

## Strengthening ESG Credentials to Attract Investment

Gateway Real Estate Africa is a private real estate development company which specialises in the turnkey construction of accommodation for multinational corporates and retailers wishing to expand their operations on the African continent.

For qualifying investors, Gateway Real Estate Africa provides direct real estate exposure to high-yielding US-dollar denominated rental income streams and robust growth potential.

As part of its growth strategy Gateway was looking to approach and attract further investment from a range of platforms including:

- Private Equity Impact Funds;
- Sovereign Wealth Funds;
- Development Finance Institutions; and
- Pension Funds.

Aware that ESG issues are increasingly important considerations for these players, Gateway approached Digby Wells to for advice to help improve its ESG credentials.



Building Africa for the Long Term

## Policy Benchmark, Gap Assessment and Update

To assist Gateway **improve** its **ESG credentials**, **strengthen performance** and **attract investors**, Digby Wells as a first step undertook a review of Gateway's ESG and sustainability linked policies.

The review included identifying the key frameworks used in industry, industry best practice, investor expectations, and benchmarking Gateway's policies against each.

By benchmarking policies we were able to understand and illustrate how the company compared to current industry and best practice, and identify gaps.

Digby Wells then provided a memo of identified gaps, and steps to take to improve the company's policy's and performance.

The steps to take were prioritized and categorized into three groups:

- **Easy wins** – gaps which could be closed in the short term based on the company's existing practice, or with small adjustments to language;
- **Necessary actions** – actions to be taken over the next one – two years to strengthen systems and policies
- **Long-term stretch ambitions** – actions and updates for management and board discussion which establish Gateway as an industry leader.

Findings were presented and discussed with Gateway's management and Board. Digby Wells also supported and led on the implementation of recommendations into Gateway's updated policies.

As well as the policy updates, Digby Wells also developed a board-level **ESG Charter** for Gateway.



## SDG Benchmark and Matrix

Alongside the policy benchmark and update, Digby Wells also reviewed how Gateway **monitors** and **aligns** the **impact of its developments and investments** against the goals the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals**.

While many businesses' approach to monitoring and understanding impact is provide anecdotal evidence of alignment to the broader ambitions of the goals. Digby Wells found that Gateway had already carefully mapped its impacts to a set of core and supplementary goals.

The company had also developed an initial scoring matrix to determine impact.

Digby Wells provided Gateway with advice as to how the company could make its **scoring** system more **robust**. Recommendations included linking scoring to specific KPIs of the SDGs, identifying priority groups for impact and creating a weighted scoring system based on nature and length of impact and quantification of lives impacted.



## Message from the Project Manager



Sarah Cooper  
Group Sustainability  
Manager

From the outset we took time to understand the company's current practices, and plans, and we worked to set a practical pathway to good practice which could followed and implemented by Gateway at its own pace – either independently or with our support.

Gateway is an exciting and ambitious company and we are thrilled to be working with them.