

Environmental Authorisation and Integrated Water Use Licence Application for the Reclamation of the 7L15 Tailings Storage Facility (TSF) in the City of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality, Gauteng Province

Background Information Document

DMPR reference number: To be determined

Purpose of the Document

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

- Project background for the Reclamation of the 7L15 Tailings Storage Facility (TSF) (“the Project”), located in the in the City of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality (CoE), Gauteng Province.
- The Scoping and Environmental Impact Assessment (S&EIA) and the Public Participation Process (PPP) to be undertaken as part of the Environmental Authorisation (EA) process.
- The PPP that will also be undertaken as part of the Project’s Integrated Water Use Licence Application (IWULA), and comment period for the draft Integrated Water and Waste Management Plan (IWWMP).
- How to 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 Scoping Report (DSR).

Project Background and Motivation

Ergo Mining is a major surface gold tailings retreatment operation that focuses on old and abandoned TSFs. Ergo Mining is a wholly owned subsidiary of DRDGOLD - within which the group’s eastern surface retreatment assets are consolidated.

Ergo Mining is also the largest gold tailings retreatment company in South Africa. The surface deposits controlled by Ergo Mining are waste products created from the historical processing of gold and uranium ores of the Witwatersrand Supergroup. Ergo Mining owns the 7L15 TSF, and this TSF was historically used as a mining waste deposition site which has been dormant for some time.

Tailings from the 7L15 TSF are proposed to be conveyed via newly constructed pipelines (approximately 8.3km). The pipeline will convey slurry from the TSF area to the Ergo Mining Beneficiation Plant (Ergo Mining Plant), with ultimate residue deposition taking place on the Brakpan/Withok TSF and/ or the Daggafontein TSF.

As part of Ergo Mining rehabilitation strategy, the removal of historic TSFs allows repurposing of the land in a more sustainable manner and ultimate offsetting of environmental impacts. The reclamation project is in line with the objectives of the Gauteng Mine Residue Area Strategy (2012), which are to reclaim and/or rehabilitate TSFs to the point where they become safe for adjacent communities, and land can be made available for other purposes.

Project Activities

Ergo Mining intends to reclaim and reprocess the 7L15 TSF with the objective of recovering gold using hydraulic reclamation. Hydraulic reclamation is a largely mechanised process with a risk profile that is significantly lower than that of conventional mining. During hydraulic reclamation, a water monitor blasts the sides of the TSF, the process water mixes with the unconsolidated material, resulting in what is known as a 'slurry'. The slurry will report to a pumpstation, located at the lowest point of a TSF, where it will then be pumped and conveyed to Ergo Mining Plant for reprocessing.

The reclamation of the 7L15 TSF will be consolidated into an Integrated Environmental Authorisation (IEA) application. This application will be submitted to the Department of Mineral and Petroleum Resources (DMPR), which serves as the Competent Authority responsible for assessing and approving mining-related environmental projects in the Gauteng Province. In addition to the IEA, a Water Use License (WUL) will be required for any activities that may impact water resources. The Integrated Water Use Licence Application (IWULA) will be reviewed and considered by the Vaal-Orange Catchment Management Agency (VOCMA), ensuring that all water-related aspects of the Project comply with National Regulations.

The Project will require environmental permitting in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998) (NEMA) and the National Environmental: Waste Management Act, 2004 (Act No 59 of 2008) (NEM:WA), Category B activities. The Project thus triggers the need for the Scoping and Environmental Impact Assessment (S&EIA) to be undertaken.

It is certain that the Project activities will trigger the requirement for a WUL, due to the section 21 water use requirements. An 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 and will be supported by a Technical Report and Integrated Water and Waste Management Plan (IWWMP).

Method of Reclamation

The reclamation method which will be used to reclaim the TSF is referred to as top-down hydraulic reclamation. This technique uses high-pressure water monitors / cannons to deliver a high-pressure water jet to excavate unconsolidated tailings material within the TSF hydraulically. The water from the cannon mixes with the tailings and forms a slurry with a high solids content. The slurry then flows under gravity along trenches at the base of the TSF to a collection sump which is positioned at the lowest elevation of the bench being mined.

At the sump, finger screens remove any debris that may impact pumping operations, and a penstock will control water flow into the sump. The position of the collection sump will change as the reclamation progresses. From the collection sump, the slurry reports to a reclamation station. To control the volume of water reporting to the reclamation station, flapper valves are used to hold, and release slurry contained in the collection sump. The slurry will then report to a pumpstation, located at the lowest point of a TSF, where it will then be pumped and conveyed to Ergo Mining Plant for reprocessing.

