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# Kassier Road upgrade kickstarts Westown Square Development Phase 1a

The upgrade of Kassier Road has begun, enabling the development of Phase 1A of the Shongweni catalytic project which was launched as the Westown Square in August this year, writes Sohana Singh.

**T**HE Westown development is a catalytic project that will be the new economic hub of Durban's outer west, anticipated to generate some R15 billion in new investment over the next 10 to 15 years. The development is led by Fundamentum Property Group.

The mixed-use precinct of urban and green spaces at Shongweni is perfectly positioned between Durban and Pietermaritzburg on the country's main economic arterial, the N3. The first development activity within the Shongweni Urban Development, a 2 000-hectare eThekweni catalytic project, Westown has approved development rights of approximately 517 000m<sup>2</sup> of bulk floor area.

"The upgrade of Kassier Road is long overdue and the commitment by the City for the funding of this work has enabled Westown to begin development," said Fundamentum CEO Carlos Correia. "This upgrade, along with supporting bulk infrastructure (water, wastewater, and electricity) has been triggered by the first phase of Westown's development – Westown Square. This is a retail high-street offering with open and convenient spaces that connects people to shopping, dining, and commercial and recreational amenities. This project is widely recognised as a catalyst for the upliftment of the entire region."



Infrastructure upgrades include two new bridges and a total make-over of the existing two-lane Kassier Road across the M13 and N3 into four lanes with a centre median. A new pedestrian bridge will also be added over the N3 along with a new loop ramp and bridge over Kassier Road providing direct access into Westown. Because of the extent of the Westown development and the number of sub-precincts that will come on stream over time, the Kassier Road upgrade will

be phased. Phase 1 is split into sub-phases A and B and covers the 3km section from Alverstone to Milky Way (MR559). Phase 2 is from Alverstone to the R103 (Old Main Rd).

### Phase 1A and 1B

Phase 1A runs from the N3 to Milky Way (MR559). Work on this phase began in October with preparations for the road bypass which will come into play from mid-January 2023.

This bypass is located adjacent to Kassier

**The first phase of the Westown development will generate R15 billion in new investment over the next 10 to 15 years. Kassier Road is also being upgraded as part of the development**

Pictures: SUPPLIED

Road, after the N3 bridge heading south towards the Shongweni Farmers Market. This has been put in place to limit disruptions and facilitate traffic flow, while this section of Kassier Road is upgraded. It is anticipated that this bypass will be in place for 12 to 15 months.

Phase 1B is from the N3 Shongweni interchange heading north to the Hillcrest Hospital/ Alverstone intersection. Construction of this portion will commence in early 2023. As the road

upgrades progress, so too will the development of Westown Square, with the West Private Hospital, the warehousing and logistics sub-precinct and the first tranche of residential units being phased in.

As part of its commitment to empowering the local community, the Westown Foundation, has been developed to facilitate and amplify local socio-economic opportunities that the development will create in the surrounding communities. The initial focus, in partnership with contractors Stefanutti Stocks and the support of the local stakeholder community, is the establishment of an on-site training centre, providing skills development and training in construction and building-related trades. As part of Westown's commitment to local sustainability, participation, skills transfer and empowerment, these skills will be used on-site as the development of Westown unfolds and facilitate opportunities beyond the training centre.

Phillip Sithole, Deputy City Manager for Economic Development and Planning said the City is excited that implementation has begun.

"The development is expected to provide the much-needed work and business opportunities, during and post construction stages. We are looking forward to the opening of the Westown Square towards the end of 2024," added Sithole.