

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

EIA FOR NEW LANDFILL SITES IN UMZINYATHI DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY

SOUTHERN SITE WML REF. No: DC/WML/0005/2010

1. INTRODUCTION

The uMzinyathi District Municipality is in the process of locating and establishing a new landfill site to serve the waste management needs of the southern region of the district. The landfill will have the capacity to accept up to 500 tonnes of general waste per day for the next 50 years.

An environmental impact assessment (EIA) process for the proposed landfill site initially commenced under the NEMA EIA Regulations under reference number DC/24/0023/09. Due to changes in South Africa's legislation, the EIA phase and Waste Management Licence application (WML) will now continue in terms of GNR 718 of the National Environmental Management: Waste Act (Act 59 of 2008).

Government Notice Number	Activity Number	Activity Description
GNR 718	Category B (10)	The disposal of general waste to land covering an area in excess of 200m ² .

According to GNR 718, the establishment of a general waste landfill of the capacity intended, falls into a category B activity. The notice states that *"a person who wishes to commence, undertake or conduct an activity listed under this Category, must conduct an environmental impact assessment process, stipulated in the environmental impact assessment regulations made under section 24(5) of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998) as part of a waste management licence application"*.

This background information document provides a brief summary of the steps that have already been taken in the process thus far. It will also provide detail on what is expected to come during the rest of the EIA/WML application.

2. WHAT IS PROPOSED?

The uMzinyathi District Municipality has identified the need for waste disposal facilities in the district. The distance between the northern and southern areas of the district has meant that the most feasible option is to develop two sub-regional sites. The northern landfill will mainly serve the areas within the Endumeni and Nquthu Municipalities whilst the southern site will cater for the Msinga and uMvoti local municipal areas.

The sites will only accept general waste which includes domestic refuse, non-hazardous industrial waste, commercial waste, garden refuse and builders' rubble. The sites will not accept any hazardous waste i.e. waste which has toxic, chemical or long-lasting properties which may have a negative effect on human health or the environment.

The project is divided into two phases, namely the Scoping Phase and the Environmental Impact Assessment Phase (EIA). The purpose of each phase is discussed in a little more detail in the next paragraphs.

3. SCOPING PHASE

The first phase of the project, Scoping has been completed.

The main objectives of the Scoping Phase were to:-

- Identify possible issues, impacts and concerns relating to the closure of a landfill site;
- Screen out non-issues; and
- Identify alternative sites for the location of the landfills.

A report on the Scoping Phase had been compiled and distributed to all Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) for comment. Feedback received during this period was incorporated into the document and submitted to the provincial environmental authority for approval. The provincial authority is the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Development (KZN DAEARD). A Plan of Study for EIA had been submitted with the Scoping Report and outlined the steps that would be taken during the rest of the EIA/WML phase.

4. EIA PHASE

The purpose of the EIA phase is to:

- Address issues that have been raised during the scoping phase;
- Assess alternatives to the proposed activity in a comparative manner;
- Assess all identified impacts and determine the significance of each impact; and
- Formulate mitigation measures.

The EIA and Waste Licence Application must also be released for comment and discussion before being submitted to the authorities. The report must also outline the proposed design, maintenance and operational plan recommended by the project team.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public Participation is a statutory requirement for projects of this nature in terms of the Constitution and NEMA. It establishes an ongoing mechanism for the collection and assimilation of I&AP inputs. The objectives of the public participation process can be summarised as follows:

- To inform I&APs of the proposed development;
- To provide an opportunity for I&APs to raise issues, concerns and suggestions;
- To promote transparency and an understanding of the project and its consequences;
- To facilitate liaison and communication with I&APs;
- To serve as a data gathering mechanism for the Scoping phase; and
- To address the issues and concerns raised by I&APs as far as possible.

6. HOW WERE SITES SELECTED?

The project team identified several candidate sites for the proposed location of the southern landfill site. These broad areas were ranked according to economic, social and environmental suitability, explained below:-

- **Social Aspects**

Densely populated areas will be avoided as a landfill site does have the potential to impact on community health, safety and general well-being. For this reason, the landfill will require a

sufficient buffer zone for it to be potentially suitable. A buffer zone is the piece of land between the boundary of the landfill and the nearest residential area.

- **Biophysical Aspects**

The biophysical attributes of an area must be considered in order to determine the type and level of risk the landfill will pose to its surrounding environment. The impact that the landfill may have on nearby water sources is usually of most concern, however, other factors such as topography, geology and climate play an important role in determining site suitability.

- **Economic Aspects**

Site selection is also determined by the financial cost of a landfill site. Factors such as access to major routes and distance to waste generation areas can determine the cost of operating a site. Finding a site that is economically feasible must tie in with other considerations because if the site becomes a burden to manage it can potentially impact on the social and biophysical environment.

In total, ten sites were identified as potential candidate sites. After conducting a site ranking exercise based on the factors discussed above, three sites were chosen as the most viable, with Site 10B being the preferred site. The attached map shows the location of Site 10B.

