



**SITE VERIFICATION REPORT FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF 20
RESIDENTIAL UNITS ON ERF 511, WETTON, CAPE TOWN, WESTERN CAPE.**

Date: March 2021

SEC REFERENCE: 021015

DEA&DP REFERENCE: 16/3/3/6/7/1/A2/45/3064/21

1.Introduction & Legislative Context

The applicant, The War Family Trust, proposes to develop a residential development on Erf 511, Wetton, Cape Town. The proposed site is approximately 4362m² in extent. Please refer to **Figure 1** to view the locality of the site.



Figure 1: Location of Erf 511, Wetton, Cape Town (Source: Cape Farm Mapper, 2021).

In summary, the following is proposed:

- 20 residential units of approximately 80m² each.
- An open space/ stormwater management area of 382m²
- Refuse room of 18m²

Access to ERF 511 is off Blomhof Avenue, via a proposed internal 5m wide access road. Blomhof Avenue is a class 5 collector with a 10m road reserve, a portion of it is constructed as a gravel road.

The proposed development triggers the following activities, which is listed in terms of 2014 EIA Regulations, as amended, published under the National Environmental Management Act, Act No. 107 of 1998 (NEMA), and therefore requires an application for Environmental Authorisation: **Activity 19 from Listing Notice 1** (2014 EIA Regulations, as amended); and **Activities 4 & 12 from Listing Notice 3** (2014 EIA Regulations, as amended).

Sillito Environmental Consulting (Pty) Ltd (SEC) has been appointed to undertake the Basic Assessment EIA Process with the aim of receiving an Environmental Authorisation in terms of the 2014 EIA Regulations, as amended, published under the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA).

Regulation 16(1)(v) of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations 2014, as amended, states that a Screening Report is required to accompany any application for Environmental Authorisation. In this regard the National web-based Screening Tool must be generated and submitted with every application.

The Procedures for the Assessment and Minimum Criteria for Reporting on Identified Environmental Themes in Terms of Sections 24(5)(a) and (h) and 44 of the NEMA, dated 20th March 2020, prescribes the general requirements for undertaking **site sensitivity verification and provides protocols for the assessment and minimum report content for environmental themes.**

These Procedures explain that prior to commencing with a specialist assessment the current use of land and the environmental sensitivity of the site identified by the National Screening Tool must be confirmed by undertaking a site sensitivity verification and the outcome of the site sensitivity verification must be recorded in the form of a report. This report therefore meets the requirements of the site sensitivity verification report outlined in the Procedures.

2. Themes & Environmental Sensitivity Identified by Screening Tool

The table below indicates the level of sensitivity of each of the themes identified in the National Web-based Screening Tool Report:

Theme	Very High Sensitivity	High Sensitivity	Medium Sensitivity	Low Sensitivity	EAPs Opinion
Agriculture Theme		X			Dispute
Animal Species Theme			X		TBC See Section below
Aquatic Biodiversity Theme	X				Agree
Civil Aviation Theme		X			Dispute
Defence Theme			X		Dispute
Paleontology Theme				X	Dispute
Plant Species Theme			X		Agree, Specialist input however required
Terrestrial Biodiversity Theme	X				TBC See Section below

3. Specialist Studies Identified by Screening Tool

The following Specialist Assessments have been identified by the Screening Tool:

1. Landscape/Visual Impact Assessment
2. Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment
3. Palaeontology Impact Assessment
4. Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact Assessment
5. Aquatic Biodiversity Impact Assessment
6. Hydrology Assessment
7. Socio-Economic Assessment
8. Plant Species Assessment

4. Site Assessment and Determination of Site Sensitivity by EAP

A site visit was carried out to verify the site sensitivity and the specialist assessments required. Erf 511 Wetton is currently an undeveloped site, with overgrown grasses, reed beds and some areas have alien vegetation on them. Please refer to the figures below which indicates the current condition of the site.



Figure 2: View of the site from Bloemhof Avenue.



Figure 3: View of the site from Bloemhof Avenue



Figure 4: View of the site from neighbouring residential property.



Figure 5: View of the site from neighbouring residential property.

