

Integrated Water Use Licence Application for the Harmony Free State Defunct Shafts Backfilling Project, Free State Province

DWS Reference Number: WU44553

Background Information Document

Purpose of the Document

This Background Information Document (BID) aims to provide you with important information regarding:

- Project background of the proposed Harmony Gold Mining Company Limited (Harmony) Free State Defunct Shafts Backfilling Project (“the Project”);
- Water Use Licence (WUL) approval requirements;
- The Public Participation Process (PPP) that will be undertaken as part of the IWULA process.
- How you can register as an Interested and Affected Party (I&AP) and be kept informed about the Project’s developments; and
- The public review and comment period for the draft Integrated Water and Waste Management Plan Report (IWWMP).

Project Background

Harmony Gold Mining Company Limited (‘Harmony’) intends to close its defunct mine shafts in the Free State region. The proposed method of closing these shafts is backfilling them with tailings material from plants and Tailings Storage Facilities (TSFs).

The proposed Harmony Free State Defunct Shafts Backfilling Project (‘Proposed Project’) aims to address the safety risks associated with open defunct shafts. It is Harmony’s intention to rehabilitate these defunct shafts, including backfilling and sealing. To achieve this, Harmony is proposing backfilling its defunct shafts, listed in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Shafts to be backfilled

Shaft	No.	Type
Harmony	1	Vent
Harmony	3	Main
Harmony	4	Main
Harmony	4	Vent
Harmony	5	Vent
Merriespruit	2	Vent
Saaiplaas	1	Vent

Shaft	No.	Type
Saaiplaas	2	Main
Saaiplaas	3	Main
Freddies	6	Main
President Steyn	2	Vent
Brand	1A	Vent
Brand	3	Vent
Brand	5	Main & Vent
Unisel		Main
Bambanani East		Main
Bambanani West		Main

Kongiwe Environmental (Pty) Ltd ('Kongiwe') has been appointed by Harmony to prepare the required documents to attain a WUL for the Project. The Harmony Defunct Shafts Backfilling Project requires an Integrated Water Use Licence (IWUL) in terms of the National Water Act (Act No. 36 of 1998) (NWA) for Section 21 water uses before it can commence.

An Integrated Water Use Licence Application (IWULA) will be prepared and submitted in accordance with the Water Use Licence Application and Appeals Regulations 2017, published in GNR 267 on 24 March 2017. The **IWULA** will be supported by an **Integrated Water and Waste Management Plan (IWWMP)**.

Project Location

The Proposed Project is located between Virginia and Welkom, within the Matjhabeng Local Municipality (MLM) in the Lejweleputswa District Municipality (LDM) of the Free State province. Please refer to **Figure 1** for the Proposed Project local orientation.

Figure 1 shows the locations of shafts to be backfilled. The Project area extends across Wards 8, 9, 24, 32, 35 of the Matjhabeng Local Municipality. Properties in the Project area are listed in **Table 2**.

Table 2: Properties in the Project Area

Farm Name & Number	Farm ID	Farm Portion	Infrastructure	Farm owner
Fregul 443	RD	0 (RE)	Freddies 6 Shaft Pipeline	Freegold Harmony Pty Ltd
Klippan 14	RD	1	Brand 5, Unisel, Bambanani East Connecting Pipeline	Freegold Harmony Pty Ltd

