**UMTHOMBO WESIZWE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION REPORT**

**Introduction**

As part of the process of conduction the Heritage Impact Assessment of Mthombowesizwe Primary School, a stakeholder engagement process was undertaken to ensure that all interested and affected parties are consulted and have a comments and consent on this development. While huge effort was made to reach a many interested and affected parties as possible it is important to note that this process took place in the mist of limitations posed by the covid19 pandemic.

**Background**

**Location**

**Interested and Affected Parties**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Stakeholders | Type of Stakeholders  | Level of Importance  | Comments  |
|  |  | High | Medium  | Low |  |
| Families of the Graves  | Affected  | x |  |  | Families are custodians of the graves that will be affected by the renovations  |
| Community  | Interested  | x |  |  | The impact of the project is important to the community as graves are regarded as a sacred place in the community  |
| Ward Councillor  |  |  | X |  | The Ward Councillor is responsible for endorsing the project and ensuring that it is part of the Integrated Development Plan  |
| School Principal  | Affected and Interested  | x |  |  | Since some of the graves are inside the school parameters, the principal is responsible for ensuring that the graves are not affected by the development and that all parties are in harmony with with the development  |
| School Governing Body  | Interested and Affected  | x |  |  | To sign off the proposed development site as they are responsible for school governance  |
| Department of Education  |  |  | x |  | The Department is responsible for the school and is the implementing agent for this development  |
| KwaZulu Natal Amafa  | Interested | x |  |  | KZN Amafa is regulatory Authority on matters of heritage  |
| Local Municipality | Interested  | x |  |  | The municipality is responsible for the approval of plans  |

**Public Participation Methods**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Medium  | Comments  |
| Meetings | * Families of the graves
* School Principal
* Ward Councillor
 |
| News Papers  | * Notice on the Ilanga Newspapers
 |
| Public Notices  | * Notices places at strategic arrears
 |

Public Participation Process

 Meetings

Two meetings was held with the families (Khumalo Families) of the gravies whom are considered as custodians of the grave that might be impacted by the development. The first meeting was to introduce the project and the second meeting was to present the project designs to show the project boundary and parameter and to assure them that graves will not be affected during construction. The families did not object to the project infect they support the project as it is planned. In the meeting with the families, in attendance was the school principal and the Chairperson of the governing body who also pledged their support of the project. A second meeting was held with the Ward Councillor to solicit his understanding of the project. The Ward Councillor confirmed his knowledge and support of the project. A third meeting was held with the Ward Councillor who advised that he is aware of the project and is in full support of the project.

Public Notices

To apprise the community about the project, notices were placed a various strategic points. This was also meant to arouse any support or objection from any member of the community.

Newspaper Advertisements

A newspaper advert was issued on the Ilanga Newspaper to enhance the public participation and consultation regarding this project.

**Limitation to the Stakeholder Engagement Process**

It is common course that when you conduct public participation especially in a rural setting you conduct community meeting as some of the community members do not have access to newspapers and could not read and write. Limitations were therefore posed to the process by the disaster management regulations which prohibited holding of meetings. As a result no community meetings were held. In light of that we remain certified that we have reached all important parties in the process.

**Recommendations**

* That the families as custodians of the graves be represented in the project steering committee
* That all families be informed before the projected starts and be walked around the project boundary/ parameter to reassure them that no grave will be touched of affected.
* That for future and monumental preservation all graves that are inside that boundary be secured with tombstones so that they remain visible.

Conclusion

All interested and affected that were consulted did not object to the project and were supportive of the project.

Annexures

1. Public Participation Report
2. Neighbours Consent Forms signed by Interested and Affected Parties
3. Copy of Notices
4. Ilanga Newspaper Advertisement
5. Project Designs
6. Site Plan/Map with clear buffers