

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

FOR

THE BASIC ASSESSMENT (BA), WATER USE LICENSE APPLICATION AND A HERITAGE PERMIT FOR THE PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE OF NEW SYSTEM 1 AT RAND WATER VEREENIGING TREATMENT WORKS, INSTALLATION OF APPROXIMATELY 7 KM PHASE 2 SLUDGE PIPELINE IN VEREENIGING, 1.5 KM SLUDGE LINE IN PANFONTEIN AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE WITHIN THE JURISDICTION OF SEDIBENG DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY, GAUTENG PROVINCE

APPLICANT



ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PRACTITIONERS



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1. PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

The purpose of this Background Information Document (BID) is to provide information to interested and/or affected parties (I&APs) about the Basic Assessment process, Water Use License Application and the Heritage Permit for the Construction & Maintenance of New System 1 at Rand Water Vereeniging Treatment Works, the Installation of approximately 7 Km Phase 2 Sludge Pipeline in Vereeniging, a 1.5 Km Sludge Line in Panfontein and Associated Infrastructure within the jurisdiction of Sedibeng District Municipality, Gauteng Province, South Africa. This Background Information Document (BID) also aims to explain the Public Participation Process that is prescribed by the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998) (NEMA), National Water Act – NWA (Act 36 of 1998) and the National Heritage Resource Act, 1999 (Act No. 25 of 1999), which invites all I&APs to comment on issues and concerns related to the project.

In addition to supplying information about the proposed project, the BA, WULA, and Heritage Permit processes being undertaken, this BID will also provide I&APs with the opportunity to:

- Duly register as an Interested and Affected Parties in the public participation process.
- Understand the Basic assessment, Water Use License application, and the Heritage Permit processes in order to participate effectively.
- Raise issues of concern and/or submit suggestions to enhance the proposed project, and
- Contribute local knowledge.

2. INTRODUCTION & PROJECT BACKGROUND

Rand Water (applicant) proposes the construction & Maintenance of New System 1 at Rand Water Vereeniging Treatment Works, the installation of approximately 7 Km Phase 2 Sludge Pipeline in Vereeniging, and a 1.5 Km Sludge Line in Panfontein, and Associated Infrastructure within the jurisdiction of Sedibeng District Municipality, Gauteng Province, South Africa.

Selahle Consultancy and Projects (Pty) Ltd (herein referred to as SCP) team has approached this proposal with a great deal of experience in undertaking EIAs and all related Environmental Services. SCP has a team of specialists with the capacity and background to undertake the fieldwork and compile the reports within the required timeframes.

The proposed development requires authorisations under the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA), Heritage Permit (NHRA) and the Water Use License Application and Appeals Regulations, 2017(amended) promulgated under the National Water Act – NWA (Act 36 of 1998) to ensure compliance with Environmental, Heritage, Water legislation and regulations, the Competent Authorities for all the required documentation are the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE), Provincial Heritage Resources Authority Gauteng (PHRA-G), and the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) respectively. All relevant legislation will be consulted during the Basic Assessment process and will be complied with at all times.

3. PROJECT LOCATION

The proposed project spans three locations but remains within the jurisdiction of the Servitude of Rand Water within the Sedibeng District Municipality, Gauteng Province, South Africa. The coordinates to the three sites are as follows (refer to the locality maps and the tables below).

3.1 New System 1 Vereeniging

The Vereeniging New System 1 at Rand Water Vereeniging Treatment Works will consist of the following infrastructure:

- Construction of a new 250 MLD flocculator and 225 MLD sedimentation tank.
- Installation of the de-sludge bridge.
- Construction of access roads.
- Installation of a raw water pipeline.
- Installation of a sludge pipeline.
- Demolition of System 1 tank (90 MLD) to allow for the installation of a new automated system capable of producing 1400 MLD.
- Construction of a Laboratory and
- The installation of a new Carbon Dioxide dosing Carbonisation Bay.

Table 1: Vereeniging New System 1 Location

PROJECT LOCATION	
Province	Gauteng
District	Sedibeng District Municipality
Local Municipalities	Emfuleni Local Municipality
Ward Numbers	15
Nearest Town	Vereeniging
Farm Names and Numbers	LEEUKUIL 596 IQ
Portion Numbers	Portion 111 of 596
Co-ordinates	26°41'15.46" S 27°55'06.63" E



Figure 1: New System 1 (Vereeniging) Locality Map

3.2 Phase 2 Sludge Pipeline in Vereeniging

- Phase 2 of the sludge pipeline starts from the sludge pumping station inside Vereeniging Treatment Works and runs through mostly an established industrial area in the south of Vereeniging.
- The proposed sludge pipeline runs alongside as well as across some of these services, which also include Rand Water Bulk Water Pipelines to the Vaal River Crossing.
- The installation of approximately 7 km in length of 1000mm nominal internal diameter steel sludge pipe with an 8mm wall thickness to be laid from the Vereeniging Pumping Station to the Vaal River Crossing.