Infrastructure for the Project

The following infrastructure will be utilised:

- Reclamation infrastructure at each TSF consisting of a pump station which includes:
 - Slurry sump;
 - Vibrating Screen;

- Penstock;
- Water tank;
- Receiving Points;
- Motor control centre;
- Slurry and associated Pumps; and
- Water associated pumps.
- A 500 Nominal Bore (NB) High-Density Polyethylene (HDPE) - lined pipeline will be installed to transport slurry to the Ergo Mining Plant, while a 450NB pipeline will be installed to convey process water from the Brakpan TSF to the reclamation site. Both the slurry and process water pipelines will be constructed after authorisation has been granted;
- Stormwater management infrastructure including:
 - Pumpstation and stormwater systems; and
 - Existing paddocks on the TSF footprint.
- 11 kV overhead powerlines capable of transmitting 3 kVA of electricity and electricity reticulation;
- Administration buildings, including change houses and ablution facilities;
- Access roads, routed from existing entry points; and
- Construction contractors' yards (temporary facilities).

Project Location

The Project is located approximately 10 km south-west of Springs, in Ward 111 on the farm Vlakfontein 130 IR in Kwa-Thema within the City of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality (CoE), Gauteng Province. The 7L15 TSF reclamation activities will be undertaken on Portion 21 of Vlakfontein 130 IR.

The Project is located approximately 1.6 km south-east of Dunnottar Township. The Kwa-Thema community situated to the north of the existing 7L15 TSF is located approximately 1.4 km from the TSF footprint. The TSF is surrounded by the Vlakfontein Road and M63 Road, while the reclamation area is primarily bordered by nearby townships and a main road.

The total footprint of the 7L15 TSF is approximately 73.27 hectares. Refer to Table 1 for a list of the directly affected properties, and Figure 1 for the Project locality map.

Table 1: Directly Affected Property Details

Farm Name	Farm ID	Farm Portion	SG Code	Property owner
7L15 TSF Reclamation Site				
Vlakfontein 130	IR	21	TOIR00000000013000021	City of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality
Pumpstation				
Vlakfontein 130	IR	21	TOIR00000000013000021	City of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality
Pipeline				
Vlakfontein 130	IR	RE/19	TOIR00000000013000019	City of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality
Vlakfontein 130	IR	28	TOIR00000000013000028	City of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality

Farm Name	Farm ID	Farm Portion	SG Code	Property owner
Vlakfontein 130	IR	24	TOIR00000000013000024	City of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality
Vlakfontein 130	IR	52	TOIR00000000013000052	City of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality
Vlakfontein 130	IR	71	TOIR00000000013000071	City of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality
Vlakfontein 130	IR	78	TOIR00000000013000078	City of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality
Withok 131	IR	65	TOIR00000000013100065	City of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality
Withok 131	IR	RE/0	TOIR00000000013100000	City of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality
Withok 131	IR	1	TOIR00000000013100001	City of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality
Withok 131	IR	74	TOIR00000000013100074	City of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality
Withok 131	IR	77	TOIR00000000013100077	Ergo Mining Pty Ltd
Withok 131	IR	107	TOIR00000000013100107	City of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality
Withok Estate 397	IR	1	TOIR07370000039700001	Ergo Mining Pty Ltd
Tsakane 217	IR	22	TOIR00000000021700022	City of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality
Tsakane Ext 12 Parcel 27232	IR	0	TOIR07760002723200000	City of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality
Tsakane Ext 12 Parcel 27152	IR	0	TOIR07760002715200000	City of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality
Tsakane Ext 12 Parcel 38546	IR	0	TOIR07760003854600000	City of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality

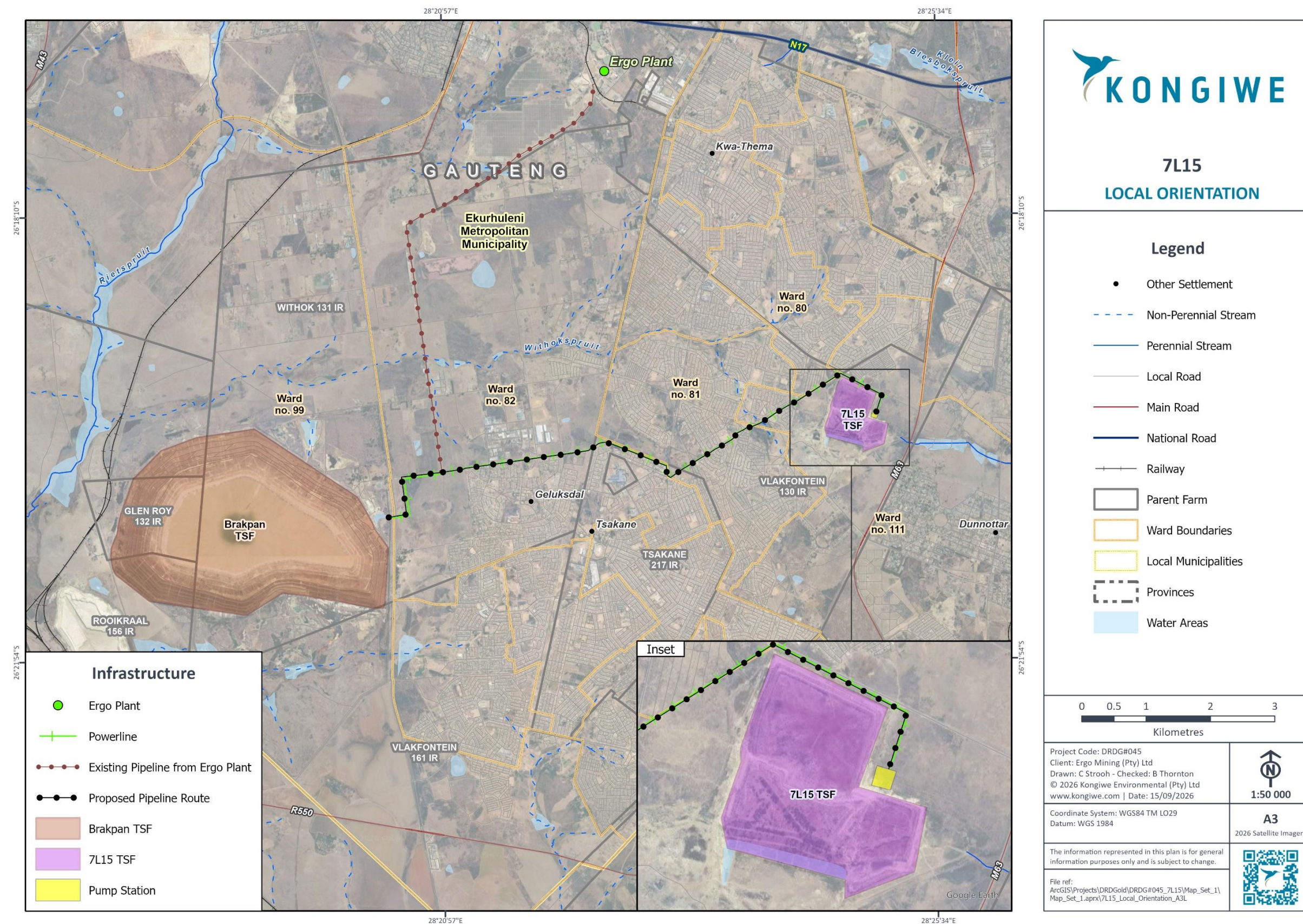


Figure 1: Locality Map

Land Use

The Project area is predominantly surrounded by mining areas, residential areas, powerline infrastructure, and existing road networks. Most of the Project area has been subject to significant disturbance due to past mining activities and infrastructure, the presence of the existing TSF, and grazing cattle roaming throughout the area. Most of the land cover of the Project area is classified as mine dumps, grassland, townships residents and waterbodies.

Access

The major access routes in the vicinity of the 7L15 TSF include the N17, which provides connectivity to the M63 Road located to the north-east of the TSF site operation area.

As far as possible, existing access roads will be utilised, and where this is not possible, these will be constructed. Where access roads are to be constructed, these will be 4m wide gravel roads with mitre drains to protect the road structure from flood damage. Intersections will be properly designed to provide safe entry and exit in and out of the reclamation area. Approvals from the provincial roads authorities will be obtained where necessary.

Power and Water Supply

The reclamation activity will require 11 kV overhead powerlines capable of transmitting 3 kVA of electricity. Power will be supplied by Eskom.

Potable water will be sourced from the Brakpan TSF and stored in JoJo tanks until it becomes available for purchase from the CoE.

