

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

GLEDHOW LIGHT INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT LOCATED ON AGRICULTURAL LAND AND WITHIN 32M OF A WATERCOURSE

KWADUKUZA MUNICIPALITY

PROJECT BACKGROUND & DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY

uShukela Milling (Pty) Ltd are the landowners of various portions of Farm Gledhow Mount No. 1983 located within the KwaDukuza Local Municipality, iLembe District (parent farm outlined in red in Figure 1). Farm Gledhow Mount No. 1983 has recently been subdivided to unlock development opportunities. SMA Consultants, on behalf of the landowner, propose to construct a “light industrial” development on Portion 16 of Farm Gledhow Mount No. 1983 (outlined in yellow in Figure 1). The property is currently zoned Agriculture 1 with portions of the property still being used for sugarcane farming.

The light industrial development will consist of platforms, parking bays and an internal road network (public and service roads). The development will connect to the existing municipal services network in the area. The total footprint of the industrial development is approximately 7.7 hectares (pending final layout). The proposed layout is provided in Figure 2. Approximately 9 000m² of industrial infrastructure falls within 32m the wetland associated with a watercourse flowing along the eastern and southern boundaries of the site. Figure 3 shows the wetland and 32m regulated area.

The construction of a light industrial development on agriculture land triggers Activity 28 of Listing Notice 1 and the development of infrastructure within 32m of the watercourse triggers Activity 12 of Listing Notice 1. Environmental Authorisation through a Basic Assessment process is required.

This Background Information Document (BID) has been prepared to provide information on the process which will be followed to assess the environmental impact of the change in land use and confirm the specialist studies required.

Figure 1: Farm Gledhow Mount No. 1983 outlined in red with Portion 16 outlined in yellow.



Figure 2: Conceptual Layout of the Industrial Sites Proposed within the Gledhow Industrial Development.



SITE ENVIRONMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS

- Vegetation

The property falls within the KwaZulu-Natal Coastal Belt (CB 3) ecosystem type which is classified as *vulnerable* by the South African National Biodiversity Institute. The site is presently used for sugarcane farming and therefore there is little to no indigenous vegetation remaining, apart from a small portion of vegetation along the watercourse. It is likely that much of this vegetation is comprised of exotic vegetation; however this will be confirmed by a terrestrial specialist.

- Watercourses

The study area is located within the U40J quaternary catchment. A tributary of the uMvoti River flows along the eastern and southern boundaries of the site. SDP Ecological and Environmental Services have provided a preliminary wetland delineation for the site which is in the process of being confirmed (Figure 3). Buffers between wetland and developable area are also in the process of being determined.

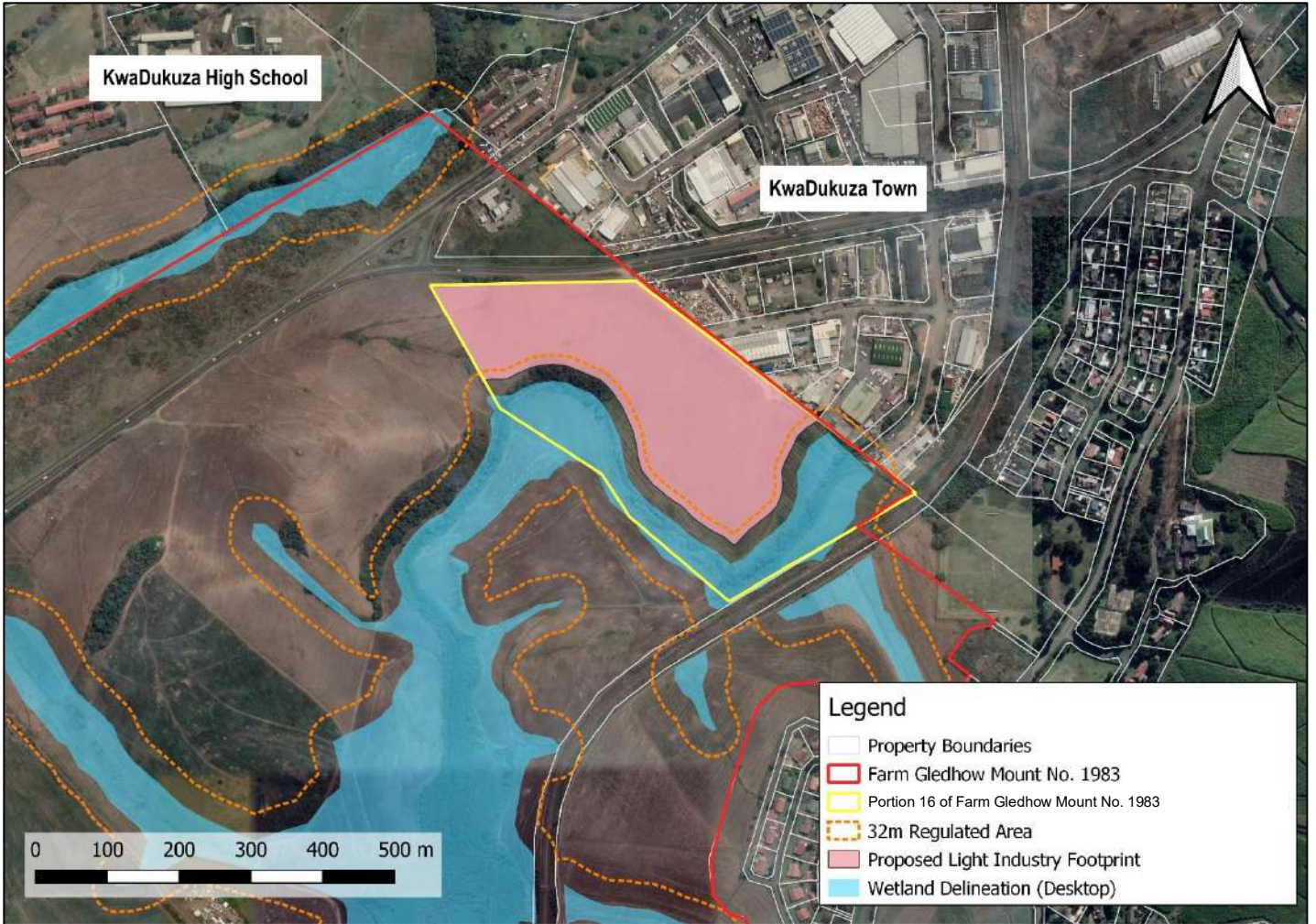
- Heritage

The site is undeveloped and therefore there are no known heritage or cultural features associated with the area. Any development or activity which will change the characteristics of a site exceeding 5 000m² in extent requires a Heritage Impact Assessment and therefore the specialist will confirm the status of the site and surrounds. The study area falls within a “*moderate*” palaeontological sensitive area. A Desktop Palaeontological Impact Assessment will be required to confirm the likelihood of uncovering fossils during construction and the submission of a Protocol for Fossil Finds.

- Agriculture

The greater Gledhow Mount No. 1983 farm is zoned Agriculture 1 and has been used as a sugarcane farm for a number of years. The Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries excluded the property from the provisions of the Subdivision of Agricultural Land Act, Act No. 70 of 1970 on the 02nd March 2018. The property will be rezoned for industrial purposes through a separate town planning application following the environmental process.

Figure 3: Map Showing the Desktop Wetland Delineation and 32m Regulated Area Associated with the Study Area.



IMPACT ASSESSMENT

SDP Ecological and Environmental Services have been commissioned to confirm the extent of wetland associated with the watercourse and recommend a buffer. The layout shown in Figure 2 may require adjusting based on input from the wetland specialist.

The key aspects which will form the focus of the assessment are:

- To assess the change in land use from agricultural to light industrial. This includes the loss of open space, faunal movement corridors, stormwater management with the increase in hard surfaces etc.
- To review the availability of services in the area (water, sewage, and road network) to ensure the development is feasible and sustainable; and
- To provide measures in the EMP to be adhered to during construction so that the development does not result in any disturbance to the adjacent watercourses (physical and functionality).

The following specialist studies have been identified in the DFFE Screening Report:

Study	Specialist	Objective
Agricultural Impact Assessment	N/A	The property has been excluded from the provisions of the Subdivision of Agricultural Land Act, Act No. 70 of 1970 (Act 70/70 consent). Consent was granted by the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries on the 02 nd March 2018. An Agricultural Impact Assessment will therefore not be conducted.
Landscape / Visual Impact Assessment	N/A	The location of the site earmarked for light industrial is well positioned and is located directly adjacent to existing industrial development. The proposed land use is similar to adjacent developments. There are no residential areas directly adjacent to the site. A Visual Impact Assessment is therefore not considered necessary.
Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment	Jean Beater	The heritage specialist has confirmed that a Desktop Heritage Impact Assessment will suffice considering the historic use of the site for sugarcane farming.
Palaeontology Impact Assessment	Marion Bamford	The property falls within a “moderately” sensitive palaeontological area. A desktop assessment is therefore required by AMAFA and will be carried out.
Terrestrial Biodiversity Impact Assessment	SDP	The study area is presently used for sugarcane farming. The vegetation is completely transformed. Indigenous vegetation is only present along the watercourse. SDP to review the vegetation on site and confirm this (statement on terrestrial biodiversity will be provided).
Aquatic Biodiversity Impact Assessment	SDP	A desktop wetland delineation has been provided by SDP and is in the process of being confirmed. The impact of the proposed development will be assessed by SDP and recommendations provided. The impact assessment must also include the development of services associated with the development.
Hydrology Assessment	N/A	Provided that stormwater is attenuated on site, the development will therefore not change the hydrological nature of the nearby watercourses. A Hydrological Assessment was not deemed necessary for this project.
Socio-Economic Assessment	N/A	The proposed project will have a positive socio-economic impact. A Socio-Economic Assessment will not be provided unless specifically requested by EDTEA or I & APs.
Plant Species Assessment	SDP	As above, SDP to review the site and confirm if indigenous species will be cleared.
Animal Species Assessment	SDP	SDP to include comment on faunal species that may utilise the site and assess the impact of the change in land use on these species.
Other specialist studies forming part of the Basic Assessment include:		
Engineering Services Report	SMA	SMA Consultants will prepare the Engineering Services Report (ESR) to identify the location of existing services and ensure there is sufficient bulk water and sewer services to supply the development. The water and sewer pipeline routes will be provided in the ESR.
Geotechnical Assessment	Drennan Maud	To identify any slope failures / unstable geological conditions and make recommendations during the earthworks phase and design of the foundations. A Desktop Geotechnical Assessment Report will be provided based on available desktop information, mapping and the geologists experience of the area.