



## Business Plan for development of the “Water Palace” waterfall.

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## **LOCATION of the WATERFALL**

**Below the S bends of Barry Hertzog Avenue in Melpark,  
adjacent to the CSIR Laboratories and Melville Koppies, is probably one of the  
BEST KEPT SECRETS OF GAUTENG.**

**Thousands of people pass this point every day, and none are aware of this site of Social, Historical  
and Ecological importance to the people of Johannesburg.**

The waterfall is situated on the Braamfontein Spruit , which rises in Barnato Park, (adjoining Hillbrow) on the property which belonged to Barney Barnato. His house became the Johannesburg High School for Girls and is now Barnato High School

The Auckland Park tributary, now fully canalised, arises beneath the Gas Works in Milner Park and joins the main spruit at Sans Souci Hotel built c 1891..

A canalised section of the Spruit was built in stone in the years of the 1933 depression, and provided employment for many at that time. This stone work is an example of exceptionally beautiful craftsmanship.

Long before the arrival of settlers in S.A., the Waterfall was one of the sources of water for the inhabitants of the area, those people who built the iron age furnaces on Melville Koppies and smelted the iron which they obtained from the Parktown and other Ridges.

The waterfall surrounds were later to become an “uitval grond” on the wagon road to Pretoria and Rustenburg (hence Rustenburg Rd.)

**This is one of our Historical areas which, together with the stone canal, should become a Heritage site.**

Prior to and after the establishment of Melville as a suburb in 1896, this waterfall was a favourite picnic spot for the residents of Johannesburg.

Later market gardens , a dairy, a Nursery , and the RAND STEAM LAUNDRY which was nearby in Richmond, (replacing the ZULU laundry on the banks of the Spruit) were established.

From an ecological point of view, the site is the eastern extremity of the Melville Koppies, and would have been the main water supply for animals living in the area. The site would also have been one of the water sources for the Iron Age settlement on the Koppies. The site is still home to many indigenous plant species and has a sense of place unique to the area.

The recent history of the waterfall is not as romantic. The building of Rustenburg Road at the turn of the century, and more recently Barry Hertzog Avenue isolated the area, which was relegated to a rubble dump site. The canalization of the Braamfontein Spruit changed the flow rate of the river, with an impact of the ecological system and the isolated nature of the area led to the development of an informal settlement around the waterfall. This site was socially unacceptable, and the settlement was closed.

The isolated nature of the site and misuse of resources led to the degradation of the site. As a result of dumping and disturbance of the vegetation, the site has become invaded with proclaimed weeds and large alien invasive plants. The recent settlement of the area has resulted in large amounts of discarded building material and other pollution. The site has recently been fenced to prevent re-invasion of the area. Indigenous church groups currently use the area.

The area has however, the potential to become a site of social cultural, ecological and importance. The proximity to high density residential areas, the Melville Koppies and major arterial routes in Johannesburg, and the historical and ecological nature of the area make this area a prime site for rehabilitation, and a flagship of redevelopment and empowerment in Gauteng.

**It is with this in mind that the Braamfontein Spruit Trust is proposing a business plan for the rehabilitation and development of the area.**

# **Business Plan**

## **Purpose**

The rehabilitation and development of the waterfall and surrounds for the benefit of residents of Gauteng.

## ***Proposed End State of the area***

An accessible, ecologically sustainable, attractive area that adds value to the Johannesburg metropolitan area and the Braamfontein Spruit.

## ***Proposed Development***

The rehabilitation programme must be addressed professionally and in an ordered fashion. It is proposed that there are two phases to the project, an initial investigative phase and a second implementation phase.

## ***Phase One.***

The employment of a specialist to develop a detailed environmental development plan for the area. A detailed Scope of Work will be developed to ensure that the study addresses the following issues:

- Legal requirements in terms of the Environmental Conservation Act in terms of EIAs. The report should address all scoping requirements in terms of the Act.
- Policy requirements of legally accountable authorities
- Environmental issues and possible remediation there of, including:
  - Identification and removal of alien vegetation and introduction of appropriate indigenous replacements
  - Reduction of plastic and other waterborne pollution
  - Landscaping
- Development of recreation sites including for paths, communal braai areas, and associated ablutions.
- Access to the site from main arterial routes, parking requirements
- Incorporation of adjoining areas and businesses, e.g. CSIR, in the development.
- Identification of I&APs, assessment of opinions and concerns
- Linking to ecological and social objectives of the Melville Koppies
- The potential for sustainable entrepreneurial developments

It is proposed to utilise University resources for the execution of phase one. This will be done through existing projects in the area but may require additional specialist input.

The resulting report should allow the responsible authority to accurately gauge the financial implications of the rehabilitation of the area and to implement the rehabilitation of the area.

Once the report is available it will be used to develop a detailed implementation plan and associated budgets.

Phase one will be complete when the first rehabilitation starts.

## ***Phase Two***

This phase will involve the rehabilitation of the area and the development of infrastructure to support the sustainable utilization of the area. There will be fundamental objectives during this phase:

- Maximise employment opportunities during the project.
- Minimise impact environment impact during development
- Maximise the marketing potential of the rehabilitation project
- Maximise community involvement and benefit.

Phase Two will be completed with the opening of the site to the general public.

Full planning for this phase will be done during phase one of the project.

## ***Phase Three***

The sustainable, community driven operation of the site.

### **Time Frame**

	<i>Start</i>	<i>Complete</i>
Phase One	1 December 2001	28 February
Phase Two	1 March	30 July

### **Budget Requirements**

Phase One	R20 000
Phase Two	c. R500 000

### **Funding Source:**

Initially - Local, Provincial and National Authorities and Government funding for WSSD

## Interested and Affected Parties

<b>Group</b>	<b>Interest in area</b>
BST	Braamfontein Spruit Trust. Initiators of Project
Business - Local	Financial
Corporate Business	Financial/Sponsorship
CSIR	Neighbour
DACEL	Conservancy
Croc./Marico Catchment Forum	Eco-monitoring Competition for Schools
Delta Park Environment Centre	Environmental Education
Delta and Spruit Users	Promotion of River Trails
Eco Access	Cater for the Disabled
Heritage Agencies	Heritage Site
Historical Society	History
Independant Churches	<b>Current Users</b>
Jhb Council for Natural History	Associated Environmental NGOs provide expertise
Johannesburg City Parks	Owner?
Local Residents Associations	"Select and Sustain a Suitable Section of the Spruit" ( <b>SSSSS</b> )
Melville Koppies Forum	Management of Koppies
Melville Residents Association	<b>SSSSS</b>
NORFED	Incorporate RPA's Under one Organisation - communication
Region 4 Director	Site is in Region 4
River Rangers	Security
SAPS	Security
Schools in the immediate vicinity	<b>SSSSS</b>
Tourist Board - Gauteng.	
Tour Operators	
University of the Witwatersrand	Depts. of Earth Sciences and Architecture
Upper Jukskei Catchment Forum	Schools Water Monitoring Competition
Ward Committees Region 4	Site is in Region 4
WARM	Residents Association

