

PROPOSED UPGRADE: PROVINCIAL ROADS DR 08375 & DR 08376 FROM THE R61 AT ST MARKS TO SABALELE VILLAGE, EASTERN PROVINCE

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT



GARR/marw

BID No: 475139/1

June 2014

PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

A Basic Assessment (BA) has commenced to assist the Eastern Cape Department of Roads and Public Works to determine the extent and significance of the potential environmental consequences associated with the proposed upgrade of a portion of the Provincial Roads DR 08375 and DR 08376 within the Intsika Yethu Local Municipality of the Chris Hani District Municipality, Eastern Cape.

Notice of a Basic Assessment Process is given in terms of regulation 54(3) of the regulations published in Government Gazette No. R543 under Section 24(5) of the National Environmental Management Act (Act No.107 of 1998), of intent to carry out the proposed activity.

Issues of concern and potential environmental and social impacts will be evaluated during the Basic Assessment process.

The purpose of this Background Information Document (BID) is to provide a brief description of the project and process that will be followed and to obtain initial comments and contributions from Interested and Affected Parties (IAPs) on the issues relating to the proposed development.

Findings of the Basic Assessment, including concerns raised by IAPs, will be submitted to the Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs & Tourism (DEDEAT) for consideration.

IAPs are hereby invited to comment on environmental, social and economic issues relating to the proposed activity. Your comments will ensure that relevant issues are evaluated and will form part of the Assessment.

Kindly complete the registration form at the end of this document and send (either via email, post or fax) to Wanda Marais at SRK Consulting, to register your interest in the proposed activity and provide your input.

Your comment on this document must reach SRK Consulting by **12:00 on 20 June 2014**.

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DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

The project is located within the Intsika Yethu Local Municipality of the Chris Hani District Municipality. The nearest major centre is the town of Cofimvaba, located approximately 20 km to the east along the R61 and Queenstown located approximately 55 km to the west.

The project includes the upgrade of a 19 km portion of the DR 08376 from the R61 at St Marks to Sabalele Village, and a 4 km stretch of the DR 08375 from the R61 past the provincial hospital, located within the Intsika Yethu Local Municipality, Eastern Cape.

The project involves upgrading the existing gravel road to surface standard, with a single lane in each direction.

The upgraded road would, amongst other benefits, improve access to the Chris Hani memorial located in Sabele Village.

The upgraded road would have an asphalt pavement width of 6.8 m (two 3.4 m lanes) with a 0.9 m wide shoulder on each side of the road (total road width therefore 8.6 m). Along most of the alignment this is wider than the existing 5 – 6 m road width. The existing road includes a number of road bridges of varying standard, plus a number of low level and narrow causeways. At all river crossings, bridge widening or reconstruction will be required.

The design speed of the road will not be changed and consequently horizontal and vertical alignment changes will be minor, and usually associated with crossing of rivers (for new bridges).

Assessments will also be done for the utilisation and development of borrow pits (existing and new) and one hard rock quarry along the road. An application will be submitted to the Department of Mineral Resources.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

The Basic Assessment process will be conducted in accordance with Government Gazette No. R. 543, in terms of the National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998) Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) regulations.

The EIA regulations list activities that may have a significant impact on the environment, and which consequently require authorisation from the relevant environmental authorities, in this case the DEDEAT. The regulations further specify the assessment process

and the information that is required to enable DEDEAT to make a decision regarding the proposed activity.

The main activities associated with the proposed project are listed under GNR 544 and 546, and are as follows:

GN R.544 Item 11 (iii): The construction of bridges within 32m of a water course;

GN R.544 Item 18 (i): The infilling or depositing of material of more than 5 cubic metres into, or the dredging, excavation, removal of soil, sand, shell grit, pebbles or rock from a watercourse;

GN R.544 Item 39 (iii): The expansion of bridges within 32m of a water course; and

GNR.546 Item 13 (a) the clearance of an area of 1 hectare or more of vegetation, where 75% of the vegetative cover constitutes indigenous vegetation.

WHAT IS A BASIC ASSESSMENT?

