

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

**FOR THE PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF
A STEEL SHED AT THE EXISTING
LOCOMOTIVE TESTING AREA
IN BAYHEAD**

Purpose of this Document

The purpose of this Background Information Document (BID) is to provide Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) with background information about the proposed project and introduce the Basic Assessment (BA) process to be followed. It also aims to inform I&APs on how to fully participate in the BA process and encourages response to documents distributed for review and active attendance at meetings.

What is Proposed and Where?

Transnet Engineering (TE) intends to construct a steel shed over the rail tracks of an existing locomotive testing area at the TE premises in Bayhead in the Port of Durban, KwaZulu-Natal.

The existing Locomotive Testing Area is situated within the TE premises at 311 Solomon Mahlangu Drive, approximately 10km southwest from the Durban City Centre.

The TE premises is used for wreckage salvage, maintenance, repairs and upgrading of coaches, wagons, locomotives and connected elements of the rail component of Transnet.

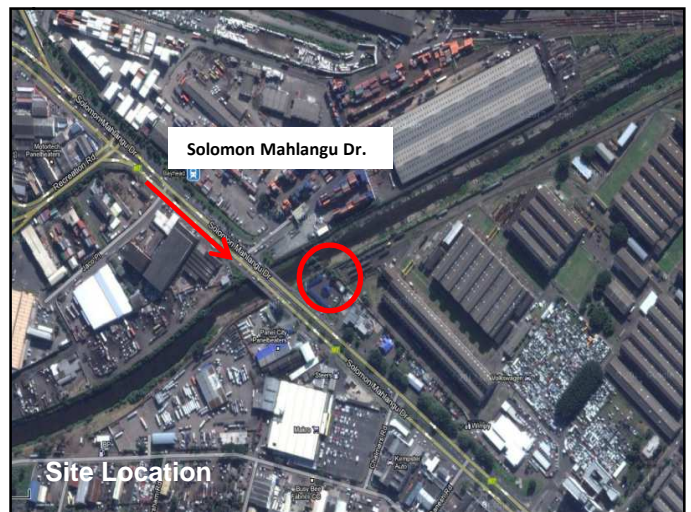
The TE premises link in with the local Transnet rail network. The premises is fenced with a 24-hour 7-day-per-week security access control.

Transnet Capital Projects, the project engineers for the project, have appointed GIBB (Pty) Ltd, as the independent Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) to undertake the Basic Assessment for the proposed intersection upgrade.

