

PROPOSED UPGRADE AND EXPANSION OF SEAGULLS BEACH HOTEL AS WELL AS THE DEVELOPMENT OF SEAGULLS LIFESTYLE ESTATE LOCATED ON FARM 119 CENTANE, WILD COAST, EASTERN CAPE

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

INTRODUCTION

Indwe Environmental Consulting was appointed as independent Environmental Assessment Practitioners to undertake a Basic Assessment (BA) for the proposed upgrading and expansion of the existing Seagulls Beach Hotel as well as the development of the Seagulls Lifestyle Estate on Farm 119, Centane located on the Wild Coast, Mnquma Local Municipality, Eastern Cape.

The BA will conform to the National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998), (NEMA) as amended and the EIA Regulations (2010), as published in Government Notice No. R. 543 – 546.

This document is intended to provide background information to stakeholders, authorities and other interested and affected parties and forms a key component of the public participation process being undertaken as part of the Basic Assessment.

PROJECT LOCATION

The proposed land development area is located on Farm 119, Centane on the Wild Coast within the Mnquma Local Municipality, Eastern Cape.

The property covers an area of 2.485 hectares and is surrounded by holiday cottages and residential dwellings located to the north, west and south and by the Indian Ocean located to the east (Figure 1).



Figure 1: The locality of Farm 119, Centane, Eastern Cape

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed Project is twofold, firstly it involves the formalisation of the existing Seagulls Beach Hotel through the upgrading and expansion of the existing infrastructure and secondly it would include the development of the new Seagulls Lifestyle Estate (Figure 2).

The architectural concept for the development is a “Cape Cod Themed” low impact Country Estate and Resort Development. In keeping with this, the building footprint will be restricted to a maximum of 5 897.23m² and low impact construction and technology alternatives will be selected where possible.

The following proposed development activities will be undertaken in order to achieve the required objectives:

- The upgrading and expansion of 6 existing single storey hotel buildings to that of double storey buildings.
- The upgrading and expansion of the existing single storey conference centre to that of a double storey building.
- The demolition of 2 existing buildings.
- The construction of 5 double storey buildings containing a double garage with a building footprint of 200m².
- The construction of 8 single storey buildings containing a single garage with a building footprint of 150m².
- The construction of 13 single storey timber units on stilts with a building footprint of 90m².
- The construction of 1 single storey staff unit with a building footprint of 60m².
- The installation of a new waste water reticulation system and package plant.
- The construction of 42 parking bays that would service the upgraded Seagulls Hotel.
- The construction of 57 parking bays that would service the proposed Seagulls Lifestyle Estate.
- The construction of an internal road network that would service all existing and proposed buildings.
- The construction of a wooden boardwalk within the southern section of the site.
- The installation of a storm water pipeline network.
- The relocation of existing telephone lines.
- The relocation of existing electricity boxes.
- The upgrading of the existing water reservoir and potable water reticulation system.

Water supply is provided by the Amathole District Municipality via a 50mm main pipe to storage reservoirs located approximately 2km from Seagulls.

A general authorisation has also been issued by the Department of Water Affairs which allows for the abstraction of water from the natural springs occurring on site. This water supply will be stored and used as a secondary measure when municipal water supply is interrupted.

The current rudimentary sanitation infrastructure (septic tank and soak away system) will be replaced by a Clear Water Technology System. Treated grey water will be used for the irrigation of gardens and the golf course.

