



higher education
& training

Department:
Higher Education and Training
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**Towards New Universities in
Mpumalanga and the Northern Cape**

Annexure 02
Summary overview of Sites visited

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1. Introduction

Three towns in the Northern Cape and five in Mpumalanga were visited from November 2011 to March 2012. In total 18 properties within or around these towns were investigated and studied. A variety of issues and informants are currently investigated, to ascertain which of the towns and sites are best suited to accommodate a new university. The primary objectives and key selection criteria have been established in order to evaluate all the sites. Included in this document is a brief description of the various sites visited and observations on some of the critical constraints.

2. Northern Cape Province

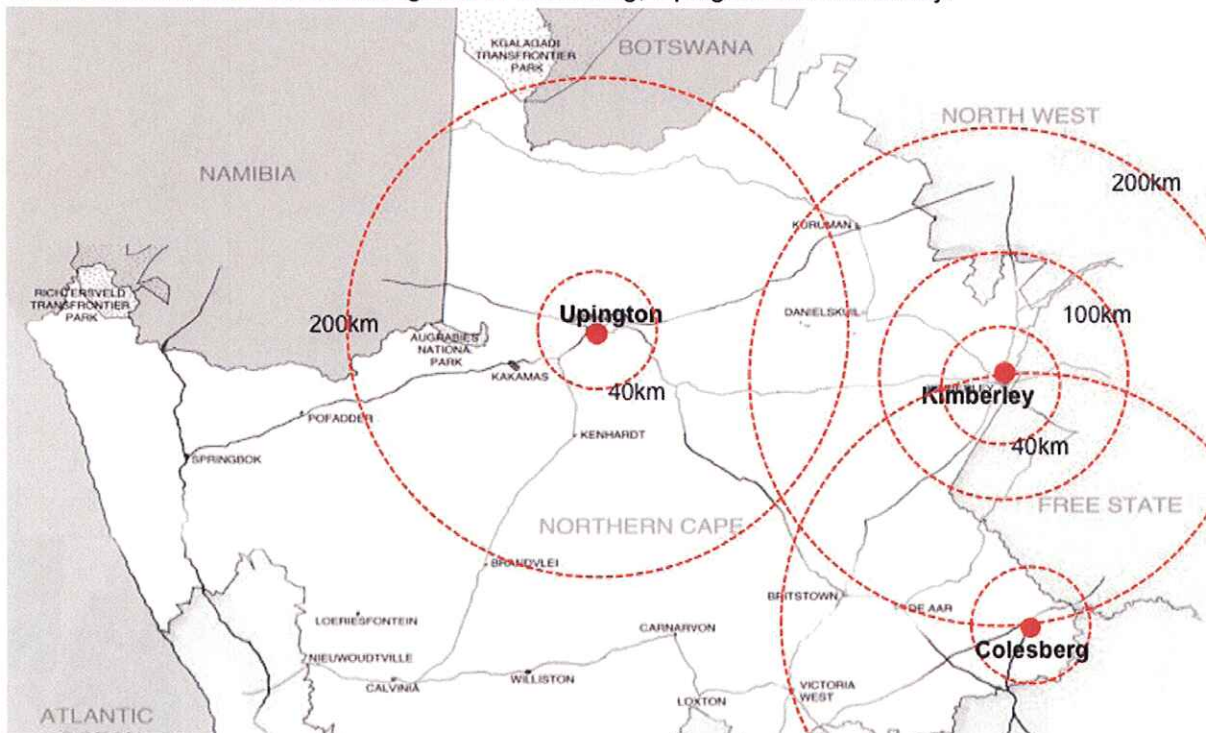
The vast and arid Northern Cape is by far the largest province, and represents up to nearly a third of South Africa's land area. Yet it has the country's smallest population, around 1-million people, and an extremely low population density of three people per square kilometre. The capital is Kimberley, on the province's eastern border. Other important towns are Upington, Springbok, Kuruman, Colesberg and De Aar.

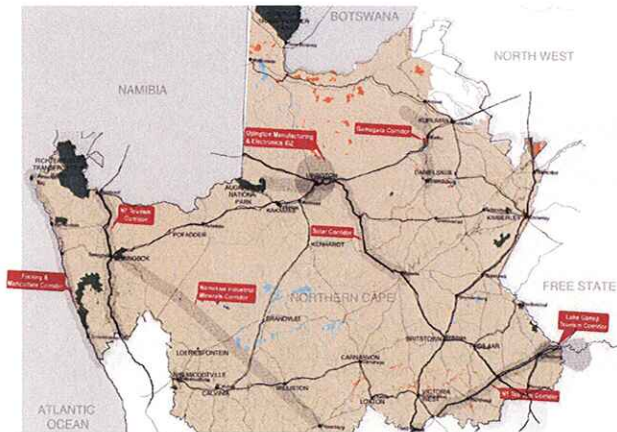
The Northern Cape is rich in minerals, with the country's major diamond pipes found in the Kimberley district, with diamond exploration also along the Orange River. The Sishen Mine near Kathu is the biggest source of iron ore in South Africa, while the copper mine at Okiep is one of the oldest mines in the country. Copper is also mined at Springbok and Aggenys. Other minerals found here are asbestos, manganese, fluorspar, semi-precious stones and marble.