Farm Name & Number	Farm ID	Farm Portion	Infrastructure	Farm owner
Klippan 14	RD	2	Bambanani West, Bambanani East and Brand 5, Unisel, Connecting Pipeline	Freegold Harmony Pty Ltd
Stuirmanship 92	RD	1	Brand 5, Unisel, Bambanani East Connecting Pipeline	Freegold Harmony Pty Ltd
Stuirmanship 92	RD	2	Brand 5, Unisel, Bambanani East Connecting Pipeline	Freegold Harmony Pty Ltd
Stuirmanship 92	RD	6	Brand 5 Main/Vent and Brand 5, Unisel, Bambanani East Connecting Pipeline	Freegold Harmony Pty Ltd
Rietpan 17	RD	0 (RE)	Freddies 6 Shaft Pipeline	Freegold Harmony Pty Ltd
Welkom 80	RD	0	Brand 3 and 1A Vent Pipeline	Freegold Harmony Pty Ltd
Harmony Farm 19	RD	0 (RE)	Harmony 5 Vent Pipeline	Harmony Gold Mining Co Ltd
Harmony Farm 222	RD	92	Harmony 1 Vent and Harmony 1 Vent Pipeline	Harmony Gold Mining Co Ltd
Harmony Farm 222	RD	30	Harmony 3 and 1 Vent Pipeline	Harmony Gold Mining Co Ltd
Harmony Farm 222	RD	89	Harmony 1 Vent Pipeline	Harmony Gold Mining Co Ltd
Harmony Farm 222	RD	83	Harmony 1 Vent Pipeline	Harmony Gold Mining Co Ltd
Harmony Farm 222	RD	0 (RE)	Harmony 3 Shaft and Harmony 1 Vent Pipeline	Harmony Gold Mining Co Ltd
Jurgens Hof 490	RD	0 (RE)	Unisel Shaft and Brand 5, Unisel, Bambanani East Connecting Pipeline	Harmony Gold Mining Co Ltd
La Riviera 289	RD	RE	Harmony 3 and 1 Vent Pipeline	Harmony Gold Mining Co Ltd
Morijah 288	RD	0 (RE)	Merriespruit 2 Vent	Harmony Gold Mining Co Ltd
President Styen 154	RD	0 (RE)	Steyn 2 Vent and Steyn 2 Vent Pipeline	Harmony Gold Mining Co Ltd
Rustgevonden 564	RD	1	Harmony 4 Main, Harmony 4 Vent and Pipeline	Harmony Gold Mining Co Ltd
Saaiplaas 771	RD	0 (RE)	Saaiplaas 1 Vent and Saaiplaas 3 Shaft Pipeline	Harmony Gold Mining Co Ltd
Saaiplaas 771	RD	15	Saaiplaas 1 Vent Pipeline	Harmony Gold Mining Co Ltd
Voorspoed 132	RD	3	Brand 3 Vent and Brand 3 and 1A Vent Pipeline	Harmony Gold Mining Co Ltd
Welkom 80	RD	11	Brand 3 and 1A Vent Pipeline	Harmony Gold Mining Co Ltd

Farm Name & Number	Farm ID	Farm Portion	Infrastructure	Farm owner
Welkom 80	RD	12	Brand 3 and 1A Vent Pipeline	Harmony Gold Mining Co Ltd
Hesters-Rust 224	RD	0 (RE)	Freddies 6 Shaft Pipeline	Matjhabeng Local Municipality
Kalkuil 153	RD	2	Freddies 6 Shaft and Freddies 6 Shaft Pipeline	Matjhabeng Local Municipality
Vaalkranz 220	RD	3	Harmony 5 Vent and Harmony 5 Vent Pipeline	Mr Abraham Paulus Van Den Berg
Vaalkranz 220	RD	2	Harmony 5 Vent Pipeline	Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI)
Voorspoed 132	RD	1	Brand 3 and 1A Vent Pipeline	City Thatch CC / Paint King
Welkom 80	RD	5	Brand 3 and 1A Vent Pipeline	City Thatch CC / Paint King
Saaiplaas 771	RD	11	Saaiplaas 1 Vent Pipeline	To be Confirmed
Harmony Farm 222	RD	97	Harmony 1 Vent Pipeline	To be Confirmed
Voorspoed 132	RD	0 (RE)	Brand 3 and 1A Vent Pipeline	To be Confirmed
Voorspoed 132	RD	4	Brand 3 and 1A Vent Pipeline	To be Confirmed