Table 2: Phase 2 Sludge pipeline location

PROJECT LOCATION	
Province	Gauteng
District	Sedibeng District Municipality
Local Municipalities	Emfuleni Local Municipality
Ward Numbers	15
Nearest Town	Vereeniging
Farm Names and Numbers	LEEUWKUIL 596 IQ KLIPPLAATDRIFT 601 IQ USCO 603 IQ UITVLUGT 434 IR
Portion Numbers	Portion 0 of 596 Portion 60 of 596 Portion 81 of 596 Portion 98 of 596 Portion 117 of 596 Portion 122 of 596 Portion 111 of 596 Portion 160 of 596 Portion 251 of 596 Portion 255 of 596 Portion 260 of 596 Portion 0 of 601 Portion 72 of 601 Portion 0 of 603 Portion 77 of 434
Co-ordinates	Start Point: 26° 41'27.50" S 27° 54'41.83" E Middle Point: 26° 41'55.80"S 27°54'51.63" E End Point: 26°40'55.90"S 27°56'13.15"E



Figure 2: Phase 2 Sludge Pipeline

3.3 1.5km Panfontein Sludge Pipeline

The Panfontein Sludge Pipeline will consist of the installation of an interconnection new sludge pipeline with approximately 1.5km in length and 800mm in diameter.

Table 3: Panfontein 1.5km Sludge Pipeline

PROJECT LOCATION	
Province	Gauteng
District	Sedibeng District Municipality
Local Municipalities	Midvaal Local Municipality
Ward Numbers	1
Nearest Town	Panfontein
Farm Names and Numbers	PANFONTEIN 437 IR
Portion Numbers	Portion 6 of 437
Co-ordinates	Start Point: 26° 42' 15.72" S 28° 01' 40.08" E Middle Point: 26° 42' 51.76" S 28° 02' 08.18" E End Point: 26° 42' 32.01" S 28° 02' 05.84" E



Figure 3: Panfontein Sludge Pipeline Locality Map

4. BASIC ASSESSMENT & WATER USE LICENSE APPLICATION PROCESS

4.1 What is a Basic Assessment?

A Basic Assessment is an environmental impact identification, evaluation and mitigation conducted under the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA), Act 107 of 1998. It applies to activities that are listed under Listing Notice 1 or 3 of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations, which are considered to have a low to moderate potential environmental impact. Basic Assessments are undertaken where the impacts are less likely to have significant impacts on the receiving environment.

The process involves the preparation of a Basic Assessment Report (BAR), which outlines the nature and scope of the proposed development, describes the existing environmental conditions, identifies and assesses potential environmental impacts, and proposes mitigation measures. An Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) is also developed to guide the implementation of mitigation and monitoring measures. Public participation is a key component of the Basic Assessment process, and stakeholder engagement must be documented within the BAR. The completed report is then submitted to the relevant competent authority, which in this case is the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) for decision-making. Figures 4 & 5 illustrate the process of the Basic Assessment Process and the Public Participation Process to be conducted.

