

Proposed Expansion of the Existing Intaba Ridge Private Game Estate on Erf 115 Almond Bank, Bisley Valley, Msunduzi Local Municipality, KwaZulu-Natal

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

May 2017



WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT?

The purpose of this document is to:

- ◆ Inform Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) about the proposed project, and to invite them to participate;
- ◆ Provide a brief background on the proposed project; and
- ◆ Explain the aims and objectives of the Environmental Impact Assessment process.



WHAT IS THE BACKGROUND TO THIS DEVELOPMENT?

The Applicant, Sign Power Investments 8 Pty (Ltd) has proposed the expansion of the existing Intaba Ridge Private Game Estate located on Erf 115 Almond Bank in the Bisley Valley area of Pietermaritzburg, Msunduzi Local and Umgungundlovu District Municipalities of KwaZulu-Natal.

In terms of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations 2014, under the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA; Act No 107 of 1998), published in Government Notice No. R. 982 of 2014, the proposed development may trigger the following Listed Activities which require a Basic Assessment process to be conducted:

GNR 983	Part 19	<i>The infilling or depositing of any material of more than 5 cubic metres into, or the dredging, excavation, removal or moving of soil, sand, shells, shell grit, pebbles or rock of more than 5 cubic metres from-</i> <i>(i) a watercourse;</i> <i>(ii) the seashore; or</i> <i>(iii) the littoral active zone, an estuary or a distance of 100 metres inland of the high-water mark of the sea or an estuary, whichever distance is the greater but excluding where such infilling, depositing, dredging, excavation, removal or moving-</i> <i>(a) will occur behind a development setback;</i> <i>(b) is for maintenance purposes undertaken in accordance with a maintenance management plan; or</i> <i>(c) falls within the ambit of activity 21 in this Notice, in which case that activity applies.</i>
GNR 983	Part 25	<i>The development and related operation of facilities or infrastructure for the treatment of effluent, wastewater or sewage with a daily throughput capacity of more than 2000 cubic metres but less than 15000 cubic metres.</i>

GNR 983	Part 27	<i>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> <i>(i) the undertaking of a linear activity; or</i> <i>(ii) maintenance purposes undertaken in accordance with a maintenance management plan.</i>
GNR 983	Part 28	<i>Residential, mixed, retail, commercial, industrial or institutional developments where such land was used for agriculture or afforestation on or after 01 April 1998 and where such development:</i> <i>(i) will occur inside an urban area, where the total land to be developed is bigger than 5 hectares; or</i> <i>(ii) will occur outside an urban area, where the total land to be developed is bigger than 1 hectare;</i> <i>excluding where such land has already been developed for residential, mixed, retail, commercial, industrial or institutional purposes.</i>
GNR 985	Part 4	<i>The development of a road wider than 4 metres with a reserve less than 13,5 metres.</i> <i>(d) In KwaZulu-Natal:</i> <i>viii. Critical biodiversity areas as identified in systematic biodiversity plans adopted by the competent authority or in bioregional plans;</i> <i>xi. Sensitive areas as identified in an environmental management framework as contemplated in chapter 5 of the Act and as adopted by the competent authority.</i>
GNR 985	Part 12	<i>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.</i> <i>(b) In KwaZulu-Natal:</i> <i>v. Critical biodiversity areas as identified in systematic biodiversity plans adopted by the competent authority or in bioregional plans;</i> <i>xii. Sensitive areas as identified in an environmental management framework as contemplated in chapter 5 of the Act and as adopted by the competent authority.</i>
GNR 985	Part 14	<i>The development of-</i> <i>(x) buildings exceeding 10 square metres in size;</i> <i>(xii) infrastructure or structures with a physical footprint of 10 square metres or more;</i> <i>where such development occurs-</i> <i>(a) within a watercourse;</i> <i>(b) in front of a development setback; or</i> <i>(c) if no development setback has been adopted, within 32 metres of a watercourse, measured from the edge of a watercourse;</i> <i>(d) In KwaZulu-Natal:</i> <i>vii. Critical biodiversity areas or ecological support areas as identified in systematic biodiversity plans adopted by the competent authority or in bioregional plans;</i> <i>viii. Sensitive areas as identified in an environmental management framework as contemplated in Chapter 5 of the Act and as adopted by the competent authority.</i>

Under Government Notice No R. 982 of 2014, the Applicant is required to appoint an independent Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) to conduct the environmental authorisation process. The Applicant has appointed Green Door Environmental to conduct the Basic Assessment process for the proposed expansion of the Intaba Ridge Estate.

