

Umgeni Road, Durban

Windermere, Berea, Ethekewini Municipality 4001

The site is located in the north of Durban and along the East coast of South Africa. It is within close proximity of the Moses Mabhida Stadium, which hosted the 2010 World Cup. The Umgeni Road site is strategically located near a sports facility and city stadium and acts as an important interface between the city centre, its outskirts and Durban Train Station. The site also borders the Ilsaah Ntshangase Road which provides access to the Sun Coast Entertainment Centre and nearby beaches.

Durban has experienced unprecedented growth due to rural-urban migration and has seen a rise in the need for affordable housing. This site forms part of eThekweni's broader initiative to combat the housing crisis by ensuring 40% of new homes built are affordable or social, with 10,000 units set to be built across the city.

Students are expected to develop proposals that: (1) Develop low-cost social and 'gap' housing, particularly in the eastern area of the site, for low to middle-class populations to reduce the housing backlog within the city.

(2) A mixed-use 'centre' in the North-Western area of the site, including commercial, retail, social, and public services.

(3) Improve accessibility, and promote equal access to green spaces and public transport services.

Given that site acts as an important connection between the northern suburbs (Morningside, Durban North, etc.) and the city centre, students are encouraged to develop proposals that embrace the site's location and provide a variety of mixed services.

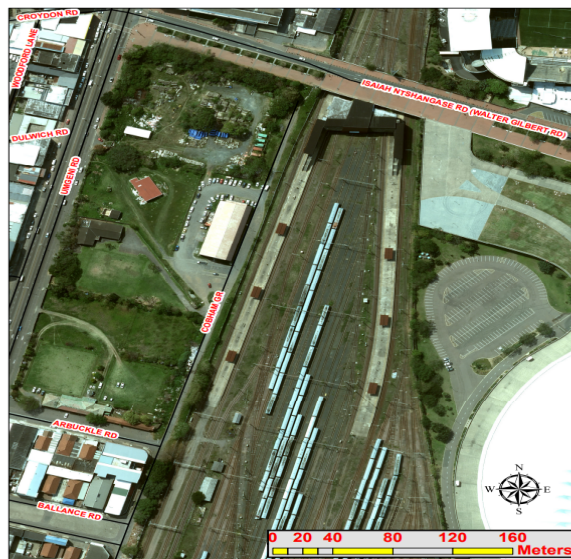


Figure 1: Umgeni Road Site - Durban City Council

Approx. site area:

4 hectares, hosting the potential to construct 1560 residential units.

Key Information:

The site is composed of old sports fields and currently hosts various sports fixtures and occasionally parking during events hosted at Moses Mabhida Stadium.

Priority areas & main expectations:

1 - Balance the need for affordable housing with other land-use opportunities, such as market-delivered housing.

2 - Promote mixed urban areas (commercial, residential, recreational)

3 - Ensure residents are well-connected to public transport to commute into the city

4 - Embed clean energy into site construction and promote the circular use of resources, considering Durban's net-zero 2050 target

5 - Integrate urban greening practices to create spaces that boost climate resilience (against flooding, the urban heat island effect) and spaces that are used recreationally, like parks and squares.

6 - Repurpose existing cultural heritage buildings for community use

Presentation of the site and development expectations

Firstly, the **primary focus** for the development of the site is on the **delivery of social and gap housing**, as well as **well-located affordable housing options**. The [Inner-City LAP](#) recommendations suggested that this site should prioritise residential settlements, due to housing backlogs that were exacerbated by people being displaced by the 2022 floods. Residential concentration should be promoted towards the eastern edge of the site.

Well-designed public space and adequate social facilities will be critical to the success of dense inner-city social housing. Formal public squares, pocket parks and neighbourhood parks, and recreational facilities will also be important to support the social life of neighbourhood development.

Proposals should consider the importance of promoting residential community land use. These include a crèche and a small park and which should be located centrally within the development. An area for this development has already been located within site. This recreational area is sufficient to accommodate three 'combi' court-type facilities. The option of increasing the size of this area to service a larger catchment should be determined during the detailed feasibility and design phase. The public right-of-way system must be considered an integral part of the public space network.

