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REVISED BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

The Proposed Development of Richards Bay Truck Staging Area on a Portion of the Remainder of Erf 5333, Alton, Richards Bay, KZN

05 OCTOBER 2023

Prepared By:

Emvelo Quality and Environmental Consultant
(PTY) Ltd

Prepared For:

uMhlatuze Local Municipality



INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

Emvelo Quality and Environmental Consultant (Pty) Ltd has been appointed by uMhlathuze Local Municipality (the Applicant), as the independent Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP), to facilitate the Basic Assessment Process required in terms of the National Environmental Management Act ,1998 (Act. No. 107 of 1998) (NEMA) for this application.

Through the concentrated land use planning and effort to address the trucks congestion challenges within the uMhlathuze Municipality, the uMhlathuze Local Municipality has leased the parcel of land which is under the municipality ownership within remainder of Erf 5333, strategical under the mandate to develop the truck staging area, in order to ease traffic congestion on R34 (John Ross Highway) and N2. The lessee for this property is Eyamakhosi Resources (Pty) Ltd. As a result, the lessee (Eyamakhosi Resources) will develop the land for the development of a truck staging area aimed at controlling the flow of trucks to the Port of Richards Bay and therefore alleviating the congestion of traffic caused by the trucks along the major routes leading to the port.

South Africa was the fifth largest exporter of coal in the world in 2015 and due to its geographic location, the country can competitively export coal to both the Atlantic and Pacific basins. Almost all hard coal exported from South Africa is exported through the port of Richards Bay, with some minor volumes shipped through Durban or Maputo in Mozambique. The Port of Richards Bay is one of the country's largest ports in size, and depth with total land and water surfaces of 2 174 hectares and 1 443 hectares, respectively. While numerous mining and other products move through the Port, coal remains the single largest export commodity in terms of volumes, making it one of the ports largely used for shipment of raw material commodities (DoE, 2016).

The South African coal export has risen sharply from year 2022. This unexpected surge in the demand for South African coal happening at the same time with unprecedented operational challenges with railways has caused a logistical challenge for the Port of Richards Bay as well as the host municipality (uMhlathuze Local Municipality). Hundreds of coal tipper trucks have been queuing on the N2 to offload coal at the port. As a result, the N2 freeway and R34 (John Ross highway) have gridlocked by coal trucks waiting to offload export coal at the port, and situation seems to be worsening daily.

Therefore, the uMhlathuze Local Municipality has identified the need for the development of a trucks staging area in order to ease traffic congestion plus drivers fatigue and enable efficiency on trucks to make deliveries to the port. This facility will be used as a temporary parking for all trucks destined to the port, which will include administration office, convenience and food shop, ablution facilities, maintenance, and security services.

The implementation of the Richards Bay Trucks Staging Area will facilitate the logistical decongestion of the Port City's National and Provincial roads, as the staging area will provide a sound traffic co-ordination for trucks destined to the port of Richards Bay, thereby receiving and sequencing of trucks, and co-ordinate approximately 876 trucks over 24 hours (per day).

The purpose of this Background Information Document (BID) is to provide you, as an Interested or Affected Party (I&AP), with a brief description of the EIA process to be undertaken and to obtain comments and contributions from I&AP's with regards to the potential impacts to the environment by the proposed project.

In addition, this BID also covers other Environmental Statutory requirements as described below:

The National Water Act (NWA, 36 of 1998) as provided in Section 21 of the Act, governs the process of applying for Water Use. A provision for Water Use is made for two forms of application: General Authorisation & and Water Use License Application, depending on the scope of the activity as *Section 21(c); 21 (i) & 21 (g)* has been triggered.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed development entails the development of a 15Ha and will have the following amenities and activities:

- ✚ The truck staging with a capacity of 336 trucks parking bays;
- ✚ Administration office;
- ✚ Construction of trucks fuel filling station comprising of six (6) above ground storage tanks of 83 000ℓ (83m³) each, with a combined capacity of 498 000ℓ (498m³);
- ✚ Canteen; and
- ✚ Ablution facilities.

