

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

### BASIC ASSESSMENT ENVIRONMENTAL PROCESS FOR THE PROPOSED EXTENSION OF HOUMOED AVE (FROM BULLER LOUW AVE TO LEKKERWATER)

CHAND REFERENCE NO.: 30053

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS & DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: PENDING

HERITAGE WESTERN CAPE REFERENCE NO. 15111709JW0316E

#### 1. PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

The City of Cape Town's Transport and Urban Development Authority is proposing to extend Houmoed Avenue to Lekkerwater Road. This proposal aims to provide a traffic solution for the greater area and also serves to alleviate congestion during the 30 month construction period of the Kommetjie Road Upgrade.

A team of professionals has been appointed to carry out the necessary statutory application processes and assist with the project planning. This document forms part of the public participation process for this proposed project and it describes the following:

- Information about the site and the project proposal currently under consideration;
- An overview of the statutory environmental and related Public Participation Processes; and
- Suggestions on how you can participate in the process.

#### PROJECT TEAM

Environmental Assessment Practitioners and Public Participation Consultants: **Chand Environmental Consultants**  
 Traffic Engineer: **HHO Africa**

#### 2. DESCRIPTION AND ZONING OF THE SITE

The site comprises of 10 land parcels and lies on the boundary of the urban area and the south eastern edge of the so-called Pick & Pay reedbeds wetland (part of the greater Noordhoek wetland system). See the locality map included in **Appendix A**.

The majority of the proposed route lies inside a proclaimed road reserve, however some sections extend to privately owned land which the City would have to acquire. The current zoning of the

various land parcels are Single Residential 1, General Industrial 1 and Open Space 2.

#### 3. WHAT IS PROPOSED AND WHY

The proposed route extension starts at the end of Houmoed Avenue in the east, adjacent to Long Beach Mall, and links up with the northern end of Lekkerwater Road to the west, bypassing the residential suburbs of Milkwood Park and Noordsig.

Alternative alignments are considered for the western edge where the road links with Lekkerwater Road. These alternatives are being finalised in consultation with affected landowners.

The road reserve / servitude for the proposed road is 20 m wide. A temporary roadway that is proposed for the remainder of the duration of the construction phase of the Kommetjie Main Road upgrade project would, however, only be approximately 6 m in width. The proposed works would also include the upgrading and expansion of stormwater infrastructure, street lighting, and traffic signals.

The main focus is to tie into Lekkerwater Road so as to divert/split traffic loads along Kommetjie Main Road, thus offering some relief during peak travelling times. However, the CoCT's Transport and Urban Development Authority motivation for the road is more than just the alleviation of congestion during construction. Other motives for the new road include:

- Better transport circulation through the valley. The transport studies for the Kommetjie Valley show that Houmoed Ave is needed even after Kommetjie Road and Ou Kaapse Weg are upgraded.
- Creating the opportunity for local trips between the residential area's and the shopping centres without looping to Kommetjie Road and around to the shopping centres and beyond.
- Creating a publicly accessible edge along the northern side of the formal project creating recreation opportunities for the enjoyment of

the greater public along the southern boundary of the vleis.

- Providing an improved access route for rapid response of emergency and municipal services to the community in general. There is a new fire station being implemented at the Kommetjie Road / Wood Road intersection. Depending on the location of the incident / accident, the road could assist in improving the rapid response time.
- Formalising a route that affords the City's Departments easier access to efficiently serve the local ratepayers in general, such as refuse collection, mitigating illegal dumping and land invasion.
- Activating an unsafe, out of sight strip of land with improved safety and security through greater visibility and eyes on the vleis edges – such as general public usage, law enforcement patrols, local security company patrols etc.
- It should be noted that the City is also contemplating the extension of Houmoed from Lekkerwater Road to Fish Eagle Park. This proposal will also be subject to an environmental process where I&APs will be engaged for comment.

#### 4. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

The proposed project requires environmental authorisation from the relevant authority in terms of section 24 (5) of the National Environmental Management Act 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998) (NEMA), as amended. The relevant authority in this case is the Western Cape Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning (D:EA&DP).

Activities that may have an impact on the environment are listed in various Government Notices published under NEMA. The listed activities that pertain to the proposed project will be finally determined when the official application is lodged with the D:EA&DP, however at the moment, it is understood that it will, as a minimum, trigger the following listed activities:

##### Government Notice R983 – Listing Notice 1

**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;

But excluding where such infilling, depositing, dredging, excavation, removal or moving-

(a) will occur behind a development setback;

- (b) is for maintenance purposes undertaken in accordance with a maintenance management plan; or
- (c) falls within the ambit of activity 21 in this Notice, in which case that activity applies.

**Activity 67:** Phased activities for all activities listed in this Notice-

- i. which commenced on or after the effective date of this Notice; or
- ii. similarly listed in any of the previous NEMA notices, which commenced on or after the effective date of such previous NEMA Notices; where any phase of the activity may be below a threshold but where a combination of the phases, including expansions or extensions, will exceed a specified threshold.

The specific listed activities triggered necessitates a **Basic Assessment** process with a view to obtaining the required environmental authorisation from the D:EA&DP.

The proposal also requires comment from the heritage authorities in terms of the National Heritage Resources Act No. 25 of 1999. This will be undertaken by a specialist as part of the environmental process.

