

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: FINAL SCOPING REPORT

## PROPOSED NEW CBD BYPASS ROAD IN HERMANUS

DEA&DP Reference Number: 16/3/1/2/E2/15/2124/14  
Heritage Western Cape Reference Number: 14112403AS1203E

### 1 INTRODUCTION

The Provincial Government Western Cape: Department of Transport and Public Works (WCDTPW) proposes to construct a bypass road approximately 3 km long, to the north of the Hermanus Central Business District (CBD), abutting Mountain Drive, past the Hermanus Sports Complex and along Fairways Avenue, in Hermanus in the Western Cape (see Figure 1).

SRK Consulting (South Africa) Pty Ltd (SRK) has been appointed to undertake the Scoping and Environmental Impact Reporting (S&EIR, also referred to as EIA) process required in terms of the National Environmental Management Act 107 of 1998, as amended (NEMA).

**See page - 9 - for details on how you can participate in the process.**



### 2 GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

Sections 24 and 44 of NEMA make provision for the identification of activities which may not commence without an Environmental Authorisation (EA), and stipulate the requirements for the assessment of such activities. The EIA Regulations, 2010<sup>1</sup> are contained in four Government Notices (GN) issued in terms of NEMA. GN R543 sets out two alternative procedures for authorisation processes: depending on the type of activity that is proposed, either a Basic Assessment (BA) process or a S&EIR process is required to apply for EA from the competent authority – in this case the Western Cape Department of Environmental Affairs & Development Planning (DEA&DP).

SRK has determined that the proposed Hermanus CBD Bypass project triggers activities listed in terms of Listing Notices 1 – 3 (GN R544, GN R545 and GN R546) of the EIA Regulations, 2010 (Table 1).

<sup>1</sup> The EIA Regulations, 2010 and associated Listing Notices were replaced by the EIA Regulations, 2014, which came into effect on 4 December 2014. The application for EA for the Hermanus CBD Bypass was submitted prior to the promulgation of the EIA Regulations, 2014. As such, the process will be governed by the EIA Regulations, 2010. No additional listed activities that are not also listed in terms of the EIA Regulations, 2010 were identified in terms of the EIA Regulations, 2014. Table 1 shows the equivalent EIA Regulations, 2014 listed activity numbers in brackets.

**Table 1: Listed activities triggered by the project**

No	Description (abbreviated)
<b>Listing Notice 1 (requiring BA)</b>	
11 (12)	The construction of 50 m <sup>2</sup> of infrastructure or structures within a watercourse or within 32 m of a watercourse.
18 (19)	The infilling or depositing of more than 5 m <sup>3</sup> of any material into, or the dredging, excavation, removal or moving of soil, sand, shells, shell grit, pebbles or rock from a watercourse.
22 (24)	The construction of a road, outside urban areas, with a reserve wider than 13.5 m.
40 (49)	The expansion of infrastructure by more than 50 m <sup>2</sup> within a watercourse or within 32 m of a watercourse.
<b>Listing Notice 2 (requiring S&amp;EIR)</b>	
18 (27)	The route determination of roads and design of associated physical infrastructure for a road administered by a provincial authority.
<b>Listing Notice 3 (requiring BA)</b>	
12 (12)	The clearance of 300 m <sup>2</sup> or more of vegetation where 75% or more constitutes indigenous vegetation within a critically endangered ecosystem.
13 (-)	The clearance of 1 ha or more of vegetation where 75% or more constitutes indigenous vegetation outside of urban areas in a protected area and within 10 km from national parks and in urban areas in areas zoned for use as public open space and areas on the watercourse side of the development setback line or within 100 m from the edge of a watercourse, where no such setback line has been determined.
16 (14)	The construction of infrastructure covering 10 m <sup>2</sup> or more within a watercourse or within 32 m of a watercourse.
19 (18)	The widening of a road by more than 4 m, or the lengthening of a road by more than 1 km outside of urban areas.

Consequently, the proponent is obliged to apply for EA for the project. Since activities listed in Listing Notice 2 apply to the project, an S&EIR process is required.

It is also anticipated that a Water Use Authorisation in terms of sections 21 of the National Water Act 36 of 1998 (NWA) will be required from the Department of Water and Sanitation. Water use activities that may be applicable to the project are listed in Table 2.