In addition to the above, the proposed development constitutes a Water Use in terms of Section 21 of the National Water Act (36 of 1998) and requires a Water Use License Application, in terms of the following listed activities:

Section 21	S21(c)	<i>Impeding or diverting the flow of water in a watercourse.</i>
Section 21	S21(e)	<i>Engaging in a controlled activity.</i>
Section 21	S21(f)	<i>Discharging waste or water containing waste into a water resource through a pipe, canal, sewer, sea outfall or other conduit.</i>
Section 21	S21(g)	<i>Disposing of waste in a manner that may detrimentally impact of a water resource.</i>
Section 21	S21(i)	<i>Altering the bed, banks, course or characteristics of a watercourse.</i>

Section 21(c) and (i) activities are triggered wherever infrastructure is proposed close to a water source, within a wetland or within 500 metres of a wetland. Section 21(e), (f) and (g) activities may be applicable for the operation of a package plant.

It should be noted that the proposed development may trigger additional Listed Activities. These will be identified through the Basic Assessment process.



WHAT IS PROPOSED?

The Applicant, Sign Power Investments 8 (Pty) Ltd wishes to expand the existing Intaba Ridge Private Game Estate which is located in the Bisley Valley area of Pietermaritzburg.

The property is 284ha in extent and is located to the south of Pietermaritzburg, approximately 1.5km from the Bisley Nature Reserve. The site currently comprises a mix of residential, agriculture and conservation areas. Infrastructure relating to past farming activities as well as the existing 100 unit residential estate, associated roads and service infrastructure and estate office is present on the site. The property also includes a 70ha grassland conservation area.

The Applicant now wishes to expand the existing 100 unit residential estate to include the following additional infrastructure:

- 60 Freehold sites;
- 100 unit low impact Sectional Title Village;
- A package Plant; and
- Spa with 20 Rooms.

The proposed infrastructure will be incorporated into the existing freehold stands where possible. The package plant will be situated in the lower lying less visible area of the property. The proposed expansion is therefore not considered to deviate from the development concept as historically approved. The key difference is an increase in net density of residential units on the property.

Refer to Figure 1 below for a locality map of the Intaba Ridge Private Game Estate on Erf 115 Almond Bank.



WHERE IS THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT?

