

## PRESS RELEASE

### **PUBLIC STATEMENT ON THE ONGOING RELOCATION AND UPGRADE OF THE NAIROBI ANIMAL ORPHANAGE**

Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) notes with concern statements circulating on social media from a group calling itself “Friends of Nairobi National Park (FoNNaP)” alleging that “the upland forest in Nairobi National Park is being destroyed.”

KWS wishes to clarify that these claims are **misleading, unfounded and inflammatory**.

KWS confirms that the relocation and upgrade of the Nairobi Animal Orphanage is a carefully planned, lawful, and forward-looking initiative aimed at enhancing wildlife conservation, animal welfare, conservation education, and visitor experience.

Established in 1964, the Nairobi Animal Orphanage has played a central role in the rescue, rehabilitation, and care of wildlife in distress for over 60 years. However, due to increasing visitor numbers, growing demand for wildlife rescue, and evolving international standards on animal welfare, the current facility within Nairobi National Park no longer meets modern requirements.

#### **Legal and Policy Compliance**

This project is anchored in the provisions of the Wildlife Conservation and Management Act, 2013, which mandates KWS to conserve and manage wildlife while upholding high standards of animal welfare.

In full compliance with environmental law, an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) was conducted under the Environmental Management and Coordination Act (EMCA). A comprehensive project report was prepared and submitted to the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), including stakeholder engagement through a workshop held on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2025 and supporting surveys.

NEMA reviewed and approved the project and issued an EIA Licence (Ref: NEMA/ENVIS/CPR/LIC-0940) on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2025.

#### **Rationale for Relocation**

The decision to relocate the facility, first conceptualised in 2013, is informed by the need to:

- i. Align with internationally recognised animal welfare standards, including those of the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).
- ii. Provide larger, more natural and humane enclosures.
- iii. Decongest the current facility and improve visitor flow and safety.

- iv. Enhance operational efficiency in wildlife rescue, treatment, and rehabilitation.

### **Key Features of the New Facility**

The upgraded Nairobi Animal Orphanage will include:

1. Spacious enclosures designed to meet modern welfare standards.
2. A fully equipped veterinary and treatment unit.
3. A modern wildlife hospital with surgical capability.
4. Quarantine and nursery facilities for rescued wildlife.
5. Designated animal release areas to support rewilding efforts.
6. Improved visitor amenities, including walkways, rest areas, sanitation, and controlled parking.
7. Sustainable waste management systems.
8. Outdoor learning spaces and interpretation centres for conservation education.
9. Provide over 500 direct jobs and many more service provider opportunities to young Kenyans.

The existing old orphanage site will be restored and rewilded, reinforcing the ecological integrity of Nairobi National Park.

The new facility is designed to accommodate increasing visitor demand while improving overall experience and reducing congestion. The relocation also strengthens integration between wildlife conservation and Nairobi's broader tourism offerings, including proximity to the Bomas International Convention Centre. This will enhance accessibility, improve visitor management, and support Kenya's position as a leading global conservation and tourism destination.

KWS reaffirms its Constitutional and Statutory mandates to conserve and manage wildlife for the benefit of present and future generations.

This project represents a deliberate investment in improved animal welfare, environmental sustainability, enhanced conservation education, and jobs creation.

The relocation and upgrade of the Nairobi Animal Orphanage is, therefore, both a conservation necessity and a strategic step towards delivering a modern facility aligned with national priorities and international standards.

### **For Media Enquiries**

Corporate Communications Office

Kenya Wildlife Service

WhatsApp: +254 726 610 509

Toll Free: 0800 597 000

Email: [communications@kws.go.ke](mailto:communications@kws.go.ke)