

RESEARCH REPORT

Assessing the Economic and Safety implications of the present state of the Takoradi Butcher's Shop



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Assessing the Economic and Safety implications of the present state of the Takoradi Butcher's Shop	1
CHAPTER 1	5
INTRODUCTION.....	5
1.1 Background of the Research / Problem Statement	5
1.2 Purpose of Study.....	5
1.3 Terms of Reference	5
1.4 Methodology.....	6
1.5 Limitation	6
1.6 Structure of research report	6
1.7 Justification	7
CHAPTER 2	8
2.1 Management of the Shop	8
2.2 Problems/ challenges.....	9
CHAPTER THREE	15
3.0 PLANS BY CITY AUTHORITIES TO REHABILITATE THE MEAT SHOP	15
3.1 Challenges that could be encountered from this plan	17
CHAPTER FOUR	18
4.1 Conclusion.....	18
4.2 Recommendation.....	18
4.2.1 General recommendations for stakeholders.....	18
4.2.2 Short term measures	19
4.2.2.1 Reconstruction of Tables	20
4.2.2.2 Provision of storage facilities	20
4.2.2.3 Provision of water supply within the meat shop.....	20
4.2.2.4 Reconstruction of Floor	20

4.2.2.5 Replacement of torn Window nets.....	20
4.2.2.6 Painting of walls.....	21
4.2.3 Medium term measure.....	21
4.2.4 Long term measures.....	22
REFERENCES.....	22

List of Abbreviation/Acronyms

BUSAC	Business Sector Advocacy Challenge Fund
ECG	Electricity Company of Ghana
GCWL	Ghana Water Company Limited
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTDP	Medium Term Development Plan
STMA	Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolitan Assembly
TBA	Takoradi Butchers' Association
WR	Western Region

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter summarizes the background of the research, the scope of work, method and structure of the research report.

1.1 Background of the Research / Problem Statement

The Takoradi butchers' shop was constructed in 1960 to provide the people of Takoradi and its environs with healthy hygienic meat products. The shop has since its construction not experienced any renovation. This has led to the deterioration and wearing-out of facilities in the meat shop. Parts of the building, especially the floor have developed cracks and other parts caving in. The poor working environment has created a bad public perception about the wholesomeness of meat sold in the shop leading to low patronage and dwindling sales.

With the discovery of oil and its resultant increase in population and associated businesses, coupled with the renovation of the Sekondi Butcher's shop, the Takoradi Butcher's shop faces an uphill task of modernizing their facilities and operations to compete for the emerging attractive market for meat and meat products in the Metropolis with the shop in its current state.

The ultimate aim of this report is to outline effect that the current state of the shop is having on the hygiene, safety and incomes of butchers and the general public.

1.2 Purpose of Study

The research report aims at identifying the economic and safety implications of the present condition of the Takoradi butchers' shop and recommend effective strategies to abate them.

1.3 Terms of Reference

The study was conducted with regards to the following:

- Assessing the current state of the Takoradi Butchers shop and implications on the safety and incomes of the butchers.
- Outlining measures and challenges to the renovation of the shop
- Recommending measures to be adopted by stakeholders especially the Association, Metropolitan Assembly and Utility Service providers for the renovation of the shop

1.4 Methodology

To help achieve the aims of conducting the research a combination of methods were adapted which included:

- Desktop and internet research to review secondary data on subject matter
- Visits to the Takoradi and Sekondi Butchers' shops to ascertain their current states and how the shops are managed.
- Conducting guided interviews with officials of the Physical Planning, Development Planning, Revenue and budgeting, the public health Departments of the Sekondi-Takoradi Municipal Assembly, as well as members of the general public. As well as, Focus group discussions with the management of the Takoradi and Sekondi Butcher's shops, member of TBA,
- Snap shot of some relevant scenes
- Analyses of data gathered
- Writing of technical report.

1.5 Limitation

There were not much problems encountered in the research except for the delay in getting information and the inability to get some relevant information from the Sekondi Takoradi Metropolitan Assembly on time. That notwithstanding, this research will add to the body of knowledge needed to help improve the conditions of the Takoradi meat shop and for the members.

1.6 Structure of research report

The research report has been organized into four main chapters/sections.

