

# Dam fills up with sewage

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News Editor

**U**NTREATED sewage is still flowing into Kamfers Dam, despite a flurry of activity and earthworks at the Homevale Sewerage Works.

Earthworks at the Homevale Sewerage Works was started earlier this month after the Save the Flamingo Association sent a letter demanding immediate rectification of the situation at Kamfers Dam from the relevant authorities.

Ekapa Mining and various small contractors were called in to assist with the repair of the dysfunctional aeration ponds, peaking dam and clearing of solids in the effluent holding dam.

A consultant who advised on the proper functioning and upgrading essential for the efficient operation of the Homevale Sewerage Works in 2004 was also called in to provide further advice.

Before this, mostly untreated raw and toxic sewage was being discharged into Kamfers Dam, which, according to the Save the Flamingo Association, had become a direct threat to the survival of Kamfers Dam's flamingos.

"For several years the Homevale Sewerage Works has been completely hydraulically overloaded to such an extent that it has failed to achieve virtually any of its designed and desired effluent treatment capability," a spokesperson for the Save the Flamingo Association said.

However, while the ponds and dams were being cleared and repaired, the untreated and bacteria-infected sludge and water was pumped out into the veld adjacent to the sewerage works, building up against the railway line and flowing through a culvert into Kamfers



**TROUBLE FOR TRAINS:** While the process of upgrading the Homevale Sewerage Works has started, raw sewage is being pumped into the veld around Kamfers Dam, building up against the railway line, and flowing through a culvert into Kamfers Dam.

Picture: Supplied

Dam.

"This is clearly a contravention of the Water Act," the spokesperson said.

"This unacceptable temporary measure may have a severe impact on the railway line, and the result is the continued discharge of untreated effluent into Kamfers Dam.

"Until certain vital components

of the sewerage works that filter out the grits and break down solids are functioning properly, the effluent leaving the sewerage works is not going to be close to the required environmental and water quality standards."

The spokesperson pointed out that repair and upgrading of the overloaded Greenpoint Sewerage

Works was also becoming critical.

"The unacceptable practice of discharging partially treated sewage into the veld on neighbouring properties must be discontinued as soon as possible."

He added that before any new developments around Kamfers Dam could go ahead, including the first phase of the proposed Northgate

development, the Homevale Sewerage Works had to be fully functional and upgraded to cope with the current, and any additional, effluent produced by Kimberley.

"Without a positive record of decision on an Environmental Impact Assessment, the Sol Plaatje Municipality cannot approve the rezoning of land for the Northgate development. Despite previous statements in the media that phase one of Northgate will go ahead, this development cannot take place until an authorisation is granted.

"The Save the Flamingo Association would like to categorically state that it is pro-development in Kimberley, but as long as such developments do not take place at environmentally-sensitive localities."

He said it was unlikely that the city could currently accommodate any new major developments because of the city's stressed bulk infrastructure.

"New developments should not be to the detriment of service delivery, and the maintenance of current infrastructure in Kimberley."

According to the spokesperson, the Save the Flamingo Association would continue to monitor progress at the Homevale Sewerage Works to ensure that Kamfers Dam's flamingos were protected.

"The Save the Flamingo Association has had tremendous support with more than 5 500 signatures on a petition on its website ([www.savetheflamingo.co.za](http://www.savetheflamingo.co.za)).

"The association appreciates the support of concerned people from Kimberley, elsewhere in South Africa, and across the globe ... these people have shown that the degradation of sensitive environments and threatened birds will not be tolerated. These assets are for the benefit and enjoyment of all the people of our fragile planet."