The province has fertile agricultural land in the Orange River Valley, especially at Upington, Kakamas and Keimoes, where grapes and fruit are cultivated intensively. Wheat, fruit, peanuts, maize and cotton are produced at the Vaalharts Irrigation Scheme near Warrenton. The interior Karoo, depends on sheep-farming, while the karakul-pelt industry is one of the most important in the Gordonia district of Upington.

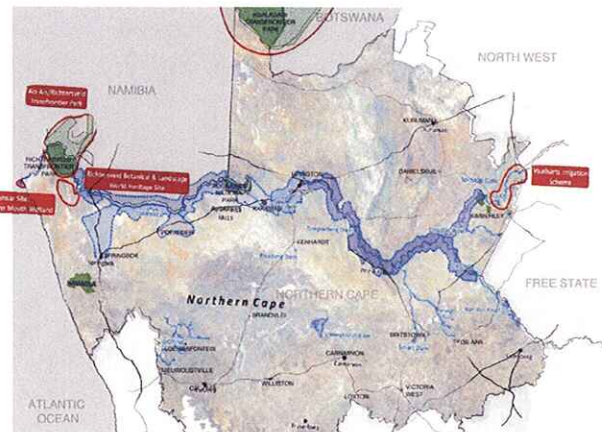
The Spatial Development Framework for the Northern Cape places great emphasis on the development along the Orange River, establishing infrastructure links between mining area and ports, and the integration on various levels with established national infrastructure.

Seven different sites were investigated in Colesberg, Upington and Kimberley.





Provincial Land Use Plan and Development Focus

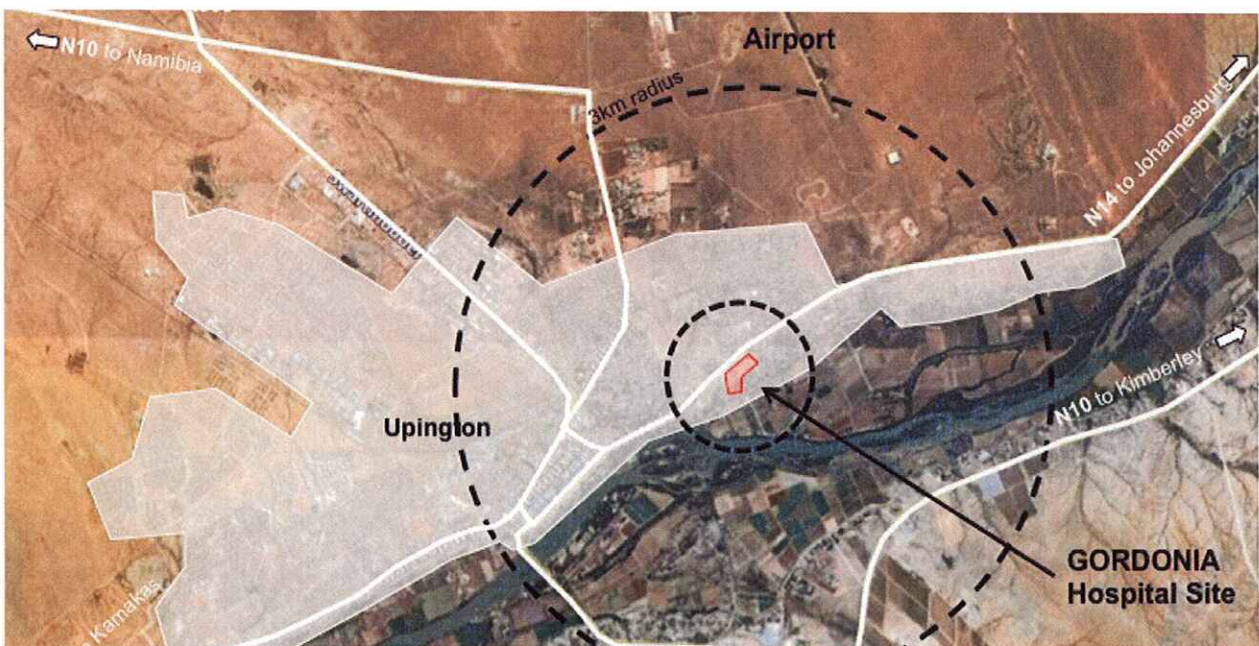
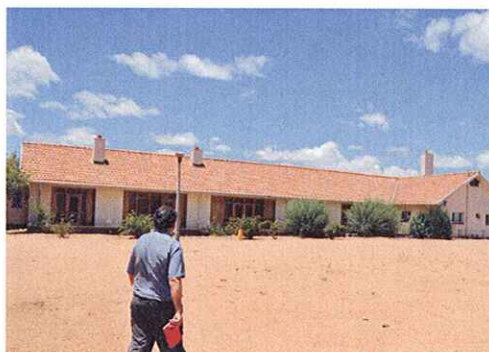


