

BASIC ASSESSMENT PROCESS FOR THE PROPOSED UPGRADE AND TARRING OF THE DR 08017 (SECTION 2B) KM 10.5 TO KM 23.4 BETWEEN MOUNT FRERE AND CEDARVILLE

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT



GARR/thor

BID No: 442993

July 2012

PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

An environmental Basic Assessment (BA) has commenced to assist the Eastern Cape Department of Roads and Public Works (ECDRPW) in determining the extent and significance of the environmental consequences associated with the proposed upgrade and tarring of the DR 08017 (Section 2B) Km 10.5 to Km 23.4 between Mount Frere and Cedarville, Mzimvubu Local Municipality in the 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 and Tourism (DEDEAT) for consideration.

IAPs are hereby invited to comment on the environmental, social and economic issues relating to the proposed upgrading of the road. 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 Robyn Thomson 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 August 2012**.

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DESCRIPTION OF THE DEVELOPMENT

The proposed project includes the upgrade and tarring of the DR 08017 (Section 2B) Km 10.5 to Km 23.4 between Mount Frere and Cedarville, Mzimvubu Local Municipality in the Eastern Cape (see Locality Plan included).

It is proposed to upgrade the existing gravel road to surfaced standard. The road will also be widened beyond 8m in several places to make provision for climbing lanes. The alignment will also deviate from the existing road in some places, however will remain within the servitude/ road reserve.

The proposed scope of works is to include the following:

- Tarring and widening of approximately 12.9 km of the existing provincial road;
- Upgrading of culverts if necessary to accommodate hydraulic load and changes to road width and/or grade line.

Interested and Affected Parties are hereby invited to identify potential environmental issues that may be relevant to this proposed development.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

The BA process for this assessment will be conducted in accordance with Government Gazette No. R543 in terms of the National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998) Environmental Impact Assessment regulations.

The National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) EIA regulations list activities that may have a significant impact on the environment, and which consequently require authorisation from the Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEDEAT). The regulations further specify the assessment process, and the information, that is required to enable DEDEAT to make a decision regarding the activity.

The following main activities (as a minimum), listed under the NEMA EIA regulations (GNR 544) as requiring a Basic Assessment, are associated with the road upgrade:

47) The widening of a road by more than 6 metres –
 i) Where the existing reserve is wider than 13,5 m, or ii) where no reserve exists where the road is wider than 8 m excluding widening or lengthening occurring inside urban areas.

18) The infilling or depositing of any material of more than 5 cubic metres into, or the excavation, removal or moving of soil, sand, pebbles or rock from (i) a watercourse.

WHAT IS A BASIC ASSESSMENT?

A Basic Assessment 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 the authorities (DEDEAT) and the proponent (ECDRPW) 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 EIA 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 the Environmental Assessment process. The principles of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) govern most aspects of Basic Assessments, including public participation. These include the ongoing provision of sufficient information (in a transparent manner) 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 result in a better understanding of the project for all involved, and more 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 addressed in the Basic Assessment.

IAPs will be provided with a 30-day comment period in which to raise issues and / or concerns in response to the Background Information Document. A draft Basic Assessment Report will be compiled and will also be available for public comment for a period of 40 days. The Final Basic Assessment Report including Comments and Responses from the public will be submitted to DEDEAT following the second public comment period. IAPs will be notified in writing of any decisions made by DEDEAT after submission of the final Basic Assessment Report.

Please note that communications regarding the process and the availability of reports will only be sent to registered

Interested and Affected Parties. To register for the process, and thus 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.

EIA PROCESS

Who is doing the Basic Assessment?

In terms of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) regulations, an independent Environmental Assessment Practitioner must be appointed to conduct the Basic Assessment. SRK Consulting has been appointed to conduct the Basic Assessment. SRK will identify and assess the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed activity by conducting an objective and independent Basic Assessment in which all the relevant information and opinions of Interested and Affected Parties (IAPs) will be collected and passed on to the Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEDEAT). In this way an informed decision-making process can take place.