The supporting infrastructure for the Richards Bay Truck Staging will include:

- ✚ Construction of approximately 900m (90mm ø) PVC-U class16 pipeline to supply water to the facility, which will

be connected to main line feeding Empangeni; and

- ✚ Construction of 3 septic tanks to service the facility's ablution infrastructures. These are: Septic Tank 1 to serve Main Guard House (2.9m x 1.6m x 1m); Septic Tank 2 to serve Cashiers Post for Diesel Bowers (2.9m x 1.6m x 1m); Septic Tank 3 to serve the remaining structures (12.7m x 6.5m x 1.8m). All tanks are designed for a 5-day liquid retention before the effluent is released into a soak pit area. Sludge is to be sucked out of tanks every 2 years using a honey sucker.

The implementation of the Richards Bay trucks staging area will facilitate the following activities and services:

- ✚ Logistical decongestion of the Port City's National and Provincial roads;
- ✚ Sound traffic co-ordination for trucks and other commodity trucks destined to the port of Richards Bay, thereby receiving and sequencing of trucks, and other commodity trucks;
- ✚ Truck staging facility to park and co-ordinate approximately 876 trucks over 24 hours (per day).
- ✚ Secure and safe overnight stay and day stay facilities for trucks;
- ✚ Ablution services;
- ✚ Refuelling (Diesel);

- ✚ Provide facility for basic services to trucks, such as tire changes, light mechanical repairs for breakdown trucks en-route to the port, and from port.

PROJECT LOCATION

The Richards Bay trucks staging area site is located within portion of the remainder of Erf 5333, Richards Bay, KZN at approximately (28°46'34.53"S, 31°58'8.90"E).

The project area is within Quaternary Catchment W12F of Pongola-Mtamvuma Catchment Management Area.

The proposed site is adjacent the R34 Richards Bay bound just after passing Esikhaleni intersection, at the exit by the banana market.

Table 1: Perimeter Co-ordinates

Expansion Perimeter Co-ordinates	
Corner 1	28°46'43.72"S, 31°58'13.43"E
Corner 2	28°46'36.17"S, 31°58'14.71"E
Corner 3	28°46'23.16"S, 31°58'6.50"E
Corner 4	28°46'24.00"S, 31°58'1.41"E
Corner 5	28°46'27.63"S, 31°58'0.73"E
Corner 6	28°46'33.26"S, 31°58'5.90"E
Corner 7	28°46'39.18"S, 31°58'3.88"E

Table 2: Water Connection Co-ordinates

Water Connection Pipeline Co-ordinates	
Connection Point	28°46'10.32"S, 31°57'50.45"E
Middle	28°46'24.15"S, 31°58'7.50"E
End to Facility	28°46'40.22"S, 31°58'14.51"E

WHAT IS AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT?

An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is an effective planning and decision-making tool, which allows for the identification of potential adverse environmental consequences of a proposed project, and its management through the planning process.

In terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No.107 of 1998), as read with the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations of 2014 as amended in 2017, an Environmental Authorization must be obtained from the relevant decision-making authority, the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs (EDTEA) prior to the commencement of any of the listed activities that may result in potential negative impacts on the environment. Thus, an environmental impact assessment is required. A Basic assessment that includes the public participation process will be performed.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT PROCESS

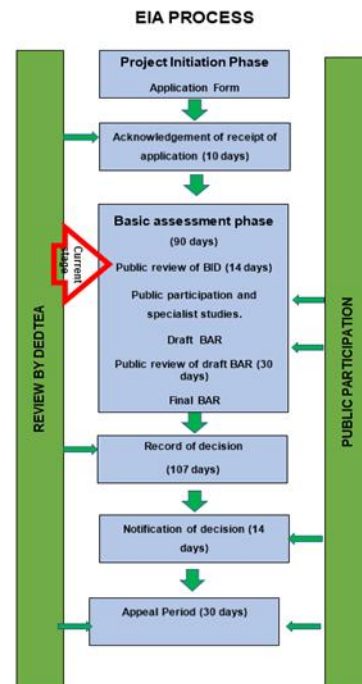


Figure 1: EIA process

In terms of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) regulations, an independent Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) must be appointed to conduct the EIA.