Provincial Development Framework and Resource Plan

2.1 //Kara Hais Municipality, Upington, Gordonia Hospital

The property is an approximately 4,5ha site, which formerly housed the Gordonia Hospital. The property consists of a variety of administrative buildings, medical wards, medical suites, support services and nurses accommodation. The original hospital structures fall under the National Heritage Resources Act.

Recommendation: This is not an appropriate site as the main seat of the new university, as the property is too small, with limited surrounding expansion opportunity. The existing buildings would require extensive restructuring if they were to be converted into academic space.



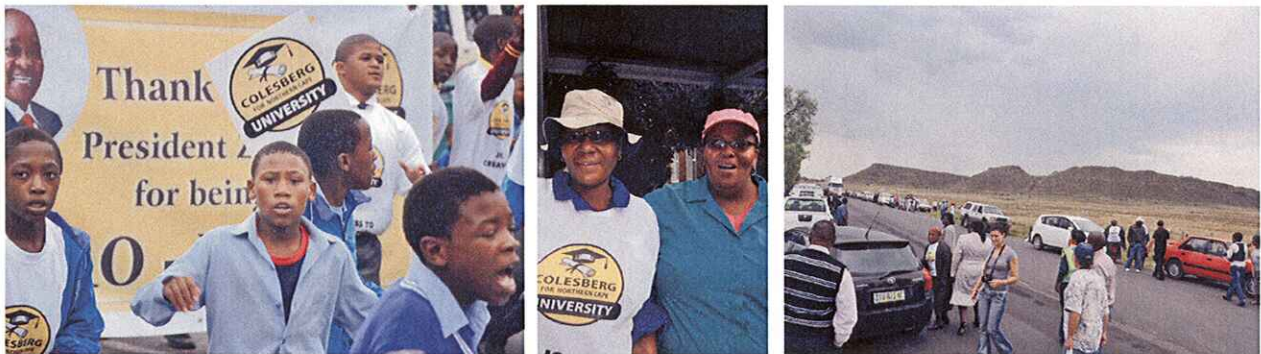
2.2 Pixley Ka Seme District, Umsobomvu Local Municipality, Colesberg

The first site in Colesberg is a 256ha municipality-owned property to the west of the historic town centre, and forms part of the future expansion area for the town. The site is currently zoned agriculture and although bordering the town, is not serviced with any bulk infrastructure. The property is linked directly to the town and the N1 interchange, which is currently under construction.

A second site in Colesberg is a privately owned property of 254 ha to the south of the town. It is located at the junction of the N1 to Cape Town and N9 to Noupoort / Port Elizabeth. The owners are willing to donate the required land for the university to the DHET. The property is still zoned agriculture, and would require township establishment, environmental assessment and the provision of bulk infrastructure.

Recommendation: Both sites in Colesberg are not recommended as a main seat of the new university, as both share the same constraints and challenges. The greatest constraint is related to the town and its ability to accommodate the seat of the university. The town is small and has limited amenities, housing, public facilities and recreation opportunities to attract and retain high-performing academics.

In the future growth of the new university, the town should not be excluded from consideration as a site of delivery.



2.3 Sol Plaatje Municipality, Kimberley

a. Galeshewe Teachers Education College

The Teachers Education College is a well maintained campus of approximately 8ha in size, located in the heart of Galeshewe, 6km from the Kimberley CBD. The campus consists of a variety of teaching spaces, some residences and limited sport fields.

Recommendation: The Teachers Education College was not considered as it is too small to accommodate the new university in the Northern Cape.

