



DRIVING THE BUSINESS OF TRADE AND INVESTMENT

In partnership with



HAZELMERE DAM  
Tourism Development

# CONTENTS

Introduction	2
Facilities at the Dam	3
Proposed Tourism Developments	4
Technical Aspects	7
Property Details	8
Related Developments	8
Competitor Analysis	12
Issues to be Resolved	12



## Introduction

Facilities at the Dam

Proposed Tourism Developments

Technical Aspects

Property Details

Related Developments

Competitor Analysis

Issues to be Resolved

There has been significant renewed interest in the development of tourism facilities at the scenically located Hazelmere Dam, 40km outside Durban in the eThekweni Municipality of the province of KwaZulu-Natal. Despite the proximity of the dam to the city and beaches, and its natural attractions, limited tourism development has taken place here. A key reason for this renewed interest is the planned construction of the new International Airport. The airport and the Dube TradePort (DTP) is expected to significantly change the tourism potential of the area. A recently concluded feasibility assessment has determined that sites adjacent to the dam should be developed with the following tourism facilities:

- Lodge or Hotel (3 \*)
- Self-Catering Accommodation
- Camping and Caravanning
- Business Centre
- Team-Building and Adventure Tourism Centre
- Nature Reserve
- Picnic and Braai Facilities
- Restaurant

This feasibility assessment pointed to the clustering of these products, taking advantage of the natural attractions, tranquil surroundings and existing game reserve to offer a unique natural tourism attraction close to an international airport.

Introduction

## Facilities at the Dam

Proposed Tourism Developments

Technical Aspects

Property Details

Related Developments

Competitor Analysis

Issues to be Resolved

The dam is well visited, mostly by local residents for the purpose of water sports (including jet-skiing, canoeing, water-skiing), fishing, picnicking and for game-viewing (including impala, zebra, wildebeest and a host of different bird and butterfly species). Lock-up facilities are available for boat storage.

The dam offers camping and caravanning, and provides accommodation in the form of two self-catering units. The dam also has two conference facilities, located at the entrance to the dam, which is used by both individuals and companies.



Introduction

Facilities at the Dam

Proposed Tourism Developments

Technical Aspects

Property Details

Related Developments

Competitor Analysis

Issues to be Resolved

#### Lodge or Hotel (3 \*)

An accommodation establishment set in the natural surroundings of the dam to accommodate first-night guests using the new airport as their point of arrival in KwaZulu-Natal, before they set out on tours. The competitive advantage of such accommodation will be the natural surroundings, which will be further underlined if it is incorporated into the game reserve, with game roaming freely around the establishment. This will need to be developed in such a way as to provide a unique establishment that blends into, rather than stands out from the environment in which it is situated. It will also serve to accommodate business travellers, both those making use of the business centre facilities proposed below and those coming to Durban for meetings and the like, who are looking for a venue in close proximity to the airport and related businesses.

#### Self-Catering Accommodation

There will be a need to continue providing self-catering accommodation at the dam for first-night stays for tourists and for businessmen and women searching for middle-range quality and cost accommodation or for the privacy usually offered by such accommodation. As with the above, the style and location of this development will determine its competitive advantage and it is suggested that the lodge or hotel should be in close proximity to the self-catering accommodation. This accommodation will also be attractive to the local market, to families and to persons participating in team-building, adventure or sports activities.

#### Camping and Caravanning

Camping and caravanning is currently provided at the dam and it is suggested that this should be continued at the dam. These facilities are well utilised and can be expected to generate significant demand from adventure tourists, those attending team-building, and persons taking part in sports at the dam. This accommodation may be provided in relative isolation from other accommodation facilities.

Introduction

Facilities at the Dam

Proposed Tourism Developments

Technical Aspects

Property Details

Related Developments

Competitor Analysis

Issues to be Resolved

### Business Centre

It is evident that there is significant current demand for meeting, incentive, conference and events facilities provided in a natural environment as there is currently limited supply of such facilities in Durban. Furthermore, the development of the DTP and international airport will increase the demand for these facilities given their proximity to the airport and related activities. Finally, it is important to recognise that the DTP will include significant business development in the area, with related opportunities for a meeting facility in close proximity. This business centre should include meeting and conference facilities, with catering, and should be in close proximity to accommodation facilities and team-building facilities as detailed below.

