

# Background Information Document

## Basic Assessment Process for the Proposed Tertiary Institution, Node 6, Sibaya Coastal Precinct

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Applicant and Environmental Assessment Practitioner

EcoLink Consulting (Pty) Ltd has been appointed by Tongaat Hulett Developments (Pty) Ltd (THD) to undertake the environmental authorisation process for the proposed development of a tertiary institution in Node 6, Sibaya Coastal Precinct, eThekweni Municipality, KwaZulu-Natal.

## 1.2. Purpose of the Background Information Document

The aim of this Background Information Document (BID) is to provide stakeholders with initial Project information, as well as information regarding the associated Basic Assessment (BA) and Public Participation Process (PPP). You are encouraged to register as an Interested and Affected Party (IAP) so that you can be kept informed about the Project throughout the BA process.

## 1.3. Location and Project Description

The proposal is for the development of a private tertiary institution within Node 6 of the Sibaya Coastal Precinct. Node 6 is situated between the M<sub>4</sub> and eMdloti town, north of the arterial road (M<sub>27</sub>) into eMdloti (Figure 1) and is approximately 180 hectares in extent. The site is approximately 34 ha in extent and is currently under sugar cane cultivation.



Figure 1. Location of the Proposed Tertiary Institution, Sibaya Coastal Precinct

The development is proposed to be undertaken by a reputable, national JSE-listed private educational institution that has led the way in providing quality educational facilities in South Africa and Africa.

The objective of the new development is to complement existing tertiary institutions within the province while providing a new destination aimed at retaining the youth for the next generation of South African professionals and entrepreneurs within the province, and even attracting ambitious and talented youth to the province from across the country and Africa. The investment of a new private tertiary institution is also aimed at bringing relief to existing institutions, thereby increasing access to education.

The selection of the site for the institution has been based on the extent of land required as well as the physical and natural attributes of the site which will enable the creation of a destination offering with a sense of place. The location is also able to be serviced within the short term and is easily accessible with good access to regional and national routes. It is close to the airport which is also an important element. The site itself is well suited from a topographical perspective enabling all aspects of the facility to be located in close proximity and designed and planned in an integrated manner.

The proposed tertiary institution will consist of the following components (as demarcated in concept in Figure 2):

- Administration Offices
- Lecture Halls and associated educational facilities
- Onsite food, beverage and retail facilities
- Sports fields of varying disciplines – hockey, rugby, soccer, basketball
- Indoor sports facilities / hall
- Parking areas
- Student accommodation

The tertiary academic calendar is approximately 9 to 10 months of a year, in contrast to the surrounding towns of uMhlanga and eMdloti, which are largely seasonal. The academic calendar and holiday periods are therefore complementary to one another which will allow for uses that become multi-purpose and available to the broader communities, including parking during peak periods. The sports facilities will also be available to the broader community on the basis of club-type operations and memberships throughout the year.

Furthermore, the structure of the curriculum is proposed to create split morning and afternoon lectures and later starting and finishing times proposed to reduce impacts on peak hour traffic flows. The institution will also draw traffic in opposite directions to the current peak hour traffic flows.

The development of the tertiary institution will take place over a number of years on a phased basis. The first phase of the development seeks to provide for between 3 000 and 5 000 students, growing to a phase able to accommodate 10 000 students at the institution at any point in time.

Student accommodation (of up to 3 000) is a key element of the offering. This should have a positive effect on traffic flows and is aimed at complementing the remainder of the Sibaya Coastal Precinct and the associated retail and urban amenities.

From an infrastructural perspective, the facility is to be accessed off the M27 at the fully signalised Heleza Boulevard Intersection through the construction of a new boulevard road that will also provide access into the remainder of Node 6.

Services (water, sewer and electrification) will be procured through the extension of the Node 5 infrastructure and which will be in place prior to the development of Node 6.

The Basic Assessment process will provide for the assessment of the above proposals including potential alternatives.

