

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENT



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## THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK FOR THE WESTERNPART OF KUNGWINI LOCAL MUNICIPALITY AREA

### 1. BACKGROUND

The study area is located within the jurisdiction of the Kungwini Local Municipality (hereafter referred to as Kungwini), which is situated towards the north-eastern part of the Gauteng Province. The western part of Kungwini is currently experiencing high development pressure, resulting from the eastwards expansion of high income exclusive housing development and the conversion of small agricultural holdings into urban uses.

This is manifested by the current urban sprawl towards low-scale agricultural areas, including Olympus, Shere, Zwavelpoort, Tiegerpoort, Tweefontein, Rietfontein and Mooiplaats. Consequently, this has necessitated an integrated approach to environmental planning and management of the area.

Current land-uses in the area vary from high density Residential 3 development of up to 60 units per hectare on the western border, in the Olympus and Tweefontein, area to high income residential developments at low densities of about 10 units per hectare in Silver Lakes, Rietfontein and Mooikloof and very low densities in the Zwavelpoort, Tiegerpoort agricultural holdings towards the east. This eastern region incorporates a large portion of agricultural holdings predominately used for rural residential purposes and agricultural activities but with an emerging trend towards resort and conference facility developments.

The area has many sensitive bio-physical features worth protecting. These include the Rietvlei dam catchment area which comprises sensitive underground aquifers and dolomitic geological conditions, sensitive ecosystems such as Bronberg Ridge and the presence of Red Data fauna and flora such as the Golden Mole habitat in the Shere area. Unmanaged and unplanned development could pose a threat to the integrity of the ecosystem in the area therefore a strategy for better growth management necessary. As custodians of the environment, the Gauteng Department of Agriculture, Conservation, Environment and Land Affairs (GDACEL) is committed to the protection of ecologically sensitive areas, and to the promotion of environmentally sensitive development in the Province.

In order to give effect to this commitment GDACEL has undertaken to establish an Environmental Management Framework (EMF) for the western Kungwini area. The EMF would describe the current state of the ecological environment in the area, establish, through active participation of relevant stakeholders, the desired state of environment and determine the way forward from the current status to the desired state. The major focus of the EMF will be to identify and rank areas of environmental importance and formulate a framework for making trade-offs and balancing land-uses. In addition, the EMF will emphasise the interconnectedness of the natural ecosystems in the area of study as the framework for conservation and development.



MEC: KHABISI MOSUNKUTU

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The aim of this project is to provide an environmental framework that will support decision-making in order to ensure sustainable development in the Western section of the Kungwini Local municipality in line with the principles of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA)(Act 17 of 1998).

**2. DELIVERABLES OF THE PROJECT**

- Draft Environmental Status Quo Report
- Environmental Status Quo Report
- Draft Strategic Environmental Management Plan
- Strategic Environmental Management Plan
- Draft Environmental Management Framework
- Environmental Management Framework (EMF)
- Action plan(s) for the implementation of the EMF

This report deals only with the Draft Environmental Status Quo.

**3. DELIVERABLES FOR THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS QUO REPORT**

The consultants must, after the necessary review of the literature and field investigations of the study area, prepare a report on the status quo of the environment in the study area. This report should address/include the following:

- Identification of the key environmental issues in the study area;
- A spatial representation of the environmental status quo. This spatial representation should indicate:
  - Sensitive natural environments (such as the ridges and koppies, rivers, red data species)
  - Categorisation of areas unsuitable for development due to environmental sensitivity and the impact on these areas by development thus far
  - State of degradation
  - Status of services provision/capacity by the Local authority
  - Traffic, road infrastructure and network capacity
  - State of open space availability/provisions in the area
  - Agricultural potential of soils in the area in line with the Agricultural Resource Act (ARA) and the Agricultural Potential Atlas
  - Land use in the area

A draft of this report must be submitted to the project team for comments prior to finalisation. This report would also form the basis of consultation to establish the desired state of environment and develop strategies to be implemented in order to guide development in the area.

**4. SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

A number of studies have been for the study area. The detail to which individual components have been studied varied and varies considerably: some have been done to great detail and has been accepted as policy by GDACEL or by the local authority that commissioned the study. It is not the intention to duplicate the various databases but rather to use these studies as a basis and supplement it with additional information.

The studies used for the GIS layers of the status quo are:

SOURCE OF INFORMATION
Bronberg Strategic Environmental Assessment
Gauteng Open Space Project (Version 2 and 3)
Gauteng Agricultural Potential Atlas
The GDACEL Draft Policy for Development on Ridges



The GDACEL Draft Red data Plant Policy
<b>OTHER GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS</b>
GAUTRANS road network
Department of Development Planning and Local Government (DPLG): Gauteng Spatial Development Framework. Review Sub-Project 4: Management of the Urban Edge
DPLG: Gauteng Spatial Development Framework. Phase 3
<b>LOCAL GOVERNMENT</b>
Development Guidelines and frameworks for accommodation at the Rietvlei Nature Reserve
Eastern Gauteng Regional Environmental Framework
Eastern Gauteng Regional Services Council: Water Services Field Manual for the Bronberg Representative Council
The IDP for the Kungwini Local Municipality

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