Based on the site visit and the images provided above it is evident that the site is undeveloped and contains a wetland area with several wetland plant species on site. The site is located in a Critically Endangered Ecosystem as a result of the vegetation type of the area being the Cape Flats Sand Fynbos. The site has however been transformed and currently consist of several grass species (several of which is invasive). The site therefore contains no intact Cape Flats Sand Fynbos plant species.

5. Motivation by the EAP Agreeing or Disputing the Specialist Assessments Identified in Screening Tool Report

a) **The following specialist studies, as identified by the Screening Tool Report, will not be carried out:**

5.1 Landscape Impact Assessment

Erf 511 is located in an urban area, surrounded by several other residential houses, the proposed development will therefore no change the character of the area. Landscaping will however still be carried out as a section of the site will be used for stormwater management and will require landscaping.

5.2 Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment

The development site is located within an urban area with several developments adjacent to the site.

5.3 Palaeontology Impact Assessment

The development site is located within an urban area with several developments adjacent to the site.

5.4 Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact Assessment

The proposed development will result in a loss of the wetland habitat. Erf 509 located east of the site however contains several wetlands and will mitigate against the loss of terrestrial biodiversity in the area. The development site will also include a section of the wetland in the storm water management facility and will as such still provide a terrestrial habitat on site. The majority of impacts associated with the terrestrial biodiversity will be addressed in the freshwater, botanical and animal species assessment. The EAP cannot at this stage agree or dispute the site sensitivity as the outcome of the site sensitivity will be based on the assessments referred to above.

5.5 Socio-Economic Impact Assessment

The proposed development will be small in scale and will only have localised economic impacts, as such an impact assessment will not be required.

5.6 Hydrology Assessment

Hydrological impacts have been assessed in the Freshwater study.

b) **The following specialist study, as identified by the Screening Tool Report, which was already carried out:**

5.6 Freshwater Impact Assessment

A Freshwater Impact Assessment (FIA) was carried out by Blue Science in 2016 and amended in 2020. The state of the watercourses on site was described in the FIA as follows:

"The wetland areas on Erf 511 are considered to be largely modified. The major impact is the development of the surrounding areas, resulting in increased run-off with lower water quality. Other impacts relate to the construction of drainage channels for the conveyance of the storm water to and from the site and the invasion of kikuyu grass within the wetland areas. The site is wetter than it would have been naturally, with a larger permanently inundated area which has a low diversity as it is dominated by *T. capensis*."

Figure 6 below indicates the location of the wetlands and wetland vegetation on Erf 511:



Figure 6: Wetlands and wetland vegetation on Erf 511, Wetton (Source: FIA, 2020).

c) **The following assessments have been identified by both the EAP and Screening Tool Report to be carried out. The Competent Authority must please advise if they agree or dispute these findings.**

5.7 Botanical Impact Statement

The site is undeveloped and contains a wetland area with several wetland plant species on site. The vegetation type of the area is classified as Cape Flats Sand Fynbos, which is listed as critically endangered ecosystem. The site has however been transformed and currently consist of several grass species (several of which is invasive). The site therefore contains no intact Cape Flats Sand Fynbos plant species. The site will however require the removal of vegetation to allow for the development. The EAP therefore recommends that a botanical compliance statement is required for the proposed development.

5.8 Traffic Impact Statement

The Blomhof Avenue road is currently not a formalised road, the gravel road does not extend all the way to Erf 511. As such, an additional section of road will be required to connect the property to either the Old Strandfontein Road or the High Road.

5.9 Animal Species Assessment

Confirmation is required whether any Cape Leopard Frogs are located within the boundaries of Erf 511. The EAP recommends that a site visit is carried out by a relevant SACNASP registered professional. The findings from the site visit will determine whether any further action/ assessments are required. The EAP can therefore at this stage not dispute or agree with the sensitivity of Animal species theme, as the site may have a medium sensitivity if it is confirmed that the Cape Leopard Toad is present on site.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, a Freshwater Impact Assessment was already conducted for this site. It is requested by the EAP that the Competent Authority should confirm if a Botanical Impact Statement, Traffic Impact Statement and Animal Species Assessment is required for the proposed development site.

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