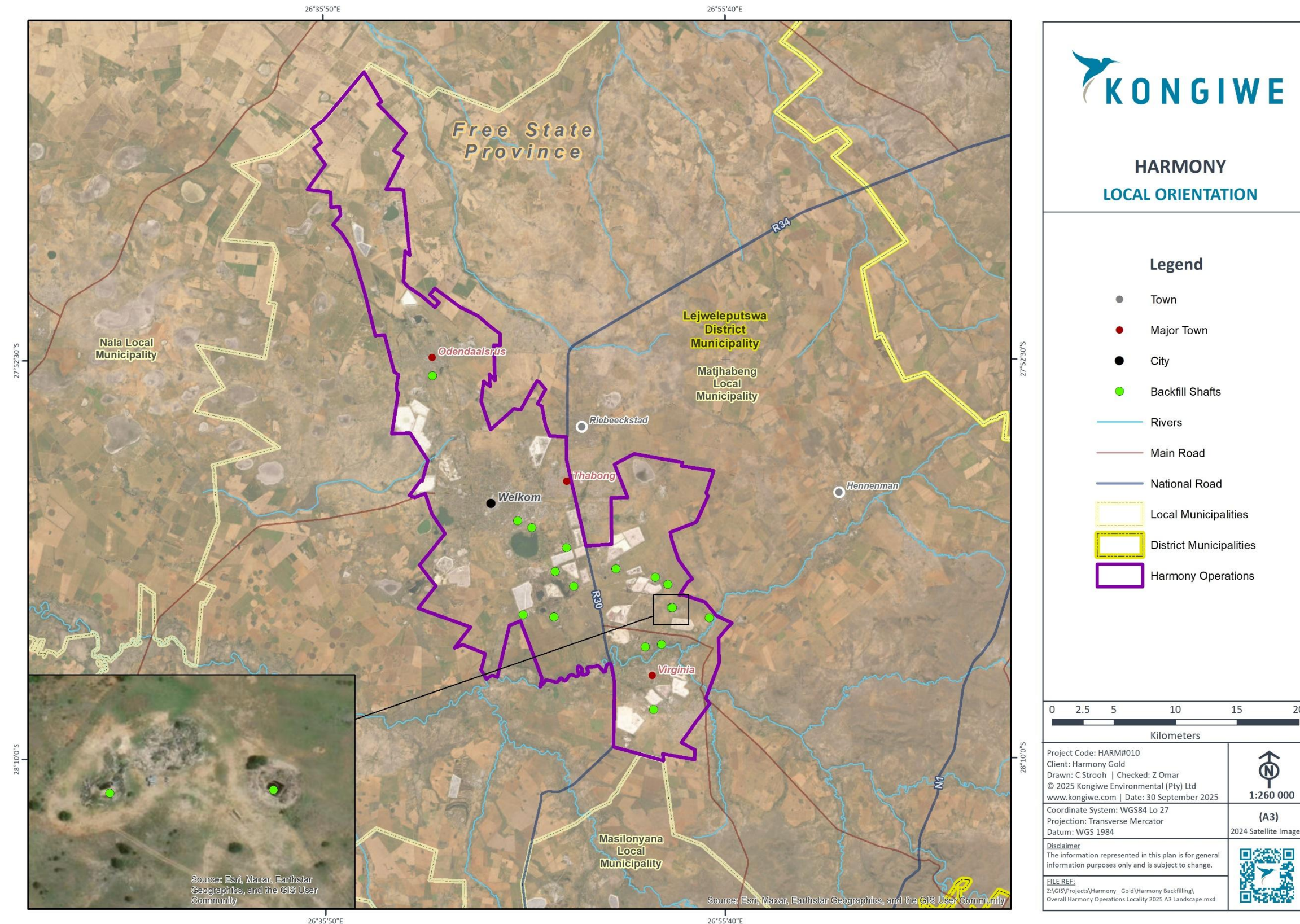


Figure 1: Locality Map

Backfilling Method

Backfilling is the proposed method for the rehabilitation of the defunct shafts for the Harmony Free State operations.