Section One comprises introduction, background of the study, problem statement, terms of reference, research methodology and limitations.

Chapter two of the report deals with the current situation of the Takoradi meat shop in terms of management of facilities, the conditions of facilities and the problems and challenges being faced by butchers there.

Chapter three captures plans of the Metropolitan Assembly to rehabilitate the meat shop and the challenges.

Chapter four proposes strategies for rehabilitating the current shop in the short term taking into consideration the longer term plan of the Assembly to develop a modern and appropriate meat shop.

1.7 Justification

According to the 2010 population and housing census of the republic of Ghana, the population of the Sekondi –Takoradi Metropolis stands at 559,548 compared to 369,166 as at the 2000 census. It must be noted that the projected population for Sekondi Takoradi Metropolitan Assembly by the year 2013 was 444,752 but as seen from the census by the year 2010 the population had risen to 559,548.

There is a general public perception that the discovery of oil off shore the coast of the western region has contributed to an increase in population and an influx of migrants including expatriates.

With this increase the local market for meat product has expanded resulting in an increased demand. This Butcher's shop serves a chunk of the populace of Sekondi Takoradi. The supply of wholesome meat products is therefore very essential for the continual growth of the local economy hence the need to renovate the Takoradi Butchers' shop which is located in the central market sited in the center of the metropolis. There is therefore the need to position the meat shop as a primary supplier of meat products for the people of STMA.

Again with the current renovation of the Sekondi Butchers shop into a modern butcher shop and the construction of the Apramdo market meat shop, the Takoradi Butchers shop is likely to face stiff competition for customers with the two aforementioned butchers' shops. The Takoradi meat shop is disadvantaged as its facilities are in deplorable and unhygienic state as compared to the other two butchers' shops. Therefore there is the likelihood that Companies and the general public who consume meat buy from the other two butchers' shops as they offer more hygienic meat and meat products.

CHAPTER 2

CURRENT STATE OF THE TAKORADI BUTCHERS' SHOP AND ITS IMPLICATIONS ON THE SAFETY AND INCOMES OF BUTCHERS.

The Takoradi butcher's shop is located within the market circle in Takoradi. This is where butchers send their meat for sale to the general public after a day's slaughter. It was constructed in 1960 and is the biggest and most centrally located meat shop in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis. However, lack of regular maintenance has led to deterioration of facilities at the shop which is posing serious safety issues to the butchers themselves and members of the general public who patronize meat products from the shop and as such affecting the incomes of the butchers.

The meat shop is home to about 200 butchers, all belonging to the Takoradi Butchers Association(TBA) who work there 7 days a week processing and selling meat and meat products to clients like hotels, catering services providers; businesses and the general public.

2.1 Management of the Shop

The management of the shop is the responsibility of the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolitan Assembly (STMA). It is however done in collaboration with the Takoradi Butchers Association. Hence the Assembly collects table fee of Gh¢ 1.50 a month from every butcher for the day to day running and maintenance of the shop. There is also the butcher's license of Gh ¢ 10.00 a per annum, per butcher, meaning every butcher pays Gh¢28.00 a year to the Assembly.

The Association also levies its members for the welfare of its members and sometimes for the management of the place even though it is not in their mandate to cater for the running and maintenance of the meat shop.

The butchers undertake a general cleanup of the shop and its facilities every last Saturday of the month. However whenever the assembly organizes a major clean up in the metropolis, they send water to the butchers to undertake a general cleanup at the shop. Butchers, once in a while raise money for the painting of the shop.

2.2 Problems/ challenges faced in the shop and its implications on the butchers and the general public

- **Broken down tables**

The tables on which butchers display their meat for sale are the most significant provisions made for them. The tables are made of concrete on which the butchers have placed timber logs to facilitate the cutting of meat into sizeable pieces to suit consumer demands. Even though there are efforts made to keep the Butcher's shop tidy, Most of the tables are broken down and in a state of disrepair. This adds to making the place untidy. Some have also developed cracks and can break down at any point in time. This also makes the usage of the place unsafe for the butchers and the general public because the tables could break down at any time and could harm anyone close to it at the time whether it is the butcher cutting the meat or the consumer waiting to be served.



A picture showing some broken tables and how it makes the shop appear unkempt.