A Basic Assessment (BA) is a planning and decision-making tool that is used to identify the environmental consequences of a proposed project, before the development takes place.

A Basic Assessment needs to show IAPs, the authorities (DEDEAT) and the proponent (SANRAL) what potential environmental, economic and social impacts can be expected from the proposed activity. Public issues and concerns must therefore be identified, so that these can be evaluated. If required, the authorities will request that a full Environmental Impact Assessment be done to determine the extent of those impacts. In the case where an activity will have minimal impact on the environment, the authorities can grant authorisation based on the Basic Assessment Report.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public participation is the cornerstone of any Environmental Assessment process. The principles of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) govern most aspects of the Environmental Assessment process, including public participation. These include the ongoing provision by the environmental consultant of any relevant information in an objective manner throughout the duration of the project to Interested and Affected Parties (IAPs).

During the Public Participation Process, input from the proponent, technical experts, government authorities and the general public will be gathered to foster a better understanding of the project for all involved, and facilitate better-informed decision-making throughout the process.

The key objective of public participation during the Basic Assessment process is for IAPs to raise issues of concern and suggestions that need to be considered in the Basic Assessment.

IAPs will be provided with a 14-day comment period in which to raise issues and / or concerns in response to the content of the Background Information Document (BID). A Draft Basic Assessment Report (DBAR) will thereafter

be compiled and will be made available for public comment for a period of 40 days. The Final Basic Assessment Report (FBAR) will thereafter be compiled and also be made available for public comment for a period of 14 days. The FBAR, including Comments and Responses from the public, will be submitted to DEDEAT following the third public comment period. IAPs will be notified in writing of any decisions made by DEDEAT after submission of the FBAR.

Please note that communications regarding the process and the availability of reports will only be sent to registered Interested and Affected Parties. To receive further communications regarding this development, please register by sending the signed registration sheet at the back of this document, together with your contact details and nature of interest, to SRK Consulting.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Basic Assessment Process

