

9 October 2020

**NOTIFICATION OF IN-PROCESS PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PERIOD:
9 October 2020 – 13 November 2020**

GNEC Code: 20640

DEA&DP PRE-APPLICATION REF: 16/3/3/6/7/1/E5/1088/20

Dear Interested and Affected Party

NOTIFICATION OF START OF THE IN-PROCESS PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PERIOD FOR THE PROPOSED 160MM uPVC BULK WATER CONVEYANCE PIPELINE FROM TESSELAARSDAL TO BETHOESKLOOF IN THE WESTERN CAPE.

The town of Tessaarsdal is situated approximately 23km south-east of Caledon (Caledon being the capital of the Theewaterskloof Municipality). Caledon is located approximately 112km east of Cape Town via the N2 and is situated at the foothills of the Klein Swartberg Mountain. Tessaarsdal can be described as a rural settlement, the town is a small rural village with a unique character and identity. The rural community is predominantly involved in agricultural activities and nearby settlements such as Bethoeskloof (approx. 4km), Steyntjiesfontein (approx. 2km) and Solitaire (approx. 6km) forms part of this node. The above approx. km's are from Tessaarsdal.

Current Situation

Tessaarsdal is supplied with water from a single production borehole. The water is pumped to a 150kl reservoir, from where it gravitates to the end-users. Bethoeskloof is also supplied with a borehole that supplies water to a 52kl reservoir. A rural scheme, north of Tessaarsdal (towards Solitaire), is also supplied via the distribution network. The existing reticulation system seems sufficient, however the bulk infrastructure seems to be insufficient. During 2015 water shortages were experienced and the supply of water to the end-users had to be supplemented. Hence, the proposed bulk water pipeline for Tessaarsdal.

Proposed Development

The Theewaterskloof Municipality is required by legislation to provide proper basic services to the communities within its Municipal borders. The proposed development entails the installation of a 160mm uPVC bulk water conveyance pipeline from Tesselaarsdal to Bethoeskloof in order to minimize water shortages. The proposal is to install the 160mm bulk water conveyance pipeline adjacent to the existing main road (Minor Road OP04103), along existing fence lines (within the road reserve and on private property), within an existing gravel road and footpath. The preferred alternative is proposed to be approximately 5.3km in length with alternative 1 proposed to be approximately 5.7km. The two alternatives follow a very similar route, but alternative 1 includes an extra section of pipe from the main road towards the Bethoeskloof Reservoir. The preferred alternative will result in less disturbance to indigenous vegetation as the extra section of pipe, as proposed in alternative 1, would be through an area with pristine indigenous vegetation.

The proposed water pipeline alternatives are proposed to cross 4 watercourses in total per alternative (5 watercourses were assessed and included in the reports). Dietmar de Klerk from DDK Consulting was appointed to conduct a Watercourse Assessment of the proposed pipeline alternatives. DDK Consulting concluded that the proposed water pipeline alternatives will have a low risk to the integrity of the identified watercourses. The impacts on the watercourses will be minimised through the implementation of the mitigation measures proposed by DDK Consulting.

Paul Emms from Capensis Ecological Consulting (Pty) Ltd. was appointed to conduct a botanical assessment due to natural vegetation being present in certain sections of the proposed pipeline footprints. Paul Emms noted that the vegetation type that occurs along the proposed pipeline alternatives are mostly Western Rûens Shale Renosterveld (Critically Endangered classification) and Overberg Sandstone Fynbos (Critically Endangered classification). The Overberg Sandstone Fynbos is only applicable to alternative 1 while the preferred alternative is proposed to only be situated within the Western Rûens Shale Renosterveld area.

As removal of the natural vegetation will not be avoidable (except for the Overberg Sandstone Fynbos as part of alternative 1), action will be aimed to minimize the impact on the vegetation. Paul Emms reported that *“Most of the impacts would occur during the construction phase since it would involve clearing of the vegetation and pushing the topsoil to one side. Overall impacts without mitigation are expected to be Low Negative due to (a) narrow footprint, (b) the high levels of disturbance and minimal disturbance of intact vegetation”*.

Guillaume Nel Environmental Consultants (GNEC) has been appointed by the Theewaterskloof Municipality to facilitate the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process for the proposed 160mm uPVC bulk water conveyance pipeline from the Tesselaarsdal Reservoir to Bethoeskloof in order to minimize the risk of water shortages.

Taking the above-mentioned proposal of the proposed 160mm bulk water pipeline into account, the following legislation was considered:

National Environmental Management Act (Act No. 107 Of 1998) and the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014 (as amended)

Government Notice No. R.327 (as amended 07 April 2017):

Activity 19

The infilling or depositing of any material of more than 10 cubic metres into, or the dredging, excavation, removal or moving of soil, sand, shells, shell grit, pebbles or rock of more than 10 cubic metres from 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;
- (c) falls within the ambit of activity 21 in this Notice, in which case that activity applies;
- (d) occurs within existing ports or harbours that will not increase the development footprint of the port or harbour; or
- (e) where such development is related to the development of a port or harbour, in which case activity 26 in Listing Notice 2 of 2014 applies.

Government Notice No. R.324 (as amended 07 April 2017):

Activity 12

The clearance of an area of 300 square metres or more of indigenous vegetation where such clearance of indigenous vegetation is required for maintenance purposes undertaken in accordance with a maintenance management plan.

Western Cape

- i Within any critically endangered or endangered ecosystem listed in terms of section 52 of the NEMBA or prior to the publication of such a list, within an area that has been identified as critically endangered in the National Spatial Biodiversity Assessment 2004;
- ii Within critical biodiversity areas identified in bioregional plans;

iii Within the littoral active zone or 100 metres inland from high water mark of the sea or an estuarine functional zone, whichever distance is the greater, excluding where such removal will occur behind a development setback line on erven in urban areas;

iv On land, where, at the time of the coming into effect of this Notice or thereafter such land was zoned open space, conservation or had an equivalent zoning; or

v On land designated for protection or conservation purposes in an Environmental Management Framework adopted in the prescribed manner, or in Spatial Development Framework adopted by the MEC or Minister.

National Water Act (Act 36 of 1998)

A Water Use Application process is currently underway at the Breede-Gouritz Catchment Management Agency (BGCMA) for the proposed watercourse crossings. The application is made in terms of Section (c) & (i) of the National Water Act (NWA) (Act 36 of 1998).

National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act No. 25 of 1999)

A Notice of Intent to Develop was submitted electronically (due to COVID-19) to Heritage Western Cape (HWC) on the 24th of April 2020. HWC provided a response on email on the 22nd of June 2020 stating that *“Since there is no reason to believe that the proposed installation of bulk water pipelines will negatively impact on heritage resources, no further studies required”*. HWC forwarded an official signed NID response on the 28th of August 2020.

The aim of this EIA process is to ensure that:

- Public participation will be conducted, i.e. to afford stakeholders and/or the community sufficient opportunity to provide comment on the proposed development; and
- Sufficient information is submitted herewith to decision-makers to support an informed decision-making process.

The Public Participation Process will run from the **9th of October 2020** until the **13th of November 2020**.

The in-process draft Basic Assessment Report will be available from 9 October 2020 on GNEC's website www.gnec.co.za. The in-process draft Basic Assessment Report will be made available electronically or via other means to any I&AP's on request. Due to the current National COVID-19 pandemic, no hardcopy documents are available at the Public Library.

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