

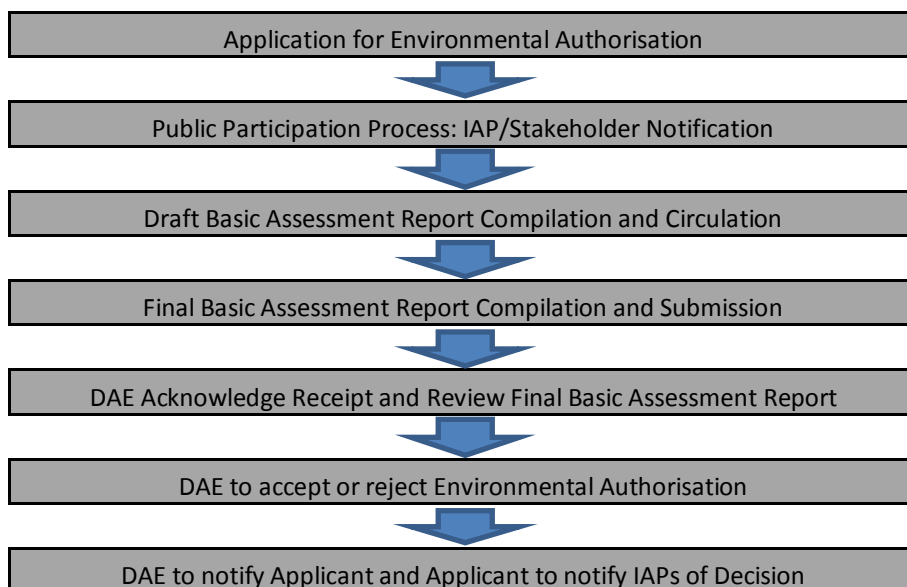
Background Information Document
as part of the Basic Assessment process for the
Proposed Construction of Mkuze Interchange on National Route 2, Section
31 (KM29.30), Mkuze, Jozini Local Municipality.
DEA Reference:14/12/16/3/3/1/1239

Applicant:	Environmental Consultants:	Consulting Engineers:
		
<p>South African National Roads Agency SOC Limited (SANRAL)</p>	<p>Enviroedge cc PO BOX 1009, Kloof, 3640 Tel:(031) 764 2569 Fax: (086) 654 6598 info@enviroedge.co.za www.enviroedge.co.za</p>	<p>Aecom (Pty) Ltd</p>

Introduction

Notice is given in terms of Regulation 54 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2010 (GN No. R543) under Chapter 5 of the National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998) as amended, that the South African National Roads Agency SOC Limited (SANRAL) has submitted an application for environmental authorisation to the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) for the Proposed Construction of Mkuze Interchange on National Route 2 Section 31 (Km 29.30).

The proposed interchange requires a Basic Assessment in terms of Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations of 2010 (Regulations in terms of Chapter 5 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998, as amended). Enviroedge cc has been appointed by Aecom (Pty) Ltd, on behalf of SANRAL as the Environmental Consultants in this regard and an application has been lodged with the Department of Environmental Affairs. The Basic Assessment process is summarised below.



What is the Background Information Document about?

As part of the Basic Assessment and associated public participation process, the Background Information Document (BID) serves to inform all authorities, landowners, stakeholders, and Interested and/or Affected Parties (IAPs) of the applicant's proposed development. The BID provides interested and affected parties an opportunity to submit any issues or concerns relating to the biophysical, social or socio-economic environment.

Public Participation Process

The public participation process forms part of the Basic Assessment process, and helps to ensure that IAPs have an opportunity to participate throughout the process. Members of the public have the right to be informed of decisions that may affect them and they must be provided with the opportunity to submit comments or concerns and raise any issues that they may have. Should you wish to register as an IAP and submit comment regarding the proposed Construction of the Mkuze Interchange, please utilise the attached registration form and send us your written comments. Registered IAPs and comments received will be included in the Basic Assessment Report submitted to DEA. Registered I&APs will be kept informed of the project developments in the process. IAPs may also contact the consultant on the contact details provided.

The Project

The South African National Roads Agency SOC Limited (SANRAL) has proposed the construction of the Mkuze Interchange on National Route 2 section 31 (km 29.30). The project area is located at the National Route 2 (N2-31) and P234 junction at 27°37'28.78"S 32° 1'35.47"E. This is the main entrance into Mkuze town and is situated within Ward 20 of the Jozini Local Municipality. The project aims to provide an improved and safer access for vehicles entering and exiting Mkuze while accommodating both current and predicted traffic volumes and pedestrian activity.