Secondly, the site could also support a **variety of land uses**, but these should be compatible with inner-city residential development. Proposals should promote mixed land use to support the development of a neighbourhood centre towards the western and northern edges of the site. This includes social and public services. For example, the site is well situated for light and service industries, as an extension to the existing concentration located on Umgeni Road.

Finally, in addition to the priority focus of developing affordable housing, the northernmost portion of the site has a high potential for **sustainable commercial development** (retail, hospitality, office etc..) that fosters a green economy, given that:

- The site is located in relation to the sports facility and primary city stadium. These spaces are well-managed and have undergone significant urban environment upgrades.
- The site is accessible to a wide socio-economic cross-sectional demographic.
- The location supports active ground floors for commercial use/community services, with further residential units located on the floor above.
- The site is highly visible given the Umgeni and Isaiah Ntshangase Roads carry high volumes of people in and out of the city.

On the site, the Stamford Hill Bowling Club and KZN Badminton Club facilities currently host occasional sports fixtures. These are the only buildings required by law to be preserved, as they are over 60 years old and are protected by heritage legislation. Students should consider the importance of these clubs in relation to the development of a sports facility close to the site.

However, students are encouraged to develop proposals that retrofit and repurpose other existing buildings for community uses, such as developing a crèche, to support the new residential population.

The current development on the site consists of six small to moderate-sized building clusters arranged in separate pockets across the site. In their designs, students should consider the following characteristics of the site:

- The development of the site is in line with the priorities of the city which aims to respond to housing backlogs.
- Location near major sports amenities.
- Excellent connectivity along a major transport route.
- The location is adjacent to a passenger rail station.
- Interface space between the Berea suburbs and Inner City.

City climate priorities and specific environmental challenges

The eThekweni Municipality has embarked on the development of climate change-related programs to develop context-specific responses and has emphasised the importance of mainstreaming climate actions into all aspects of municipal work.

Developed in partnership between eThekweni Municipality's Climate Adaptation Branch and its Energy Office, the [Durban Climate Change Strategy \(DCCS\)](#) was initially approved by the eThekweni Municipal Council in 2015. This was followed in 2019 by the development of the [City Climate Action Plan](#) which aligned the city's climate actions with the objectives of the 2015 Paris Agreement.

This has led to the revision of the DCCS and the development of a detailed Integrated Implementation Plan, which will guide the city's implementation efforts through the DCCS Implementation Framework.

The City has developed a number of policies to address the 2 most greatly-felt effects of climate change in the area:

- Flooding within the inner city due to hard surfaces
- The urban heat island effect due to the amount of heat-absorbing concrete

A key approach the City has taken in adapting to climate change has been through [Community- Ecosystem-based Adaptation \(CEBA\)](#), where community members manage adjacent ecosystems to secure job benefits and improved ecosystem services. Although this is an urban site, students should be aware of Durban's reputation for promoting and supporting natural ecosystems, as evidenced by Durban's Management Open Space System (D'MOSS).

In line with these priorities, students should climate change adaptation approaches, such as urban greening, resilient buildings and green energy into their proposals.

DCCS Mission statement

"The people of Durban will collectively build governance, social, environmental and economic adaptive capacity and resilience to climate change while achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050."

Specific planning rules and regulations

The [Inner-City LAP](#) recommendations promote the development of a range of accommodation options for people across the socio-economic spectrum, with at least 40% of new housing provided as a mix of social housing, 'gap' or affordable housing. In response to work undertaken in the preparation of the LAP, six sites in the inner city were identified with the potential for supplying social and 'gap' housing to the market. The eThekweni Human Settlements Department has targeted 10 000 units within the social and 'gap' housing market categories for the inner city. This aligns with the requirements for qualification under the National Government's Mega Human Settlements programme.

Language requirements

Proposals must be submitted in English.

City-specific Awards

Students will be given an opportunity to present their concept to the Municipal Institute of Learning (MILE) research symposium which is attended by senior officials within the municipality and external stakeholders.