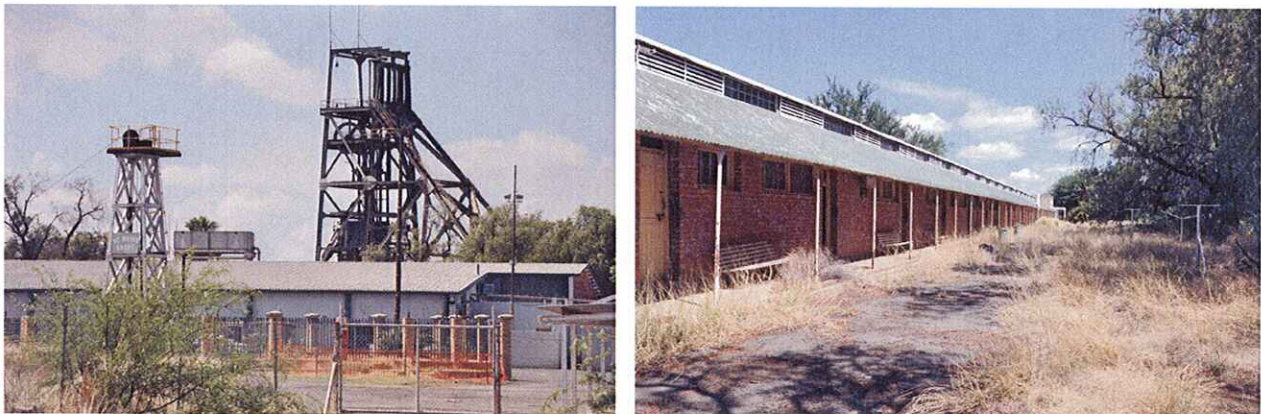


b. De Beers Workers/Miners Hostels

The property is an existing workers/mining hostel, located within the mining belt on the western edge of Kimberley on a site poorly integrated with the city. The property donated by De Beers consists of a 300x100m courtyard structure with dormitory accommodation facing onto shared amenities, recreation areas and office buildings. The hostel on its western boundary has a vacated hospital, in poor condition. The buildings fall under the Heritage Act, which make conversion and effective modification costly and time consuming. The property is located within an existing mining operation, with concerns that these are inappropriate environmental conditions for a university.

Although the site offered is too small, the surrounding land might also be available. The additional land is to the north of the hostel and approximately 70ha in size. However the additional land is compromised by past mining activities.

Recommendation: *Both the hostel and the additional land are not considered suited as main seat of the new university, as the properties are poorly connected to the city, and the environmental and geo-technical factors would present significant challenges.*



c. Kimberley Inner City. NIHE and FET Properties

The site is located in the very heart of the town around Oppenheimer Park at the junction of national roads leading to Bloemfontein, Cape Town, and Gauteng. Set within the inner city are two NIHE and two FET College properties. The spatial context is well established as it offers a variety of amenities, green spaces and public facilities. The location is rich in historical content and offers an opportunity to strengthen the civic character of the city. The Inner City Site is surrounded by a variety of schools and public sport facilities, which could be shared in future. The Sol Plaatje Municipality is highly supportive of a university within the inner city, as this would assist with their urban regeneration plans. Officials have indicated a willingness to assist with land assembly as the city owns a variety of properties and facilities in the inner city.

Constraints and concerns centre around future growth and expansion of the university. The conversion of existing buildings to suit academic use, and the limited availability of sport and recreation area require further study.

Recommendation: *This is a good possible site for the university as it is centrally located, highly visible with surrounding support amenities and facilities. It already has established higher education facilities and offers potential for quick academic establishment. The new university can be established primarily on publicly owned land. The site offers a unique opportunity to establish a university town, building on existing infrastructure and amenities. The new university can occupy the vacuum left by the vacating mining industry and provide new impetus to the town and its people. The inner city site best answers the criteria set for establishing a new university in the Northern Cape*



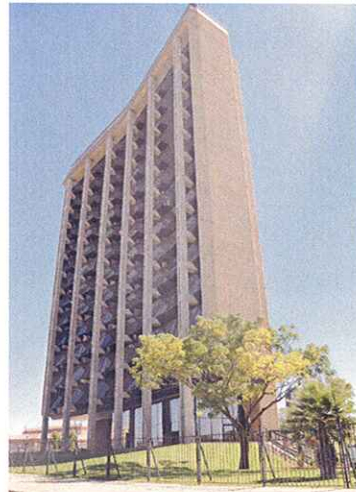
NIHE Admin. Building, with De Beers building in background



NIHE Facilities in inner city



FET College



De Beers Office Tower Block



Oppenheimer Memorial Garden



Vacant Land at Hoffe Park



Civic gardens at the hart of the Inner City

d. Northern Cape Legislature Site and Surrounds

The Northern Cape Legislature has been located on a large tract of municipal owned land between the historical city centre and the formerly segregated township of Galeshewe. The location has great symbolic value, but the development around the legislature has not fully materialized. The open space around the legislature offers a potential opportunity to establish the new university. Current plans around the legislature include the provision of housing and the location provincial government departments. Providing new bulk services to the sites has been raised as a concern, as the Sol Plaatje Municipality is currently suffering from low electricity supply.