Site Description

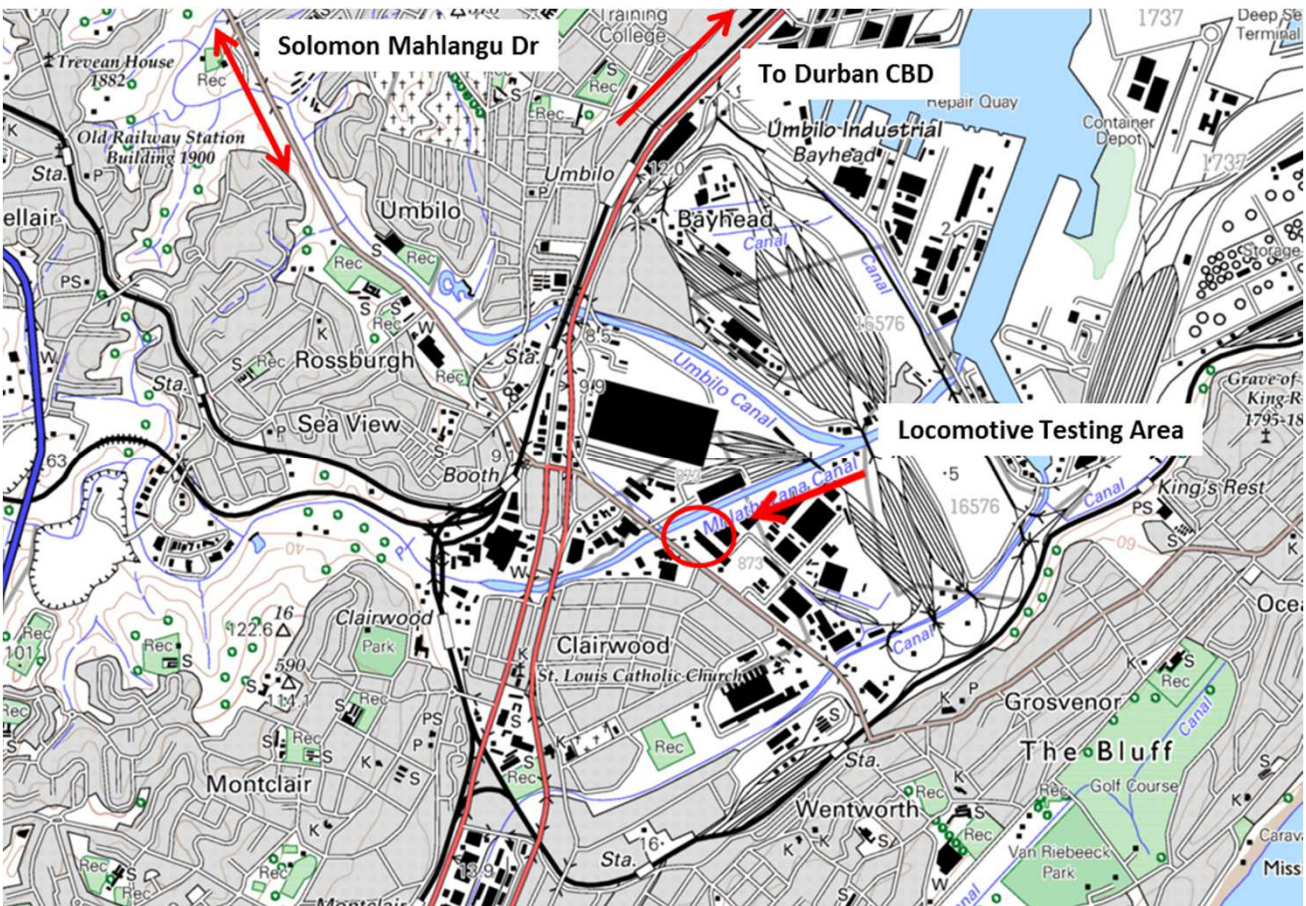
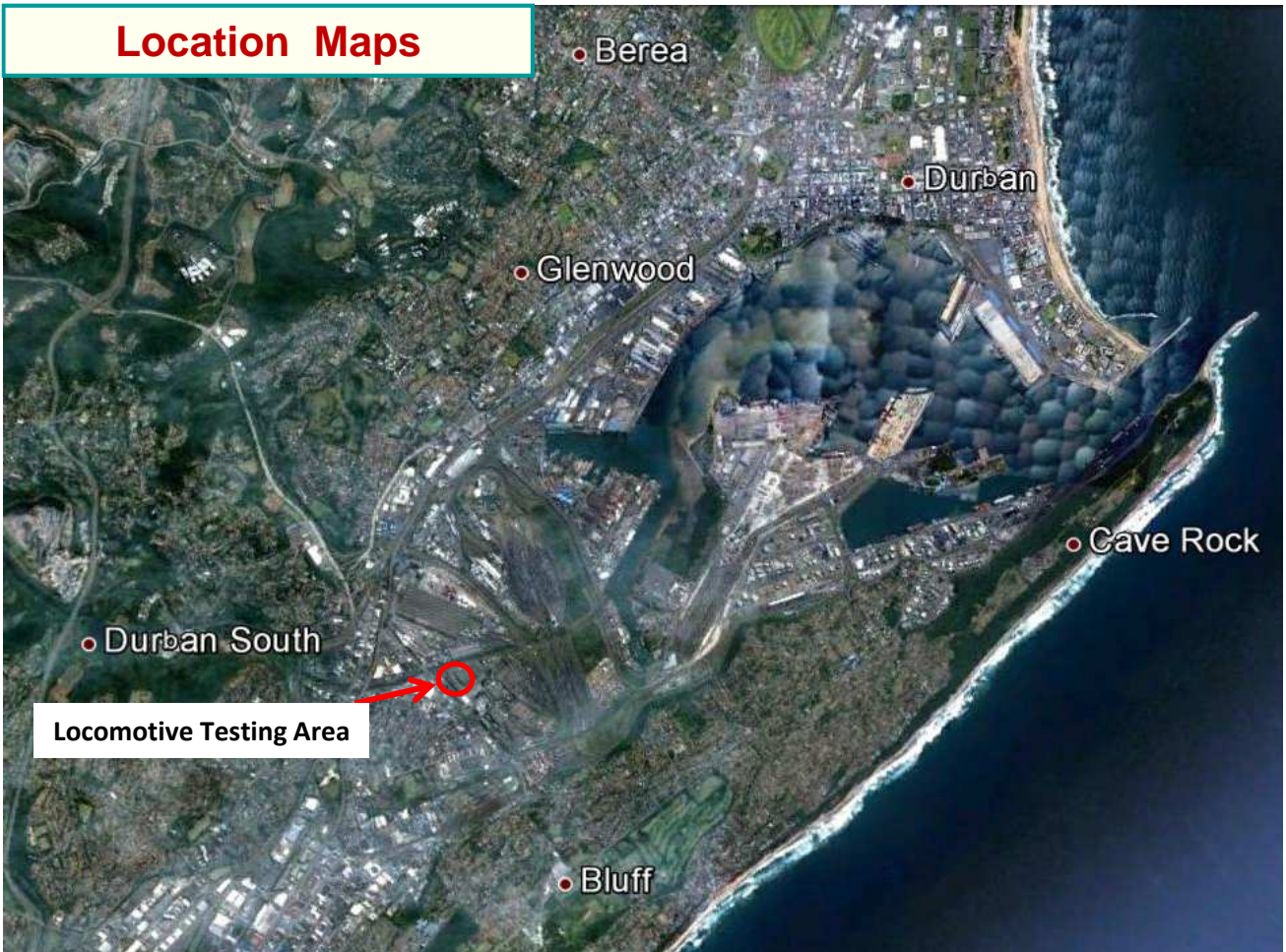
The existing 25 kilovolt Locomotive Testing Area has already been in use for many years to perform brake tests and commissioning of locomotives for Transnet. Therefore the rail tracks are already in place and the site is provided with hardstanding as it is tarred.