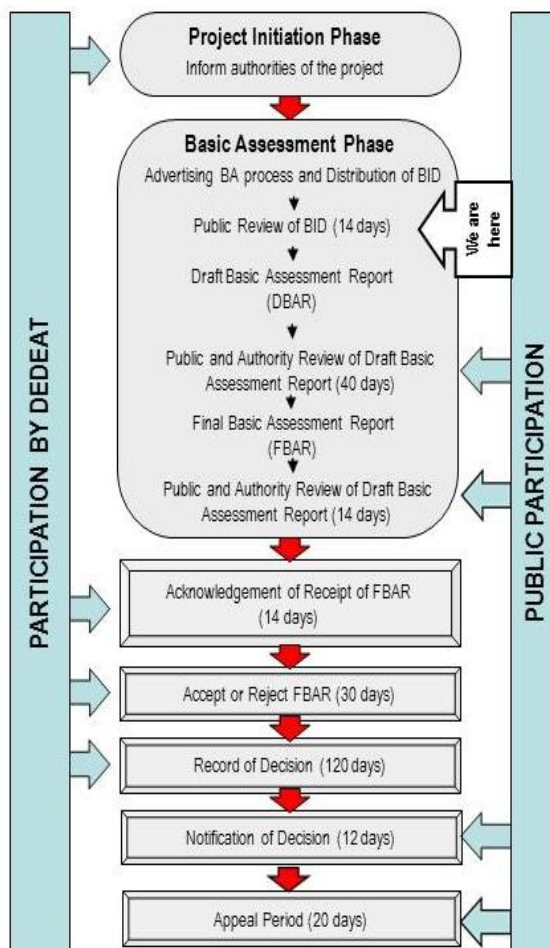
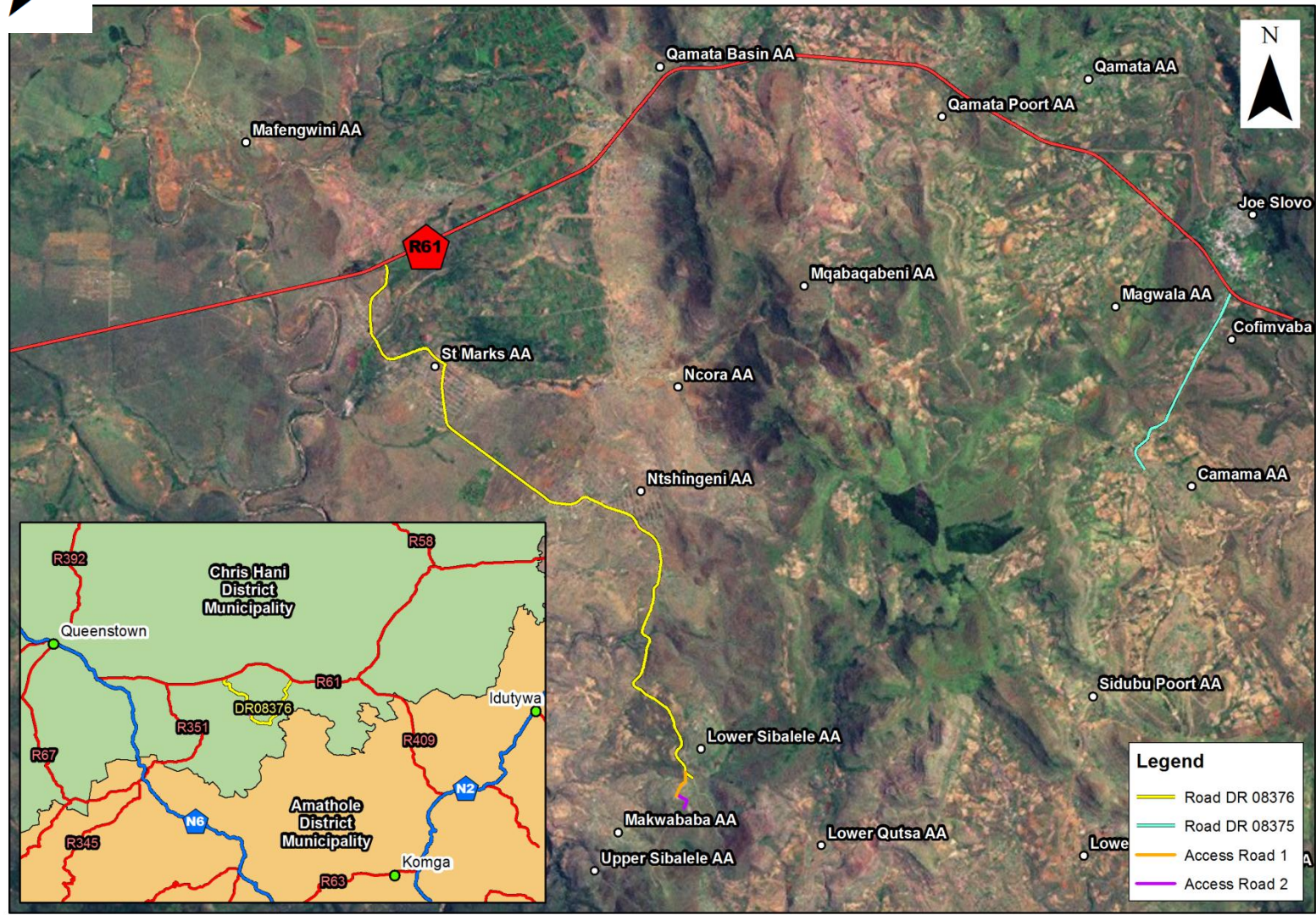


Figure 1: The BA Process and stages where public comment will be invited.



Legend	
	Road DR 08376
	Road DR 08375
	Access Road 1
	Access Road 2

Scale:		A4
1:120 000		
Projection:	TM	Datum:
		HH94
Central Meridian/Zone:		
Lo27		
Date:	Compiled by:	
03/06/2014	VERJ	
Project No.	Fig No.	
475139	001	



DR08376 St Marks to Sabalele Village
Locality