Recommendation: *The site is not recommended as future seat of the new university as land availability and bulk services supplies are a concern.*

3. Mpumalanga Province

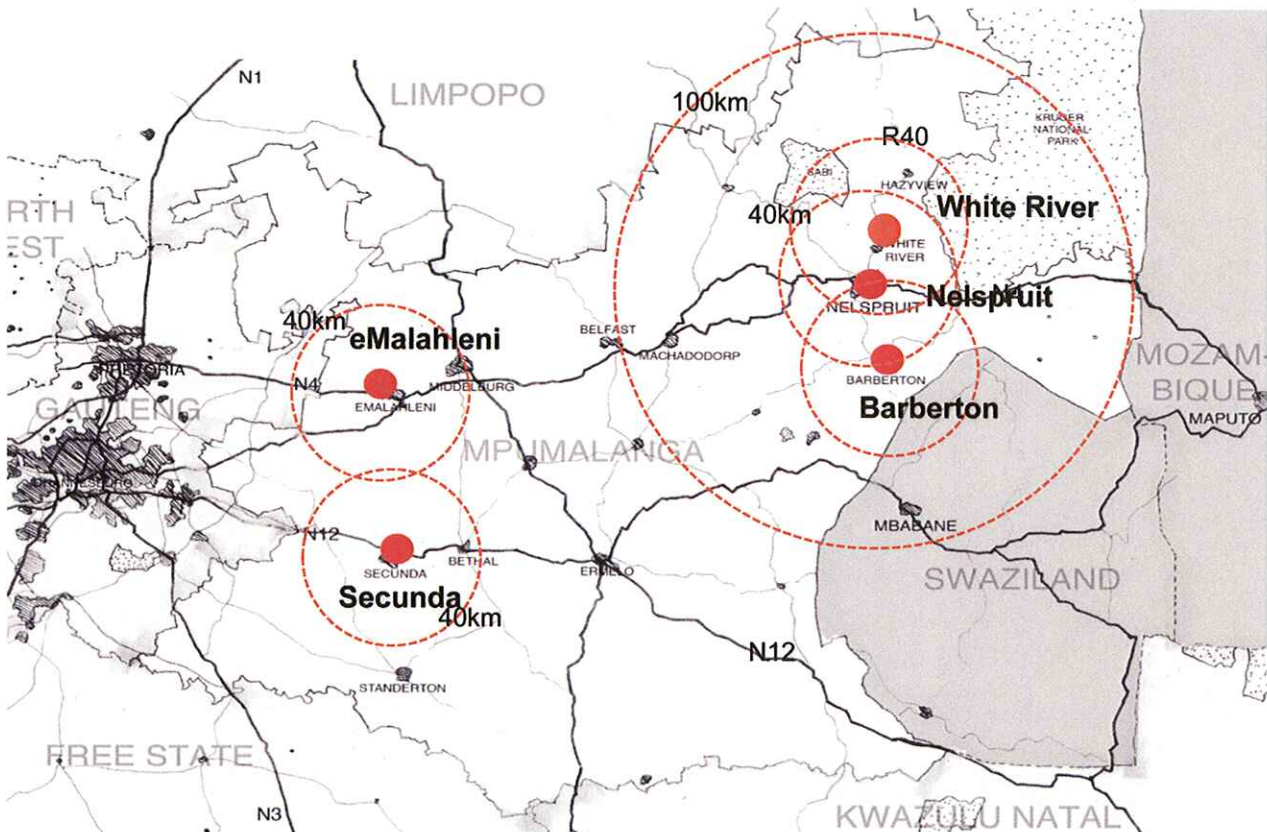
Bordered by Mozambique and Swaziland to the east and the Gauteng to the west. The Province is situated mainly on the high plateau grasslands of the Middle veld, which roll eastwards for hundreds of kilometres. In the northeast, it rises towards mountain peaks and terminates in an immense escarpment. In places this escarpment plunges hundreds of metres down to the low-lying area known as the Lowveld. With a total area of 76 495 square kilometres, Mpumalanga is the second-smallest province after Gauteng, taking up 6.3% of South Africa's land area and with a mid-2010 population of 3.6-million people.