- **Lack of electricity and cold storage facilities**

Although the cost of electricity used for lighting at the meat shop is supposed to be solely the responsibility of the individual butchers there is no electricity in the shop, a few butchers have connected electricity from inside the market circle to their tables so butchers have to close early before it is dark. Meanwhile they do not have cold storage facilities in the meat shop to store meat left after a day's sale. The butchers therefore store the meat in cold stores outside the market or around, they go for at the beginning of a day's sale and if it de freezes and not bought they would have to send it back to the fridge again and it affects the taste of the meat. This poses a challenge to the butchers because they run at a loss when the meat goes bad. Also they are afraid to invest a lot of capital into buying the meat for sale because if they are not able to sell the meat within two days they run at a loss hence they are not able to expand their business.

- **Lack of water supply**

There is no source of portable water at the shop. There used to be a water tap supplying water to the shop of which the Assembly was footing the bills. The Assembly stopped paying the bills and the Butchers were expected to foot the bill, tat the time the butchers agreed to foot the bill there was already some debt to be paid and they were expecting the Assembly to clear that one so they could start paying so the bills kept piling up after some time prompting the Ghana water company to disconnect it. This is a big challenge to butchers and their business.

A butcher had to go to other parts of the market to purchase water for cleaning and washing their tables before and after each day's work it ended up as very big disincentive to the regular cleaning of the shop. This has also resulted in presence of a penchant smell of rotten meat.

The butchers have now resorted to using knives to scrap off the blood and meat particles from the timber logs on which they display the meat after a day's sale. This contributes to the stench in shop because the blood from meat when not washed smells after some days.

This situation compels the butchers organize a general cleaning of the shop once in a month. They butchers resort to buying water from the fire service in cleaning of the place especially the floors.

Also the dirty nature of the floor makes it very slippery whenever it rains or wet with some clients and the butchers themselves falling down, thus making it unsafe for the butchers and the general public.

Others also feel the meat from the place is not hygienic because of the smell in the shop and do not feel comfortable buying meat from there. Companies and organizations who buy meat from them always complain about the stench and some have even stopped buying meat from there. Other butchers have lost contracts to supply meat to companies and institutions after their place of work was assessed by the companies. This has affected the income of the butchers to a larger extent because they have experienced a reduction in their clientele base.

- **Torn window nets**

Window nets meant to keep out insects and flies from entering the shop are all torn and dirty. It thus provides an easy entry and exit point for all kinds of insects and flies into the shop. It also mars the general scenery of the shop as flies are easily seen hovering around the shop and this adds to customers feeling uncomfortable buying meat from there.



A picture of showing the current state of the Takoradi Meat Shop as compared to the picture below of the newly renovated Sekondi meat shop which is now competition to the Takoradi meat shop.



A picture of Sekondi Meat Shop

- **Peeled off tiles**

Most of the tiles at the meat shop have peeled off with the ones left badly stained and dirty. This contributes to the shop's unclean and unkempt state which is building bad public perceptions of butchers.

- **Rodent Infestation**

The butcher shop is plagued with heavy rodent infestation, notably and mice infestation; it is implausible to run a business in such an environment taking into consideration the health risk it poses to the public. The place is not proofed to prevent access for pests. There are huge cracks and holes all over the place making it easy for mice to enter the shop. As already said, the trade generates meat particles which are not effectively disposed and they find their way into holes which have been created as a result of the cracks in some parts of the floor.

The meat particles in the cracks and holes produce a bad stench when rotting and also contributes to the attraction of rodents into the shop.

The presence of mice generally provokes strong reactions from the public since they are associated with dirt and diseases. This is affecting the business of the butchers as some customers are turned off by the sight of rodents roaming freely in the shop and the butchers complain of losing customers including companies and hotels to the Sekondi Butchers' shop because it has better and neater facilities.

The problem is compounded by Butchers eating and cleaning their plates in the shop because they have no kitchen. The food particles left there after eating also attracts mice to the shop.