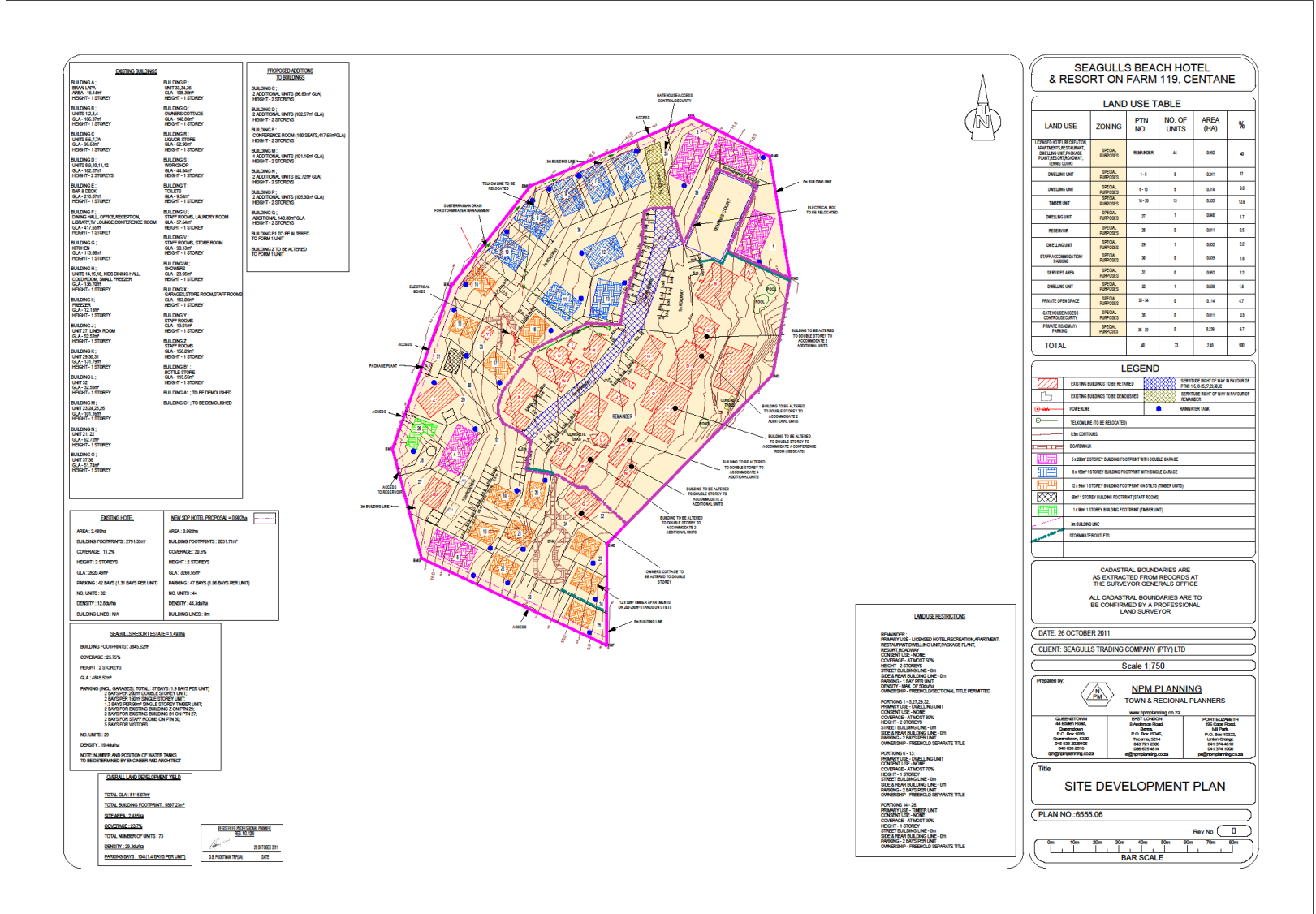


Figure 2: The proposed Site Development Plan

PROJECT MOTIVATION

The existing Seagulls Beach Hotel has had a long and significant history as a holiday destination on the Transkei Wild Coast and its past and current land use (Seagulls Beach Hotel) has not changed in nearly a century.

This land use falls in line with the Wild Coast Tourism Development Policy (2001) as well as the Mquma Local Municipality Spatial Development Framework (2009) which recognises 3 Coastal Development Nodes situated along the Transkei Wild Coast. These are Qolora Mouth, Wavecrest and Mazeppa Bay.

These First Order Nodes are defined as the most urban and extensively developed resort areas within which the focus should be on the recreational experience provided by the development.

In 2011 the Seagulls Hotel was sold to new owners who recognised the tourist potential of this development area. They have set out to maintain and enhance the current land use of this site by embarking on a development project which aims to upgrade and expand the existing old buildings and infrastructure as well as to develop a small Lifestyle Estate.

From an environmental perspective the existing accommodation facilities are serviced by rudimentary sanitation infrastructure (septic tanks; french drains). This could potentially have a negative impact on the quality of surface and groundwater as well as the marine ecosystem in this area.

A new sewage treatment works as well as the formalisation of a solid waste management plan will be a much needed improvement.

From a socio-economic perspective it is believed that, as a consequence of the proposed upgrade and expansion of the existing Hotel as well as the development of a new Lifestyle Estate, the expected increase in number and type of tourist visiting Seagulls would significantly contribute to the medium and long term creation of stable employment opportunities for members of the surrounding local communities as well as contribute to the Mquma Local Municipality's Tourism Portfolio.

EIA REQUIREMENTS

NEMA Section 24(5) stipulates that "listed activities" require environmental authorization via a Basic Assessment process.

Listing Notice Number	Activity No.	Development Activity
544, 18 June 2010	11(x)(xi)	The construction of new buildings and infrastructure with a footprint of more than 50 square metres within 32 metres of a wetland which is located near the existing buildings.
544, 18 June 2010	16(v)(vi)	There will be construction and earth moving activities related to buildings and infrastructure with a footprint of more than 50 square metres, 100 metres inland of the high water mark.
544, 18 June 2010	40(iii)	The expansion of existing buildings by more than 50 square metres within 32 metres of a wetland
544, 18 June 2010	45(v)(vi)	The expansion of facilities in the sea, an estuary, or within the littoral active zone or a distance of 100 metres inland of the high-water mark of the sea or an estuary, whichever is the greater, for – (v) buildings by more than 50 square metres; (vi) infrastructure by more than 50 square metres;
R546, 18 June 2010	4(ii)(gg)(hh)	The construction of a road wider than 4 meters with a reserve less than 13.5 meters (hh) areas seaward of the development setback line or within 1 kilometre from