Mpumalanga is highly accessible, with a network of excellent roads and railway connections, as well as a number of small airports. The Kruger Mpumalanga International Airport became operational in 2002. Nelspruit is the capital, and the administrative and business hub of the Lowveld. eMalahleni is the centre of the local coal-mining industry; Standerton, in the south, is known for its large dairy industry; and Piet Retief in the southeast is a production area for tropical fruit and sugar. A large sugar industry is also found at Malelane in the east; Ermelo is the district in South Africa that produces the most wool; Barberton is one of the oldest gold-mining towns in South Africa; and Sabie is situated in the forestry heartland of the country.

Mpumalanga produces about 80% of the country's coal and remains the largest production region for forestry and agriculture. Mining, manufacturing and electricity contribute to 41.4% of the province's GDP, with the remainder from government services, agriculture, forestry and related industries. Tourism and agriculture are potential growth sectors.

The Maputo Development Corridor, (N4) which links the province with Gauteng and the Port of Maputo in Mozambique, heralds a new era of economic development and growth for the region. As the first international toll road in Africa, the corridor is set to attract investment and release the local economic potential of the landlocked parts of the country. The R40 Corridor leading from Nelspruit north, linking with the mining belt that stretches across Limpopo is equally important.

11 different sites were investigated in eMalahleni, Secunda, White River, Barberton and Nelspruit.



3.1 Secunda: VUT Campus Secunda: Carl Bosh Street

The current VUT Campus is operating from rented space located within the industrial area of Secunda. Three properties of approximately 6500 square meters have been poorly converted to accommodate students and staff. Current teaching conditions are extremely poor.

Recommendation: *The VUT Campus in Secunda is rented, thus not considered as possible site for the Mpumalanga University. The location of Secunda in relation to the Mpumalanga Province is not considered ideal, as it falls more under the spatial sphere of Gauteng.*

3.2 eMalahleni: TUT Campus eMalahleni

The existing eMalahleni TUT Campus linked to the TUT in Thswane, is a neat and well run facility on an approximately 17 hectare site. It is also well located in terms of regional and local connections. The current campus offers academic places for 2200 students with some land available for expansion. No on-campus student accommodation is provided, requiring all students to commute. The campus also offers limited sport and recreation amenities.

Recommendation: *The TUT Campus is not considered as a seat of the new university as it is too small with limited expansion opportunities. The site could be considered as possible future site of delivery.*



3.3 Barberton

A 135 ha municipality owned property to the east of the town has been offered as a site for the new university. The property is zoned agriculture and although bordering town, is not serviced with any bulk infrastructure. The town is a keen host for the new university. The town and its surroundings offers opportunities for specialised academic research.

Recommendation: *The site and town are not ideally suited to host the main seat of the new university, as the town is relatively difficult to access and is sparsely populated with limited amenities, housing, public facilities and recreation opportunities to attract and maintain high-performing academics.*

In the future growth of the new university, the town should not be excluded from consideration as a site of delivery.

3.4 White River

Two Properties were indicated as possible sites for the new university around White River.

a. Portion 2 and 5 of the farm Waterfall No. 65

The site is located six km north east of White River and belongs to the Mpumalanga Housing Finance Corporation (MHFC) and measures 89 hectares. The property consists of three portions that require consolidation.

Recommendation: *Although the property is of suitable size, the site is not recommended as seat for the new university, as it has poor access, lacks infrastructure and roads and offers no amenities and public facilities. The time frames required to complete town planning approval, rezoning and township establishment are also a concern. The property would have to be purchased from the MHFC.*

b. The farm Nooitedacht No. 62 - JU

The site is situated along the R40 approximately 2 kilometres north of White River. The site is 100 hectares, subdivided into numerous privately owned portions. A substantial retail development has already been established on the property.

Recommendation: *The site is not recommended as main seat of the new university, as it privately owned by multiple private parties selling at commercial rates. The site also lacks infrastructure and roads and offers no amenities and public facilities.*



3.5 Nelspruit

Five different properties were investigated and visited in the greater Nelspruit area.