Envelo Consultant will identify and assess the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed activity by conducting an objective and independent EIA in which all the relevant information and opinions of Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) will be collected and passed on to

the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs (EDTEA). In this way, an informed decision-making process can take place.

LISTED ACTIVITIES TRIGGERED BY THIS PROJECT

The proposed project triggers the following listed activities of the EIA Listing Notices;

Table 3: NEMA 2014 Triggers

Activity No(s):	Provide the relevant Basic Assessment Activity(ies) as set out in Listing Notice 1 of the EIA Regulations, 2014 as amended	Describe the portion of the proposed project to which the applicable listed activity relates. As well as applicability.
14	The development and related operation of facilities or infrastructure, for the storage, or for the storage and handling, of a dangerous good, where such storage occurs in containers with a combined capacity of 80 cubic metres or more but not exceeding 500 cubic metres.	Remainder of Erf 5333, Alton, Richards Bay. Applicability: <i>The Proposed Development of Truck Staging will have a trucks fuel filling station comprising of six (6) above ground storage tanks of 83 000ℓ (83m³) each, with a combined capacity of 498 000ℓ (498m³).</i>
19	The infilling of depositing of any material of more than 10 cubic metres into, or the dredging, excavation, removal or moving of soil, sand, shells, shell grit, pebbles or rock of more than 10 cubic metres from – (i) a watercourse; - but excluding where such infilling, depositing, dredging, excavation, removal or moving— (a) will occur behind a development setback; (b) is for maintenance purposes undertaken in accordance with a maintenance management plan; [or] (c) falls within the ambit of activity 21 in this Notice, in which case that activity applies; (d) <u>occurs within existing ports or harbours that will not increase the development footprint of the port or harbour; or</u> (e) <u>where such development is related to the development of a port or harbour, in which</u>	Remainder of Erf 5333, Alton, Richards Bay. Applicability: <i>The development site falls within area identified by SAIIE Wetland dataset. The wetland delineation will verify the existence of other wetland or geomorphological bodies within the project area. Therefore, the construction will take place with SAIIE Wetlands and result in the excavation within the wetland area. The site clearance and levelling will result in excavation and infilling of more 10m³ soil within the wetland. Construction of water connection pipeline will result in clearance of 5m</i>

	case activity 26 in Listing Notice 2 of 2014 applies.	<i>width construction corridor and construction of pipeline infrastructure, section of pipeline route traverse wetland (SAIIAE Wetlands). This will result in excavation and infilling of more 10m3 soil within the wetland.</i>
27	The clearance of an area of 1 hectares or more, but less than 20 hectares of indigenous vegetation, except where such clearance of indigenous vegetation is required for— (i) the undertaking of a linear activity; or (ii) maintenance purposes undertaken in accordance with a maintenance management plan.	Remainder of Erf 5333, Alton, Richards Bay. Applicability: <i>The Proposed Development of uMhlathuze Truck Staging will result in clearance of 15ha (150 000m²) area of indigenous vegetation.</i>
Activity No(s):	Provide the relevant Scoping and EIR Activity(ies) as set out in Listing Notice 2 of the EIA Regulations, 2014 as amended.	Describe the portion of the proposed project to which the applicable listed activity relates. As well as applicability
N/A	N/A	N/A
Activity No(s):	Provide the relevant Basic Assessment Activity(ies) as set out in Listing Notice 3 of the EIA Regulations, 2014 as amended.	<i>Describe the portion of the proposed project to which the applicable listed activity relates. As well as applicability.</i>
12	The clearance of an area of 300 square metres or more of indigenous vegetation except where such clearance of indigenous vegetation is required for maintenance purposes undertaken in accordance with a maintenance management plan. d. KwaZulu-Natal v. Critical biodiversity areas as identified in systematic biodiversity plans adopted by the competent authority or in bioregional plans;	Remainder of Erf 5333, Alton, Richards Bay. Applicability: <i>The Proposed Development of uMhlathuze Truck Staging will result in clearance of 15ha (150 000m²) area of indigenous vegetation within CBA1.</i> <i>Construction of water connection pipeline will result in clearance of area of more than 300m² along the CBA1 as certain section of pipeline route traverse</i>