### Team-Building and Adventure Tourism Centre

Research has shown a significant demand for team-building facilities in the area. As with the business centre details above, such demand is expected to increase. As team-building is often associated with adventure activities, it is proposed that the two are combined into a single facility from which both team-building and adventure tourism activities may be co-ordinated, either together or independently of each other. This centre will need to be relatively close to some form of accommodation and to the Business Centre in order to combine team-building with workshops and the like taking place in the centre.

Introduction

Facilities at the Dam

**Proposed Tourism Developments**

Technical Aspects

Property Details

Related Developments

Competitor Analysis

Issues to be Resolved

#### Nature Reserve

The continued existence of a nature reserve at the dam is important as a unique selling point of all the above attractions. The comparative advantages of the facilities listed above are dependent on the unique natural attraction in the area and of game roaming around the facilities.

#### Picnic and Braai Facilities

These facilities are currently well used by local tourists who spend the day at the dam participating in family or water-sport activities. Therefore, these facilities should continue to be available at the dam.

#### Restaurant

Due to the relative isolation of the dam from other tourist developments, the provision of food will be essential to the feasibility of the other products listed above. Restaurant(s) should be provided as part of the lodge or hotel, or in close proximity to such a development. Other facilities listed above will require catering and the possibility therefore exists of more than one restaurant in the area. A restaurant will also increase the desirability of the area for "lunch meetings" or for persons conducting business in the area to do so at the dam rather than at the airport or competing facilities on the coast.



Ideally, all tourism developments should blend into the natural surroundings, as in the case of Pafuri Game Reserve in this photograph. This will contribute to the uniqueness of the area as a natural attraction.



Introduction

Facilities at the Dam

Proposed Tourism Developments

Technical Aspects

Property Details

Related Developments

Competitor Analysis

Issues to be Resolved

The Hazelmere Dam area falls within the jurisdiction of the eThekweni Municipality and serves mainly as a water infrastructure resource for the northern areas of the municipality. Although the area is rural in character, nearby services and bulk infrastructure contribute to the immediate potential of the dam for further tourism development.

The main access route, via the town of Verulam, is tarred and maintained and leads directly to the current recreational and launching facilities at the dam. Electricity and water supply exist in the area, although water-borne sanitation reticulation is not provided. Current households and agricultural operations in the vicinity of the dam effectively make use of on-site sanitation, as is common practice throughout the varying topography of Durban.

Various recreational facilities found at the dam are all located within a secure area with controlled access to the public. All activities on the water and on land are managed by agents on behalf of the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry to ensure quality, safety and security. Current recreational facilities on land include numerous picnic and braai facilities frequented by families, and situated within a small nature reserve area with buck and zebra roaming freely. Fishing at the dam is popular and opportunities are plentiful, both from the shore as well as from small boats on the water along the shoreline. Ablution facilities are provided as well as recreational halls and storage facilities for water craft. There are three launch sites ensuring fast and effortless access to the water for a variety of sports.

The dam is used extensively during weekends by water craft, including jet-ski's and motorised boats and even radio controlled power boats. Visitors are also treated to international standard F1 power boat racing and an annual adventure triathlon event held at the dam.

Introduction

Facilities at the Dam

Proposed Tourism Developments

Technical Aspects

Property Details

Related Developments

Competitor Analysis

Issues to be Resolved

Hazelmere Dam is situated on the Mloti River about 5km north of the town of Verulam. The dam was built to provide domestic water supply to the rapidly growing urban and industrial users on the North Coast. Apart from supplying domestic water, the dam also supplies water for irrigation farming, mainly sugarcane, between the dam and the sea. The dam is approximately 18km from Umhlanga and nestles within a serene rural area of the the eThekweni Municipality. The site represents one of the most pristine inland areas of opportunity in the direct vicinity of major economic activities associated with the northern areas of the municipality, including the Umhlanga New Town Centre and the Dube TradePort. The land directly abutting the dam is state-owned, while the majority of the tourism development opportunities envisaged are on privately owned land adjacent to the dam, especially in the north and south. It is envisaged that any tourism investment in the area would be a combination of public investment in infrastructure upgrading and private land development to unlock the full potential of the area.

