

Appendix K – Need and Desirability

1. Introduction

This Appendix provides a concise, structured assessment of why the proposed establishment of an olive cultivation block on the Remainder of Farm Welvenpas No. 238, Wellington, is needed and desirable in the context of environmental, planning, and socio-economic considerations.

2. Need

Site-Specific Need

The proposed development entails the re-establishment of approximately 2.21 hectares ($\pm 22\ 100\text{ m}^2$) of previously cultivated agricultural land for olive production on the Remainder of Farm Welvenpas No. 238, Wellington. The area was historically utilised for agricultural cultivation but has remained fallow for an extended period and is currently dominated by secondary, degraded vegetation.

The proposed development is required to:

- Optimise the productive use of a fallow agricultural block within an established farming landscape.
- Improve long-term agricultural viability and economic sustainability of the farming operation.
- Enhance land-use efficiency within an area already historically used for agriculture.
- Support continued agricultural production within the Drakenstein municipal area.

Broader Public Need

The proposed activity aligns with broader municipal and provincial objectives, including:

- Supporting sustainable agricultural production in the Drakenstein Municipality and broader Cape Winelands region.
- Promoting optimal use of land within established rural farming areas.
- Contributing to regional food security and agricultural value chains through continued olive production.
- Supporting rural economic activity and agricultural diversification in the Boland region.

3. Desirability

Spatial Planning Alignment

The proposed development is consistent with applicable planning intent and land-use controls, including:

- The continued protection and sustainable utilisation of agricultural land within designated rural areas.
- Efficient land use and consolidation within existing rural production landscapes.
- The property's existing agricultural land use rights, with the proposed olive cultivation remaining compatible with surrounding agricultural land uses.
- The site is located outside the urban edge within an established agricultural landscape and does not introduce urban sprawl, incompatible land uses, or non-agricultural infrastructure.

4. Environmental Desirability

Specialist verification confirms that:

- The development footprint consists of degraded secondary (ruderal) vegetation associated with historic agricultural disturbance and does not comprise intact natural fynbos habitat.
- No plant Species of Conservation Concern were recorded within the footprint.
- No wetlands, drainage lines, seep systems, or watercourses occur within or adjacent to the development footprint, and potential freshwater-related impacts are limited to indirect risks (e.g., erosion/sediment mobilisation during heavy rainfall) that can be managed through EMPr measures.
- Desktop screening indicates broader-area sensitivities; however, the verified on-site ecological condition of the footprint is low and the activity is confined to the defined footprint.

Design and mitigation measures ensure:

- Clear demarcation of the development footprint and no-go areas outside the footprint.
- Implementation of erosion control and stormwater management measures.
- Ongoing alien invasive plant management and maintenance of stable groundcover in accordance with the EMPr.

Socio-Economic Desirability

The proposed development will:

- Create short-term employment opportunities during site preparation and planting.
- Enhance long-term agricultural productivity and economic sustainability of the farming operation.
- Support local agricultural value chains and rural economic activity.
- Promote efficient use of land within an established agricultural enterprise.

5. Best Practicable Environmental Option

Based on specialist verification and the assessment findings, the re-establishment of olive cultivation within the defined 2.21 ha footprint represents the best practicable environmental option because it:

- Utilises a fallow block within an established agricultural landscape.
- Avoids expansion into other areas of the farm that may introduce greater environmental uncertainty and risk.
- Does not require new access roads, bulk infrastructure, or non-agricultural development.
- Minimises environmental risk through containment of activities within a clearly demarcated footprint and implementation of EMPr controls.

6. Conclusion

The proposed establishment of an olive cultivation block on the Remainder of Farm Welvenpas No. 238 is both needed and desirable because it:

- Enables productive use of a fallow agricultural block within an established farming landscape.
- Aligns with planning intent for sustainable agricultural development in rural areas.
- Avoids loss of intact natural habitat within the verified development footprint.
- Provides socio-economic benefits with manageable and mitigable environmental impacts, subject to EMPi implementation.