		CBA1.
14	<p>The development of—</p> <p>[(xii) infrastructure or structures with a physical footprint of 10 square metres or more]</p> <p>(ii) infrastructure or structures with a physical footprint of 10 square metres where such development occurs—</p> <p>(a) within a watercourse; excluding the development of infrastructure or structures within existing ports or harbours that will not increase the development footprint of the port or harbour.</p> <p>d. KwaZulu-Natal</p> <p>vii. Critical biodiversity areas or ecological support areas as identified in systematic biodiversity plans adopted by the competent authority or in bioregional plans;</p>	<p>Portion 94 of Erf 5333, Alton South, Richards Bay.</p> <p>Applicability:</p> <p><i>The development site falls within area identified by SAIIAE Wetland dataset. The wetland delineation will verify the existence of other wetland or geomorphological bodies within the project area. Therefore, the construction will result in excavation within the wetland area. The site clearance and levelling will result in clearance of area of more than 10m² within the wetland and within CBA1, as the Truck Staging site comprise 15ha (150 000m²).</i></p> <p><i>Construction of water connection pipeline will result in clearance of area of more than 10m² along as certain section of pipeline route traverse CBA1 and SAIIAE Wetlands</i></p>

The NEMA, and the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations (2014) as amended in 2017, govern the process of applying for environmental authorization for certain developments. A provision in the EIA Regulations is made for two forms of assessment: Basic Assessment and Scoping & EIA, depending on the scope of the activity. The EIA regulations specify that: Activities identified in Listing Notice 1 and 3 (GNR 327 and 324 of 2017) requires a Basic Assessment while activities identified in Listing Notice 2 (GNR 325 of 2017) are subject to a Scoping and EIA. The listed activity associated with the proposed development are: **Listing Notice 1, Activity 14, 19 & 27; Listing Notice 3, Activity 12 & 14**. Therefore, this application will follow a Basic Assessment Process, as Listing Notice 1 and 3 have been triggered.

WHAT IS PUBLIC PARTICIPATION?

Public participation is the process that promotes information sharing, consultation, and active involvement amongst stakeholders, and all interested and affected parties. During the Public Participation Process, input from the proponent, technical experts, government authorities and the general public will be gathered to result in a better understanding of the project for all involved thus ensuring an informed decision-making throughout the process.

REGISTRATION OF INTERESTED AND AFFECTED PARTIES.

Any person, company, authority or other entity that might be directly or indirectly affected by the proposed activity is invited to register as an I&AP, in order to assist the EAP in identifying possible environmental, economic and social impacts of the proposed development and to make suggestions for mitigations. These comments will be included as part of the Basic assessment report which will be submitted to the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs.

Interested and affected parties (I&APs) may forward their written comments along with their contact details within 14 days from receiving the document to; **Phumzile Lembede**.

Postal address: P. O. Box 101672, Meerensee,3901;

Tel: 035 789 0632;

Fax: 086 577 5220,

Email: Info@emveloconsultants.co.za

APPENDIX A: (LOCALITY MAPS)