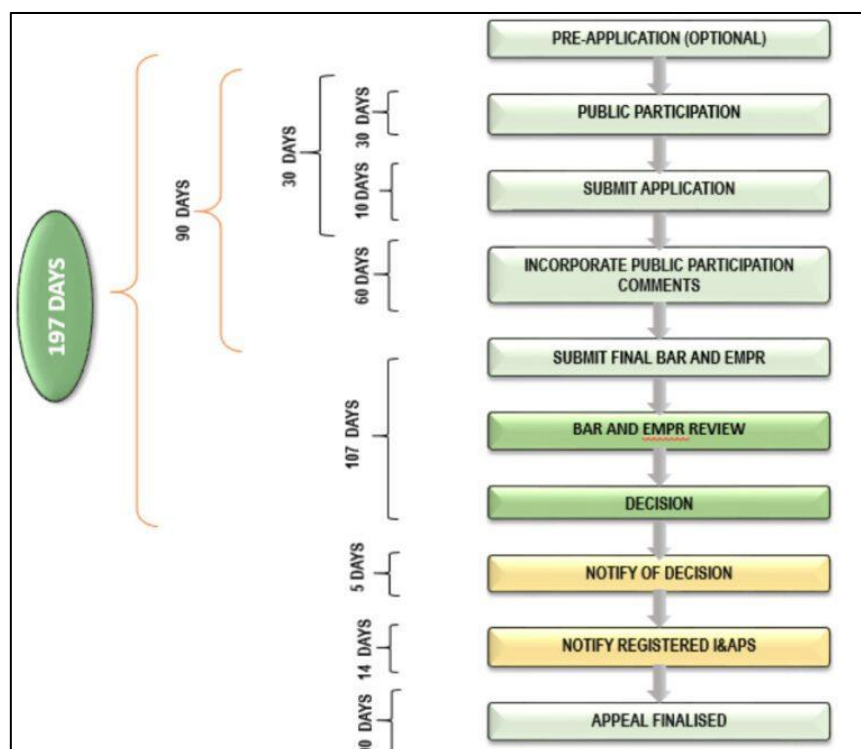


Figure 4: Basic Assessment Process

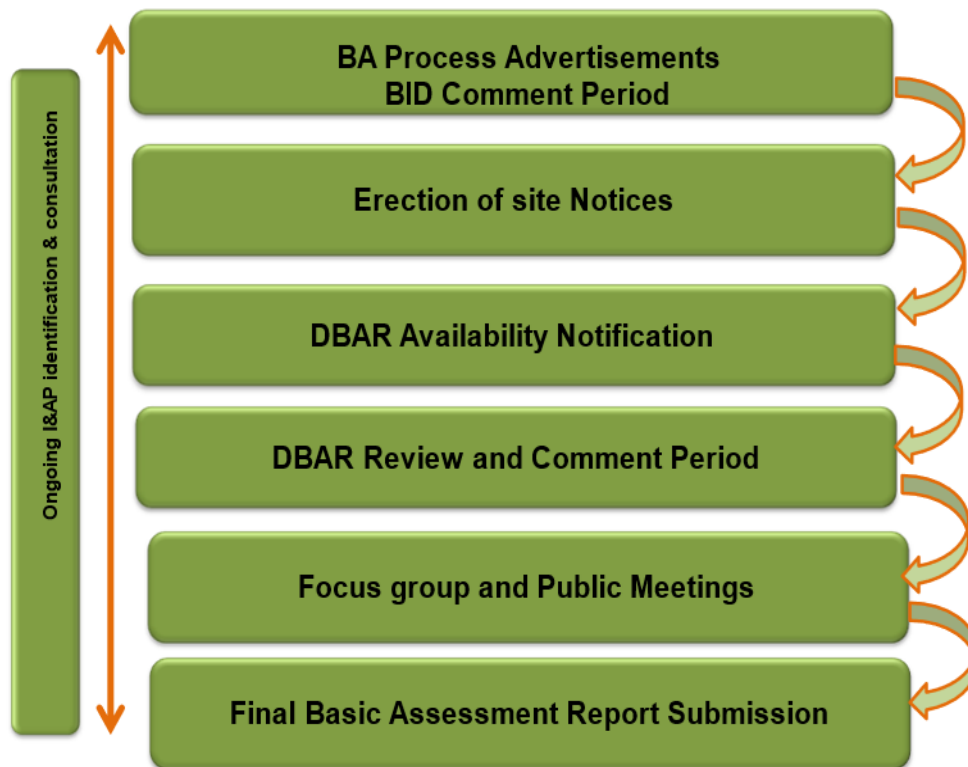


Figure 5: Public Participation Process for Basic Assessment

4.2 What is a Water Use Licence Application?

The Water Use Licence Application is undertaken in accordance with the Water Use License Application and Appeals Regulations, 2017(amended), promulgated under the National Water Act – NWA (Act 36 of 1998). The NWA was created in order to ensure the protection and sustainable use of Water Resources in South Africa.

A WULA is required when an activity falls under Section 21 of the National Water Act, which identifies 11 different water uses that require authorisation. These include taking water from a resource such as rivers, dams, or boreholes; storing water in reservoirs or dams; impeding or diverting water flow in a watercourse; and engaging in streamflow reduction activities like commercial afforestation. Other regulated uses involve controlled activities such as irrigation with wastewater, discharging waste into a water resource, and disposing of waste in a manner that affects water bodies. Additionally, activities such as altering the bed, banks, or course of a watercourse, removing or discharging groundwater, and using water for recreational purposes may also require a licence.