Owing to the presence of wetland, the proposed construction of the road will constitute a (non-consumptive) water use. As such, a Water Use Authorisation (either a General Authorisation or a Water Use Licence) would be required from the Department of Water and Sanitation. This application will run concurrent with the basic assessment process.

This proposal has previously been mentioned as a possibility in the Open Day Event held in September 2016 for the Kommetjie Road Upgrade, and was further raised for comment and discussion at the Community Liaison Meeting for Kommetjie Road Upgrade in December 2016. It should however be noted that the environmental process has officially commenced this year and that all related public participation activities as legislated (and beyond legislation) are taking place currently and in the next few months.

The City's previous (2004) application for environmental authorisation was approved by the D:EA&DP, but subsequently overturned under an appeal process. Changes to traffic volumes in the area as well as other motivating factors (see Section 3) highlighted the demand for the road and the new application in this regard.

## 5. BASIC ASSESSMENT PROCESS

It is a statutory requirement for this process to be undertaken by independent consultants. Chand Environmental Consultants were appointed as the independent Environmental Assessment Practitioners (EAP) to undertake the environmental process.

The aim of the process is to identify feasible and reasonable alternatives as well as to ascertain whether there are issues, concerns, benefits and/or opportunities associated with the proposed project.

This is achieved by involving environmental specialists as required, based on the biological and social sensitivities on and around the site, as well as obtaining the inputs and comments from I&APs and relevant organs of state. The findings of the environmental process will be recorded in a Basic Assessment Report (BAR). Organs of state and I&APs will have the opportunity to comment on the draft and final versions of the BAR. Note that the 2014 Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations only specify the need for one version of this report, however the team believed it would best serve the proposed project and I&APs to allow for an additional opportunity to provide comment.

The BAR, accompanied by an Environmental Management Programme, the specialist reports and a record of the public participation process will ultimately be submitted to the DEADP to inform their decision on the application. Environmental Authorisation, which may be granted subject to conditions, will only be considered once the process has been completed. Details of the specialist input obtained, the public participation process and the alternatives that will be considered are provided below.

### Specialist Input:

Environmental experts (as shown in the box below) were appointed to undertake the necessary studies to inform the environmental process.

**SPECIALIST INPUT**

- Freshwater Ecology: **Dean Ollis of Freshwater Consulting Group**
- Heritage: **Bridget O'Donoghue**

The specialists will now proceed to assess the development alternatives put forward by the team in order to determine the specific environmental impacts and rate the significance of such impacts. Where appropriate, mitigation measures will be proposed to avoid and/or minimise negative impacts and enhance positive impacts.

The anticipated impacts that will be assessed as part of the basic assessment process include impacts on:

- Wetland habitat and biota
- Fauna (including the Western Leopard Toad)
- Botany
- Social

The outcome of the environmental assessment will be recorded in the draft and final BARs.

Legal requirements in terms of NEMA as well as environmental best-practice will be observed in undertaking the basic assessment process.

### Public Participation:

When compared to the previous regulations governing Environmental Impact Assessments, the latest (2014) Regulations are less prescriptive in terms of public participation requirements. In light of the nature of the proposal, the team, in consultation with the client, has opted for a more comprehensive public participation strategy to allow maximum opportunities for I&APs to comment. The following public participation activities will be undertaken:

- Identification of potential and legislated I&APs;
- One-on-One meetings with key affected landowners;
- Hosting 2 Focus Group Meetings with invited affected parties;
- Placement of an advertisement in The Sentinel newspaper;
- Placement of notice boards in the area;
- Distribution of this Background Information Document; and
- Public review of the draft and final Basic Assessment Reports.

### **YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO BE INVOLVED**

Your active participation will contribute to ensuring responsible development of the site, as well as responsible decision making by the authorities.

The first step in the process is for any members of the public who feel they are affected by or have an interest in the proposed project, to register as I&APs. All registered I&APs will receive continuous communication regarding the proposed project and will be notified of the availability of reports for comment.

## **6. HOW TO GET INVOLVED**

Should you not be registered on our database, or you wish to register another interested party, please contact:

### **Melissa Mc James**

Chand Environmental Consultants  
PO Box 238, Plumstead, Cape Town, 7801  
Tel: (021) 762 3050  
Fax: 086 665 7430  
Email: [melissa@chand.co.za](mailto:melissa@chand.co.za)

There is a comment sheet attached to this document for any initial thoughts you would like the project team/environmental team to be aware of.



APPENDIX A: LOCALITY MAP

**THE PROPOSED EXTENSION OF HOUMOED AVE (FROM BULLER LOUW AVE TO LEKKERWATER)**

We appreciate your interest and participation in this process. If you have any issues, questions or concerns regarding this proposed project specifically, please ensure to have your comments returned to us.

**Mellissa Mc James**  
**CHAND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANTS**

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**ENSURE TO WRITE CLEARLY AND LEGIBLY AND TO USE EXTRA PAPER IF NEEDED.**

**NAME:**

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**ORGANISATION:**

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**POSTAL ADDRESS**

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**TELEPHONE NUMBER:**

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**FAX NUMBER:**

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**E-MAIL ADDRESS:**

**SUGGESTED COMMENTING CATEGORIES:**

**HERITAGE:**

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**SECURITY:**

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**INFRASTRUCTURE:**

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**NATURAL ENVIRONMENT:**

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**GENERAL:**

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