts on watercourses, water bodies or drainage.	A wetland assessment has been commissioned as part of the WULA to the watercourses and potential impacts. This will help ensure that any impacts of the operational phase can be mitigated against.
Impact on the local residents and commuters	The construction of the bridge will have a positive impact on all who use it as the design will allow for ease of access for vehicles and the local community.

Basic Assessment Process

To determine the overall environmental feasibility of the proposal, a Basic Assessment (BA) is required as per the National Environmental Management Act, 2014 EIA regulations, (Regulations in terms of Chapter 4 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998, as amended). A BA is an assessment carried out to determine the environmental impacts of a development proposal. It is a planning and management tool for sustainable development and aims to inform decision-makers about the potential environmental, physical, biological and socio-economic effects of the proposal. This allows relevant authorities and decision-makers to make an informed decision on whether to authorise or reject the proposed bridge upgrade, i.e. whether to grant Environmental Authorisation. As part of the BA process, an EMP is created which is a site specific document that lists all the potential impacts of the proposal can have on the surrounding environment and details mitigation measures, if possible, for the impacts identified in the BA.

The following activities, outlined in Table 2, contained in GNR 983 and GNR 985 of the NEMA regulations (4 December 2014), will be applied for:

Table 2: Potential Activities being applied for.

NUMBER AND DATE OF THE RELEVANT NOTICE:	ACTIVITY NO (S) (IN TERMS OF NOTICE:	LISTED ACTIVITY TRIGGERED AS PER THE PROJECT DESCRIPTION:
As per Listing Notice 1 GNR 983-4 December 2014	Activity 19 The infilling or depositing of any material of more than 5 cubic metres into, or the dredging, excavation, removal or moving of soil, sand, shells, shell grit, pebbles or rock of more than 5 cubic metres from - (i) a watercourse	The construction of the piers and abutments of the new bridge will result in the removal/moving of soil of more than 5m ³ from the Mahedeni River.
As per Listing Notice 3 GNR 985-4 December 2014	Activity 14 The development of- (iii) bridges exceeding 10 square metres in size; (vi) Infrastructure or structures with a physical footprint of 10 square meters or more. (d) In KwaZulu-Natal vii. Critical biodiversity areas or ecological support areas as identified in systematic biodiversity plans adopted by the competent authority or in bioregional plans;	The construction of a new vehicle bridge measuring 3.1m in height, 26.8m in length and 5m in width. The project site is located within a Critical Biodiversity Area (CBA).

Water Use License Application (WULA)

The National Water Act (Act No 36 of 1998) deals with various consumptive and non-consumptive uses of water resources and controls the manner in which water resources are protected, used, developed, controlled, conserved, managed and ensures the equitable use for all.

In terms of Section 21 of the National Water Act (Act No 36 of 1998) a WULA will be required as the bridge to be upgraded crosses a watercourse. This will trigger a Section 21 (c) and 21 (i) water use:

- 21 (c)-Impeding or diverting the flow of water in a watercourse;
- 21 (i)-Altering the bed, banks, course or characteristics of a watercourse.

Public Participation Process

Public Participation is a legislated component of the BA and WULA process as per the National Environmental Management Act, 2014 EIA Regulations (Regulations in terms of Chapter 6 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998, as amended) and as per the National Water Act 1998 (Regulations in terms of Chapter 4 of the National Water Act, 1998) respectively. Public Participation is the opportunity afforded to I & APs (including government authorities) to become involved in the BA and WULA processes and is required to ensure that the views of I & APs are taken into consideration during the assessment of potential impacts. Public Participation forms part of the BA and WULA processes as indicated in Figure 2. Details on how I & APs can comment on this application is described below.