#### Raising of the Dam Wall

When the Hazelmere Dam was originally envisaged and designed in 1972, it was considered that storage in the dam would be small relative to the mean annual run-off to the Mloti River at the dam site. The dam was subsequently designed and built to facilitate a later raising of the full supply level by seven metres. The dam was equipped with suitable slots and first stage built-in arts to enable installation of radial gates on the spillway crest. To further facilitate the anticipated raising of the wall, the State expropriated most of the land that would be required once the dam wall was raised.

The current increase in investment and development along the northern coastal areas in, especially, the residential, tourism and industrial sectors has necessitated investigations into the feasibility of now raising the dam wall, as originally envisaged. The findings of the investigation supports the increase of the dam storage capacity by raising the wall by seven metres and it is anticipated that upon environmental authorisation, the said radial gates will be fitted by 2009. From an investment perspective, the raising of the dam wall will add an additional 4km of shoreline to the dam, presenting significant tourism investment potential.

Introduction

Facilities at the Dam

Proposed Tourism Developments

Technical Aspects

Property Details

**Related Developments**

Competitor Analysis

Issues to be Resolved

### Dube TradePort and new International Airport

The planned new International Airport and Dube TradePort development is a mere 5km from Hazelmere Dam and is expected to have a significant impact on the feasibility of tourism development in the areas surrounding the development.

Dube TradePort is a multifaceted development concept which is anchored by an international airport with multiple passenger terminals and a runway length sufficient to support the largest aircraft in circulation – opening Durban up to direct international flights, which the current airport is unable to accommodate. The new airport will replace the existing Durban International Airport and effectively relocate the epicentre of airborne tourism traffic into the province to a site adjacent Hazelmere Dam, quantified as per the table below.



Introduction

Facilities at the Dam

Proposed Tourism Developments

Technical Aspects

Property Details

Related Developments

Competitor Analysis

Issues to be Resolved

Table of projected estimates of tourists arriving in KwaZulu-Natal through the new international airport (2010-2035)

Type of Estimate	Growth Rates Applied	2005 (Actual)	2010 (Forecast)	2015 (Forecast)	2020 (Forecast)	2035 (Forecast)
<b>Lowest Estimate</b>						
Domestic tourists	- Baseline Growth (-10%)	3 115 120	1 848 274	1 096 624	650 653	135 901
International and regional tourists	- Low Growth (8%)	238 057	349 785	513 948	755 159	2 395 490
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>3 353 178</b>	<b>2 198 058</b>	<b>1 610 572</b>	<b>1 405 811</b>	<b>2 531 392</b>
<b>Mid-Estimate</b>						
Domestic tourists	- Low Growth (2,5%)	3 115 120	3 524 473	3 987 617	4 511 623	6 534 175 (37,5%)
International and regional tourists	- Baseline Growth (13,6%)	238 057	450 374	852 050	1 611 969	10 915 201 (62,5%)
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>3 353 178</b>	<b>3 974 847</b>	<b>4 839 667</b>	<b>6 123 592</b>	<b>17 449 376</b>
<b>High Estimate</b>						
Domestic tourists	- High Growth (7%)	3 115 120	4 369 117	6 127 913 (80,6%)	8 594 715 (70,1%)	23 713 089 (29,6%)
International and regional tourists	- Baseline Growth (20%)	238 057	592 363	1 473 989 (19,4%)	3 667 756 (29,9%)	56 509 201 (70,4%)
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>3 353 178</b>	<b>4 961 480</b>	<b>7 601 902 (100%)</b>	<b>12 262 471 (100%)</b>	<b>80 222 290 (100%)</b>
Airport passenger capacity***		3 592 000	6 200 000	7 500 000	7 500 000	7 500 000

Introduction

Facilities at the Dam

Proposed Tourism Developments

Technical Aspects

Property Details

**Related Developments**

Competitor Analysis

Issues to be Resolved

\*\*\* INR, 2006, assuming first stage with one runway only is constructed.