**Table 2: NWA water use activities for the project**

No	Description
c	Impeding or diverting the flow of water in a watercourse.
i	Altering the bed, banks, course or characteristics of a watercourse.

Where the Hermanus CBD Bypass impacts on areas within the Fernkloof Nature Reserve (FNR), an application to exclude affected areas must be submitted to the Minister for Environmental Affairs of the Western Cape Province.



Figure 1: Location of the proposed Hermanus CBD Bypass (northern and southern alternatives)

### 3 ENVIRONMENTAL PROCESS

The EIA Regulations, 2010 define the detailed approach to the S&EIR process, which consists of two phases: the Scoping Phase (the current phase) and the Impact Assessment Phase (see Figure 2).

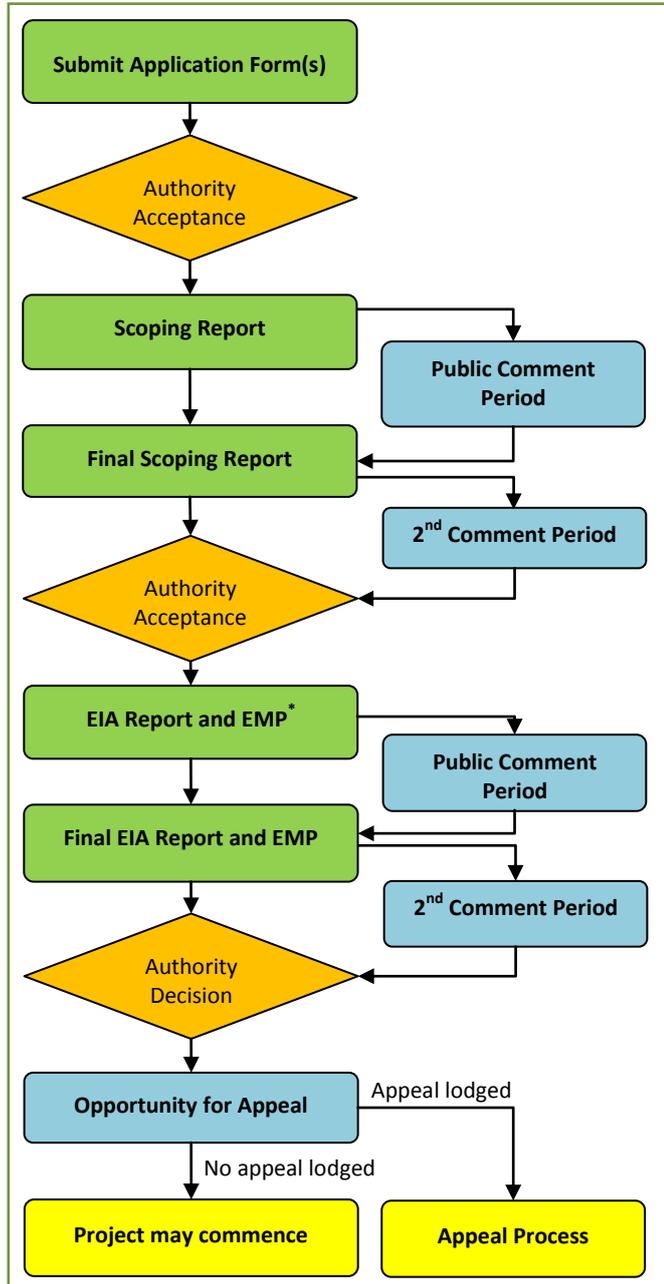


Figure 2: S&EIR Process

\*Note: EMP = Environmental Management Programme

The objectives of the Scoping Phase are to:

- Identify stakeholders and inform them of the proposed activity, feasible alternatives and the S&EIR process;
- Describe the affected environment and potential environmental issues and benefits arising from the proposed project that may require further investigation in the Impact Assessment Phase;

- Develop terms of reference for specialist studies to be undertaken in the Impact Assessment Phase;
- Provide stakeholders with the opportunity to participate in the process and identify any issues or concerns; and
- Produce a Scoping Report for submission to the relevant authorities.

Once the Scoping Phase has been completed, the Impact Assessment Phase will commence, in which the significance of potential impacts will be assessed and measures to avoid and /or mitigate negative impacts and enhance benefits will be determined.

### 4 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND ENVIRONMENT

Hermanus is situated along a narrow stretch of the coast between the Kleinrivier Mountains and the Atlantic Ocean. It is the largest town in the Overstrand Municipal area and the business, cultural and administrative centre of the region.

Due to its reputation as one of the best land-based whale watching destinations in the world and its scenic landscape, Hermanus is a popular holiday and retirement destination for local and international visitors alike, who support a flourishing hospitality industry, specialty shops, shopping centres and restaurants.

The proposed Hermanus CBD bypass is located north of the Hermanus CBD. The western section of the bypass is located north of the existing urban area and Mountain Drive, which effectively forms the urban edge in this area, and in the southern portion of the FNR. This section is largely located on the southern edge of an area densely vegetated with fynbos (see Figure 3).

The eastern section of the bypass is located within the existing urban area immediately to the west of the Hermanus Golf Course (see Figure 4). The proposed bypass largely follows and/or will be aligned parallel to existing roads.



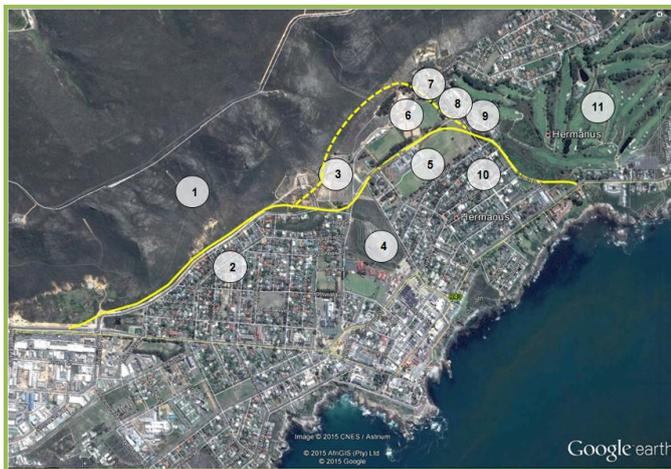
Figure 3: Western section of Mountain Drive



**Figure 4: Fairways Avenue along Hermanus Golf Club**

The proposed bypass route abuts urban areas and natural areas. The most notable land uses adjacent to the route are shown in Figure 5 and include:

- The Fernkloof Nature Reserve (1);
- Residential areas, including Northcliff suburb (2), Eastcliff suburb (10) and Innesbrook Village (9);
- Institutions and recreational areas, such as the Hermanus High School (5), Hermanus Private School (8), Sports complex (6), Hermanus Golf Course (11) and Hermanus Country Market (7); and
- Heritage areas such as the Hermanus cemetery (3) and Hoy's Koppie (4).



**Figure 5: Land uses surrounding the proposed CBD Bypass**

The mountainous areas, sandstone cliffs and stony scree slopes of the Overstrand municipal area provide habitat for near-pristine remnants of Critically Endangered mountain fynbos vegetation and are considered of high importance for biodiversity conservation. The proposed bypass is located in Overberg Sandstone Fynbos, at the ecotone with Hangklip Sand Fynbos and Agulhas Limestone Fynbos. The FNR also provides pristine and varied habitat for many animal species.

According to the South African National Biodiversity Institute, the area north of Mountain Drive is deemed a Critical Biodiversity Area (CBA), while a wetland adjacent to the Hermanus Golf Course is designated an Ecological Support Area (ESA).

A number of watercourses drain the Kleinrivier Mountains north of Hermanus. A number of dispersed ephemeral drainage lines cross the proposed alignment of the Hermanus CBD Bypass.

The population in the Overstrand Local Municipality, where the site is located, increased by approximately 44% between 2001 and 2011, to 80 432 in 2011. Local economic growth is driven by tertiary services such as wholesale and retail (which also reflects tourism activity), transport, government and business services, as well as property development. The relatively strong growth of Overstrand Municipality may (at least partly) be linked to the vibrant tourism industry that centres predominantly around Hermanus.

