

Background Information Document

Cato Ridge Land Development and Release
Project, eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality,
KwaZulu-Natal

NOVEMBER 2022

CATO RIDGE DEVELOPMENT COMPANY LTD

CRDC



ZUTARI
IMPACT. ENGINEERED.

PURPOSE OF DOCUMENT

This Background Information Document (BID) provides Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) with information about the proposed project and its components, the steps in the environmental regulatory process and how to become involved.

Invitation to comment and register as an Interested and Affected Party (I&AP)

You are invited to register as an I&AP for the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process for the proposed Cato Ridge Land Development and Release Project, comment or raise any issues of concern.

Should you wish to hear more about the project or wish to comment or raise issues, please complete the enclosed Registration and Comment Form and return it to:

ROSE OWEN

Public Participation Facilitator
Phelamanga Consulting

CONTACT DETAILS:

- Cell/WhatsApp: 071 457 3288
- Post: 8 Kilkenny, 18 Mill Road, Hillcrest, 3610
- E-mail: rose@phelamanga.co.za

The Draft Scoping report will be available for review from 9 November to 9 December 2022 from:

- www.zutari.com/cato-ridge
- Hardcopies can be viewed at:
 - Cato Ridge Golf Course, Chamberlain Street, Cato Ridge, and
 - KwaXimba Community Hall at the eThekweni Sizakala Centre, Mr423 Rd, Msunduzi, Ximba.

All comments must be submitted in writing and must reach Rose Owen by **9 December 2022** for a matter relating to the EIA) and **30 January 2023** for matters relating to the Water Use Licence Application

PUBLIC MEETING:

Should you wish to hear more about the project you are also invited to attend a public on Monday **21 November 2022 at 10h00 or 17h30 at the Inkosi Msinga Sports Centre, KwaXimba**



INTRODUCTION

The **Cato Ridge Development Company Ltd** ("CRDC"), a wholly owned subsidiary of Assmang (Pty) Limited ("Assmang"), proposes to develop and release land parcels across three proposed phases (**Figure 1**). The intention is to make land available for a combination of land use options in the Cato Ridge area for future developers to develop / construct. The proposed Cato Ridge land development and release project (hereinafter referred to as "The Project") is located within the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality, KwaZulu Natal (KZN). Zutari (Pty) Ltd ("Zutari") has been appointed as the Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) to undertake the regulatory Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process, and Phelamanga has been appointed to assist and facilitate the Public Participation Process (PPP).

The land is owned by Assmang and the proposed development footprint for the 3 project phases affects an area of up to 369.2 hectares (ha). The landholdings are located north of the N3 Corridor, forming part of the national Strategic Integrated Project 2 (SIP 2: Durban-Free State-Gauteng) and located within eThekweni's Primary Corridor and a proposed logistics hub as per the Cato Ridge Local Area Plan (LAP). Cato Ridge has been identified as a potential industrial and logistics node and falls under the KZN Industrial and Logistics Hub (Region 1). The suitability of the land for logistics development is based on the proximity to the railway line, the N3 national road and the fact that it is located on the Harrison Flats (one of the few plateaus in the area).

The proposed project is in its planning phases with conceptual layout plans available. CRDC intends to develop the land and to make land available for sale to prospective end users, should authorisation be obtained for the specific activities to be undertaken. The application for Environmental Authorisation (EA) for the proposed Project will include logistics, warehousing and light industrial land uses and internal road, electrical, sewer, water and stormwater infrastructure.

The construction phase of The Project will be unlocked over a period of up to 25 years in three phases (see map), based on market demand and the level of interest of investors and end users.

All individual future developments within the area will require a detailed legal review to ensure alignment with the requirements of the site-specific EIAs/ Environmental Management Programmes and additional permits and licenses may be required for the final land use this will remain the responsibility of the future end users.