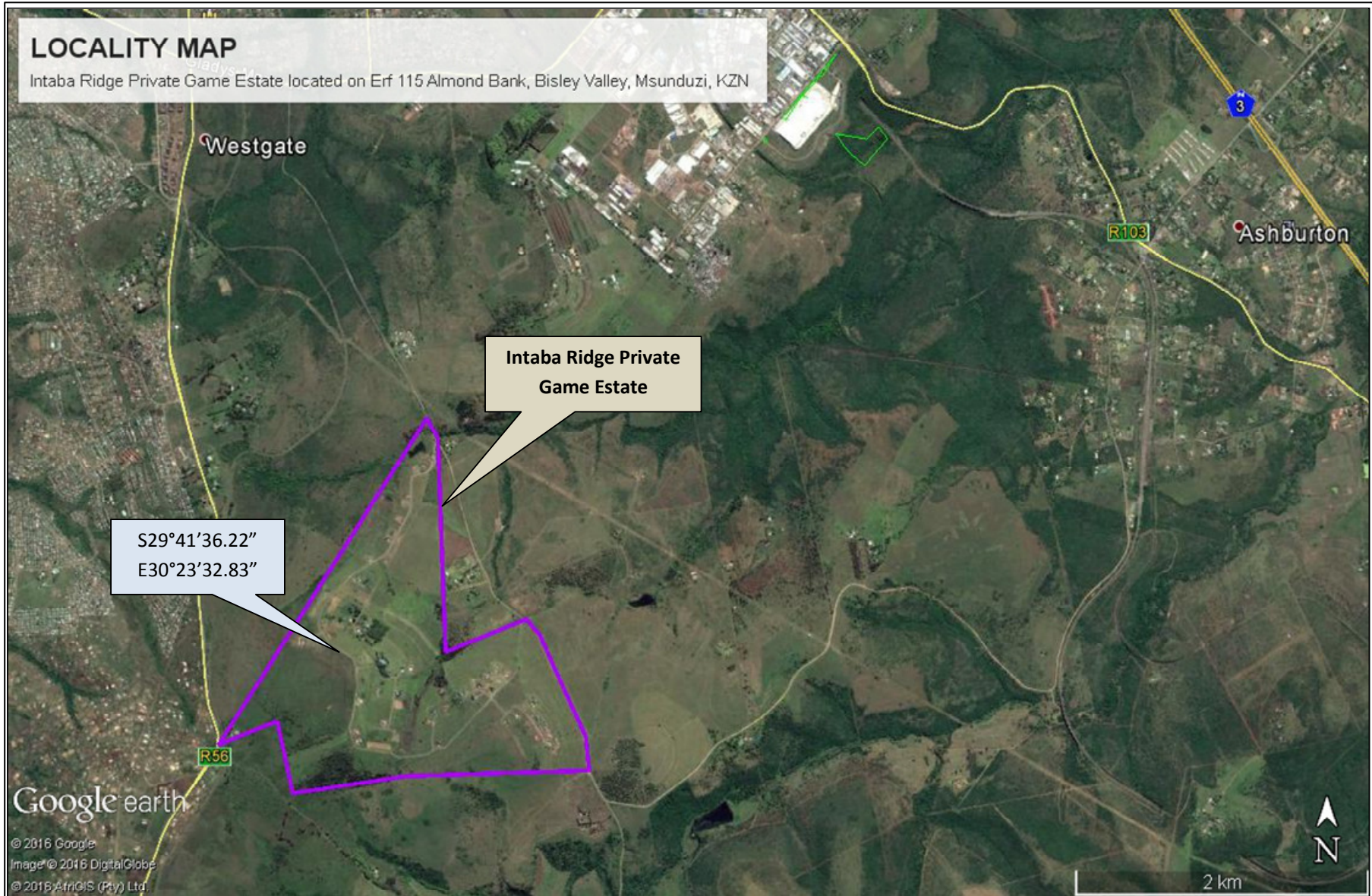


Figure 1: Aerial view of the Intaba Ridge Private Game Estate development property and the surrounding areas (Google Earth).



WHAT IS THE AIM OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL BASIC ASSESSMENT (BA)?

The Basic Assessment process aims to:

- ◆ Inform and involve all potentially Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) of the proposed development;
- ◆ Identify the potential impacts (positive and negative) that the proposed development may have on the ecological and socio-economic environment;
- ◆ Provide recommendations based on the identified impacts and conduct further specialist studies if necessary; and
- ◆ Provide the Competent Authority with enough information to make an informed decision regarding the proposed upgrade.



WHAT IS INVOLVED IN THE EIA PROCESS FOR BASIC ASSESSMENT?

The Basic Assessment process can be described as follows:

1. Application Form:

An official Application Form is required to be completed and submitted to the Competent Authority. This Form provides information on the property, a description of the proposed activity, and lists the relevant Listed Activities which are triggered.

2. Public Participation:

The general public and relevant Authorities will be notified of the proposed upgrade through newspaper adverts, site notices and direct consultation. Alternative methods will be employed to inform those I&APs who may be illiterate, disabled or otherwise disadvantaged. Should you be aware of anyone who might be interested in this project, but has not been notified, please send the relevant contact details to Green Door Environmental. This Background information Document will be circulated to neighbouring landowners, relevant authorities and any other persons registered as I&APs following the adverts and site notices.

3. Identification of Impacts and Alternatives

Environmental issues, concerns, development constraints and possible development alternatives will be identified using professional judgement, project information, experience of similar projects, a review of available literature, site visits, and consultation with authorities and the public.

4. Impact Evaluation

The significance of environmental issues will be evaluated in terms of their expected extent, intensity, duration and probability of occurrence.

5. Mitigation and Management Measures

Measures to manage and minimise impacts to within acceptable levels, as well as measures to maximise the socio-economic benefits associated with the upgrade, will be identified and recorded in the Basic Assessment Report. An Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) will be compiled to facilitate the implementation of mitigation measures.

6. Reporting

The Basic Assessment Report and Draft EMPr will be made available for review and comment by all I&APs and relevant authorities for 30 days. A Final Basic Assessment Report and EMPr will be compiled and will include comments received on the circulated Basic Assessment Report.

7. Authority Decision

The Final Basic Assessment Report will be used by the Competent Authority as the basis for the decision on whether the proposed upgrade should be approved or not.

2. The following potentially interested and affected parties should also be contacted:

Name:	Organisation:
Tel Number:	
Address:	Email:
Name:	Organisation:
Tel Number:	
Address:	Email:

3. Additional comments?

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Should you be aware of anyone who might be interested in this project, but may be illiterate, disabled or otherwise disadvantaged, please send the relevant contact details to Green Door Environmental.

Thank you