In terms of process water, the water cycle operates as a closed circuit, meaning that limited make-up water will be required for the reclamation of the TSF. Process water required for the reclamation activities will be sourced from the Brakpan TSF and conveyed to the Project site via newly constructed process water pipelines, which will be installed following the granting of authorisation. The water will be reused within a closed-circuit system.

Life of Operation

The life of the Project is expected to be 10 years. An estimated maximum amount of 300 000 to 450 000 tons/month of slurry is expected to be pumped from the 7L15 TSF to the Ergo Mining Plant for beneficiation.

Rehabilitation

The Proposed Project is for the purpose of reclaiming the historic TSFs and removing a pollution source from the area, aiding in the rehabilitation of the mining legacy left behind in the area. Once reclamation is completed, the areas will then be assessed for contamination (particularly in terms of radiation). Contaminated soils will be removed, and the land levelled to its original functioning topography levels.

Oversized vegetative material generated during the reclamation process, which does not contain radiological contamination, may be reused for rehabilitation following completion of the TSF reclamation activities. The material may be applied as organic compost to rehabilitation areas to improve soil structure, increase organic matter content, support revegetation, and assist in maintaining the integrity and quality of the topsoil layer. This

measure promotes sustainable material reuse and contributes to the successful rehabilitation. Following rehabilitation, it is anticipated that the land will be returned to the landowner to use at their discretion.

Legislative Requirements and Good-Practice Guidelines

Applicable Legislation and International Best Practice

The Public Participation Process (PPP), as required by the environmental law and regulations specified therein, is being undertaken in line with the statutory requirements for public participation. The following legislation is and will be considered throughout the development and implementation of the PPP for the Project:

- NEMA and Public Participation guidelines in terms of NEMA;
- The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations, 2014 (as amended) (EIA 2014 Regulations);
- NEM:WA and the List of Waste Management Activities (GN R921 of 29 November 2013, as amended);
- NWA;
- Protection of Personal Information Act, 2013 (Act No. 4 of 2013) (POPIA); and
- Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000 (Act No. 2 of 2000) (PAIA).

NEMA mandates public participation for environmental decision-making, ensuring affected communities have a voice in the development of projects through the EIA Regulations, 2014. The NEMA Public Participation Guideline (in terms of the EIA Regulations) is a mandatory part of the (EA process, aiming for transparent and informed decisions that promote sustainable development by integrating social, economic, and environmental factors.

The NWA is the primary law for the protection, management, and equitable use of the water resources. The NWA establishes the government's role in allocating water resources, promoting sustainable use of water resources, and preventing pollution.

The POPIA regulates the processing of personal information by both public and private bodies, aiming to protect individuals' constitutional right to privacy.

The PAIA gives effect to the constitutional right to access information held by both the state and private bodies. The Act establishes procedures for individuals to request information for the protection or exercise of their rights.

POPIA: Safeguarding Registered Person's Personal Information

In terms of section 19 of the Protection of Personal Information Act, 2013 (Act No. 4 of 2013) (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 or parties to whom the information is supplied.

International Standards

In addition to the above legislation, the PPP is to be aligned to international good-practice guidelines for public participation, particularly in regard to the following Core Values of the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2):

- To be based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process.
- To include the promise that the public's contribution will influence the decision.
- To promote sustainable decisions by recognising and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision makers.
- To seek out and facilitate the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision.
- To seek input from participants in designing how they participate.
- To provide participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.
- To communicate to participants how their input affected the decision.
- Development of a PPP also needs to align to any additional considerations noted in the International Finance Corporation (IFC) Performance Standards (PSs), particularly in relation to stakeholder engagement aspects outlined in PS 1 (Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts).

SCOPING AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Kongwiwe Environmental (Pty) Ltd ("Kongwiwe") has been appointed by Ergo Mining as the independent Environmental Service Provider and tasked with conducting the S&EIA process which is aimed at critically evaluating the potential environmental and social the Project.

The steps involved in the S&EIA process are outlined in **Figure 2** below.