## 5 PROJECT MOTIVATION

The R43 (Trunk Road 28) is a provincial road connecting Wolseley and Ceres in the Witzenberg Municipality to Bredasdorp in the Cape Agulhas Municipality. In Hermanus, the R43 leads through the entire length of the town, including the Hermanus CBD.

According to the Road Classification and Access Management system, the R43 should be a Class 2 Major (Urban) Arterial in Hermanus in terms of its route continuity and regional mobility functions; direct access to properties, traffic calming and parking is generally not permitted on such routes. This is at odds with the accessibility requirements in the Hermanus CBD, and the R43, together with the CBD Relief Road, performs a dual function as urban collector and regional mobility route.

While current traffic conditions in and around the Hermanus CBD are generally acceptable at present, the network is close to capacity. Greater Hermanus has experienced high tourism numbers and rapid population growth in the recent decade, and indicators show that these trends will continue. Three associated trends are anticipated to trigger the need for the Hermanus CBD Bypass:

1. **Increase in traffic bypassing or driving through the CBD**, typically generated by local residents travelling between the eastern and western areas of Greater Hermanus and exceeding the capacity of the CBD road network and/or of lower-class residential roads used as *de facto* bypasses.

A number plate survey and modelling studies show that ~25% of traffic entering town could reasonably be expected to use a CBD bypass (consisting of ~21% of traffic through, but not to, the CBD and ~7% of traffic through Hermanus). Traffic counts also indicate that a number of vehicles already avoid the CBD area by using Mountain Drive, Fairways Avenue and other smaller detour roads that serve the residential areas and schools to the north of the CBD area;

2. **Increase in traffic destined for the CBD**, which reduces the capacity of the CBD road network to accommodate through-traffic.

Long-term spatial plans call for residential densification in central Hermanus and a larger number of residents and visitors will sustain more businesses in the area, including the Hermanus CBD; and

3. **Increase in demand for traffic calming** and safer pedestrian precincts in the town centre, with emphasis on access, parking and non-motorised transport. However, such measures do not comply with the requirements of a Class 2 Major (Urban) Arterial and can thus not easily be implemented in the CBD while the R43 retains the status of a provincial road.

Delays into and in Hermanus are expected to increase without further road network improvements, particularly in the CBD area, which may limit expansion and development of the town centre.

The construction of the bypass will enable the WCCTPW to proclaim the Hermanus CBD Bypass as the new provincial trunk road and de-proclaim the R43 section through the Hermanus CBD, which will become a municipal road administered by the Overstrand Municipality in line with local accessibility requirements. Specifically, the implementation of the Hermanus CBD Bypass aims to:

- Provide a mobility route for through traffic between the eastern and western parts of Hermanus that complies with the necessary standards for a Class 2 Urban Arterial;
- Improve accessibility, traffic flow and safety in the CBD area;
- Enable business development within the Hermanus CBD by optimising accessibility, parking and non-motorised access; and
- Create a more liveable and economically viable CBD environment.

It is expected that the bypass will primarily benefit residents and the commercial sector in the greater Hermanus urban area, as the majority of traffic on the bypass is expected to derive from vehicles commuting between the eastern and western parts of Hermanus.

## 6 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The WCCTPW proposes to construct the Hermanus CBD bypass to accommodate anticipated future traffic flows in and through Hermanus. The proposed bypass is approximately 3 km long and:

- Starts in the vicinity of the intersection of Main Road, Mountain Drive and Mimosa Street in the west;

- Runs in a north-easterly direction along and to the north of Mountain Drive and the existing edge of the built environment;
- Passes either (also see Section 7):
  - To the north of the cemetery and the proposed new Hermanus Sports Complex before turning southwards along the eastern edge of the sports fields (*northern alternative*); or
  - To the south of the cemetery and intersects with Lord Roberts Drive before continuing in a north-easterly direction along Jose Burman Drive between the Hermanus High School and the proposed new Hermanus Sport Complex (*southern alternative*);
- Continues southwards across the eastern portion of the Hermanus High School sports fields and along a section of Fairways Avenue between the residential suburb of Eastcliff and Hermanus Golf Course; and
- Joins Main Road at a new traffic circle approximately 110 m to the north-east of the existing intersection of Fairways Avenue with Main Road (R43).