Therefore, the proposed project also involves the impeding of the stream /river or diverting of the flow of the river as well as altering the bed, banks of a watercourse, which will trigger Section 21(c) and (i) of the National Water Act (Act 36 of 1998), as promulgated on the 20th of August 1998.

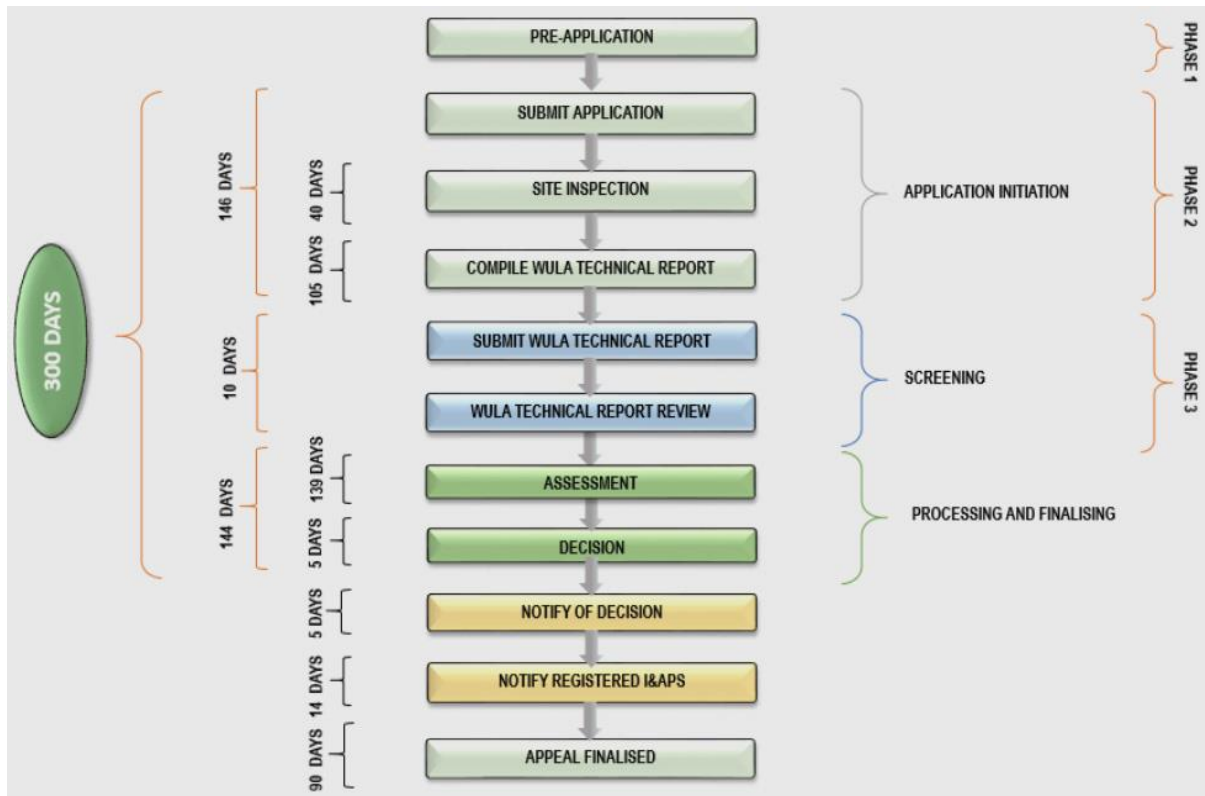


Figure 6: Water Use License Process

4.3 What is a Heritage Permit Application?

A Heritage Permit Application is a formal process undertaken to obtain a permit from a recognised heritage authority, such as the Provincial Heritage Resources Authority Gauteng (PHRAG) or the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA). This process is governed by the National Heritage Resources Act (Act No. 25 of 1999) and is applicable to any activity that may affect identified heritage resources. These include, but are not limited to, structures older than 60 years, graves and burial grounds, archaeological or paleontological sites, rock art, and declared or proposed heritage sites.

The application typically requires the submission of a motivation report or Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA), along with supporting documentation such as photographs, maps, and detailed descriptions of the proposed activity. In some instances, specialist studies may be required, and a public consultation process may also be necessary. The permit ensures that the heritage significance of a site is adequately considered before any alteration, demolition, or development can proceed.