Note: Actual figures are used for 2005, and 2010-2035 are forecast estimates.

Source: INR: 2006; Ch12, p30

As per the above table, by 2010 more than 2 million (2 198 058) passengers (low case) would be utilising this airport and seeking additional tourism-related services in the immediate area. If the medium case is realised then almost 4 million (3 974 847) tourists would enter KwaZulu-Natal via the airport. High case estimates for 2010 are at 6 million (6 200 000) tourists through this portal. When these figures are combined with the spend per head indicated in the table below there is a clear indication that this influx of tourists will be bringing considerable spending power with them – and if facilities are available in close proximity, at Hazelmere Dam, some of this spend could be captured within eThekweni.

Table of spending profiles from DTP in relation to forecasted tourism arrivals (Rm)

Growth Estimates	2005 (Estimate)	2010 (Forecast)	2015 (Forecast)	2020 (Forecast)	2035 (Forecast)
Lowest Estimate	R3,058	R2,903	R3,322	R4,321	R12,584
Mid-Estimate	R3,058	R4,405	R6,772	R11,045	R26,127
High Estimate	R3,058	R5,639	R11,116	R14,775	R28,870

(INR: 2006; Ch12, p31)

Introduction

Facilities at the Dam

Proposed Tourism Developments

Technical Aspects

Property Details

Related Developments

**Competitor Analysis**

**Issues to be Resolved**

This growth in tourist numbers and change of locale for disembarkation opens up a series of exciting opportunities for the sector, and especially at the Hazelmere Dam location – notable amongst these are the following:

- First-night accommodation facilities (hotel, chalet, lodge);
- Conferencing facility;
- Corporate Tourism; and
- Getaway location.

In terms of competing tourism attractions, the area has many hotels, B&Bs, lodges and tourism activities, concentrated mainly on the coast. However, there are very few attractions in natural settings with close access to wildlife and a nearby international airport. It is clear, therefore, that any tourism development in the immediate surrounds of Hazelmere Dam will have to offer tourists something unique and be developed according to the area's comparative advantages, in order to overcome competing products. It is important, at this point, to note that there is a distinct lack of competition in the area under study in terms of nature-based tourism which therefore presents an ideal opportunity area for developments at Hazelmere Dam.

There are also planned hotel developments for the Dube TradePort and airport site, which could decrease demand for tourism accommodation at Hazelmere Dam. However, if the dam development is undertaken as a unique tourism attraction, building on the natural surroundings of the area, this competition could be overcome.

While the feasibility assessment for tourism development at Hazelmere Dam pointed to significant potential for tourism development, a number of issues need to be resolved. These are as follows:

- Land around the dam is privately owned and approaches for development will need to be made to these owners;
- Bulk infrastructure provision and upgrades will be required for tourism development; and
- Rezoning of the land will be required.