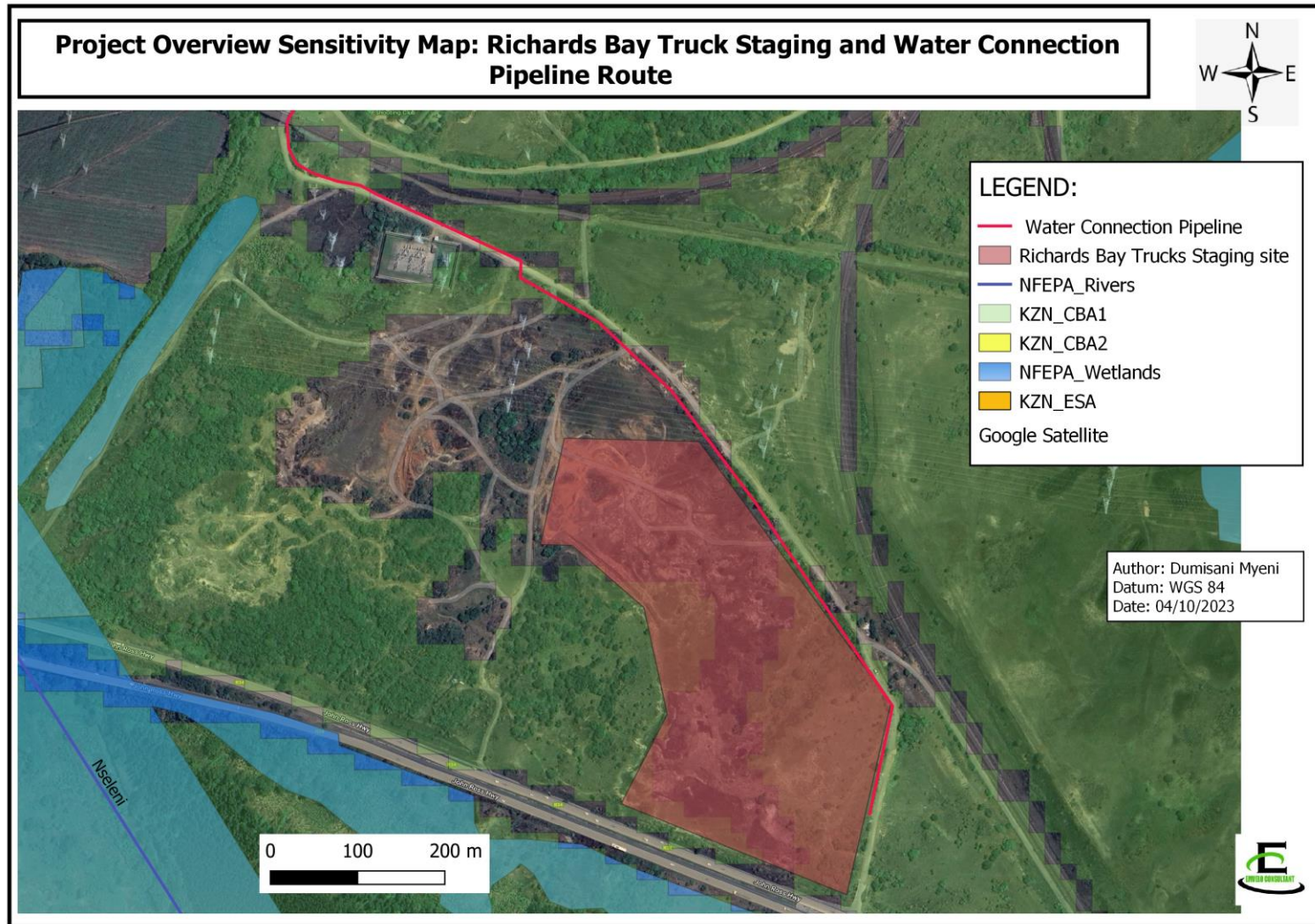


Figure 2: Project Overview Map of Truck Staging Area and Water Connection Pipeline Route

