

Appendix K – Need and Desirability

1. Introduction

This Appendix has been prepared in accordance with the Western Cape Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning Guideline on Need and Desirability (March 2013) and the Department of Environmental Affairs Integrated Environmental Management Guideline (2017). It provides a concise, structured assessment of the need and desirability of the proposed development of a single primary dwelling and associated infrastructure on Portion 76 of Farm Uitzicht No. 216, Brenton-on-Sea, Knysna. The assessment considers the site-specific context, applicable planning frameworks, environmental constraints, specialist investigations, climate resilience considerations and the socio-economic implications of the proposed development.

2. Need (Site-Specific and Contextual)

2.1 Site-Specific Need

The property is privately owned and currently undeveloped. The proposal seeks to establish a single primary dwelling and associated infrastructure within a substantially reduced development footprint. The proposal is needed to:

- enable the lawful exercise of the Applicant's residential development rights associated with the property;
- provide an appropriate permanent residence on the property;
- minimise environmental impacts through a substantially reduced development footprint;
- consolidate development within a defined area to limit unnecessary disturbance; and
- implement environmentally responsible design measures, including rainwater harvesting, on-site wastewater treatment and other sustainable servicing solutions appropriate to the rural coastal setting.

2.2 Broader Public Need

The proposed development aligns with broader municipal and provincial objectives by:

- allowing appropriately scaled low-density residential development within the existing planning framework;
- promoting environmentally responsible development through the implementation of specialist recommendations and mitigation measures;
- supporting temporary employment and local economic activity during construction;

- encouraging sustainable water and wastewater management through largely self-sufficient servicing; and
- maintaining the rural and scenic character of the Brenton-on-Sea coastal landscape through a carefully designed and mitigated development footprint.

3. Desirability (Spatial, Environmental, Social and Economic)

3.1 Spatial Planning Alignment

The proposed development has been assessed against the relevant planning framework, including:

- the Knysna Municipal Spatial Development Framework (2020);
- the Garden Route Environmental Management Framework; and
- the existing rural residential character of the surrounding area.

The development has been refined through an iterative assessment process, resulting in a substantially reduced development footprint that limits unnecessary disturbance while accommodating the intended residential use of the property.

3.2 Environmental Desirability

The specialist investigations undertaken as part of the Basic Assessment indicate that:

- the proposed development footprint has been substantially reduced from previous iterations of the project;
- the majority of the property will remain in its natural state outside the authorised development footprint;
- the layout has been refined, as far as reasonably practicable, to minimise environmental impacts while accommodating the proposed residential use;
- comprehensive mitigation measures have been incorporated into the Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) and specialist recommendations; and
- rehabilitation, search-and-rescue of indigenous vegetation, erosion control, alien invasive species management and long-term environmental management measures will be implemented throughout the project lifecycle.

3.3 Socio-Economic Desirability

The proposed development will:

- create temporary employment opportunities during the construction phase;
- support local contractors, suppliers and service providers;
- contribute modestly to the local economy through procurement of goods and services;
- enable the lawful residential use of privately owned land; and
- provide ongoing property management and maintenance opportunities.

4. Best Practicable Environmental Option

Based on the findings of the specialist investigations, engineering assessments and the iterative Basic Assessment process, the preferred development represents the best practicable environmental option because it:

- substantially reduces the overall development footprint compared with previous proposals;
- consolidates development within a defined area;
- limits unnecessary disturbance to the surrounding environment;
- incorporates sustainable servicing solutions appropriate to the rural coastal setting;
- includes comprehensive mitigation, rehabilitation and monitoring measures through the EMP; and
- balances environmental protection with the Applicant's lawful residential development rights.

5. Conclusion

The proposed development on Portion 76 of Farm Uitzicht No. 216 is considered both needed and desirable because it:

- enables the lawful exercise of the Applicant's residential development rights;
- provides an appropriately scaled residential development within a substantially reduced footprint;

- has been refined through an iterative environmental assessment process informed by specialist investigations and public participation;
- incorporates extensive mitigation measures to minimise impacts on biodiversity, soils, visual resources and ecological processes;
- retains the majority of the property in its natural state outside the authorised development footprint; and
- provides modest socio-economic benefits while ensuring that identified environmental impacts can be managed to acceptable levels through the implementation of the Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) and specialist recommendations.

Based on the findings of the Basic Assessment, specialist studies and integrated environmental assessment, the proposed development is considered potentially acceptable, subject to the granting of Environmental Authorisation and the implementation of all mitigation measures contained in the Final Basic Assessment Report and Environmental Management Programme (EMPr).