a. Broham African Rural Investment

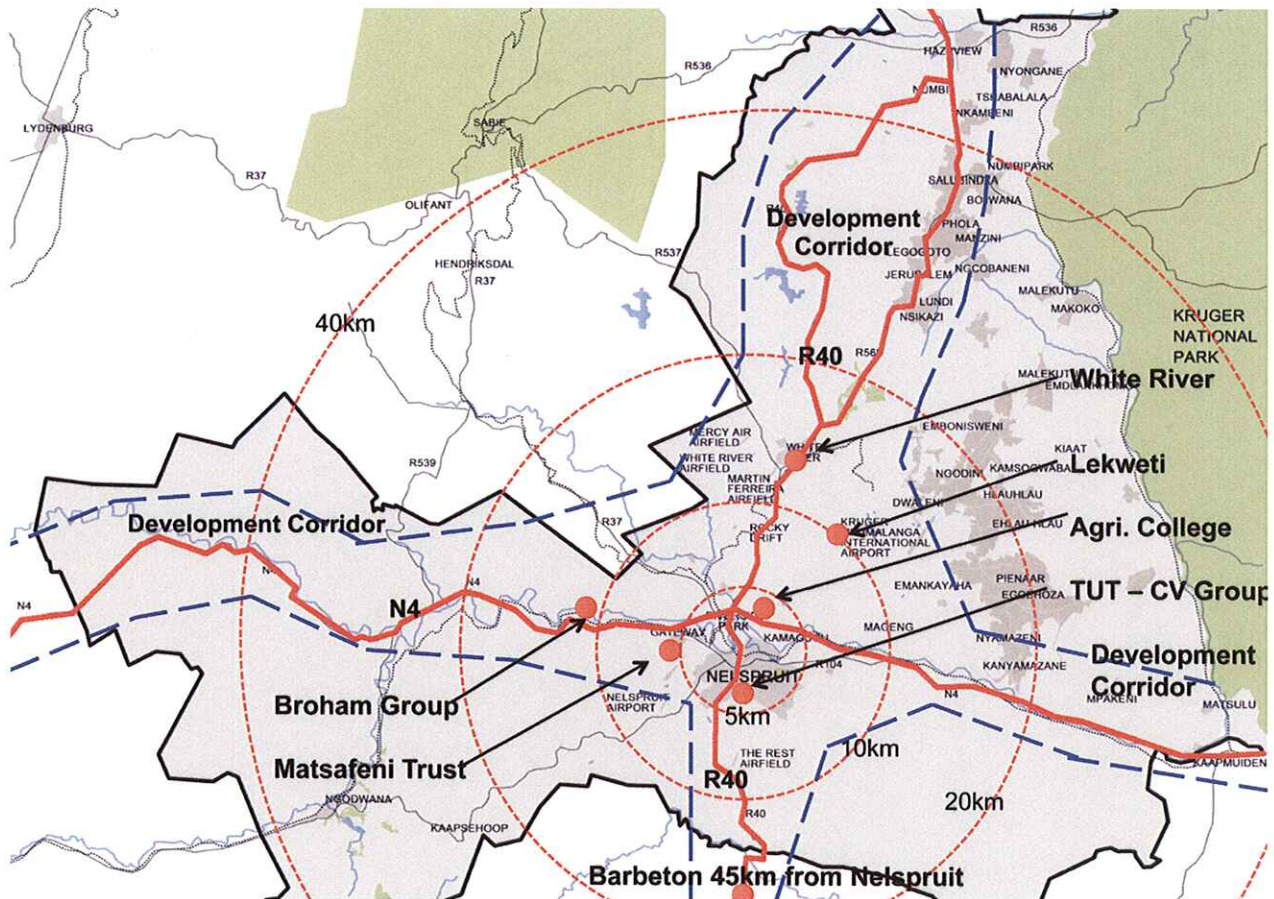
The property is a 500 hectare agricultural farm, approximately 13 kilometers west of Nelspruit on the N4. Access to the farm is via a single track weir over the Crocodile River. The site is very scenic. There are no bulk infrastructure provisions, environmental assessments, roads or planning applications. This is a private property offered at commercial rates.

Recommendation: *The site is excluded from serious consideration as possible location for the new university, as the property is located far from any amenities and support facilities.*

b. Likweti Lifestyle Estate and Golf Course Development

The property is part of a private lifestyle golf estate development, approximately 25 kilometers from Nelspruit. This is a private property offered at commercial rates.

Recommendation: *The site is excluded from serious consideration as possible location for the new university, as the property is located far from any amenities and support facilities.*



Mbombela District Municipality: Location of different sites visited. Plan shows development corridors and settlement patterns

c. TUT Mbombela Campus and CV Investment Group

The TUT Mbombela Campus is considered together with the CV Investment Group land as one possible delivery site. The site is located on the R40, 3 kilometers south of the Nelspruit CBD. The TUT Campus is a well run, neat campus but seriously constrained by the steep topography of the site. The CV Group site to the north of the TUT campus offers an expansion opportunity. The CV Group land, although large enough, offers environmental and geotechnical concerns. It is a privately owned property offered at commercial rates. The link to the TUT Mbombela Campus offers attractive academic expansion opportunities.