Harmony initially used rubble as their preferred backfill material. However, backfilling defunct shafts with rubble can create sparks which pose an explosion risk due to the methane concentration in the defunct operations. As a result, the shafts cannot be filled with rubble or waste rock. As an alternative backfilling measure, Harmony is now proposing the use of tailings material to backfill the defunct shafts. Tailings, in the form of slurry, will be pumped into the defunct shafts. The defunct shafts will be filled with tailings up to approximately 300m below surface, after which they will be topped off with rubble to minimise impacts on water resources. The slurry will be transported via existing overland pipelines, which will be connected to new overland pipelines, transporting slurry to each specific shaft area. Once complete, the pipelines will be stripped and reused. This process therefore removes tailings from surface and subsequently eliminates safety hazards associated with open shafts.

The proposed backfilling will be carried out using both existing pipelines and newly proposed temporary connection pipelines. The new pipelines are to be constructed using 300 mm diameter steel and no plinths will be required. The proposed pipelines will be connected to existing infrastructure in areas where disturbance has already occurred. Their alignment will run adjacent to existing pipelines and access roads where possible, thereby utilising current routes and minimising additional environmental disturbance.

Proposed Pipeline Routes

The proposed pipelines will be connected to existing infrastructure in areas where disturbance has already occurred. Their alignment will run adjacent to existing pipelines, and access roads where possible, thereby utilising current routes and minimising additional environmental disturbance.

Refer to **Figure 2** below for the locations of the new pipeline routes and the associated shaft areas.

Life of Operation

The anticipated duration of the total Project is 5 years. Each shaft will be backfilled within approximately 4-6 weeks. Thereafter, the pipeline which was used to backfill will be removed and reinstalled at the next backfilling shaft.