The road will function as a regional route and consist of a single carriageway with one 3.7 m wide vehicle lane in each direction and a 1.8 m wide shoulder in each direction within a road reserve of approximately 25 m, with two-way traffic. The proposed speed limit is 80 km/h, although this may be reduced to 60 km/h in the proximity of intersections. A combined 3 m wide pedestrian walkway and cycle path is proposed on the southern side of the road. It is proposed that all retaining structures are constructed with natural sandstone rock.

## 7 ALTERNATIVES

The EIA Regulations, 2010, require that all S&EIR processes must identify and describe feasible and reasonable alternatives. Alternatives considered during screening phases of this project and **screened out**, include:

**Use of alternative regional routes:** Number plate surveys indicated that only 7% of vehicles passed straight through Hermanus. As such, traffic recorded in and near Hermanus largely originates from and/or travels to the area and would not make use of alternative regional routes.

**Full bypass:** Traffic modelling predicts that traffic volumes, particularly on the eastern section of a 'full' bypass to the north of Hermanus and extending along the entire length of town, are too low to justify the construction of a full bypass.



Figure 6: Proposed northern Hermanus CBD Bypass alignment (with proposed traffic circles)



Figure 7: Proposed southern Hermanus CBD Bypass alignment (with proposed traffic circles)

**LEGEND**

- 20m ROAD ALIGNMENT
- - - CENTER LINE
- ▨ BUILDINGS
- \* EXPROPRIATION OF PORTION OF PROPERTY REQUIRED TO ACCOMMODATE ROAD WIDENING

**GENERALISED LANDUSE**

- Single Residential
- General Residential
- Business
- Educational
- Institutional/Community
- Government/Municipal Use
- Open Space
- Cemetery
- Recreational
- Vacant
- Nature Reserve

Amend.	Date	Description

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**Upgrade CBD Relief Road:** Upgrading the CBD Relief Road to a mobility route would result in ongoing conflict between the needs of providing for mobility, direct access, pedestrian and cyclist movement and safety and parking, and require extensive and costly expropriation to achieve the necessary width, which would significantly affect land uses adjacent to the CBD Relief Road *(additional information is provided in the report).*

**Upgrade R43 through CBD:** Upgrading the R43 through the CBD to a mobility route would result in ongoing conflict between the needs of providing for mobility, direct access, pedestrian and cyclist movement and safety and parking, and require extensive and costly expropriation to achieve the necessary width, with effects on the CBD.

**Upgrade Mountain Drive to function as bypass:** Mountain Drive has a large number of direct accesses and intersection spacing is too close to meet the functional requirements of the proposed bypass. Traffic calming measures (speed bumps) implemented on Mountain Drive are not compatible with mobility requirements.

**Variations of the bypass alignment, including:**

- Aligning the bypass further away from Mountain Drive (which requires more FNR land);
- Sinking the bypass along Jose Burman Drive (which presents water management and connectivity challenges and is more costly);
- Aligning the bypass along Lord Roberts Drive (which presents direct access conflicts and only addresses a portion of the R43 through the CBD);
- Aligning the bypass along Fernkloof Drive (which presents direct access conflicts without addressing noise concerns in the area).

The following alternatives will be investigated:

The **northern alignment** runs just north of and adjacent to the existing Mountain Drive, then aligns north of the cemetery and sports complex, then leads south, along the eastern edge of the sports complex between the cricket oval and the Hermanus Private School and then joins Fairways Avenue (see Figure 6).

The **southern alignment** runs just north of and adjacent to the existing Mountain Drive, then runs south of the cemetery and follows Jose Burman Drive between the high school and the sports

complex. A pedestrian underpass under the bypass is proposed in the eastern portion of this section, while a pedestrian and vehicular underpass is proposed in the western portion of this bypass section. This implies that the road is raised along this section (see Figure 7). The road then runs south along the eastern edge of the high school and joins Fairways Avenue.