Steps to Undertaking Heritage Permit Processes



Figure 7: Heritage Permit Processes

5. LISTED ACTIVITIES IN TERMS OF THE EIA REGULATIONS, NWA (Act 36 of 1998), AND NHRA (Act No. 25 of 1999)

In terms of Section 24 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998), a legal framework is provided for the regulation of activities that may have a significant impact on the environment. This framework mandates that such activities must be assessed and authorised through an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process before they may commence. These activities are referred to as "listed activities" and require an Environmental Authorisation (EA) from the relevant competent authority. The listed activities are detailed in Government Notices 327 (Listing Notice 1), 325 (Listing Notice 2), and 324 (Listing Notice 3).

In addition to the above, Section 41(1)(a) of the National Water Act, 1998 (Act No. 36 of 1998) and Section 34(1) and Section 38(1)(a) (c)(i) of the National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act No. 25 of 1999) are also applicable. Therefore, the proposed development triggers several listed activities under the above-mentioned legislation and must be assessed accordingly.

Table 4: Listed Activities Triggered by the Proposed Development

Environmental Authorisation	Water Use License	Heritage Permit
Government Notice No. 327 of 2017(as amended)	National Water Act (Act No. 36 of 1998)	National Heritage Resources Act (No. 25 of 1999)
Listing Notice 1: Activities – 10, 9,13, 19 & 27	Section 21 (c) – impeding or diverting the flow of water in a water course.	Section 34 (1) – Heritage permit to alter or demolish any structure older than 60 years.
Government Notice No. 324 of 2017(as amended)		Section 38(1)(a) – Linear development exceeding 300m in length
Listing Notice 3: Activity – 12 (c) & Activity – 14 (c)	Section 21 (i) – altering the bed, banks, course, or characteristics of a watercourse;	Section 38(c)(i) – development exceeding 5000m ² in extent

6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

The public participation process during the BA, WULA & Heritage Permit phases will enable I&APs to influence the course of the technical investigations and to review the findings of the independent studies that are undertaken. The environmental consultants will correspond directly with registered I&APs at various stages during the process to keep them informed of progress in the study and the timing of opportunities to be involved. The steps in the public participation process are outlined below:

- Letters of invitation accompanied by this BID and comment sheet to be distributed to adjacent landowners within 100m from the area of the proposed development, key individuals and organisations, announcing the project and inviting their Comments.
- Placing an advertisement in Local newspapers announcing the proposed project and providing an opportunity to comment.
- Site notices to be erected at strategic places along the property in accordance with the requirements of the Regulations, in order to announce the project.
- Key stakeholders in the area will be informed by telephone, e-mail or facsimile.
- All issues received from stakeholders will be captured in the Comments and Response Report (CRR), which will be used to screen and prioritise issues for evaluation.

6.1 Your comments are important.

Your comments will ensure that all relevant issues are evaluated in the BA, WULA & Heritage Permit phase. You are requested to complete the enclosed registration form and comment sheet. Use the contact details below in this document to make any comments or raise issues.

6.2 How to become involved

- Respond (by phone, fax or e-mail) to our invitation for your participation, which has been advertised in the printed media.
- Mail, fax or e-mail the attached Registration and Comment Form to Selahle CP;
- Contact us telephonically should you have a query, comment or require further project information.

By completing and submitting the accompanying Registration and Comment Form, you automatically register yourself as an I&AP for this proposed project, ensuring that your comments and/or concerns raised regarding the proposed project will be noted. The public participation consultants will respond to all comments and queries received during the course of the project. Use the contact details below to send your comments:

Selahle Consultancy & Projects Pty Ltd

Contact Person : Sinnah Mhlongo/ Shonisani Selahle

Tel No : 011 026 2560

WhatsApp No : 079 569 5277

Fax No : 086 532 0398

Email : ppp@scprojects.co.za

Postal : P. O. Box 1059, Halfway House, 1685

6.3 Next Step

Interested and Affected parties should register on or before **Thursday, 22 May 2025**, in the first round of stakeholder engagement and to raise issues about the proposed project. The next step is the release of the Draft BA Report, which will detail the project, baseline conditions of the affected area, and the issues and concerns raised so far. It will also describe how the report will address the concerns raised. Copies of the report will be placed in public venues for review. Registered I&APs will be informed where to review the report and will be given 30 days to comment on the report.

Information regarding public meetings and the review of the Draft Basic Assessment Report will be made available at your earliest convenience. If you wish to raise any initial issues or concerns regarding the proposed project, or if you would like to register as an I&AP, please contact the Public Participation office as detailed above.