The Locomotive Testing Area is currently open to the elements as it is not enclosed. Locomotive testing and maintenance tasks are therefore being performed in the open (see picture below).



Photograph of the existing Locomotive Testing Area

Location Maps



Project Description

Motivation for the Project

The Locomotive Testing Area is currently used to perform brake tests and commissioning of locomotives.

Due to the absence of a building, Transnet employees working in this area, as well as the maintenance equipment they use, are constantly exposed to the elements such as rain, sun, dust and wind. This exposure therefore directly affects the productivity and may affect employees health and safety.

During the rainy season it becomes even more difficult to do the required maintenance operations as the rain and moisture result in work stoppages, damages equipment and affects the quality of the work.

It is for these reasons that Transnet proposes to build a shed over the testing area to shelter employees and equipment from the elements. Transnet states that "This will ensure that our most valuable assets, our employees as well as other assets are protected."

Alternatives

- **Proposed Shed Construction (preferred alternative)** : Construct a steel shed over the rail tracks of an existing locomotive testing area at the TE premises in Bayhead.
- **DO Nothing Option (No-go Option)**: Without the new Shed employees and equipment will continue to be exposed to the elements.
- **Other Alternatives**: Since the proposed project is for addressing a need for shelter at an existing facility, other alternatives are not considered.

Surrounding Environment

The TE Premises occupies ±3.4300 hectares of land and is bordered by the uMhlatuzana Canal to the northwest and the Solomon Mahlangu Drive (Edwin Swales VC Drive) to the south west. The locomotive testing area lies in the south western corner of the TE premises next to other sheds used for rail maintenance operations.



Overlooking the Locomotive Testing Area in a westerly direction



Photo taken while standing on the site looking in a northeasterly direction

Photographs of the existing uncovered Locomotive Testing Area within the TE Premises, in Bayhead.

Note:

- The tarred surface
- This Testing Area within the TE Precinct is currently separately fenced due to the high voltage risk
- The uMhlatuzana Canal borders the TE Premises along the northwestern boundary of the area behind the concrete fence (seen on the left of the second photograph)

Why is a Basic Assessment Required?

In terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (No.107 of 1998) [NEMA] and associated Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations published in August 2010, an Environmental Authorisation must be obtained from the relevant decision-making authority, prior to the commencement of certain listed activities that may result in potential negative impacts on the environment. The proposed project involves, *inter alia*, the following listed activities, as per Government Notice No. R. 544 of NEMA:

<p>GN R544 Activity: 11</p>	<p>The construction of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) canals; (ii) channels; (iii) bridges; (iv) dams; (v) weirs; (vi) bulk storm water outlet structures; (vii) jetties exceeding 50 square metres in size; (ix) slipways exceeding 50 square metres in size; (x) buildings exceeding 50 square metres in size; (xi) infrastructure exceeding 50 square metres or more <p>Where such construction occurs within a watercourse or within 32 metres of a watercourse, measured from the edge of a watercourse, excluding where such construction will occur behind the development setback line.</p>
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A Basic Assessment (BA) must therefore be undertaken in order to obtain the required Environmental Authorisation from the national Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA), the decision making authority for this project.

POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Potential impacts (negative and positive) that may occur due to the proposed construction of the Shed over the existing Locomotive Testing Area:

- **Storm Water Management Impacts:** The site is already provided with hardstanding (tared surface) and runoff is currently directed to the existing stormwater system of the TE Premises. Rainwater from the roof of the new Shed will tie into the existing storm water system which has no discharge to the uMhlatuzana Canal that borders the proposed site.
- **Health Impacts:** The proposed new shed will provide shelter and protection from the elements for Transnet employees working at the Locomotive Testing Area.
- **Productivity Impacts:** The proposed new shed will also allow Transnet employees to work in all weather conditions, thus increasing productivity.
- **Noise Impacts:** The noise impact of the proposed project will be limited to the Construction Phase and as the construction area falls within the confines of TE's property, and is adjacent to properties that are also owned and operated by Transnet, this impact will be minimal.
- **Job Creation, Capacity Building & Skills Transfer :** This is mostly applicable to the Construction Phase
- **Construction Related Dust Impacts:** This will be limited as the site is already tared.
- **Visual Impacts and Aesthetics:** This will be limited as the project will take place on the TE Premises, which already houses neat sheds of a similar design.

Structure of the Basic Assessment Process

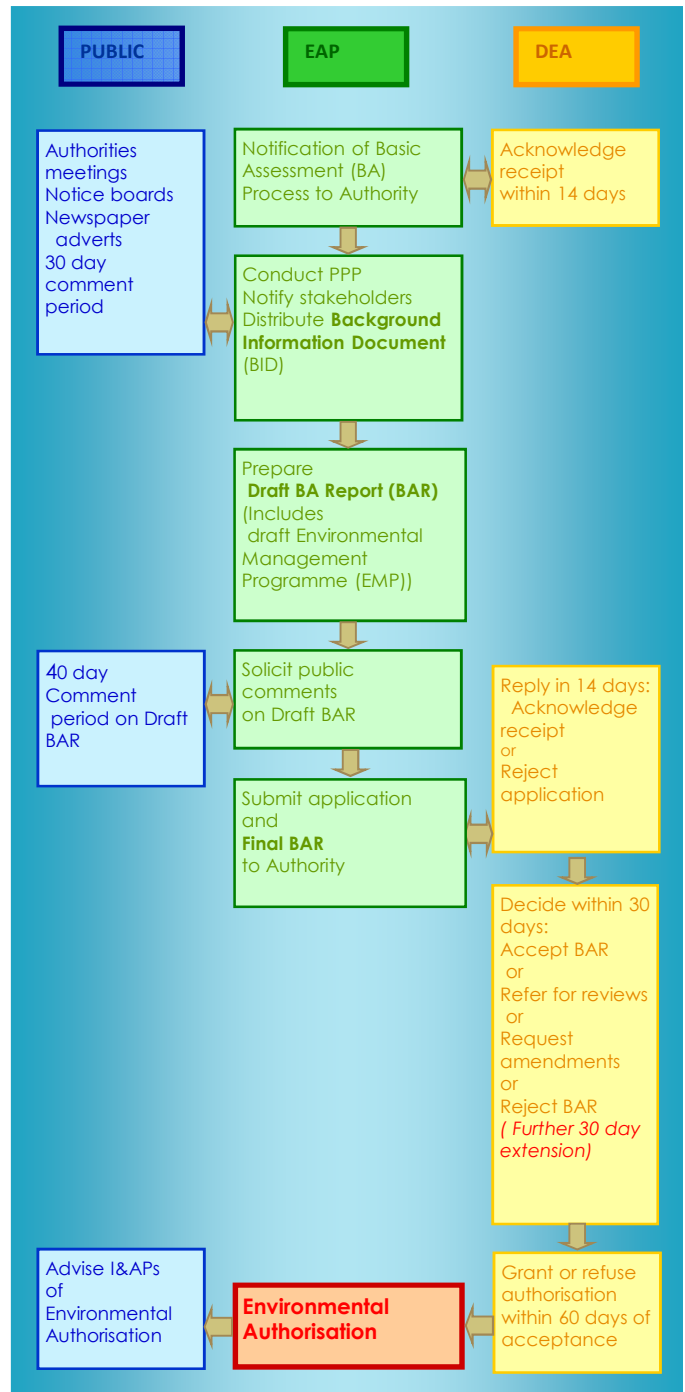
The Basic Assessment (BA) is a legislative tool used to ensure that the potential ENVIRONMENTAL impacts that may occur due to the proposed development are avoided or mitigated (lessened) if an environmental authorisation is granted.