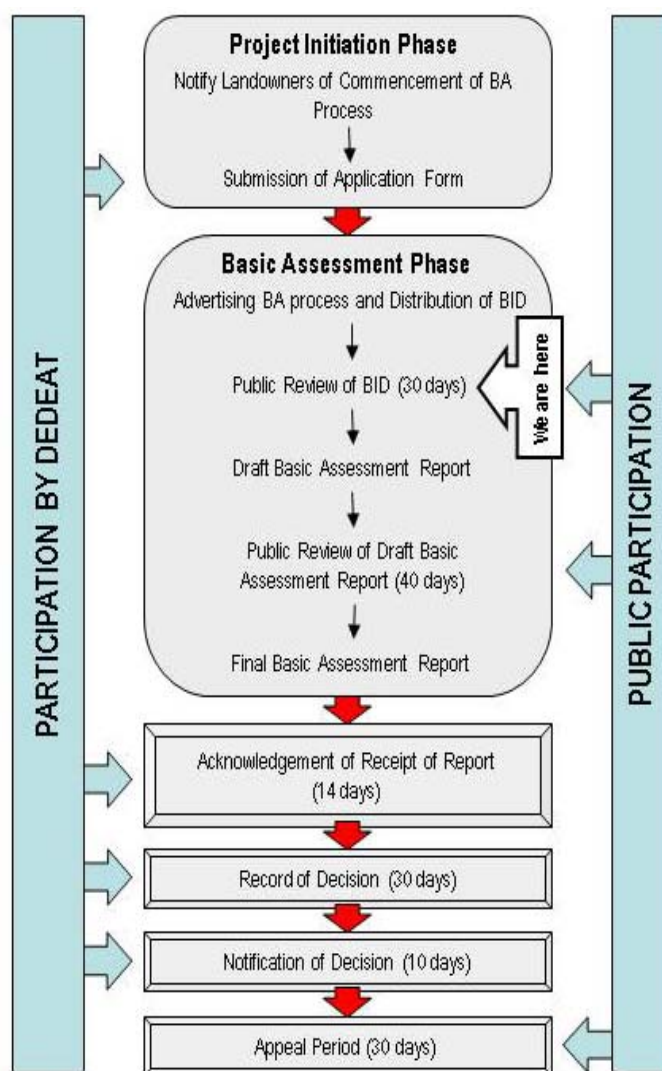
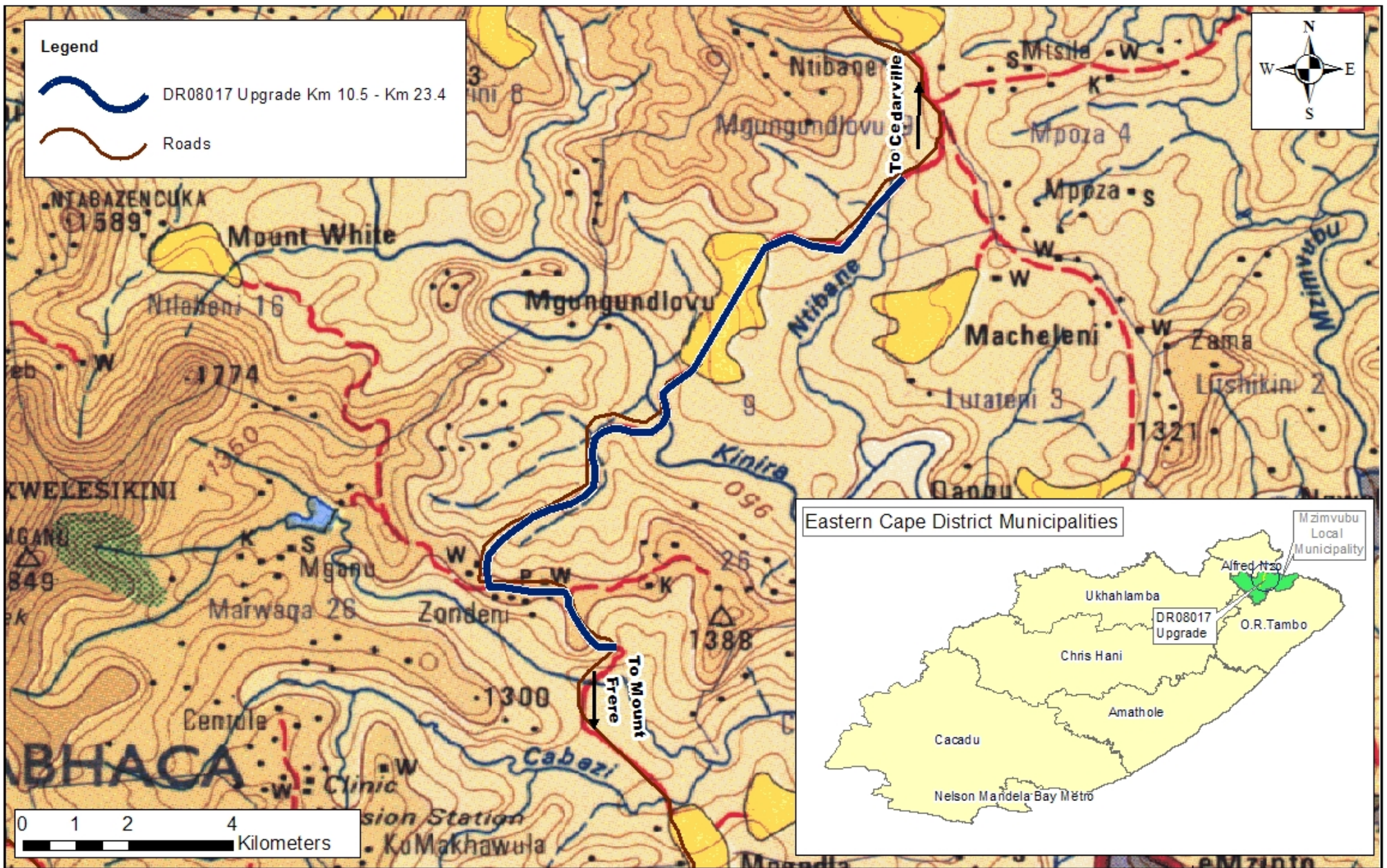


Figure 1: The Basic Assessment Process and stages where public comment will be invited



Project No:	Datum:
442993	HH1994
	Projection:
	DD
	Central Meridian/Zone:
	N/A

**DR08017 KM 10.5 TO KM 23.4 BETWEEN MOUNT FRERE
AND CEDARVILLE UPGRADE - LOCALITY**

Date:	Scale:
12/03/2012	1:90,000
Compiled by:	Fig No:
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