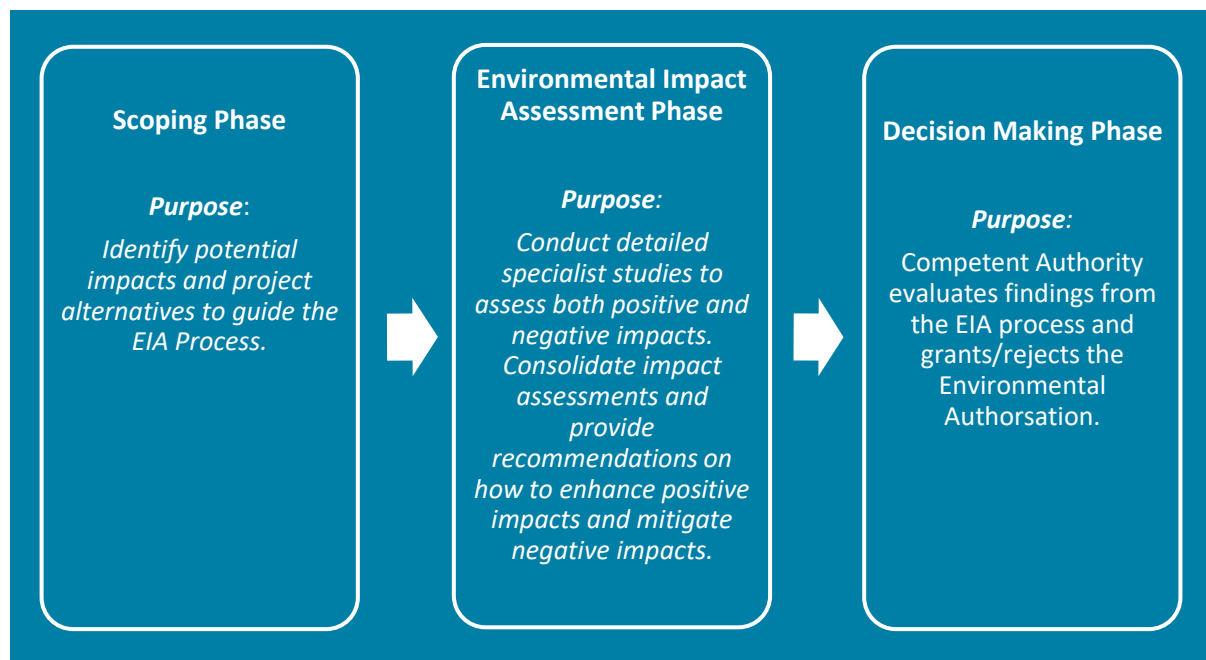


Figure 2: S&EIA Process

Summary of Listed Activities

Below is a list of activities triggered by the Project in terms of the EIA 2014 Regulations.

Applicable Listing Notice as Amended	Name of Activity & Description
GNR 984 – 21F	Reclamation of a residue stockpile or a residue deposit
GNR 984 – 6	Satellite pump station / Reclamation Station
GNR 983 – 13	Slurry receiving facility
GNR 984 – 6	Slurry receiving facility
GNR 984 – 6	Screening facility at the pump station
GNR 984 – 6	Transfer pumps in series
GNR 985 – 2	Slurry receiving facility
GNR 985 – 14	Slurry receiving facility
GNR 983 – 9	Stormwater systems
WML Activities	
Category B, Activity 11	The establishment or reclamation of a residue stockpile or residue deposit resulting from activities which require a mining right, exploration right or production right in terms of the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act, 2002 (Act No. 28 of 2002).

INTEGRATED WATER USE LICENCE

An IWULA process will be undertaken in terms of Section 40 and 41 of the National Water Act, 1998 (Act No.36 of 1998) (NWA). The Project triggers Section 21 (c), (g) and (i) water uses of the NWA. Section 21 (c) and (i) water uses are triggered by activities that impede or divert the flow of water in a watercourse; or which alter the bed, banks, courses or characteristics of a watercourse. Section 21 (g) water uses are activities concerned with the disposing of waste in a manner which may detrimentally impact on a water resource.

An IWWMP is a comprehensive plan which is used to manage and protect water resources while effectively managing waste within mining or industrial projects. It can be considered a living document that will continue to be revised and updated as and when there are fundamental changes, or as stipulated by the DWS throughout the life of a project. The purpose of updates is to accommodate any additional information and improved technology to ensure that water and waste management is continually optimised and adapted to the changing needs of the water management area, thereby reducing the risks of project activities to the environment and humans.

The IWWMP for the Project will follow the content list as stipulated in the Regulations Regarding the Procedural Requirements for Water Use Licence Applications and Appeals, GN R267, Government Gazette 40713 24 March 2017.

From a legal perspective, an approved IWWMP fulfils the requirement of an IWULA and provide a comprehensive plan for managing water uses, as outlined in Section 21 of the NWA.