Listing Notice Number	Activity No.	Development Activity
		the high-water mark of the sea if no such development setback line is determined.
R546, 18 June 2010	6(ii)(hh)	The construction of resorts, lodges or other tourism accommodation facilities that sleep 15 people or more. ii.Outside urban areas, in: (hh) Areas seawards of the development setback line or within 1 kilometre from the high-water mark of the sea if no such development setback line is determined
R546, 18 June 2010	12(b)(c)	Vegetation will be cleared for building with footprints in excess of 300 metres squared within an area delineated as Critical Biodiversity Area (CBA 1) and within 100 metres of the high water mark.
R546, 18 June 2010	18ii(ee)iii(cc)	The expansion of the existing hotel development footprint will take place within a first order node as defined by the Mngquma Spatial Development Framework which are the most urban areas as well as extensively developed resort areas. The existing hotel also falls within an area identified as CBA 1 and within 100 metres of the high water mark.

BASIC ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The Basic Assessment process entails the following 2 broad phases:

1. **Application Phase:** An application for authorisation has been submitted to the relevant authority, the Department of Economic Development and Environmental Affairs (DEDEA), East London Office. Reference No: AR/6/544,546/1/11
2. **Basic Assessment:** After DEDEA has accepted the application, a Basic Assessment is followed. This includes the undertaking of a public participation process including consultation with key stakeholders, detailed site investigations, planning and reporting. The project will culminate in the production of a Basic Assessment Report which will be submitted to the competent authority (DEDEA) for their decision on the project.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

The public participation process will be undertaken in accordance with Regulation 54 of the NEMA EIA Regulations, as published in Government Notice No. R 543. This will entail the following activities:

1. Circulation of a BID (this document) and public notification (advertising) to allow I&APs to register on project database.
2. Release (for registered I&AP review and comment) of a draft Basic Assessment Report.
3. Release (for registered I&AP review and comment) of a final Basic Assessment Report including a Comments & Responses Report.
4. Submission of relevant documentation (final Basic Assessment Report, Comments and Responses Report and EMPs) to DEDEA for a decision.
5. Announcement of the outcome to all registered I&APs.

Crucial to the EIA process is input from Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs). Hence the public are encouraged to register as I&APs for this project and to submit their comments in writing to the environmental practitioners regarding the proposed project. Registered I&APs will be kept informed of project progress throughout the Basic Assessment process.

The public will also be given the opportunity to review and comment on the draft Basic Assessment Report. All comments raised by I&APs will be incorporated into the final report and submitted to DEDEA to enable them to make an informed decision with regard to the development proposal.

Once an Environmental Authorisation is received, it will be distributed to registered I&APs who may appeal to the Minister or MEC for Environmental Affairs in opposition to the decision.

KEY ISSUES AND TYPICAL IMPACTS

Key issues and typical environmental impacts associated with the project identified to date include:

- Increased visual impacts associated with permanent structures in the coastal zone
- Increased pressure on sensitive coastal environment (e.g. contamination of soil and groundwater due to inappropriate waste disposal)
- Impact on biodiversity (both marine and terrestrial)
- Potential employment opportunities during construction and operation phases
- Economic investment and social upliftment.
- Compliance with legislation and planning policy such as the Mquma Local Municipality Spatial Development Framework, Coastal Zone Management Act, etc.

DETAILS OF THE EAP CONDUCTING THE EIA

Indwe Environmental Consulting CC is a registered environmental consultancy that specialises in all facets of environmental management. Our focus is on project based environmental studies. Broadly the services offered are Basic Assessments, Full Environmental Impact Assessments, Strategic Environmental Studies, State of the Environment Reporting, Strategic Environmental Assessments, Environmental Management Frameworks, and Integrated Waste Management Planning.

Brendon Steytler is the principal member of Indwe Environmental Consulting. Brendon is a professionally registered Environmental Scientist (Pr.Sci. Nat. No. 400304/06) and holds a Masters Degree in Environment and Development. Brendon has been involved in many diverse EIA's and other environmental studies within the Eastern Cape over the past eight years.

YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO GET INVOLVED

Should you wish to express your views regarding this proposed development, please feel free to register as an I&AP by sending us your written comments. Please submit your name, contact information and written comments to the contact person below. A written comments form is supplied at the back end of this notice for your convenience.

***Please note that electronic mail is preferred.**

Contact Information

EAP

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COMMENTS SHEET: Proposed Development of Phase 2 Coral Beach Residential Estate

Please send to: Mr. Brendon Steytler

Indwe Environmental Consulting CC

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East London • 5241 •

Tel: 083 766 7514 • Fax: 086 513 9734 • Email: indwecon@telkomsa.net



YOUR details:

Name	
Organisation	
Telephone number	
Physical address	
Postal address	
Fax number	
Email address	

Comments:

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