The proposed Mkuze Interchange consists of the following components:

- The strengthening of the existing road pavements
- The addition of an access interchange with a grade separated bridge including new cross roads
- Various alternative layouts for the interchange will be investigated throughout the process
- The investigation of taking the N2 over the cross road P234
- The addition of taxi lay byes and market stalls
- The addition of two on ramps and two off ramps (north and south)
- The adding and lengthening of drainage structures
- Possible 6.5m wide temporary deviation to accommodate two-way traffic during construction
- New road signs for the Mkuze Interchange
- Borrow pit and quarry investigations for gravel and rock materials
- Potential improvements to street lighting

Materials for the construction of the interchange will be sourced from borrow pits and a hard rock quarry. In terms of the Minerals and Petroleum Resources Development Act (MPRDA) of 2002 a mining permit must be applied for. Owing to SANRAL being the applicant, the exemption provisions of Section 106(1) of the MPRDA will apply. In accordance with Regulation 51 of the MRPDA, the use of these materials sources is also subject to the preparation of an Environmental Management Programme for the borrow pits and hard rock quarry that are proposed for use. The investigations for these borrow pits and hard

rock quarry are in progress and the application will be submitted to the Department of Mineral Resources.

Climate

The study area experiences mostly summer rainfall with some rain during the winter months. The mean annual precipitation ranges from 500mm to 900mm and the region is considered frost-free. Mean monthly maximum and minimum temperatures for the nearby Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park are 38.5°C and 7.8°C (Mucina and Rutherford, 2006).

Topography and Watercourses

The topography of the study area is relatively flat with a gentle slope which drains towards a dam that abuts the Mkuze River to the north east. The elevation of the study area is approximately 130masl. The proposed interchange crosses two watercourses, a non-perennial watercourse approximately 420 metres to the south of the intersection (WC1), and on the P234 cross road 160 metres to the east of the intersection (WC2). The watercourse crossings are located at WC1: 27°37'40.74"S 32°01'43.35"E and WC2: 27°37'26.03"S 32° 01'40.59"E. A water use licence application will be submitted to the Department of Water Affairs in line with the requirements of the National Water Act 1998 (Act 36 of 1998), and the process will be in parallel with the Basic Assessment process.

Geology and Soils

Mucina and Rutherford describe the typical geology as black-clay soils derived from a distinct variety of clastic sediments of the Dwyka, Ecca, Beaufort and igneous rocks of the Lebombo Groups. Well drained soils occur on steeper slopes. Geotechnical investigations have been commissioned and are currently in progress.