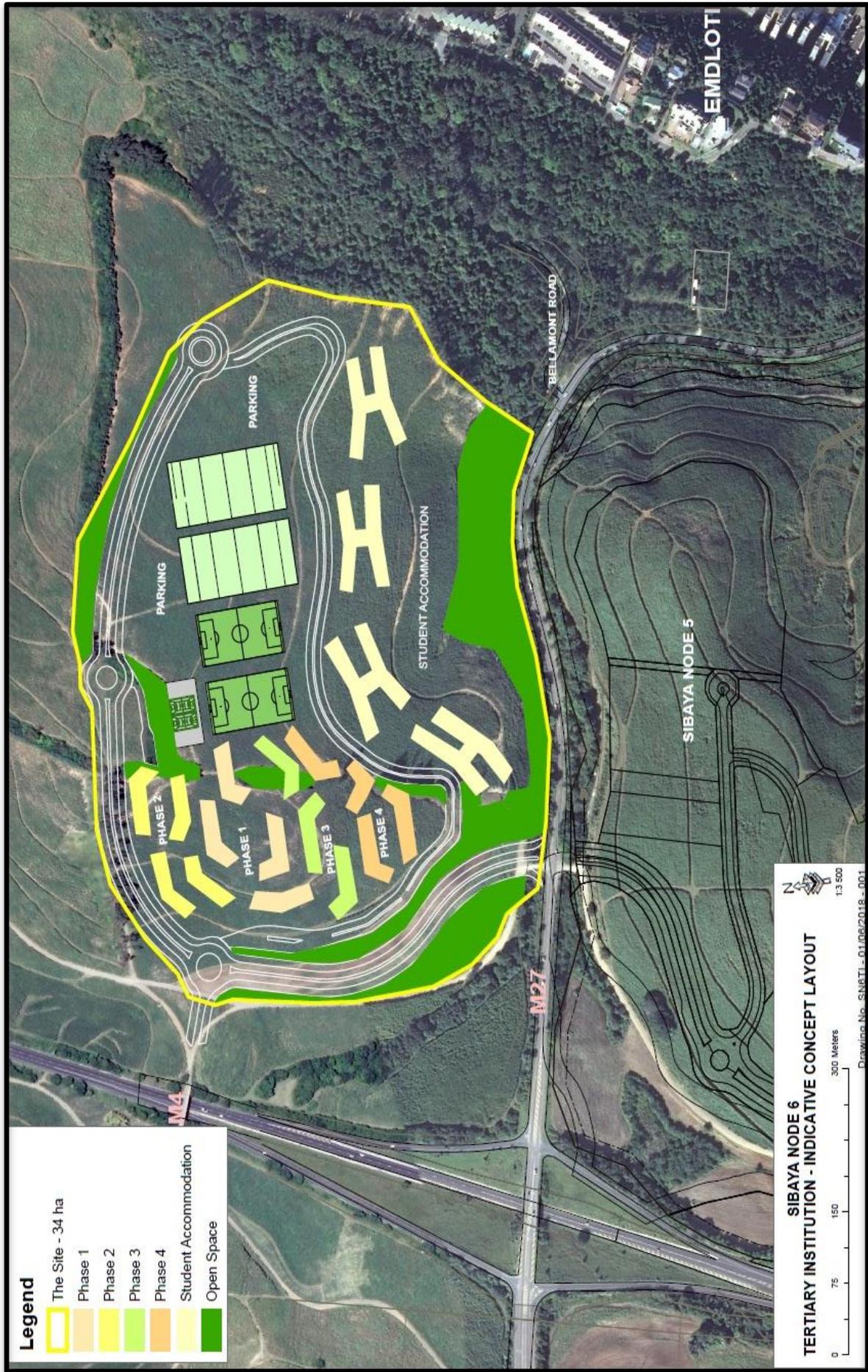


Figure 2. Draft Concept layout of the Proposed Tertiary Institution

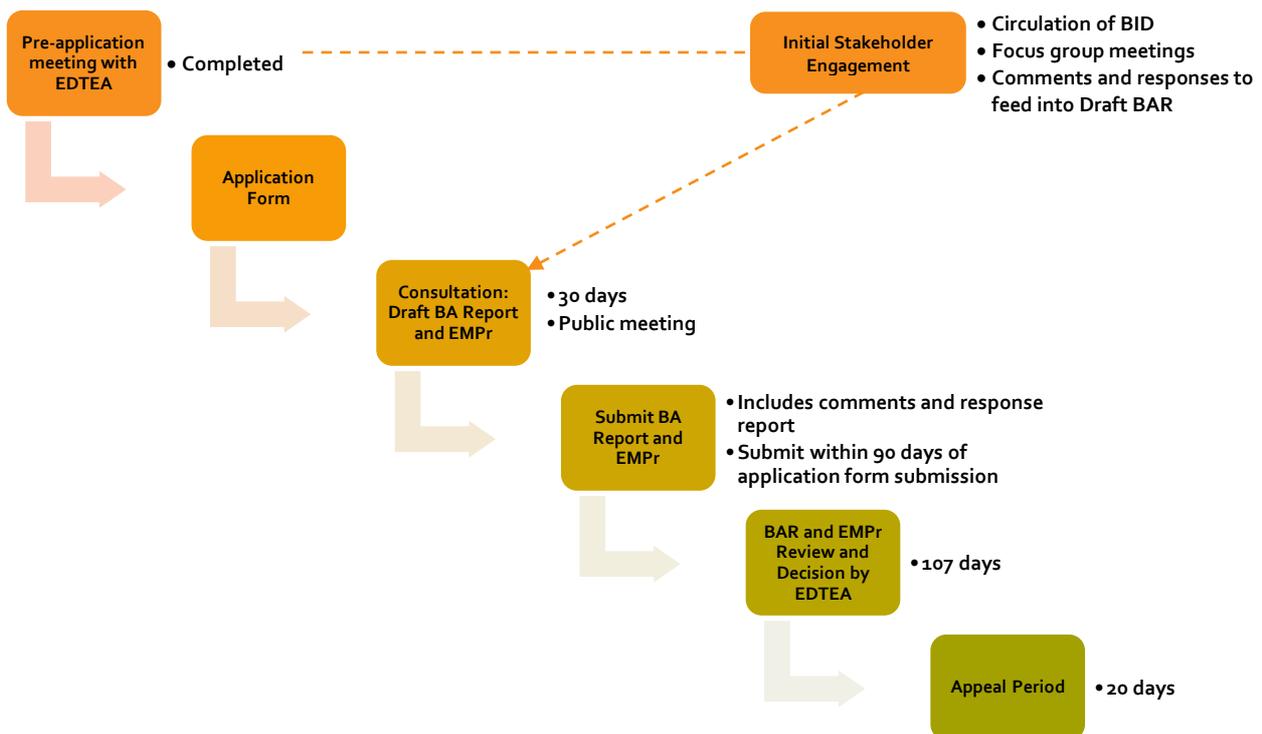
## 2. Basic Assessment Process

### 2.1. Basic Assessment Process and Triggers

The development of the tertiary institution will require the completion of a Basic Assessment process under the requirements of the National Environmental Management Act (No. 107 of 1998) Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations (as amended). The activities requiring authorisation are summarised in Table 1 while the process is summarised in Figure 3.

**Table 1.** Listed Activities Requiring Authorisation as per Listing Notice 1 (GN R983, as amended by GN 327 of 2017)

Activity	Reason
<p>28. 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:</p> <p>(i) will occur inside an urban area, where the total land to be developed is bigger than 5 hectares; or</p> <p>(ii) will occur outside an urban area, where the total land to be developed is bigger than 1 hectare;</p> <p>excluding where such land has already been developed for residential, mixed, retail, commercial, industrial or institutional purposes.</p>	<p>The institutional development is proposed to take place on land currently used for agriculture.</p>



**Figure 3.** Basic Assessment Process

## 2.2. Specialist studies

Specialist studies will be undertaken to identify and assess the potential impacts of the proposed project activities, rate their significance and propose measures to mitigate the negative impacts and enhance the benefits. These specialist studies include:

- Heritage Impact Assessment
- Wetlands (delineation and functionality)
- Traffic
- Vegetation Assessment
- Bulk Engineering Services
- Geotechnical Assessment
- Storm Water Management Plan
- Agricultural Potential
- Social Impact Assessment
- Socio-economic Impact Assessment

## 2.3. Your Participation

The public participation process (PPP) is designed to conform to the requirements of the NEMA. The key objectives for the PPP for this Project are to:

- Share information about the Project;
- Gather knowledge to improve understanding of the environmental and social context and understand locally-important issues;
- Enable interested and affected parties (IAPs) to raise concerns / questions about the Project;
- Gather responses on the EIA findings and incorporate stakeholder views into the design and management measures, where feasible; and
- Respond to concerns and questions and report back on the findings of the EIA and proposed management measures.

Anyone who is interested or affected by the proposed Project has the right to participate in the EIA process, and is invited to further participate in the process by becoming involved in the following ways:

- Register as an IAP with the environmental assessment practitioner (contact details below);
- Review the BID and provide initial comments;
- Review and provide comments on the draft Basic Assessment Report and Environmental Management Programme when these are made available for comment; and
- Attend the public meeting during the draft report stage to obtain further project information, interact with the Project Team, and/or raise issues and concerns. More information about the meeting will be circulated via email, notices in the newspaper (Mercury and Isolezwe), site notices and the Project website.

## 2.4. EAP Contact Details

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