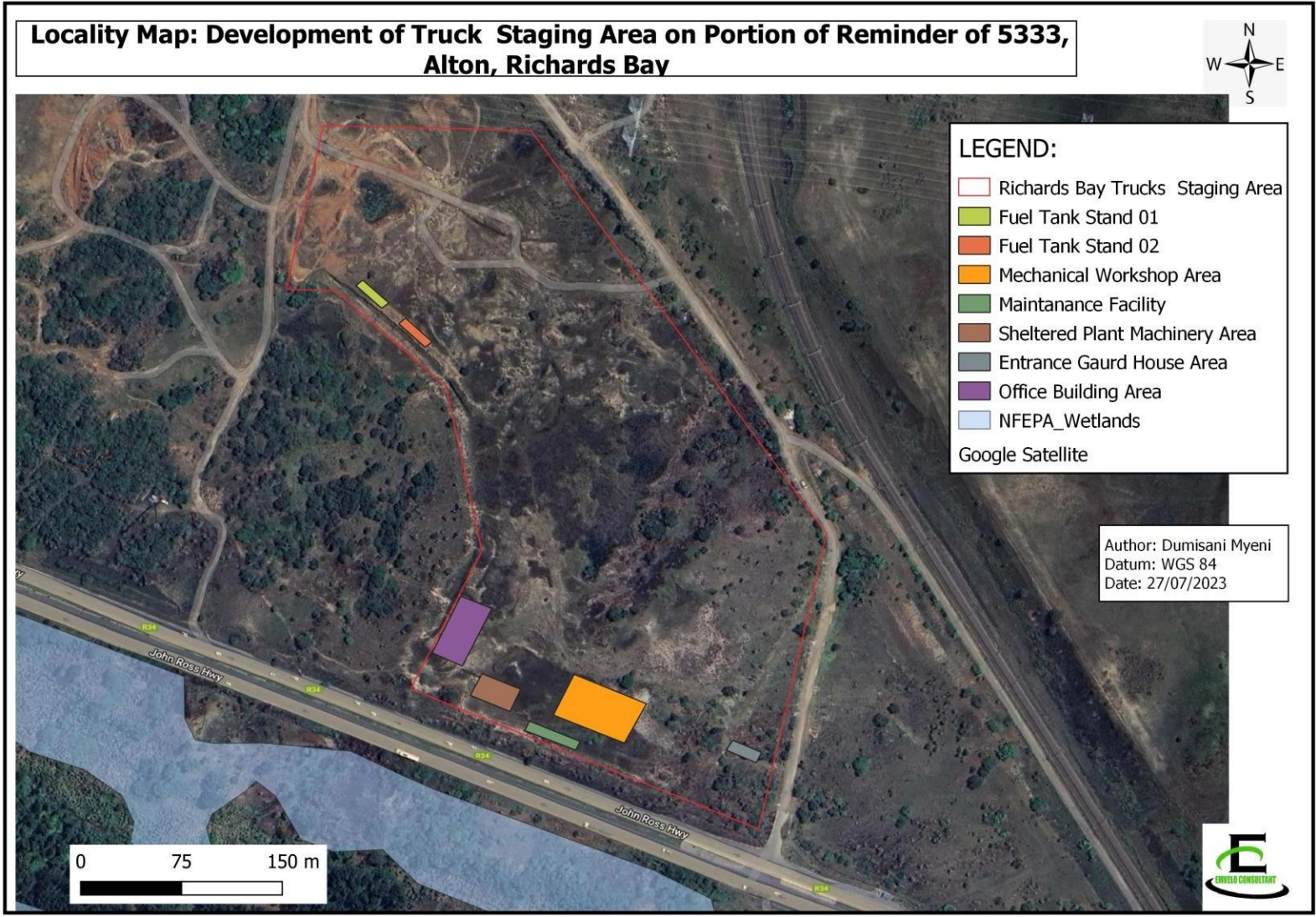


Figure 2: Locality Map of the Study Area

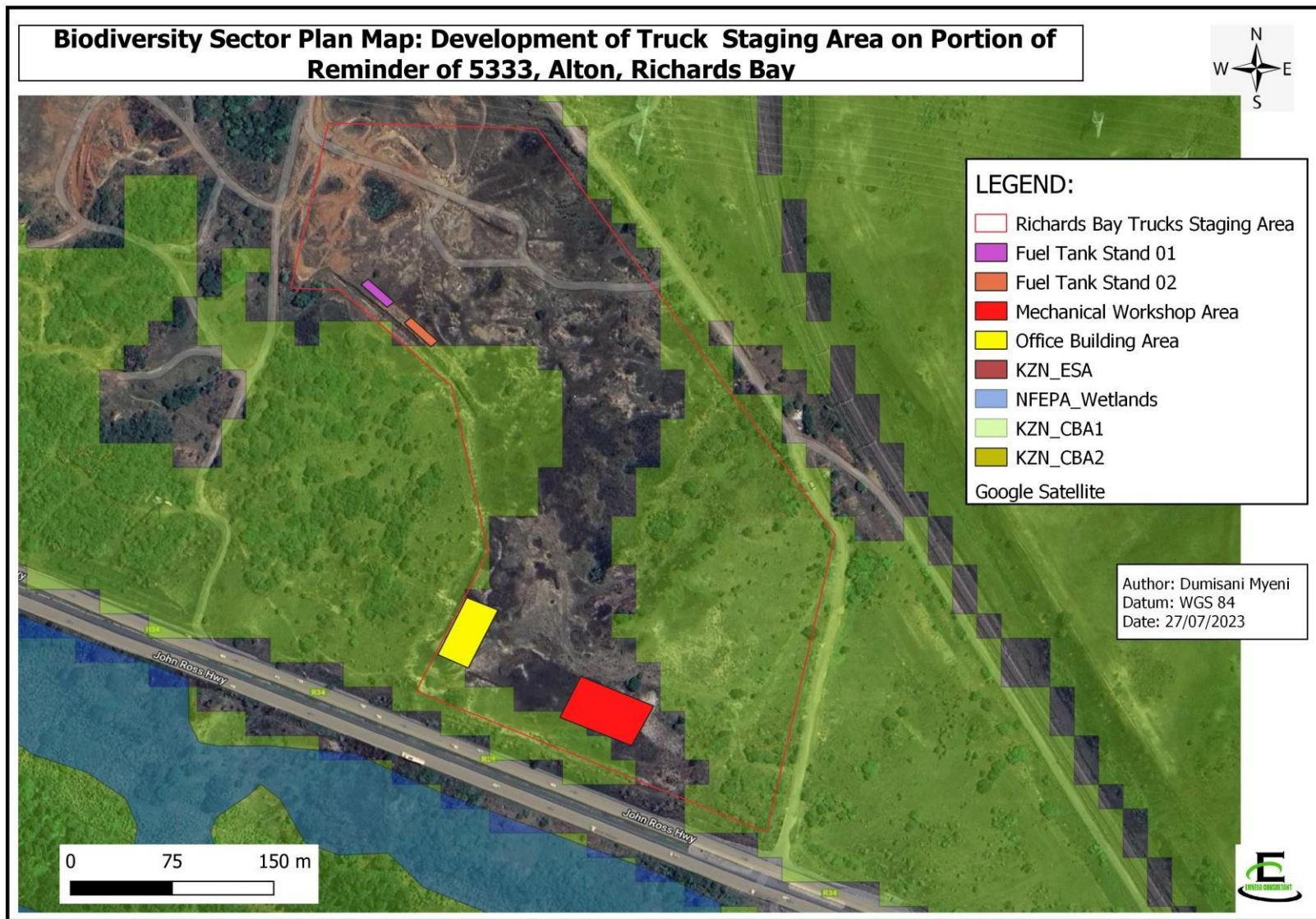


Figure 3: Biodiversity Sector Plan for the Study Area

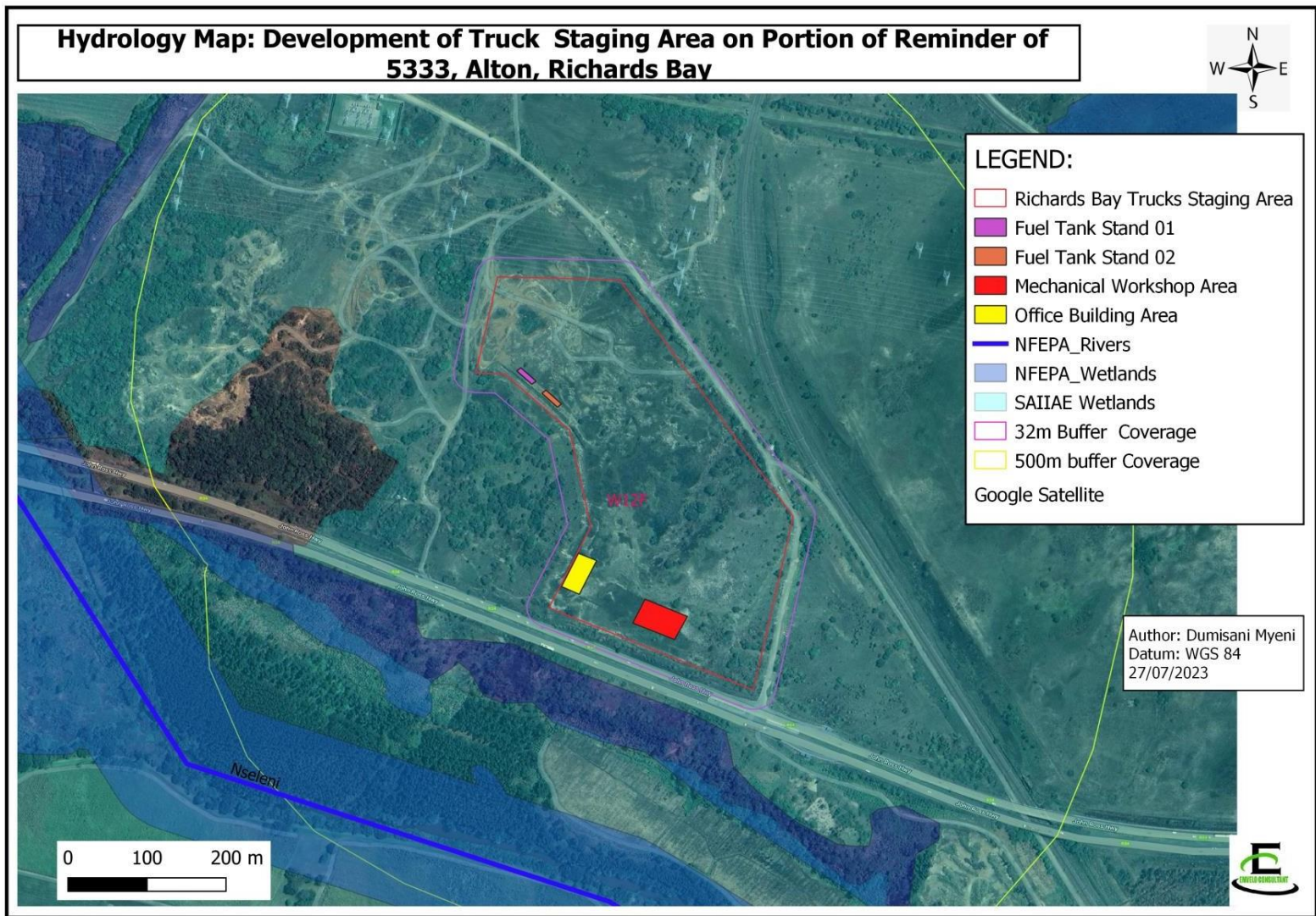


Figure 4: Hydrology Map for the Study Area



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REGISTRATION AND COMMENT FORM

**The Proposed Development of Richards Bay Truck Staging Area on a Portion of the
Remainder of Erf 5333, Alton, Richards Bay, KZN**

I wish to register as an interested and affected party and / or bring to the attention of Emvelo
Consultant the following information.

<u>Personal Information</u>	
Name and Surname	
Company /organization	
Physical Address	
Postal address	
Telephone:	Cell:
Email:	
We would like you to inform us on a preferred and effective means of receiving documents and communication from us.	
<u>Method:</u>	<u>Address:</u>
<u>Comments</u>	

Signature:

Date:.....