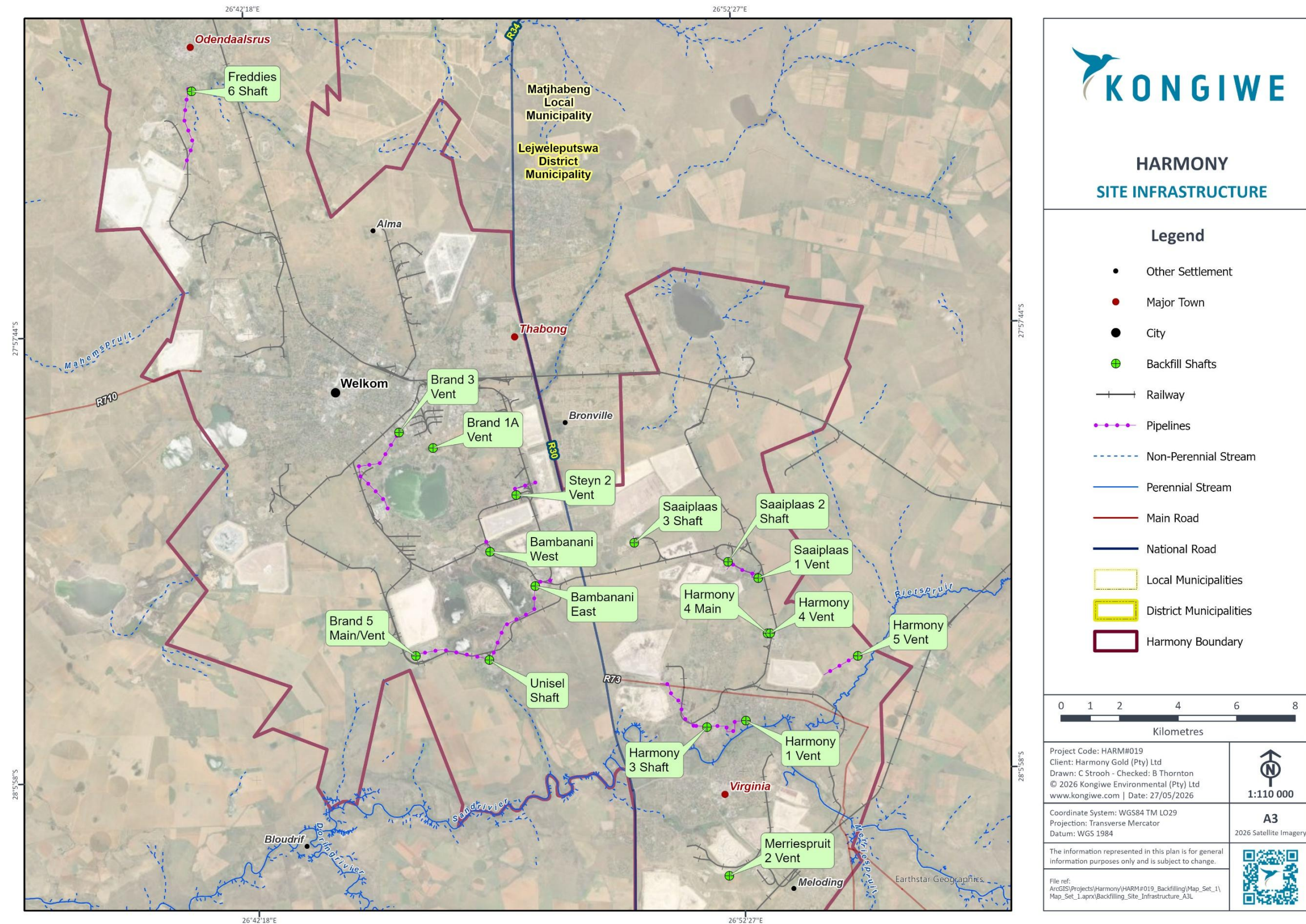


Figure 2: Location of Shafts and Pipelines

Legislative Requirements

An IWULA, in accordance with the Water Use Licence Application and Appeals Regulations 2017, must be submitted to the DWS to get a WUL for water use activities in terms of the National Water Act (NWA).

POPIA Disclaimer: Safeguarding Registered Person's Personal Information

In terms of Section 19 of the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA), a responsible party must, subject to Sections 9 and 11 of the Act, ensure the integrity and confidentiality of personal information in its possession or under its control by taking appropriate, reasonable technical and organisational measures to prevent loss of, damage to or unauthorised destruction of personal information, unlawful access to or processing of personal information. POPIA requires that personal information should be adequately protected to avoid unauthorised access. Therefore, Kongiwe continuously reviews security controls and procedures to ensure that personal information is secured. It should be noted that in terms of Section 11, personal information may be processed to the extent that this is necessary for pursuing the legitimate interests of the responsible party to whom the information is supplied.

IWULA Process

The steps involved in the IWULA process are outlined in **Figure 3**.