The **No Go alternative** will be considered in the EIA in accordance with the requirements of the EIA Regulations, 2010. The No Go alternative entails no change to the status quo, in other words the bypass will not be constructed and traffic between the eastern and western portions of Hermanus will continue to use the R43 through the CBD, the CBD Relief Road or roads in residential areas north of the CBD. The No Go alternative may have a constraining effect on land use and improvements to accessibility and non-motorised transport in the CBD in the region to protect the mobility the existing route.

**8 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

Stakeholder engagement is a key component of the S&EIR process and is undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the EIA Regulations, 2010. The stakeholder engagement activities related to the Scoping Phase are summarised in Table 3 below.

Relevant local, provincial and national authorities, conservation bodies, local forums and surrounding landowners and occupants have been directly notified of the S&EIR process and the release of the Scoping Report.

**Table 3: Stakeholder Engagement during Scoping**

Activity	Date
Advertise EIA process and release Background Information Document (BID)	27 Nov 2014
Public Open Day and meeting	8 Dec 2014
Release Scoping Report for public review	17 Jun 2015
Comment period	18 Jun - 20 Jul 2015
Public Open Day	2 Jul 2015
<u>Hold five focus group meetings</u>	<u>17 Jun – 17 Jul 2015</u>
<u>Release Final Scoping Report to public</u>	<u>14 Dec 2015</u>
<u>Comment period</u>	<u>15 Dec – 5 Feb 2016</u>

Key comments and concerns raised by stakeholders to date, based on the information provided in the BID, the Scoping Report and the public and focus group meetings can be summarised as follows:

- The motivation for the Hermanus CBD Bypass is inadequate; traffic in Hermanus is mostly satisfactory;
- Traffic on the bypass may increase noise and air pollution and affect adjacent residential areas, the High

School and the Hermanus Private School and the sense of place in the area and the FNR;

- The northern alignment would force the closure of the Hermanus Country Market, which is a regional attraction and provides income to traders;
- The extended planning process for the bypass increases uncertainty and may impact on property values;
- The bypass may require the clearing of important fynbos species, and the de-proclamation of portions of the FNR would reduce an already small reserve;
- The bypass may damage the wetland adjacent to the Hermanus Golf Course that was deemed unsuitable for development during earlier investigations;
- The bypass will remove traffic from the CBD and cause a decline in CBD retail activity, in conjunction with the development of a new regional mall; and
- The bypass is too expensive.

Comments received to date are presented and responded to in Appendix F of the Final Scoping Report. Copies of the original correspondence and notes from stakeholder meetings are also provided in the report.

## 9 POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL IMPACTS

The western portion of the proposed Hermanus CBD Bypass passes through the southern-most section of the FNR and CBA associated with Sandstone Fynbos and Sand Fynbos vegetation that are considered Critically Endangered and Endangered and, therefore, botanically sensitive. In addition, the bypass route is located in one of the few lowland sections of the FNR that may support vegetation that is poorly represented elsewhere due to the wide-spread urban development in low-lying areas the region. The eastern portion of the route encroaches on a wetland feature adjacent to the Hermanus Golf Course that is ecologically sensitive and classified as an ESA. It is also possible that a number of threatened animal species may occur in the project area.

The proposed bypass route follows the outer boundaries of the high-income residential suburbs of Northcliff and Eastcliff. A number of sensitive receptors are located alongside the proposed route, most notably single residential units, High School, Private School and the Country Market. Other socially sensitive features near the project area include recreational areas such as the FNR and Hoy's Koppie, as well as the Hermanus cemetery. Although Hermanus is an important tourist destination, the project area is largely residential and removed from the CBD and FNR visitor centre, and it is thus considered less likely that tourists will be prominently exposed to the project.

The development will include 3 km of linear infrastructure, stretching from the intersection of Mimosa Street and the

R43 to ~100 m east of the intersection of Fairways Avenue with the R43. The road reserve will be approximately 25 m wide and include all infrastructure associated with the road, such as drainage channels. The overall development footprint amounts to ~7.5 ha, of which a significant portion is already developed. Some ~2.5 ha of the footprint is located within ecologically sensitive areas that form part of the FNR, while the remainder is located in urban areas.

Emissions from the proposed development will be limited to the (relatively minor) emissions of construction vehicles during the construction phase (including dust and noise emissions) and emissions of vehicles using the road during the operation phase (primarily exhaust and noise emissions). Runoff will increase as a result of the hardening of permeable surfaces and it is possible that contaminants may be inadvertently released during construction activities.