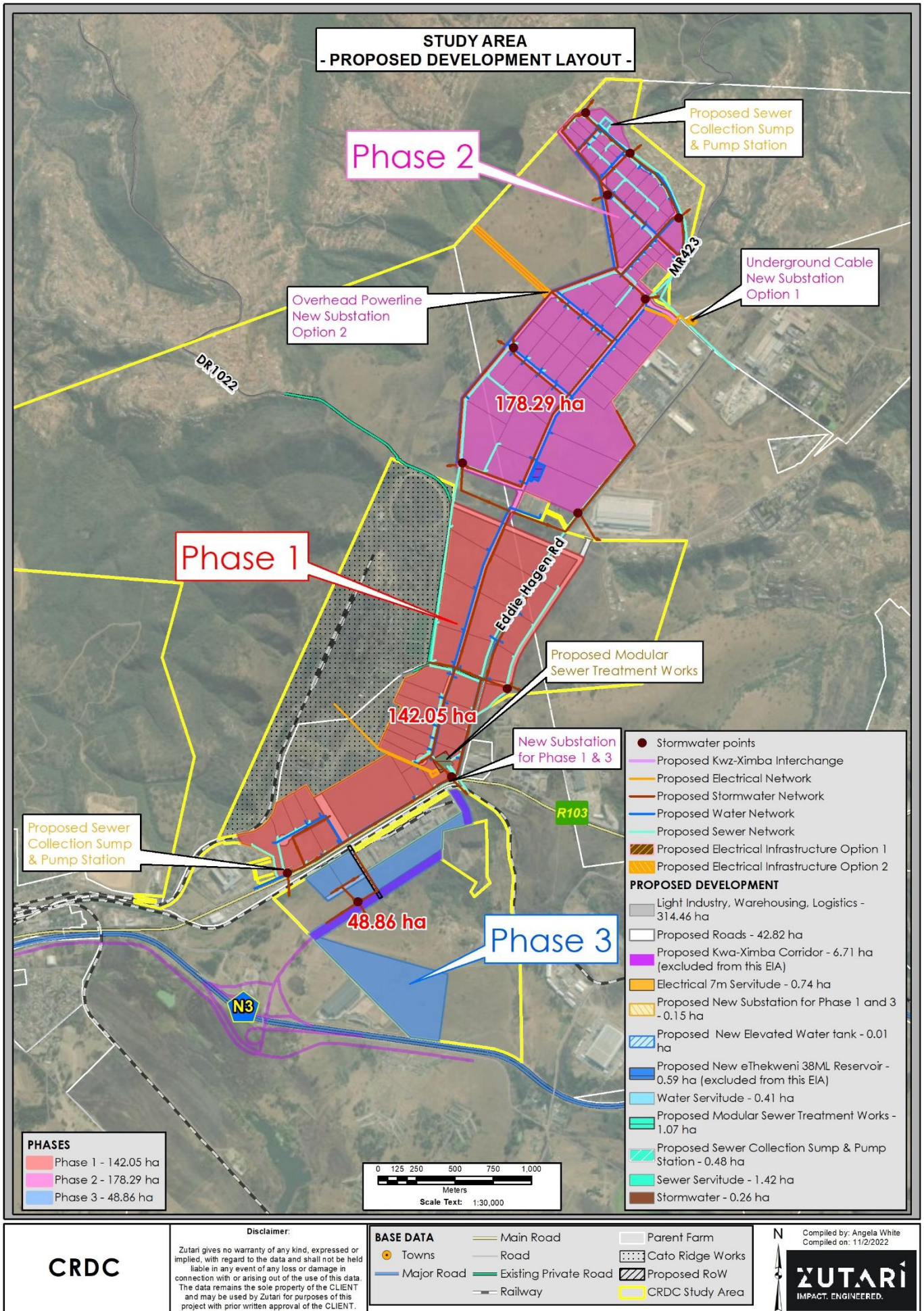


Figure 1: Locality map showing proposed project phasing in relation to Assmang landholdings

BACKGROUND

A Pre-Feasibility Study was undertaken in 2020 to determine the developability of the land, design a phased layout and determine financial viability. Through the Pre-Feasibility Study, several specialist studies were undertaken.

Based on the results of the Pre-Feasibility Study, and due to the scale of the proposed footprint, coupled with environmental sensitivities and long-term development horizon, an EIA process has been initiated.

The three project phases have been delineated based on environmental and topographical constraints and regulatory limitations such as servitudes, railway lines etc, engineering designs for internal electrical, sewer, water and stormwater infrastructure, and the timing of and linkages to future Municipal bulk services. See Figure 1.

Much of the study area is classified as KwaZulu-Natal Sandstone Sourveld Grassland (KZNSS) which is Critically Endangered at the Municipal level. Although some areas of the KZNSS are considered in poor condition according to the Vegetation Impact Assessment, however further loss of KNZSS is not supported. Given the status of the study area, in terms of the conservation status of the KZNSS and the potential loss of KZNSS as a result of the project and associated infrastructure, a process has been initiated to determine appropriate and suitable biodiversity offsets.

BIODIVERSITY OFFSET STRATEGY

Owing to the potential impacts on KZNSS in the study area, and in line with the requirements of Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife (EKZNW), the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs (EDTEA) and the eThekweni Environmental Planning and Climate Protection Department (EPCPD), a phased approach to offset planning is proposed (Figure 2), to run concurrent to the regulatory EIA process. These processes will need to be adapted based on investigations and feedback received from key authorities.

Based on the outcomes of the preliminary trade-off analysis in Phase 1 of the Offset study, a considerable offset area would need to be secured. Given that limited opportunities exist for meeting this target on-site, it was agreed that opportunities for developing a conservation bank be explored (subject to financial viability) with a Non-Profit Organisation that would then be responsible for overseeing the management of targeted offset receiving areas. A range of additional actions have also been highlighted for further consideration.

In Phase 3 of the Offset study, ongoing engagement with the relevant authorities will continue to assist with defining the final agreed development layout and in-principal biodiversity offset requirements.



Figure 2: The offset planning process.