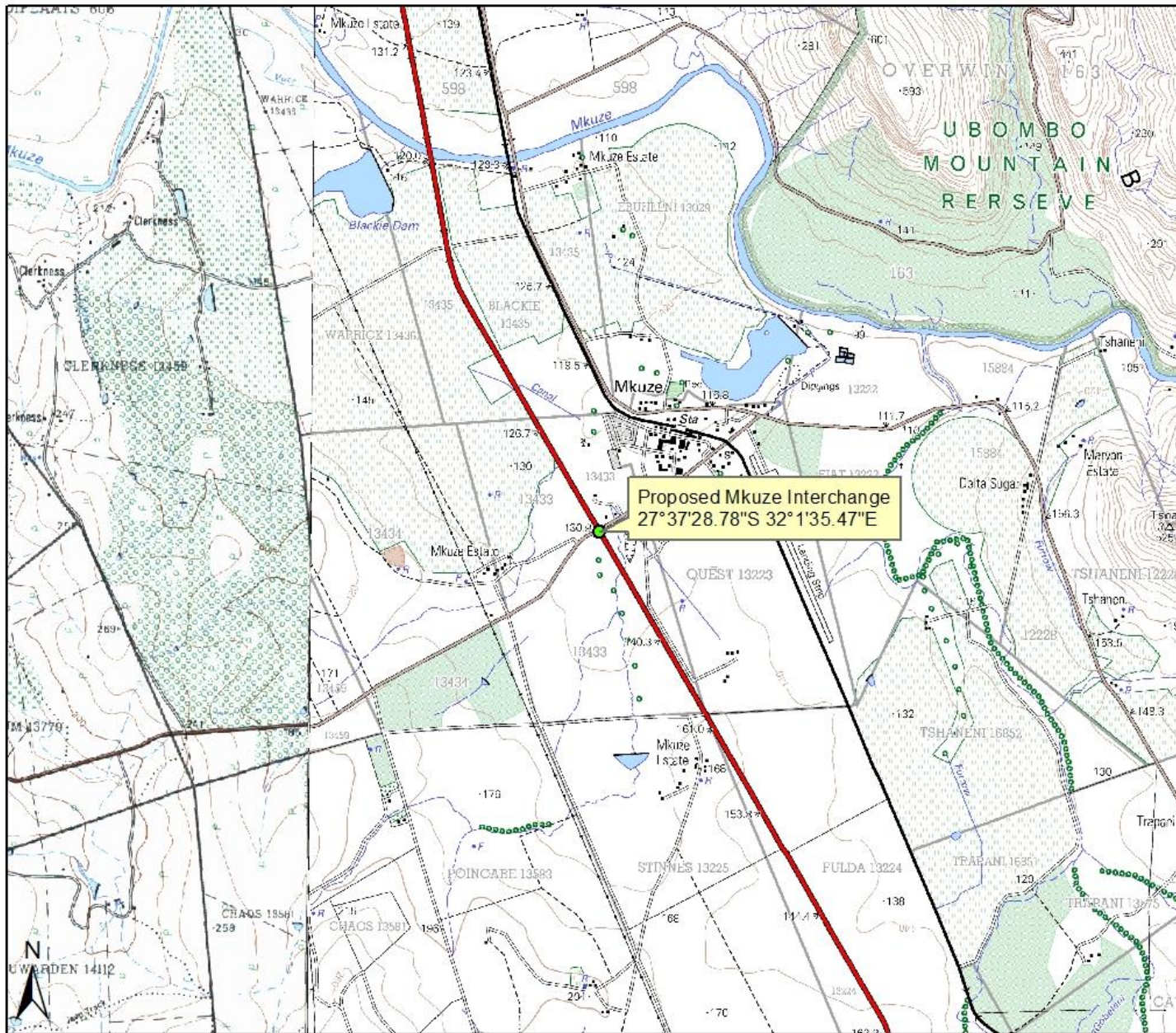
Vegetation

The study area falls within the Zululand Lowveld (SVI 23) which supports a complex of various bushveld units ranging from thickets of *Dichrostachys cinerea* and *Acacia* species, through park-like savanna to woodland with broad-leaved open bushveld with *Sclerocarya birrea*. Tall grassveld with isolated trees and shrubs form a mosaic with the typical savannah thornveld, bushveld and thicket patches. The Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife Terrestrial Systematic Conservation Plan (TSCP) allocates the study area a Biodiversity Priority Area 1 status. The uBombo Mountain Nature Reserve is situated approximately 2.5km to the north east of the site and the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park is located 8.4km to the east. Indigenous species noted on site include *Acacia Xanthophloea* (Fever Tree), *Sclerocarya birrea* (Marula Tree), *Euphorbia sp.* and *Acacia sp.* Alien Invasive species identified on site include *Agave sp.* Sisal, *Eucalyptus sp.* (Gum trees), *Melia azederach* (Syringa), *Opuntia sp.* (Prickly Pear) and *Senna sp.*

Services

The site is accessed from National Route 2 and the cross road P234. Services noted on site include powerlines, telecommunication lines and street lighting near the cross roads and along the P234. The Eskom Mkuze 132/22kV Substation is located 1.2km along the P234 to the west of the proposed interchange.

All stakeholders and identified service providers will be consulted as part of the Public Participation Process.



Project:
Mkuze Interchange

Title:
Locality Plan

Scale: 1:50 000
0 0.5 1 2
Kilometers

Rev: 01



PO BOX 1009, Kloof, 3640
Tel: (031) 764 2569
Fax: (086) 654 6598
info@enviroedge.co.za

**Proposed Mkuze Interchange – Basic Assessment
Registration and Comment Form**

Members of the public have the right to be consulted during the Public Participation Process. If you would like to be part of this process, or wish to comment or make contributions regarding specific guidelines, legislation or regulations that are specific to your organisation, please register with the environmental consultant by completing and returning the below form.

Enviroedge cc

PO BOX 1009, Kloof, 3640

Tel:(031) 764 2569

Fax: (086) 654 6598

info@enviroedge.co.za

Title	
First Name	
Surname	
Email	
Telephone	
Fax	
Organisation	
Capacity	
Physical Address	
Postal Address	
1. What is your main interest with regards to the proposed project?	
2. Do you have any issues or points of concern or support regarding the proposed project?	
3. Are there any additional stakeholders who you feel should be consulted with regards to the proposed project?	