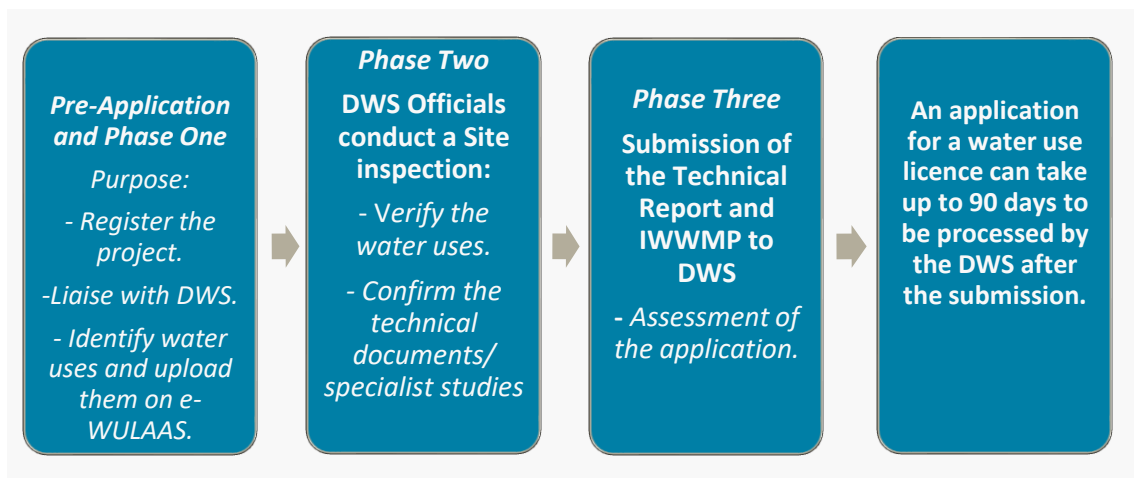


Figure 3: IWULA Process

Specialist Studies

Specialist studies that will be submitted to support the IWULA are listed below:

- Groundwater Impact Assessment.
- Wetland Impact Assessment

The findings of the specialist studies will be incorporated into the IWWMP.

Public Participation Process

The Public Participation Process (PPP) forms part of the IWULA process. The PPP offers stakeholders an opportunity to be informed about the proposed Project, to raise issues and to make suggestions for enhanced Project benefits. It also outlines the ways in which the Project team will communicate with stakeholders.

The PPP has been developed to ensure compliance with the relevant legislation and facilitate meaningful stakeholder engagement for the IWULA process. The Project team will consider relevant issues and suggestions during the IWULA Process. The issues will be addressed by the Project team, and all comments received and responses provided will be captured in the Comments and Responses Report (CRR) which will be submitted as part of the IWULA, for the DWS' consideration.

Availability of the Draft IWWMP for Public Review and Comment

The **draft IWWMP** will be made available for public review and comment for 60 days, from **Wednesday, 10 June 2026 to Tuesday, 11 August 2026**.

A notification of the availability of the **draft IWWMP** for public review and comment has been distributed on **Tuesday, 2 June 2026** to all stakeholders on the database.

The **draft IWWMP** will be made available as follows:

- An electronic copy on Kongiwe's website: <https://kongiwe.com/projects/>
- A hard copy at the Welkom Library and Virginia Library. Contact details are shown in **Table 3**.

Table 3: Libraries with Hard Copies of the Draft IWWMP

Location	Physical Address	Contact Person
Welkom Library	Cnr Tulbagh and Graaf Str, Welkom.	Mr Isaac Mokati, Librarian (071) 841 9758 Open: 09:00 Close: 17:00
Virginia Library	47 Virginia Gardens, Virginia.	Ms Lungile Maphanga, Librarian (072) 265 3786 Open: 09:00 Close: 16:30

Stakeholder Engagement Meetings

Consultation meetings will be held using platforms like Microsoft Teams (Online Meeting) and an Open Day. The purpose of these meetings is to discuss the Proposed Project and the contents of the **draft IWWMP**, and to provide Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) with the opportunity to raise comments and interact with the Project team.

Table 4 provides details of the proposed stakeholder meetings. Please confirm your attendance for the meeting.

Table 4 1: Schedule of Stakeholder Meetings

Proposed Dates	Available Time Slots	Method of Engagement
Online Meeting		
Wednesday, 1 July 2026	10H00 – 11H00	Microsoft Teams
In-Person Meeting: Open Day		
Saturday, 4 July 2026	11H00 – 13H00	Ferdi Meyer Hall Stateway & Tulbagh St, Welkom Central, Welkom

Invitation to be Involved as a Stakeholder

Kongiwe has put measures in place to ensure that all stakeholders are meaningfully consulted by using a wide range of media, documents and online tools. The proposed methods of engagement for the proposed Project are planned as follows:

- Telephonic consultations.
- Short Message Services (SMSs).
- Email correspondence:
 - Stakeholders with access to email are requested to send their comments/queries via email.
 - Stakeholders can email their Registration and Comment Form (included in this BID).
- Online engagements:
 - Project information will be timeously uploaded on Kongiwe's website.
 - Online Microsoft Teams meetings.
- In-person Engagements:
 - One-on-One consultation meetings.
 - Open Day.