Mice are known to contaminate food with their urine and droppings thus the likelihood for the foods to be poisoned at any point in time in the meat shop. Also mice spread diseases such as salmonella bacteria (food poisoning), leptospirosis and typhus; they also carry parasites such as fleas, round worms and mites. This salmonella can only be destroyed at cooking temperature above hundred degrees hence when the contaminated meat is not well cooked the consumer is likely to have food poisoning. And the probability of the meat getting contaminated is very high because the mice being nocturnal, takeover the whole shop and tables after the day's work. Since there is no source of water and butchers just scrap of the dirt from their table before and after work, the danger is that, the tables could be contaminated before the start of work because the hygienic performance at retail has a significant impact on the occurrence of salmonella (food poisoning).

There are also instances where butchers and clients have been bitten by mice which are also a serious health risk since a bite inflicted by a mouse requires prompt medical attention.

- **Insect infestation**

There are cockroaches all over the shop. The cockroaches pose a health risk to Butchers and the general public because contact of one's body with the cockroach gives diseases such as dermatitis, edema on the eyelids and nose, teary steady eyes, sneezing. They have also been identified as carriers of allergies associated with asthma. Aside from the hygienic issues associated with cockroach infestation, the smell they emit is unpleasant and can permeate food that is left exposed. This also contributes to the smell in the Butchers shop which people complain off.

Some customers even feel nauseous with others feeling uncomfortable buying meat there because of the general unhygienic nature of the shop. Others would rather buy from those who sell meat by the roadside even though they know it might be coming from the shop, they are a bit comfortable because they do not see the mice or smell the stench from the shop. This is therefore impacting negatively on the incomes of the butchers.

- **Waste Management Practices**

As stated earlier, butchers are responsible for washing and cleaning of the shop after every day's sale. There is no source of water supply at the butcher's shop; therefore butchers have to find their own means of getting water individually for cleaning their tables after a day's sale. All waste generated at the meat shop is disposed of in the central container with all dirty water channeled through the drains provided at the meat shop into the storm drain at market circle.

Occasionally, the Assembly cleans the place with the help of the butchers to make the place clean and healthy. This is by fumigating the shop with pesticide to kill the rats that breed there.

- **Financial limitation**

TBA members interviewed expressed great difficulty in obtaining credit facility from most local financial institutions e.g. banks to expand their business. Further, the high interest rate charged by the financial institutions and demand for collateral remain a disincentive to the Association members. The association itself has difficulty in mobilization funds internally and members also have a bad savings culture.

CHAPTER THREE

This portion of the report analyses the plans by the Sekondi Takoradi Metropolitan Assembly to get the Takoradi butchers shop renovated. It analyses the feasibility of the planned intervention and potential challenges that may crop up as well as suggesting mitigation options for the envisaged challenges.

3.0 PLANS BY CITY AUTHORITIES TO REHABILITATE THE MEAT SHOP

In the Medium Term Development Plan of STMA for 2010 to 2013, the Assembly aims to provide social and economic infrastructure in urban areas by 2013. In doing so the Assembly aims at providing modern infrastructure to complement and in other situations replace existing old ones.

The Assembly has therefore put together a number of plans to modernize the metropolis including North Effiakuma regeneration Project and the Takoradi redevelopment zone project. Currently the Assembly has a plan which aims at pulling down the current market circle and building a new modern super market for the metropolis. A cursory assessment of the market within which the Takoradi Butchers' shop is situated reveals a dilapidated old fashion market with most facilities either non-existent or broken down. In some situations the facilities are inadequate hence the provision of this modern market will be of immense benefit to business growth of the metropolis.

LONG TERM VISION

A Strategy for Growth and Development



Takoradi redevelopment zone project

As at the time of writing up this report the assembly had put out adverts for interested bodies to bid for the reconstruction of the market. Initially, According to the Presiding member of the Assembly, several companies showed interest to undertake the project and the Assembly went ahead to sign MOUs with them. The Assembly however realized that all of interested companies did not have adequate financial commitment to take on the construction of the modern market.

In the meantime, the Assembly has started making necessary alternative arrangements for those who will be affected by the reconstruction of the market. Other markets including the Efia, Apramdo and the Sekondi markets are being put in good conditions to temporarily host the occupants of the current Takoradi market circle who will be displaced.

With particular emphasis on the Takoradi butchers' shop, the Assembly plans to move the butchers to the Apramdo market meat shop near Takoradi. The Apramdo meat shop has all the

necessary facilities like changing and washrooms, toilets, dressing slabs etc fit for a modern meat shop.