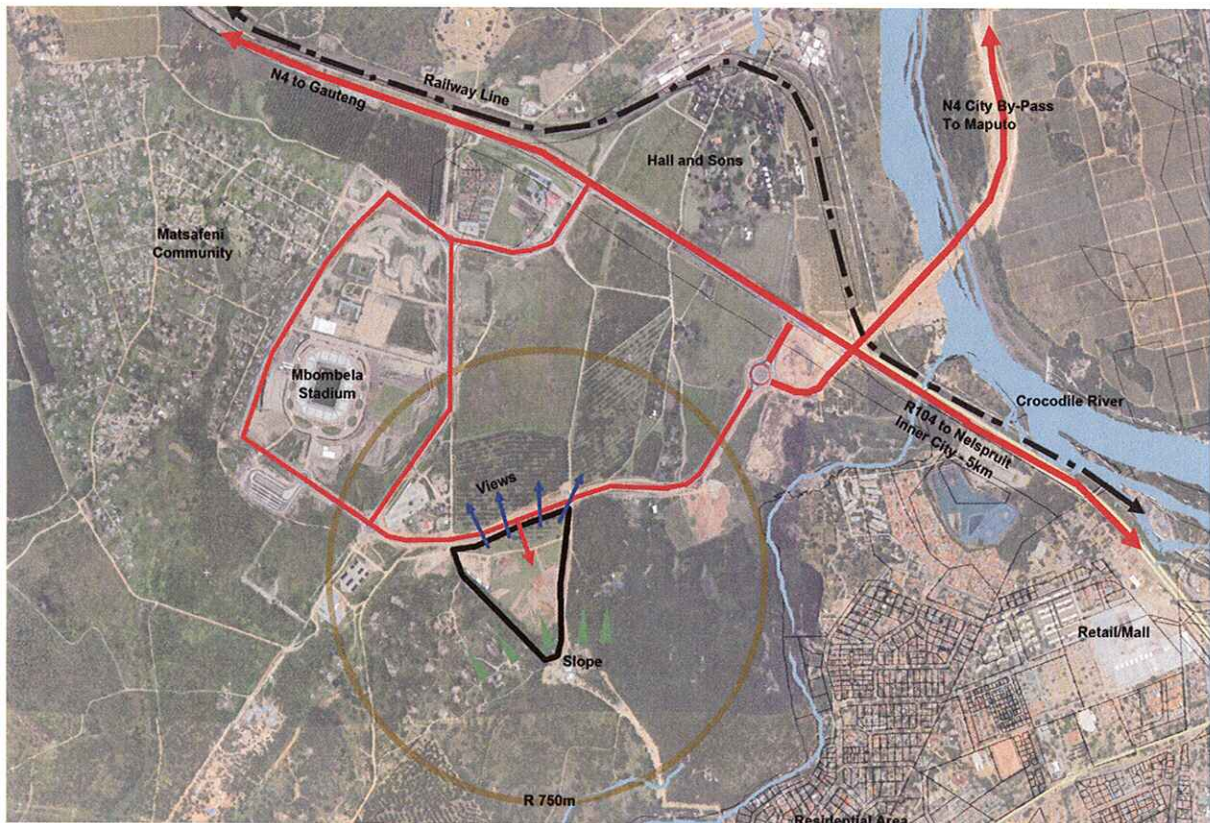
Recommendation: Despite significant potential, this site is not recommended as main seat for the new university due to a number of constraints including the steep topography, environmental concerns and cost of privately owned land.



d. Matsafeni Trust / Hall and Sons Group

The site is a 45 hectare property donated by the Matsafeni Trust and Hall and Sons for purposes of building the university. The land is part of an established development project, serviced with bulk infrastructure and roads. The site is directly south of the Mbombela Stadium, and connected to the N4 and R104 leading to Nelspruit CBD. The property has a moderate north orientated slope and is highly visible when entering Nelspruit. Although the offered 45 hectare is too small, the owners have indicated that additional land can be made available.

Recommendation: *The site has significant potential. However the realisation of this potential would require a number of challenges to be addressed. These include the insufficient size of land, relationships to surrounding future development and the multiple development partners.*



e. Lowveld Agricultural College

The existing Lowveld Agricultural College is on a 240 hectare, well established and cared for property. It is on a gentle slope facing south overlooking the Mpumalanga Legislature. The property is directly linked to both the N4 and R40 movement corridors and is highly visible and prominent. It currently offers 240 student places, with residences, sport amenities and administration buildings. It is owned by the National and Provincial Government with established bulk infrastructure roads and services. This site offers quick operational and academic establishment.

Recommendation: *The Lowveld Agricultural College answers all of the criteria set for the establishment of a new university in Mpumalanga, and is recommended as such. The property is of adequate size, well located along the R40 and N4 corridors and is iconic in terms of access and visibility. It offers quick operational establishment and ease of conversion into a university campus. There is sufficient land to create new identity, expand the academic programme, offer student and staff accommodation and sport and recreation amenities. Substantial surrounding land acquisition opportunities also exist.*