The purpose of the above-mentioned methods of engagement is to encourage dialogue with stakeholders and provide stakeholders with opportunities to raise their comments. Minutes from all engagements with stakeholders will be compiled and recorded in the Comments and Responses Report (CRR). Stakeholders are encouraged to indicate their preferred method of engagement to the stakeholder engagement team. Please see the team's contact details below under **Comments and Queries**.

For consultation to be inclusive, it is the responsibility of stakeholders to:

- Register or ensure you are registered as an Interested and Affected Party (I&AP).
 - Inform others whom you think may be interested and/or affected by the Project.
 - Provide comments on the Project.
 - Ensure comments are submitted within the allowed timeframes received by the Stakeholder Engagement office.
 - Contribute information and/or knowledge of the environment.
- Attend meetings scheduled throughout the process to participate and access information.

Comments and Queries

Any person affected by or who may be interested in the proposed Project is asked to register as an I&AP. Should you have any comments/queries, please contact the stakeholder engagement team.

Contact Details

Ms Vanessa Viljoen	+27 (10) 140 1725	stakeholders@kongiwe.com
Jean-Mari Williams	+27 (10) 140 1726	stakeholders@kongiwe.com

**Our team welcomes your participation and looks forward
to your involvement throughout this process**

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DWS reference number: WU44553

Stakeholder Registration and Comment Form

Please return a completed registration form to the Stakeholder Engagement Team:

Ms Vanessa Viljoen - Phone: (010) 140 1725 / Ms Jean-Mari Williams - Phone (010) 140 1726
or E-mail: stakeholders@kongiwe.com

Postal Address: PostNet Suite No 163, Private Bag X21, Bryanston, 2021

I intend attending the stakeholders' meeting (Please indicate your preference)

Please provide your complete contact details:

Landowner	Property					
Land Occupier	Property			Property Owner		
Title	Mr	Mrs	Ms	Dr	Prof	Other
First Name						
Surname						
Organisation						
Position in Organisation						
Contact Details	Cell				Tel	
Email Address						
Postal Address						
Please indicate your preferred method of communication	Email	☐	SMS	☐	Post	☐

Meeting Dates	Available Time Slots	Method of Engagement	Yes	No
Virtual Meeting				
Wednesday, 1 July 2026	10H00 - 11H00	Microsoft Teams	Yes	No
Live Meeting: Open Day				
Please indicate which time slot you would like to participate in:				
Saturday, 4 July 2026	11H00 - 13H00	Ferdi Meyer Hall Stateway & Tulbagh St, Welkom Central, Welkom	Yes	No

Do you have any comments/suggestions regarding the proposed project? If so, please complete the section below/ send your comments to the stakeholder engagement team (please see details above).

Comments / Suggestions							
Please provide contact details of any other stakeholders we should consult:							
Title	Mr	Mrs	Ms	Dr	Prof	Other	
First Name							
Surname							
Organisation/ Property / Business							
Cell Phone							
Email							
Title	Mr	Mrs	Ms	Dr	Prof	Other	
First Name							
Surname							
Organisation/ Farm / Business							
Cell Phone							
Email							

Please note that the information supplied herein constitutes Personal Information as contemplated in Protection of Personal Information Act, 2013 (POPIA). All your rights as set out in the Act will continue to be protected and Kongiwe will be accountable to ensure that all conditions for lawful processing are met. Your signature will be regarded as granting consent for the processing of the information strictly in accordance with the provisions of the Act. It must be noted that POPIA does not prevent any private body from exercising or performing its powers, duties and functions in terms of the law and accordingly the EAP and any appellant may perform its duties under the National Appeal Regulations provided the processing is in accordance with POPIA and meets the requirements of the National Appeal Regulations.

Signature		Date	
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