On the other hand, it emerged that the Assembly has no plans to renovate the butchers shop and are only working on getting the modern market constructed.

According to the public health department of STMA, all they can do for the meantime is to continue organizing weekly clean-ups for the butchers shop and advocacy for personal hygiene by the butchers as well as the inspection by the Veterinary Officers of the animal carcasses before they are sold to the public.

3.1 Challenges that could be encountered from this plan

Though the plan of the Assembly to pull down the current market circle and construct a modern market with modern facilities is quite commendable, there are issues that if not addressed may bring conflict or discontent from a section of stakeholders. Some of the issues identified include:

- There is inadequate of information on proposed plans. Though the plans have not been put in motion yet, there has not been much information relayed to occupants of the market including the TBA of the intentions of the Assembly concerning the market.
- The idea of not rehabilitating the meat shop because of the plans to re construct the market circle is has its own repercussions. This is because the Assembly has no readily available funds for the reconstruction of the market. The ground works to be done before such a project can take off may take years. Within this period the butchers would still have to continue working in deplorable conditions hence the loss of more clients and negative effect on the businesses.
- The plan by the STMA to move the Takoradi butchers to the Apramdu market meat shop during the reconstruction of the market may not be the best idea. The Apramdo market meat shop is said to take about 15 to 20 butchers at a time and there are already a number of butchers at the shop. The plan to move about 200 butchers to the join butchers there is simply impossible.
- The level of stakeholder consultation for the planned reconstruction of the market has been so far low.

CHAPTER FOUR

RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

4.1 Conclusion

The plan by the STMA to pull down the current market circle and build a new modern market which will include a modern meat shop is commendable but there is the urgent need to hasten the process as the current place is fast deteriorating. The butchers cannot continue use of the current Takoradi meat shop hoping that one day the STMA will find an investor to rebuild the market circle. The question is until then what happens to the butchers since the current state of the meat shop poses health risk to both the butchers and customers hence a disincentive to their business. The conditions in the shop are by all standards not safe for both butchers and the general public.

Again the goal of building a modern Abattoir by the STMA for the metropolis (which is almost completed) to provide wholesome meat product will be farce if meat from there are sold under conditions such as the one that pertains at the Takoradi meat shop.

4.2 Recommendation

The final section of this last chapter therefore recommends strategies to be considered for adoption by stakeholders for the rehabilitation of the current meat shop and the development of a modern meat shop.

4.2.1 General recommendations for stakeholders

Based on the problems faced at the Takoradi meat shop, the under listed stakeholders are expected to perform the following general tasks and the short and long term

Stakeholder	Role
STMA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rehabilitate the current meat shop facilitate the provision of utilities at the meat shop• Consult with various stakeholders to make input in the plan to reconstruct the market circle(meat shop)• create a platform for the butchers to liaise with construction partners to advance their interest in the construction of the new modern market

TBA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Association needs to train its members to be prepared to get involved in the planning of the modern market • leadership get information on the proposed modern market and then sensitize its members on it • Get the finances of the association together and find ways of mobilizing funds for the association
Utility providers(GWC) ECG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure regular supply of water at the project site • Ensure safe, quality and reliable electricity delivery to the meat shop
Company to build modern market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get input from stakeholders including the TBA to plan for the market • Create opportunity and modalities to allow interested people to take up management of aspects of the market

Specific Recommendations

The following are specific recommendations based on the problems identified at the meat shop and ones envisage in the future.

4.2.2 Short term measures

Short term measure suggested aims at helping improve hygiene at the current shop to enable the shop compete with others in the metropolis. Suggestions here were made taking into consideration plans by the Assembly to pull the market down and construct a modern one hence the need not to put in too much money whilst also noting that the plans to reconstruct the market have not been firmed up yet meaning it may take a considerable amount of time to have it operational.

The following measure/strategies are therefore needed to put the Takoradi butchers shop in good condition:

- **Reconstruction of Tables**

Most of the tables provided the butchers for the display of meat to be sold have developed cracks with others broken. The tables must be reconstructed with the tops being of smooth finish (terrazzo) to permit for easy washing and cleaning before and after each day's work.

