

THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF A 35M HIGH TELECOMMUNICATION MAST AND BASE STATION ON ERF 90, BOND STREET, DE HOOP, OUDTSHOORN, WESTERN CAPE



BASIC ASSESSMENT REPORT FOR COMMENT

JULY 2019

**PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF A 35M HIGH
TELECOMMUNICATION MAST AND BASE STATION
ON ERF 90, BOND STREET, DE HOOP,
OUDTSHOORN, WESTERN CAPE**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Proposed Activity

This application is for the development of a 35m high telecommunication mast and base station on Erf 90, De Hoop, Oudtshoorn, Western Cape. The total area of land to be cleared is 8m X 8m (64m²) to erect a 35m monopole mast with antennas attached to the top of the mast. Electricity supply to power the proposed mast will be sourced from Eskom. The telecommunication mast and base station will be closed with a 2.4m high palisade fence for safety and security reasons. (Please see Appendix B for Site Plans). No new roads will be constructed as an existing access road will be utilised to gain access to the proposed site from Bond Street. The base station will include an equipment room to house the operator equipment and generator, as well as two future service provider equipment containers. The mast will be constructed on a cement plinth and be surrounded by a palisade fence. The site co-ordinates are **33° 36' 27.65"S, 22° 2' 38.91"E**. Please see Appendix B1 for the site plans.

Environmental Requirements

The National Environmental Management Act (NEMA, Act 107 of 1998), as amended, makes provision for the identification and assessment of activities that are potentially detrimental to the environment and which require authorisation from the competent authority based on the findings of an Environmental Assessment. NEMA is a national act, which is enforced by the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA). In the Western Cape, these powers are delegated to the Department of Environmental Affairs & Development Planning (DEA&DP).

According to the regulations of Section 24(5) of NEMA, authorisation is required for the following:

Government Notice R985 (Listing Notice 3):

Activity no. 3: *"The development of masts or towers of any material or type used for telecommunication broadcasting or radio transmission purposes where the mast or tower-*

*(a) is to be placed on a site not previously used for this purpose; and
(b) will exceed 15 metres in height-*

but excluding attachments to existing buildings and masts on rooftops".

i. Western Cape:

"i. **All areas outside urban areas;**

ii. Areas designated for conservation use in Spatial Development Frameworks adopted by the competent authority, or zoned for a conservation purpose, within urban areas; or

iii. Areas zoned for use as public open space or equivalent zoning within urban areas".

Site Description

This application is for the development of a 35m high telecommunication mast and base station on Erf 90, De Hoop, Oudtshoorn, Western Cape. The total area of land to be cleared is 8m X 8m (64m²) to erect a 35m monopole mast with antennas attached to the top of the mast. Electricity supply to power the proposed mast will be sourced from Eskom. The telecommunication mast and base station will be closed with a 2.4m high palisade fence for safety and security reasons. (Please see Appendix B for Site Plans). No new roads will be constructed as an existing access road will be utilised to gain access to the proposed site from Bond Street. The base station will include an equipment room to house the operator equipment and generator, as well as two future service provider equipment containers. The mast will be constructed on a cement plinth and be surrounded by a palisade fence. The site co-ordinates are **33° 36' 27.65"S, 22° 2' 38.91"E**. Please see Appendix B1 for the site plans.

The proposed site is covered with patches of natural vegetation and some alien vegetation and is in a degraded state (see Appendix C for photographs). According to the vegetation map from SANBI BGIS, the vegetation present on the site is Muscadell Riviere. This type of vegetation is classified as Critically Endangered in the Western Cape in terms of NEMBA National list of Ecosystems that are threatened and in need of protection. From the site photos (Appendix C), the area seems transformed and disturbed due to previous developments. The site does not fall within a Critical Biodiversity Area (CBA) or Ecological Support Area (ESA). However, the

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area immediately to the west and north of the site is characterized by a CBA. Please refer to the Biodiversity Overlay Map Appendix D. There are no rivers or wetlands on or within 32m of the proposed site. Wynands River is approximately 565m south of the proposed site. There is an artificial wetland (dam) approximately 212m south-west of the proposed site, with another artificial dam approximately 380m north-west of the proposed site. Please see **Appendix B1** for the site plans, **Appendix A1** for the locality map as well as **Appendix C** for the site photographs.

Civil and Electrical Services

Electricity will be sourced from Eskom. The Proposed development of a telecommunication mast will not produce waste or use water during its operational phase.

Access

No new roads will be constructed as an existing access road will be utilised to gain access to the proposed site from Bond Street. Please see Appendix A1, Appendix B and Appendix C.

Conclusion

The proposed 35m high telecommunication monopole mast will allow for multiple service providers/ mobile network operators to attach and house their equipment (antennas) on the mast, decreasing the need for additional communications masts to be erected in the area. The benefits of telecommunications services in modern society are potentially limitless. The proposed activity will increase the coverage of these telecommunications services, including providing a more reliable and wider coverage. The activity would create a more efficient telecommunications service, considered essential to the business and private sector. The data capabilities provided by the proposed mast are also important in business, education and for the public, and has thus become paramount for social and economic development.

The construction of the telecommunications mast is therefore considered as part of the essential services for the greater community. The proposed communications mast is not expected to have any adverse effects on people's health and well-being (Refer to **Appendix K3** and **Appendix K4**). It is also not expected to produce any noise or odours during the operational phase. Some noise can be expected during the construction phase, but this will be temporary, and the impact is expected to be negligible. Due to the design and location of the proposed communications mast, the activity is expected to have a moderate-high impact on the visual character of the area. The proposed mast will be a greyish colour to blend in with the background sky. Please refer to Appendix G2 for the Visual Impact Assessment.

Heritage Western Cape ("HWC") provided a final comment on 26 February 2019 and it was included as Appendix E1 of the BAR. HWC indicated that there is no reason to believe that the proposed establishment of a 35m high telecommunication mast on Erf 90, De Hoop, will impact on heritage resources, and that no further action under Section 38 of the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999) is required.

The site does not fall within a Critical Biodiversity Area (CBA) or Ecological Support Area (ESA). However, the area immediately to the west and north of the site is characterized by a CBA. No cultural or historical aspects were identified on the site (refer to Appendix G1). Please refer to the Biodiversity Overlay Map Appendix D. There are no rivers or wetlands on or within 32m of the proposed site. Wynands River is approximately 565m south of the proposed site. There is an artificial wetland (dam) approximately 212m south-west of the proposed site, with another artificial dam approximately 380m north-west of the proposed site. Please see Appendix B for the site plans, Appendix A1 for the locality map as well as Appendix C for the site photographs. Any potential negative impacts during the construction phase are expected to be adequately mitigated through the implementation of the Environmental Management Programme ("EMPr") and the appointment of an Environmental Control Officer ("ECO") during the construction phase. Considering all the information, it is not envisaged that this proposed development will have a significant negative impact on the environment.

It is therefore recommended that this application be authorised with the necessary conditions of approval as described throughout this Draft BAR for comment.