From a best management practice perspective, an IWWMP provides the mine with a consolidated approach for the implementation of Best Practice Guidelines (BPGs) (DWAF, 2006, 2008) to integrate mine water management while protecting surrounding water resources

Specialist Studies

Various specialist studies are being undertaken as part of the S&EIA and IWULA processes to assess the potential impacts associated with the Project. Specialist studies being undertaken include:

- Air Quality Impact Assessment
- Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact Assessment
- Wetland Delineation and Functionality Assessment
- Climate Change Risk Impact Assessment
- Geohydrological impact Assessment (Groundwater)
- Hydrological Impact Assessment (Surface water)
- Heritage and Palaeontology Impact Assessment
- Noise Impact Assessment
- Social Impact Assessment
- Traffic Impact Assessment
- Closure and Rehabilitation Plan

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

Public Participation Process

The Public Participation Process (PPP) will form part of the S&EIA and IWULA processes. The PPP offers stakeholders an opportunity to be informed about the 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 S&EIA and IWULA process.

Availability of the Draft Scoping Report for Public Review and Comment

As part of the Scoping Process, the applicant is required to compile a **Draft Scoping Report (DSR)** for mining-related activities. The DSR will be available for public review and comment for a period of **30 days** from **Wednesday, 23 September 2026 to Friday, 23 October 2026**.

A notification of the availability of the DSR for public review and comment was distributed on **Tuesday, 15 September 2026** to all stakeholders on the database.

The DSR will be made available as follows:

- An electronic copy on Konglwe's website: <https://konglwe.com/projects/>.
Hard copies at the **Tsakane Public Library** and the **Kwa-Thema Public Library**. Contact details are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Libraries with Hard Copies of the Draft Scoping Report

Location	Physical Address	Contact Person
Tsakane Public Library	3889 Bhala Street (Cnr of Xhosa and Gubhela Street), Tsakani, Brakpan, 1548	Ms Lindiwe Shandu, Librarian (011) 999 8014 Monday – Friday Open: 09H00 Close: 16H30
Kwa-Thema Public Library	24501 Nkosi Street, Kwa-Thema, Springs, 1575	Ms Khalipha Khumalo, Librarian (011) 999 8494 Monday – Friday Open: 09H00 Close: 16H00

Availability of the Draft EIA Report and the Draft IWWMP for Public Review and

During the EIA phase of the Project, the Draft EIA including the Draft Environmental Management Programme (DEIA/EMPr) will be made available for public review for **30 days**.

The Draft IWWMP, in support of the IWULA process, will be made available for a public review and commenting period of **60 days**. It is anticipated that the IWWMP will be made available during the impact assessment phase. Information regarding the availability of the IWULA technical report and how stakeholders can provide their comments will be communicated to all stakeholders.

Stakeholder Engagement Meetings

Stakeholders are invited to participate through online and in-person engagements. Consultation meetings will be held using platforms like Microsoft Teams, and as well an in-person open day. The purpose of these meetings is to discuss the Project and the contents of the **DSR**, and to provide Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) with the opportunity to raise their comments and to interact with the project team.

Table 3 provides details of the stakeholder meetings. Please confirm your attendance for the meeting (*Confirmation of attendance may be submitted via the stakeholder's email address or telephonically*).

Table 3: Schedule of Stakeholder Meetings

Meeting Dates	Available Time Slots	Method of Engagement
Online Meeting		
Wednesday, 14 October 2026	10H00 – 11H00	Microsoft Teams
In-Person Meetings: Open Day		
Saturday, 17 October 2026	10H00 – 12H00	Menzi Primary School Great Kei St, Langaville, Brakpan, 1550

Invitation to be Involved as a Stakeholder

Konglwe 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 Project are as follows:

- Telephonic consultations.
- Short Message Services (SMSs).
- Email correspondence:
 - Stakeholders with access to emails are requested to send their comments/queries via email.
 - Stakeholders can email their Registration and Comment Forms.
- Online engagements:
 - Project information will be timeously uploaded on Konglwe's website.
 - 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 of all meetings with stakeholders will be compiled and recorded in the Comments and Responses Report (CRR). Stakeholders are encouraged to indicate their preferred method of engagement on the Registration Form attached to this BID.

For consultation to be Inclusive, it is the Responsibility of Stakeholders to

- Register or ensure you are registered as an 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 and received by the Stakeholder Engagement office.
- Contribute information and/or knowledge of the Project area's environment.
- Attend meetings that are scheduled throughout the process to participate and access information.

Comments and Queries

Any person affected by or who may be interested in the Project is encouraged to complete the Registration and Comments Form attached to this document (BID) should they have any comments / queries.

Contact Details

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

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