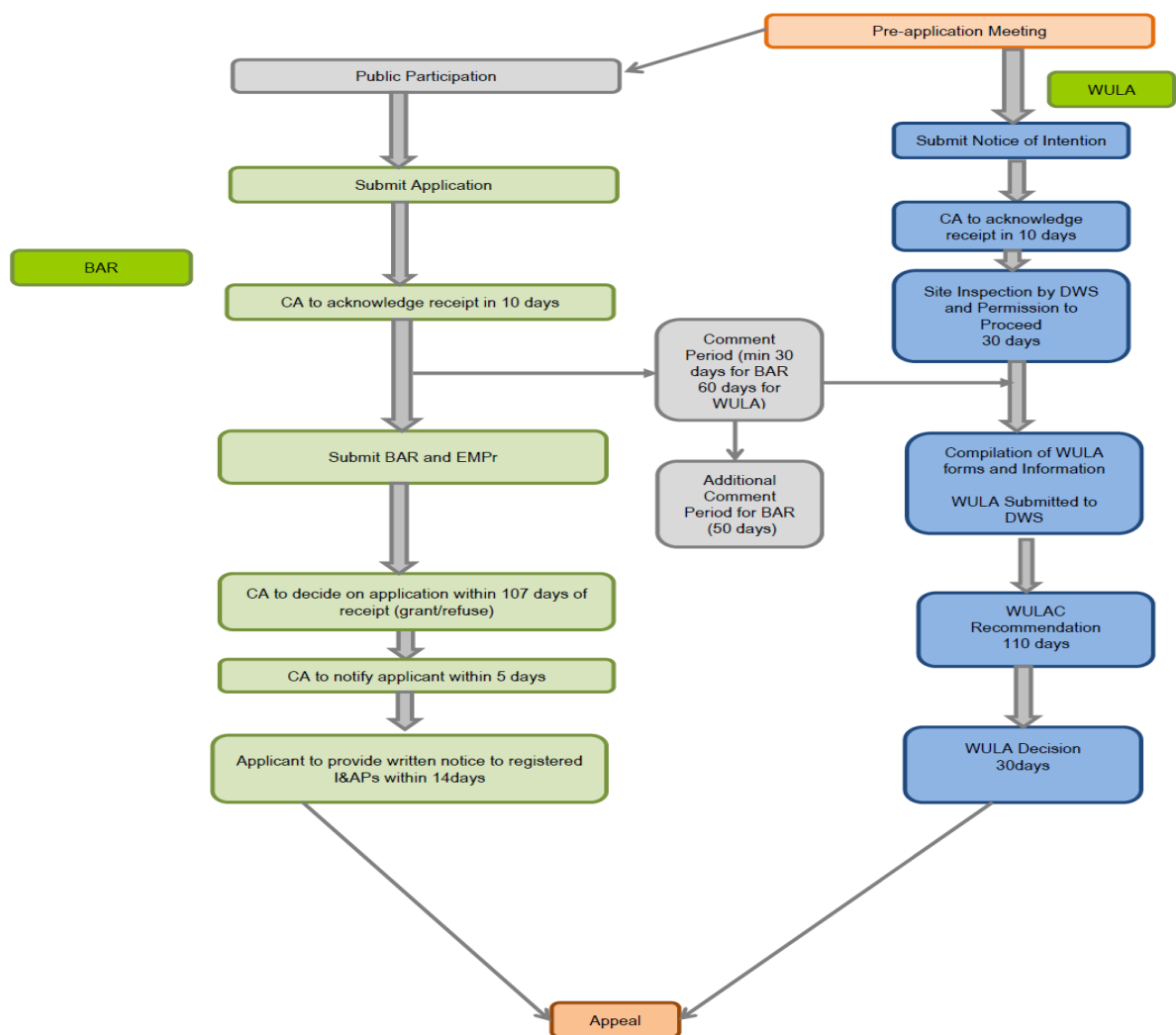


Figure 2: The BA and WULA Process.

KSEMS Environmental Consulting

Contact Kavilan Naidoo

Phone 031 769 1578

Fax 086 535 5281

E-mail: ksems@ksems.co.za

By registering for the process, your name will be included in the register of I & APs and you will be notified of meetings and availability of reports for comment. You will be able to offer comments or queries on any written submission or information provided which will be included in the reports that will be distributed to the authorities.

Please note the following legislated extract as per the National Environmental Management Act, 2014 EIA Regulations (Regulations in terms of Chapter 6 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998, as amended):

Registered interested and affected parties entitled to comment on reports and plans

43. (1) *A registered interested and affected party is entitled to comment, in writing, on all reports or plans submitted to such party during the public participation process contemplated in these Regulations and to bring to the attention of the proponent or applicant any issues which that party believes may be of significance to the consideration of the application, provided that the interested and affected party discloses any direct business, financial, personal or other interest which that party may have in the approval or refusal of the application.*

(2) *In order to give effect to section 24O of the Act, any State department that administers a law relating to a matter affecting the environment must be requested, subject to regulation 7(2), to comment within 30 days.*

PHONE: 031 769 1578 FAX: 086 535 5281 CELL: 082 823 1844 E- MAIL: KSEMS@KSEMS.CO.ZA

P.O. BOX 396, GILLITTS, 3603

COMPANY REGISTRATION NO: 1999/049452/23

MEMBERS: K.A. STANTON (DIRECTOR)