

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The Rundu Town Council hereinafter referred to as the proponent intends to undertake the following activities:

- **Subdivision of the Remainder of the Farm Rundu Townlands No. 1329 into Portions A – F and the Remainder;**
- **Reservation of Portion F as a “Street”.**

The above development triggers listed activities in terms of the Environmental Management Act (No. 7 of 2007) and Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (Government Notice No. 30 of 2012).

As such the proponent appointed Stubenrauch Planning Consultants (SPC) to undertake an independent Environmental Assessment (EA) in order to obtain an Environmental Clearance Certificate (ECC) for the above activities. The competent authority is the Ministry of Environment and Tourism: Department of Environmental Affairs (MET: DEA).

Project Description

Since gaining independence in 1990, Namibia has prioritized housing development as a key strategy for driving economic growth, alleviating poverty, and fostering sustainable communities nationwide. Housing also features prominently in the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which aim to promote sustainable livelihoods and well-being for all. Specifically, SDG 11 advocates for inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable cities and settlements by ensuring universal access to adequate, safe, and affordable housing and essential services.

Rundu, the capital of the Kavango East Region, has a population of 118,632 and covers an area of 164.1 square kilometres, according to the 2023 Namibia Population and Housing Census. A 2018 economic profile report by First Capital Namibia highlighted a significant shortfall in affordable housing in Rundu, with an estimated demand of approximately 12,460 units.

The town’s notable economic growth has triggered rapid urbanisation, increasing the demand for housing as more people migrate from rural areas in search of opportunities. Without proper planning and intervention, this urban influx could result in the expansion of informal settlements, which often become entrenched poverty zones. Such areas are typically associated with a range of social, economic, environmental, health, and governance challenges, ultimately diminishing the town’s liveability.

In response, the Rundu Town Council is proactively identifying and reserving land for future urban expansion. These land parcels have been strategically selected to help address the housing backlog and attract investment in new township developments. By doing so, the Council aims to accommodate continued population growth and promote orderly urban development in Rundu.

Public Participation

Communication with Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) about the proposed development was facilitated through the following means and in this order:

- A Background Information Document (BID) containing descriptive information about the proposed activities was compiled and sent out to all identified and registered I&APs via email on **24 April 2025**;
- Notices were placed in the New Era newspapers dated **24 April 2025 and 30 April 2025**, briefly explaining the activity and its locality, inviting members of the public to register as I&APs (**Appendix B**); and
- A notice was fixed at the project site (see **Appendix A**);

Public consultation was carried out according to the Environmental Management Act's EIA Regulations. After the initial notification, the I&APs were given two weeks to submit their comments on the project (until **27 May 2025**). The comment period will remain open until the final scoping report is submitted to MET.

The Draft Scoping Report will be circulated from the **25 June 2025 until the 09 July 2025** so that the public could review and comment on it. The overall commentary received from the public on the draft report will be documented in the comments and responses report document of this report.

Conclusions and Recommendations

With reference to **Table 9**, none of the negative construction phase impacts were deemed to have a high significant impact on the environment. The construction impacts were assessed to a **Medium to Low (negative)** significance, without mitigation measures. With the implementation of the recommended mitigation measures in Chapter 7 as well as in the EMP, the significance of the construction phase impacts is likely to be reduced to a **Low (negative)**.

With reference to **Table 9**, none of the negative operational phase impacts were deemed to have a high significance impact on the environment. The operational impacts were assessed to a **Medium (negative)** significance, without mitigation measures. With the implementation of the recommended mitigation measures in Chapter 7 as well as in the EMP, the significance of the construction phase impacts is likely to be reduced to a **Low (negative)**.

It is recommended that this project be authorised because should the development not proceed the area will remain in its current state, and the existing housing backlog in Rundu will persist. No serviced land will be made available, and the town will lose out on potential revenue and investment opportunities. The local community will also miss out on job creation during construction and the long-term benefits of formal housing and infrastructure. Therefore, this alternative is not considered favourable. The significance of the social impact was therefore deemed to be Medium (positive).

The “no go” alternative was thus deemed to have a High (negative) impact, as all the benefits resulting from the development would not be realised.

The significance of negative impacts can be reduced with effective and appropriate mitigation provided in this report and the EMP. If authorised, the implementation of the EMP should be included as a condition of approval.