

Basic Assessment Process for the Proposed Establishment of the Ulundi Crossings Shopping Centre and Service Station, and the Diversion of a Watercourse, Located on Erf 402 of Ulundi B, within the Ulundi Local and Zululand District Municipality, Ulundi, KwaZulu-Natal

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

February 2022



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 Basic Assessment Process.



WHAT IS THE BACKGROUND TO THIS PROJECT?

The Applicant, South Bound Investments (Pty) Ltd, wish to apply for Environmental Authorisation for the proposed establishment of the Ulundi Crossings shopping centre and service station, and diversion of a watercourse, located on Erf 402 of Ulundi B, within the Ulundi Local and Zululand District Municipality, Ulundi, KwaZulu-Natal.

In terms of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA, Act No. 107 of 1998) and the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations of 2014 (as amended – 2017), published in Government Notices No. R. (GNR) 324, 325 and 327 of 2017, certain Listed Activities require either a Basic Assessment Process (GNR 324 and GNR 327) or a Scoping and EIA Process (GNR 325) to be undertaken for Environmental Authorisation. The proposed project triggers the following Listed Activities, thus a Basic Assessment Process is required to be undertaken.

Listed Notice	Activity	Description
327	14	<i>“The development and related operation of facilities or infrastructure for the storage, or storage and handling of a dangerous good, where such storage occurs in containers with a combined capacity of 80 cubic meters or more, but not exceeding 500 cubic metres”.</i> Applicable as the service station will comprise tanks with a combined storage capacity of 460 m³ of fuel.

327	19	<p><i>“The infilling or depositing of any material of more than 10 cubic metres into, or the dredging, excavation, removal or moving of soil, sand, shells, shell grit, pebbles or rock of more than 10 cubic metres from a watercourse;...”</i></p> <p>Applicable as the diversion of a watercourse will comprise the movement of more than 10 m³ of material.</p>
327	27	<p><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></p> <p>Applicable as the proposed project will require the clearance of approximately 5 ha of indigenous vegetation.</p>
327	28	<p><i>“Residential, mixed, retail, commercial, industrial or institutional developments where such land was used for agriculture, game farming, equestrian purposes or afforestation on or after 01 April 1998 and where such development:</i></p> <p><i>(i) will occur inside an urban area, where the total land to be developed is bigger than 5 hectares; or ...”</i></p> <p>Applicable as the proposed project will occupy an area of approximately 5 ha and is located within an urban area.</p>

The Applicant, South Bound Investments (Pty) Ltd, has appointed Green Door Environmental to undertake the Basic Assessment Process.



WHAT IS PROPOSED?

The Applicant, South Bound Investments (Pty) Ltd, wish to apply for Environmental Authorisation for the proposed establishment of the Ulundi Crossings shopping centre and service station, and diversion of a watercourse, located on Erf 402 of Ulundi B, within the Ulundi Local and Zululand District Municipality, Ulundi, KwaZulu-Natal (Refer to Figure 1 and 2).

The proposed study site is located adjacent to the R66 Road and Princess Magogo Street in Ulundi at GPS coordinates 28°18'02.97" S and 31°25'11.47" E. It currently comprises a mixture of degraded grassland and lowveld vegetation. The proposed project will comprise the establishment of a retail component, a service station and car wash, and require the diversion of a watercourse. The retail component is proposed to comprise the following:

- ◆ Line shops;
- ◆ Hardware;
- ◆ Shuttle service area;
- ◆ Supermarket;
- ◆ Convenience store;
- ◆ Furniture store;
- ◆ Tyre shop;
- ◆ A taxi rank;
- ◆ Ablution facilities;
- ◆ Parking; and
- ◆ Service infrastructure.

The service station is proposed to comprise tanks with a combined storage capacity of 460 m³ of fuel.

The proposed study site is located on a gentle lower drainage area of a north to south flowing tributary of the White Mfolozi River. The tributary runs through the eastern portion of the proposed study site. In order to utilise this portion of the proposed study site, the Applicant is proposing the diversion of the watercourse. A variety of different options for managing the watercourse are being investigated and will be confirmed during the process.

The following Specialist Studies will be undertaken for the proposed project:

- ◆ Geotechnical Assessment;
- ◆ Biodiversity Assessment;
- ◆ Wetland Assessment;
- ◆ Riparian Dam Design;
- ◆ Heritage Impact Assessment;
- ◆ Paleontological Impact Assessment;
- ◆ Engineering Report and Designs;
- ◆ Stormwater Management Plan;
- ◆ Traffic Impact Assessment; and
- ◆ Market Feasibility and Social Impact Assessment.



WHERE IS THE PROPOSED PROJECT?



Figure 1: Locality map showing the proposed study site and surrounding area, Ulundi, KwaZulu-Natal (Source: Google Earth).



Figure 2: Map showing the proposed study site, Ulundi, KwaZulu-Natal (Source: Google Earth).



Figure 3: Map showing the proposed study site, Ulundi, KwaZulu-Natal (Source: Google Earth).



WHAT IS THE AIM OF A BASIC ASSESSMENT PROCESS?

The Basic Assessment Process aims to:

- ◆ Inform and involve all potentially I&APs of the proposed project;
- ◆ Identify the potential impacts (positive and negative) that the proposed project 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 development.



WHAT IS INVOLVED IN THE BASIC ASSESSMENT PROCESS?

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 activities and lists the relevant Listed Activities which are triggered.

2. Public Participation:

The general public and relevant authorities are notified of the proposed project through newspaper adverts, site posters 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 the proposed project, but have 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 newspaper adverts and site posters.

3. Identification of Impacts and Alternatives

Environmental issues, concerns, development constraints and possible 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 proposed project, 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, if the proposed project is approved.

6. Reporting

The Draft Basic Assessment Report and EMPr will be made available for review and comment by all I&APs and relevant authorities. A Final Basic Assessment Report and EMPr will be compiled and will include comments received on the circulated Draft 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 project must be approved or not. All I&APs will be informed of the decision.



WHAT POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS HAVE INITIALLY BEEN IDENTIFIED?

The following issues have been identified as potentially problematic and will, amongst other issues, be investigated during the Basic Assessment Process:

- ◆ Potential impacts on fauna and flora;
- ◆ Potential impacts on the watercourse and associated aquatic species; and
- ◆ Potential contamination of the watercourse.



HOW CAN I&APs COMMENT ON THE PROPOSED PROJECT?

The need for public input and involvement is of critical importance. All I&APs (neighbours, authorities, organisations etc.) are invited to comment on the proposed project. Comments can be communicated to us by post, telephone or email (contact details are provided below).

In terms of the requirements of the EIA Regulations and the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA, Act No. 14 of 2013) by registering as an I&AP, I&APs are deemed to give their consent for relevant information to be processed and disclosed. For the purposes of this Scoping and EIA Process, only the names, affiliation and comments of I&APs will be included in the Scoping and EIA Report. Should additional personal information be required by the Competent Authority, consent to share this information will be obtained from the I&AP first.

In order to ensure that your comments are addressed and incorporated, please ensure that we have received all comments by **31 March 2022**.