7. AUTHORITY INVOLVMENT

The provincial and national environmental authorities will be consulted and kept informed throughout the process. Once the required documentation and reports are submitted, the respective departments have a certain period of time in which to review it and issue their respective decisions and conditions of approval.

In terms of the legislation a Waste Management Licence is required from the provincial authority (KZN DAEARD). However, input is still required from National Departments like the Department of Water Affairs.

8. PROJECT TEAM

The Project Applicant is the uMzinyathi District Municipality. The Project Team involved with the proposed landfill sites consists of the following companies:-

- ❖ **UWP Consulting (Pty) Ltd:** Civil Engineers
- ❖ **Lombard & Associates:** EIA & Waste Management Specialists;
- ❖ **Thekwini GeoCivils:** Civil and Structural Engineers

9. HOW CAN I BE INVOLVED?

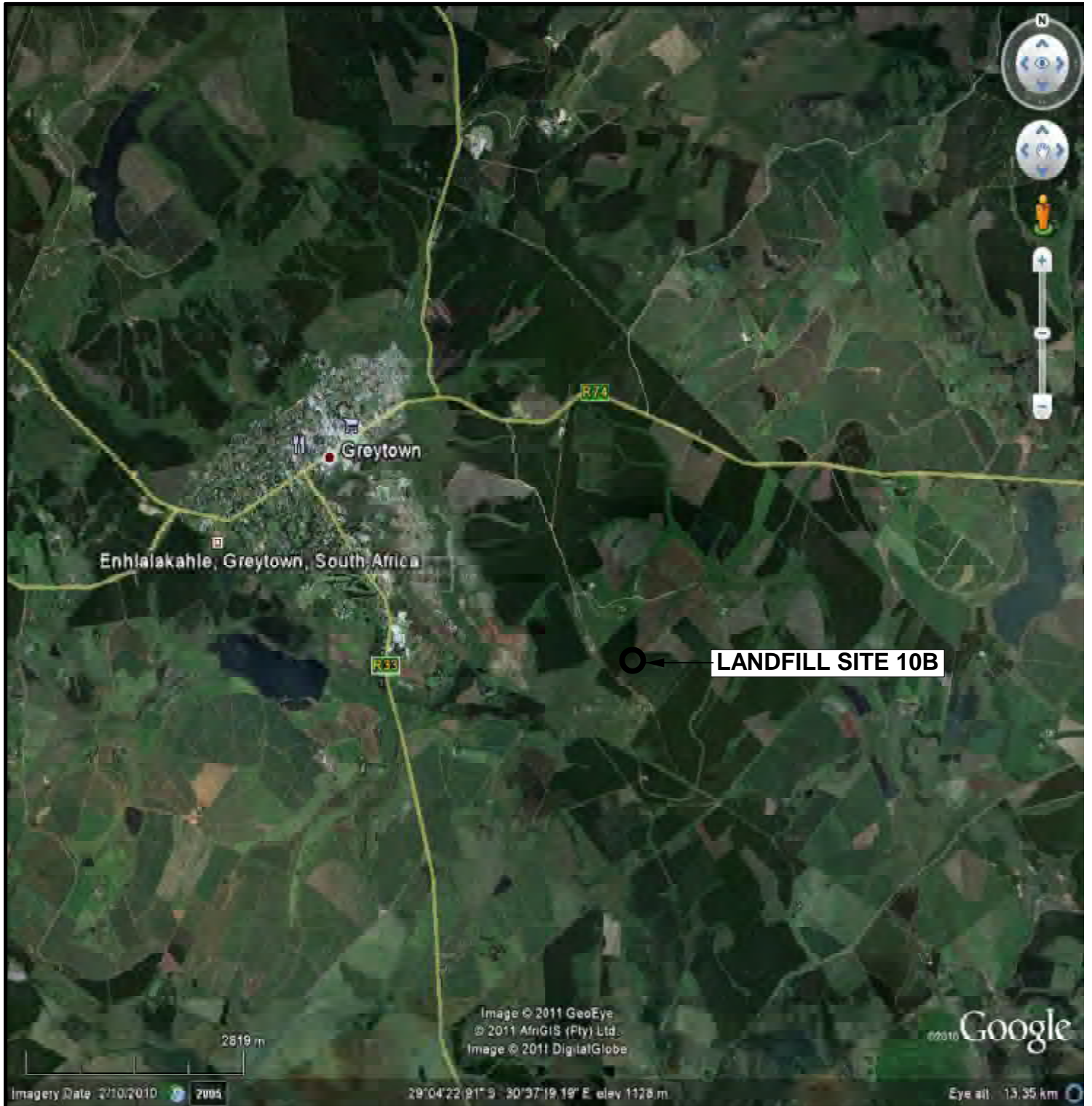
Public involvement is an important aspect of the EIA process to ensure that issues and concerns of individuals who may be affected are taken into account. To register as an interested and affected party, or to raise any concerns or issues, please fill in the attached form and fax or email it to the offices of Lombard and Associates.

10. CONTACT DETAILS

For further information please contact Lombard & Associates (contact details are given below).



P.O. Box 115, Link Hills, 3652
Tel: 031-763 3760; Fax: 031-763 3664
Email: heather@icando.co.za



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