Department of Water Affairs and Forestry



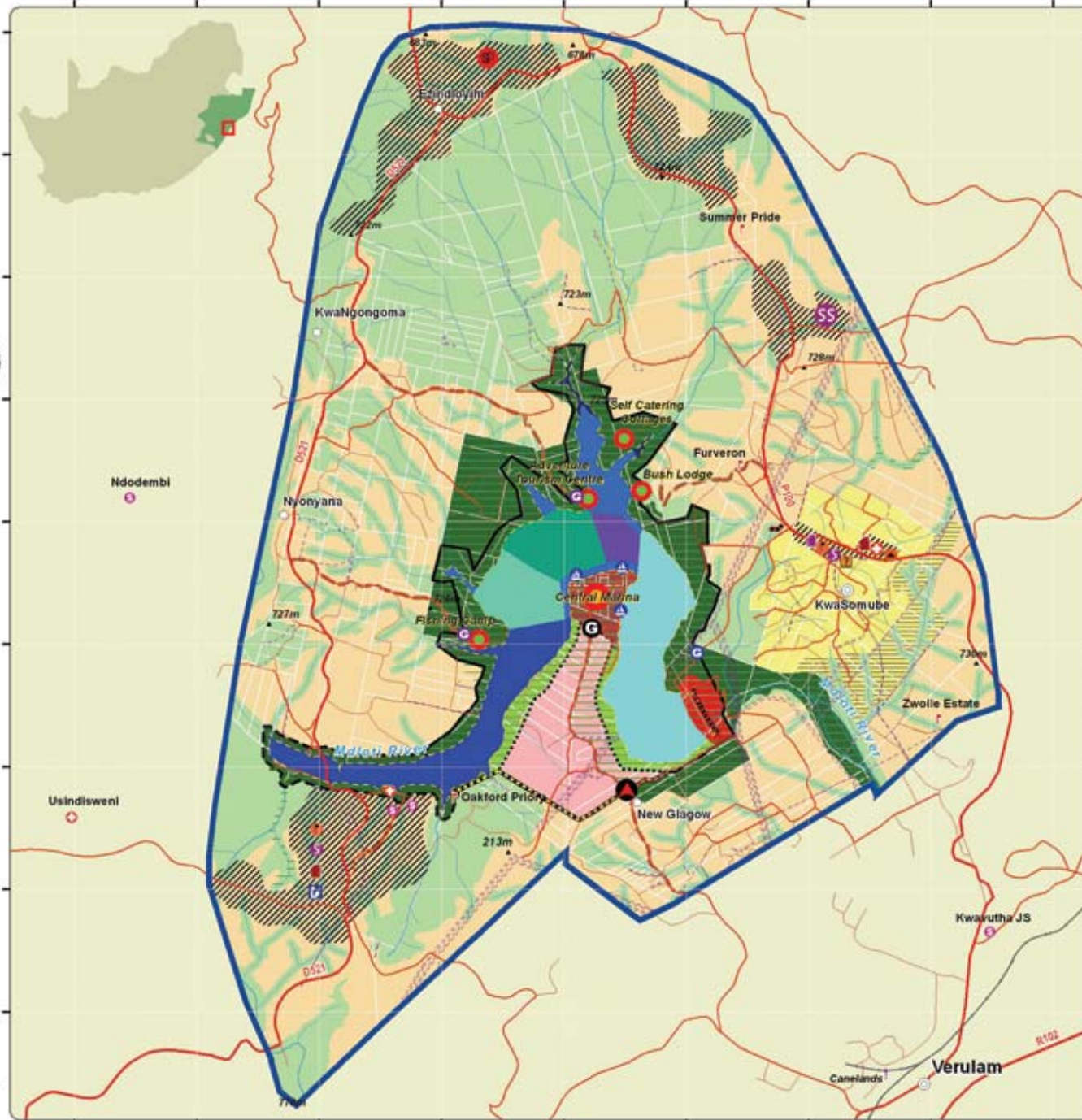
Trade & Investment KwaZulu-Natal South Africa



Projection system: Transverse Mercator Central meridian 31 WGS 84

Maluleke & Luthuli ARCHITECTS

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# Hazelmere Dam Precinct Plan

- Hazelmere Dam precinct boundary
- Dam wall
- DMOSS
- Development Proposals**
  - Tertiary Education
  - Library
  - Senior Secondary
  - Sportsground
  - Post Office
  - Old Age Home
  - Municipal
  - Community Hall
  - Clinic
  - "A"
- Precinct Development Nodes
  - Development core: tourism (high)
  - Development core: tourism (low)
  - Management access
  - Main access gate (boating)
  - Sense of arrival
  - Proposed access point: secondary
  - Launching/mooring site
- Security fence
- DWAF 2007
- Co-managed boundary
- Proposed extension
- Access: public
- Hazelmere Dam extent (after modification)
- Precinct Utilisation**
  - Hydrological zones**
    - No-go zone
    - Non-motorised
    - Dead slow zone
    - Motorised access: training
    - Motorised access: jetskis (race course)
    - Motorised access: jetskis
    - Motorised access: general recreation
  - Terrestrial zones**
    - Conservation (DMOSS)
    - Conservation: proposed
    - Public access: low impact
    - Marina activities
    - Eco-estate
    - Safety zone (100m around wall structure)
    - Agriculture potential
    - Residential: KwaSomube
    - Residential expansion
    - Housing project: DLA



Province of KwaZulu-Natal  
South Africa