- **Provision of storage facilities**

To enable butchers store meat left after a day's sales, there ought to be the provision of cold storage facilities, preferably deep freezers. The leadership of the Butchers' Association could facilitate the purchase of the freezers for the Association from the coffers of the Association or go in for bank loans with the assembly guaranteeing if they can't afford on their own. Members could store their leftover meat in the freezers at a lesser cost than the ones by other cold storage operators. This could serve as a ready facility for the butchers so their meat do not go bad, they can then invest more money in their business and get much profit as well as providing extra income for the Association.

This also calls for the provision of electricity to the shop by the Assembly.

- **Provision of water supply within the meat shop**

The leadership of the Butchers Association and officials of the metropolitan Assembly must sit with the Ghana Water company and come to an agreed arrangement on how to defray the debt left before water supply to the shop was disconnected. This ought to be done as soon as possible as the supply of water is essential for the operational activities of the butchers at the shop. This will go a long way to help keep the place clean and healthy as it will enable butchers clean their tables and the floor regularly.

- **Reconstruction of Floor**

There is the need to reconstruct the floor of the meat shop which is weak and has developed lots of cracks as this is essential to halt the harboring and breeding of rodents at the meat shop within the spaces created as a result of the cracks and caved in floors. The reconstructed floor could be screeded to allow for easy cleaning or washing.

- **Replacement of torn Window nets**

There is the need to replace all window nets at the meat shop to avoid insects from entering and exiting to spread bacteria that can contaminate the meat on display at the meat shop.

- **Painting of walls**

There is the need to replace wall tiles that are peeling off at the shop but because of the high cost that will be incurred if this exercise is to be undertaken taking into consideration plans by the assembly to pull down the shop together with the market, it is advised that all the tiles be brought down and the wall plastered and painted with oil paint. This will make for easy cleaning and improve on the scenery of the shop.

4.2.3 Medium term measure

The medium term measures suggested here are to ensure the comfort and sustainability of the businesses of the members of TBA when they are move to other meats shops for the proposed reconstruction of the market circle to be undertaken. There is the need for the STMA to work towards prevention of conflicts that may arise from the decision to relocate the butchers during the re construction of the market.

Studies carried around so far suggest the proposed shop that the Takoradi butchers will be moved in to when the reconstruction of the meat shop starts is the Apramdo meat shop which may not be big enough to contain the 200 butchers from the Takoradi butchers' shop. The butchers' shop is estimated to have the capacity to take between 15-20 butchers at a time and it already has its own butchers stationed there. It is therefore woefully inappropriate to be considered as an option. Again, patronage of goods and services at the Apramdo market is low and if the TBA members are to join their colleagues at Apramdo it may increase competition for the already small clients and this may bring about conflict between the two parties. To prevent these two inconveniences the following may be considered:

- The Assembly could look for an alternative place within the Takoradi area for some if not all the Takoradi butchers. In so doing overcrowding and potential conflict will be prevented at the Apramdo meat shop
- Alternatively, the Sekondi butchers shop could be talked into hosting some of the butchers from the Takoradi meat shop for the period of the reconstruction of the market circle.
- Again some of the butchers could establish their shops within Takoradi or other markets in the metropolis. Apart from the current Takoradi, Sekondi and Apramdo meat shops, there are no big meat shops in the various markets in the Metropolis including the Kojokom, Effia and the Kwesimintsim markets.

4.2.4 Long term measures

The long term measures however suggested are to ensure a win-win situation for the main stakeholder involve in the reconstruction of the butchers shop when it is completed. The main stakeholders envisaged here are the STMA, the business which will finance the building of the market and the TBA

It is envisaged that by the plans of the STMA, in the near future a modern market with all the necessary facilities including a meat shop will be built to replace the current market circle. The following are recommendation for stakeholders to consider before and after the construction of the new market

- The Assembly must conduct a wide consultation to get the butchers and other stakeholders' input for the planning of the modern market
- There is the need for the TBA to advocate for them to be given the opportunity to operate and manage the new meat shop that would be built. The Association however needs to put themselves in the good financial and capacity position to take advantage of this opportunity when afforded them. Members could therefore raise fund and acquire the necessary skills.
- Whichever company is given the opportunity to build the new market must consult with the relevant stakeholders to make input into their plans before starting construction.

• REFERENCES

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