

Appendix K – Need and Desirability

1. Introduction

This Appendix has been prepared in accordance with the Western Cape Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning Guideline on Need and Desirability (March 2013) and the DEA Integrated Environmental Management Guideline (2017). It provides a concise, structured assessment of why the proposed development of a primary dwelling, additional low-intensity accommodation units and associated infrastructure on Portion 79 of Farm Ruygte Valley No. 205, Sedgefield, is needed and desirable in relation to the site-specific context, broader strategic planning context, environmental constraints, climate resilience considerations, and socio-economic implications of the proposal.

2. Need (Site-Specific and Contextual)

2.1 Site-Specific Need

The property is privately owned and currently undeveloped. The proposal seeks to establish a low-intensity residential node comprising a primary dwelling and three small ancillary accommodation units within a compact footprint. The proposal is needed to:

- enable reasonable residential use of privately owned land;
- support long-term conservation stewardship over the balance of the property;
- facilitate alien invasive species clearing and ecological rehabilitation;
- provide an economically viable land-use model compatible with the site's sensitivity; and
- utilise off-grid infrastructure solutions suited to the rural coastal context.

2.2 Broader Public Need

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

- encouraging appropriately scaled rural development outside the urban edge;
- promoting private conservation and biodiversity stewardship;
- supporting local employment during construction and maintenance;
- reducing pressure on municipal services through off-grid systems; and
- maintaining the scenic and environmental qualities of the Garden Route landscape.

3. Desirability (Spatial, Environmental, Social and Economic)

3.1 Spatial Planning Alignment

The proposed development is broadly consistent with:

- Knysna Municipal Spatial Development Framework (2020);

- Garden Route Environmental Management Framework; and
- existing rural character and low-density surrounding land uses.

The development is clustered within a limited footprint, thereby avoiding dispersed disturbance across the property.

3.2 Environmental Desirability

Available specialist inputs indicate:

- development is primarily located within degraded portions of the site;
- approximately 97% of the property will remain natural or rehabilitated;
- the layout has been refined to avoid higher sensitivity features where feasible;
- off-grid servicing reduces pressure on municipal infrastructure; and
- rehabilitation, alien clearing and environmental management measures are incorporated into the EMPr.

3.3 Socio-Economic Desirability

The project will:

- create temporary employment during construction;
- support local contractors, suppliers and service providers;
- improve long-term property management and stewardship; and
- contribute modestly to the local economy.

4. Best Practicable Environmental Option

Based on available specialist input, the preferred compact development node represents the best practicable environmental option because it:

- consolidates built form into a single area;
- avoids unnecessary fragmentation of the wider property;
- retains the majority of the site under conservation-oriented management;
- limits infrastructure requirements; and
- enables mitigation and monitoring within a clearly defined footprint.

5. Conclusion

The proposed development on Portion 79 of Farm Ruygte Valley No. 205 is considered both needed and desirable because it:

- enables reasonable residential use of private land;
- aligns with planning frameworks supporting appropriately scaled rural development;

- retains most of the site in a natural state;
- supports biodiversity stewardship and rehabilitation;
- limits impacts through a compact footprint and mitigation measures; and
- provides socio-economic benefits with manageable environmental risk.

The activity is considered potentially acceptable subject to Environmental Authorisation and full implementation of the BAR and EMPr mitigation measures.