A limited number of private properties, as well as the High School, Private School and Country Market, may be directly affected by the project (i.e. through possible expropriation). A further ~50 private properties are located adjacent to the proposed bypass and may be indirectly affected, e.g. by noise. Property owners are particularly concerned about nuisance impacts due to construction and operational traffic, safety and impacts on property values. In addition, many stakeholders in Hermanus are concerned about the continued viability and protection of species present in the FNR and recreational opportunities associated with the reserve, and the continued viability of the Country Market. It is expected that some stakeholders who are not located adjacent to the project but would make use of the bypass may support the proposal.

The following key environmental issues – potential negative impacts and potential benefits – have been identified:

**Terrestrial and wetland ecology** – potential negative impact on threatened species and habitats and the flow regime of ephemeral drainage lines along Mountain Drive and wetlands along Fairways Avenue;

**Visual (or sense of place)** – potential compromising of the visual quality and the sense of place of the area;

**Heritage** – possible impacts on heritage (notably archaeological and paleontological) resources;

**Noise and air quality** – possible increase in noise and air emissions in residential areas and near schools;

**Socio-economic** – potential negative impact on existing land uses, including the Hermanus Private School, through expropriation and concern about nuisance impacts, safety, property values, impacts on the recreational opportunities associated with the FNR and continued viability of the Hermanus Country Market, coupled with economic opportunities in the CBD through de-proclamation of the R43 in the CBD; and

**Road safety** – possible interference with current movement of scholars and residents who access areas north of the bypass, including the FNR, farmers' market and educational and sports facilities, coupled with possible improvement in CBD road safety with reduction of through-traffic, implementation of traffic calming measures and improvement of pedestrian facilities.

## 10 PLAN OF STUDY FOR THE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

To address the potential issues and impacts identified thus far, the following **specialist studies** are proposed:

- Terrestrial Ecology Impact Assessment;
- Freshwater / Wetland Impact Assessment;
- Noise and Air Quality Specialist Input;
- Socio-economic Impact Assessment;
- Property Value Specialist Input;
- Visual Impact Assessment; and
- Heritage Impact Assessment.

Specialists will be required to provide detailed baseline information and to identify and assess the potential impacts of the proposed project within their particular field of study. In addition, specialists will be required to identify practicable mitigation and optimisation measures to avoid or minimise potential negative impacts and/or enhance any benefits. SRK's standard impact rating methodology will be employed in the assessment of impacts.

Once specialist studies have been completed, the results will be collated into an EIA Report and EMP. The EIA Report and EMP will be released for public comment through notifications to registered Interested and Affected Parties (IAPs). Key authorities will also be consulted as part of the process.

All comments received will be incorporated into a Comments Report which will be appended to the EIA Report. The EIA Report and EMP will be submitted to DEA&DP for their consideration in decision-making.

## HOW YOU CAN YOU PARTICIPATE IN THE PROCESS

The Scoping Report was updated following the end of the comment period to produce the Final Scoping Report, which is being re-released to stakeholders before it is submitted to DEA&DP together with all comments received.

### REVIEW THE REPORT

Copies of the complete report are available for public review at the following locations:

- Hermanus Library;
- Mount Pleasant Library;
- Zwelihle Library;
- Hawston Library;
- SRK's Cape Town office; and
- SRK's website: [www.srk.co.za](http://www.srk.co.za) – via the 'Library' and 'Public Documents' link.

Any **additional** comments must reach SRK no later than **5 February 2016** to be also included in the submission to DEA&DP.

Relevant Organs of State are automatically registered as stakeholders. According to the EIA Regulations, 2010 all other persons must request in writing to be placed on the register, submit written comments or attend meetings in order to be registered as stakeholders and be included in future communication for the project.

### REGISTER OR PROVIDE YOUR OPINION

Register or send written comment to:

**Jessica du Toit**

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**Stakeholders not previously registered** should provide their name, contact details (preferred method of notification, e.g. email), and an indication of any direct business, financial, personal or other interest which they have in the application.

**The EIA Report will now be compiled and made available to all registered stakeholders for comment.**