Two levels of impact assessment are prescribed by the NEMA EIA Regulations namely, BA and 'full' Impact Assessment. The type of assessment required is determined by the category or activity into which the proposed development fits. As noted above, the proposed construction of the Shed over the Locomotive Testing Area is listed as a GN R. 544 activity which requires a BA to be submitted with the Application for Environmental Authorisation (DEA confirmed this in writing).

The BA aims to:

- Investigate and gather information on the proposed site, in order to establish an understanding of the area
- Identify Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) and relevant authorities by conducting a Public Participation Process (PPP) (Refer to Page 6)
- Establish how the proposed development activities will potentially impact on the environment
- Identify potential environmental impacts through investigation and PPP
- Describe proposed and potential alternatives
- Describe the environment in which the proposed activity will take place
- Assess all issues and proposed alternatives identified during the PPP in terms of their significance
- Recommend, where necessary, mitigation measures to reduce the significance of potential impacts
- Compile an Environmental Management Plan (EMP) that will advise environmental specifications to be adhered to during the construction and operation phase of the project.

Basic Assessment Process Flow Diagram



NOTE: An **Interested & Affected Party (I&AP)** is any person or organisation that has a direct, business, financial, personal or other interest in, or may be directly or indirectly affected by, the proposed project.

Key IAPs identified

The following have been identified as key I&APs for the project:

- Local authorities (municipalities, government departments, environmental authorities)
- Businesses and Land Owners in and around the Bayhead area
- Road Users (light and heavy vehicles) and Trucking Companies

Public Participation

Activities of the PPP

The public will be invited to register as an I&AP and take part in the PPP through the following:

- Media Notice placed in the Southern Star
- Site display notice boards
- Distribution of the BID and comments form
- Stakeholder meeting/s
- Public meeting
- Distribution of the Draft Basic Assessment Report (BAR) for public comment.

Note: All information will be made available on request

The Purpose of PPP

The PPP aims to inform a wide range of I&APs about the proposed project and the environmental process to be followed.

It is a tool to allow the public to exchange information and to express their views and concerns on the proposed development for which the BA is being conducted. All contributions from I&APs must be fully documented, evaluated and responded to in the BA.

The PPP assists in identifying potential issues that will help focus and enhance decision-making.

The BA will be open and transparent to the public through this process.

All Registered I&AP'S will be continuously updated on **events** throughout the BA process.

How to Register as an Interested and Affected Party?

All I&APs are invited to participate by registering with and submitting their comments and contact details and an indication of any direct business, financial, personal or other interest which they have in the application, by post, fax or email to:

Ms Katherine de Jong

Tel: (031) 267 8560

Fax: (031) 266 3310

Email: kdejong@gibb.co.za

Post: GIBB

P.O. Box 1365, Westville, 3630

GIBB will distribute further information on the project to all registered I&APs. Registration by **01 March 2013**, will allow timeous distribution of information.

A Public Information Sharing Meeting will be held on 21 February 2013 at 17:30pm at Transnet Engineering, 311 Edwin Swales Drive, MPE Boardroom, Admin B building, second floor.



Interested & Affected Parties: Registration and Comment Form



Name	
Organisation or Resident	
Telephone Number	
Physical	
Postal	
Fax	
Email	

Please state your interest (i.e. direct business, financial, personal or other interest) with respect to the approval or refusal of the application for the construction of a steel shed over the existing Locomotive Testing Area in Bayhead.
Please state any concerns, suggestions and/or potential impacts that should be investigated during the BA.