

Notice of Environmental Impact Assessment for the proposed development of a Hotel at the confluence of the Timfene and Crocodile rivers within the Kruger National Park (Malelane)- Mpumalanga Province

Background Information Document & Invitation to Participate

15 July 2010

1. Purpose Of This Document

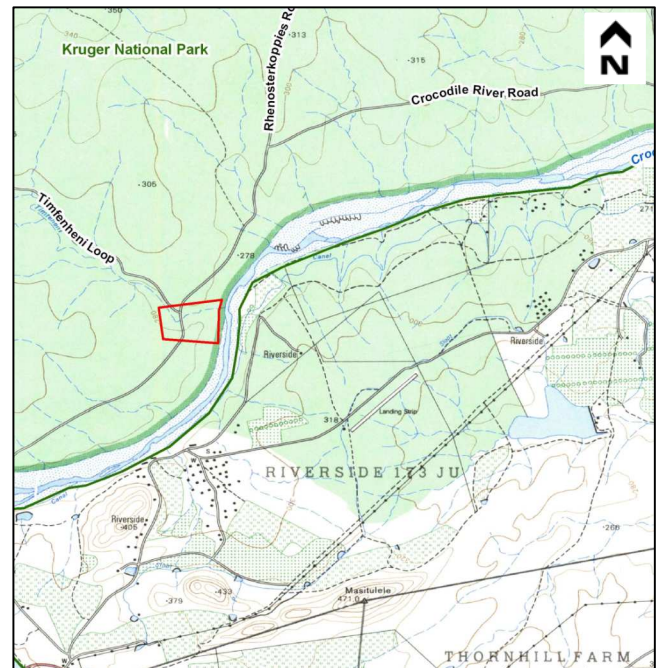
The purpose of this document is to:

- Provide information about the proposed Hotel Development and proposed realignment of Rhenosterkoppies Road, as well as the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Process to be followed prior to the establishment of this proposed development;
- Indicate how you, as an Interested and Affected Party (I&AP), can become involved in the EIA process.

2. Locality

The site is situated approx. 10 km north east of the Malelane Gate entrance to the Kruger National Park. Directly adjacent to the Crocodile River which forms the eastern boundary of the proposed development site. The area measures approximately 35 hectares within the Kruger Park. The Timfene River flows toward the Crocodile River near the north western boundary of the proposed development area. The development area is traversed by Rhenosterkoppies Road and a small portion of Timfenheni Loop falls within the proposed development area.

The site falls within the jurisdiction of the South African National Parks (SANParks) and the Department of Environmental Affairs.



Legend

- Malelane Gate
- Railway Line
- ▭ Kruger National Park Boundary
- ▭ Site Boundary

Figure 1: Locality map

3. Project Description

Cradle of Malelane (Pty) Ltd - *the applicant* proposes to establish a 240 bed Hotel with a four star rating at the confluence of the Timfene and Crocodile Rivers. The proposed Hotel Development is also to include the following ancillary uses:

- Game Drives;
- Restaurant;
- Clubhouse with a place of refreshment and pool area;

- Conference Venue;
- Spa;
- Limited retail component (e.g. curios)

The area proposed for development measures approximately 35 hectares.

The development proposal came about following the SANParks's wish to expand the tourist and income generating potential of its protected areas under its management by making various Public Private Partnerships (PPP) opportunities available to appropriate and reputable eco-tourism Operators.

4. Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Process - Legal Framework

The National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998), as amended, identifies the establishment of the proposed development as an activity that may have significant detrimental effects on the environment. Hence, an environmental impact assessment has to be undertaken in order to ensure that potential environmental impacts, which may occur as a result of the development, are taken into consideration.

In terms of Sections 24 and 24(D) of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No.107 of 1998), as amended, and as read with Government Notices R 385 (Regulations 27 – 36) and R 387 an EIA is required for the development as the following activities are anticipated to be triggered by the development:

- **Government Notice R 386 Item (1)(a):** The generation of electricity where the electricity output is more than 10 megawatts but less than 20 megawatts
- **Government Notice R 386 Item (1)(d):** The construction of facilities or infrastructure, including associated structures or infrastructure, for resorts, lodges, hotels or other tourism and hospitality facilities in a protected area

contemplated in the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act, 2003 (Act No. 57 of 2003)

- **Government Notice R 386 Item (1)(k):** The bulk transportation of sewerage and water including stormwater in pipelines with (i) an internal diameter of 0,36 metres or more
- **Government Notice R 386 Item (1)(m):** Any purpose in the one in ten year floodline of a river or stream or within 32 metres from the bank of a river or stream where the floodline is unknown, excluding purposes associated with existing residential use, but including (i) canals; (ii) channels; (iii) bridges; (iv) dams; and (v) weirs
- **Government Notice R 386 Item (1)(n):** The off-stream storage of water, including dams and reservoirs, with a capacity of 50 000 cubic metres or more, unless such storage falls within the ambit of the activity listed in item 6 of Government Notice No R387 of 2006
- **Government Notice R 386 Item (12):** The transformation or removal of indigenous vegetation of 3 hectares or more or of any size where the transformation or removal would occur within a critically endangered ecosystem listed in terms of Section 52 of the National Environmental Management Biodiversity Act, 2004 (Act No 10 of 2004)
- **Government Notice R 386 Item (13):** The abstraction of groundwater at a volume where any general authorization issued in terms of the National Water Act, 1998 (Act No 36 of 1998) will be exceeded
- **Government Notice R 386 Item (15):** The construction of a road that is wider than 4 metres and that has a road reserve wider than 6 metres, excluding roads that fall within the ambit of another listed activity or which are access roads of less than 30 metres long
- **Government Notice R 387 Item (2):** Any development activity, including associated structures and infrastructure, where the total area of the developed area is, or is intended to be 20 hectares or more

The EIA process consists of the following two very closely interlinked processes:

- A technical process, which entails the identification and management of possible environmental issues/concerns; and
- A public participation process, which requires public consultation in order to assist in the identification of possible environmental and/or social issues and/or concerns.

Project Team

The Project Team will identify potentially significant issues and assess these impacts in terms of their significance in accordance with the guidelines for EIA published by the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT).

The EIA Project Team includes:

ORGANISATION	SPECIALIST	SPECIALIST FIELD
Interdesign Landscape Architects (ILA)	Mrs. K. Botes / Ms. C Coetsee	Environmental Assessment Practitioners
Dr Johnny van Schalkwyk	Dr. Johnny van Schalkwyk	Heritage Impact Assessment
ECOREX Consulting Ecologists CC	Mr Warren McClelland	Fauna & Flora Assessment
Ecotone Freshwater Consultants	Mr. Michiel Jonker	Aquatic Assessment & River Delineation
WSM Leshika Consulting (Pty) Ltd	Mr. Carel Haupt	Geotechnical Investigation and Hydrogeological Evaluation
I-Scope	Mr. Mader van den Berg	Visual Impact Assessment

Public Participation Process (PPP)

Public Participation is any process that involves the public in problem solving or decision-making and forms an integral part of the EIA process. The PPP provides people who may be affected by the proposed development, with an opportunity to provide

comments and to raise issues of concern, or to make suggestions that may result in enhanced benefits for the project.

Comments and issues raised during the public participation process will be captured, evaluated and included in an Issues and Response Report, which will inform and be incorporated into the Scoping - and Environmental Impact Reports (EIR). The Scoping - and EIR will be made available for public comment.

Approving Authority

As the development falls within a National Park the application for environmental authorization will be submitted to the National Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA). The final Scoping Report and Environmental Impact Assessment Reports will be submitted to DEA. DEA will be responsible for reaching a decision as to whether, and under what conditions, the project may proceed, based on environmental considerations. An environmental authorization or refusal will be issued by DEA based on the information provided in these Reports.

Anticipated Environmental Issues

It is anticipated that the following environmental aspects will be significant and will hence be addressed by the Project Team in the EIA:

- Impacts on flora and fauna (ecological impacts);
- Impacts on water resources;
- Impacts on heritage and cultural resources;
- Traffic; and
- Socio-economic impacts (e.g. visual impact).

Management guidelines will be developed for the abovementioned issues and incorporated in an Environmental Management Plan (EMP). You are welcome to comment on the above list and provide additional anticipated issues and possible impacts which should be addressed and considered as part of the EIA process.

5. Invitation To Participate

We would like to encourage you to participate in this EIA process. Should you wish to be involved, please complete the enclosed registration sheet and return it on or before **Friday 13 August 2010**, to:

INTERDESIGN LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

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