LEGAL PROCESS

The following EA and licence applications must be approved per the relevant national legislation:

- An application for EA in terms of the National Environmental Management Act No. 107 of 1998 (NEMA) via a Scoping and EIA process, per the 2014 EIA Regulations, as amended.
 - Listing Notice 1, Activity 2, 8, 9, 11, 12, 19, 26, 28, 45, 46, and 56 (Activities which require authorisation via Basic Assessment)
 - Listing Notice 2, Activity 15 and 27 (Activities which require authorisation via Scoping and EIA)
 - Listing Notice 3, Activity 4, 12 and 14 (Activities that are geographically bound and which require authorisation via Basic Assessment)
- A Phase 1 Heritage Assessment according to Section 38 of the National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA, Act 25 of 1999).
- A Water Use License Application (WULA) process is underway in terms of the National Water Act, 1998 (Act No. 36 of 1998) for the following water uses:
 - Section 21 (c): Impeding and diverting the flow of a watercourse;
 - Section 21 (i): Altering the beds, banks, course and characteristics of a watercourse;
 - Section 21 (e): Engaging in a controlled activity identified in s31(1) or declared under s38(1);
 - Section 21 (f): Discharging waste or water containing waste into a water resource through a pipe, canal, sewer, sea outfall or other conduit; and
 - Section 21 (g): Disposing of waste in a manner that may detrimentally impact on a water resource.

Through the EIA process and PPP, potential environmental issues will be identified and assessed. The results of this assessment will be presented in the Draft Scoping Report and Draft EIA Report. All registered I&APs will be afforded an opportunity to comment on these reports before the report is submitted to EDTEA for review and decision-making.

A single integrated PPP will be undertaken and facilitated by Phelamanga in compliance with the legislative requirements. The EIA process and associated PPP are aimed at:

- Developing an understanding of the project area;
- Developing an understanding of the proposed and anticipated development and how its related activities may potentially impact on the surrounding environment;
- Identifying relevant stakeholders, regulatory authorities and I&APs to engage in the process;
- Facilitating the dissemination of information to the relevant authorities and I&APs and providing them with an opportunity to raise issues or concerns related to the project;
- Identifying potential issues and environmental impacts, through specialist studies;
- Assessing the significance of the potential environmental impacts identified;

- Describing and investigating alternatives that have been and or could be considered; and
- Providing feasible mitigation measures to address any significant impacts identified from the activities to be authorised.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS (PPP)

A single integrated PPP will be undertaken for both the EIA and WULA processes and facilitated by Phelamanga in compliance with all legislative requirements. The EIA and associated PPP is aimed at:

- Developing an understanding of the project area;
- Developing an understanding of the proposed and anticipated development and how its related activities may potentially impact the surrounding environment;
- Identifying relevant stakeholders, regulatory authorities and I&APs to engage in the process;
- Facilitating the dissemination of information to the relevant authorities and I&APs and providing them with an opportunity to raise issues or concerns related to the project;
- Identifying potential issues and environmental impacts, through specialist studies;
- Assessing the significance of the potential environmental impacts identified;
- Describing and investigating alternatives that have been and or could be considered; and
- Providing feasible mitigation measures to address any significant impacts identified from the activities to be authorised.

HOW CAN YOU PARTICIPATE

Public involvement is an integral part of the EIA and WULA processes and aims to include I&APs in the process by informing them of the proposed project and providing an opportunity to submit comments. Anyone can participate in the process by:

- Registering as an I&AP by completing and returning the attached Registration and Comments form;
- Reviewing draft reports, including the Draft Scoping Report and Draft EIA Report.
- The Draft Scoping report will be available for review from 9 November to 9 December 2022 at:
 - www.zutari.com/cato-ridge
 - Hardcopies viewed at:
 - Cato Ridge Golf Course, Chamberlain Street, Cato Ridge
 - KwaXimba Community Hall at the eThekweni Sizakala Centre, Mr423 Rd, Msunduzi, Ximba.
- Comments must be submitted in writing and must reach us by **9 December 2022** (Comments relating to the Scoping and EIA) and **30 January 2023** for comments relating to the Water Use Licence Application;
- To hear more you may also attend a public meeting on Monday 21 November 2022 at 10h00 or 17h30 at the Inkosi Msinga Sports Centre, KwaXimba

Registration and Comment Form:

Environmental Impact Assessment and Water Use Licence Process for the Proposed Cato Ridge Land Development and Release Project, eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality, KwaZulu-Natal



TITLE		FIRST NAME	
INITIALS		SURNAME	
ORGANISATION			
YOUR INTEREST IN THE PROJECT			
POSTAL & PHYSICAL ADDRESS			
		POSTAL CODE	
LANDLINE TEL NO		CELL NO	
EMAIL ADDRESS			

COMMENTS (please use separate sheets if you wish)

This form can be accessed here www.zutari.com/cato-ridge. All comments must be submitted in writing and must reach Rose Owen (contact details below) by **9 December 2022** for a matter relating to the EIA) and **30 January 2023** for matters relating to the Water Use Licence Application.

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION