



POWERING POSSIBILITY

## EXXARO COAL MPUMALANGA (PTY) LTD PROPOSED PAARDEPLAATS COAL MINE

### PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT:

This Background Information Document (BID) provides you, as an Interested and Affected Party (I&AP), an overview of the proposed project.

The BID invites you, as an I&AP to participate in the required Public Participation Process.

The BID provides you, as an I&AP with an opportunity to contribute and participate in the formulation of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and corresponding Environmental Management Plan (EMP).

The BID provides you, as an I&AP with the date, time and venue for the initial Public Participation Open Day to introduce you to the proposed project.

The BID also provides you, as an I&AP an opportunity to provide the project team with your comments, concerns and objections to the proposed project.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

**DMR Reference Number:** MP 30/5/1/1/2/10040 MR

**MDEDET Reference Number:** Still to be issued

**DWA Reference Number:** Still to be issued

#### Project Introduction:

Environmental Impact Management Services (Pty) Ltd (EIMS), an independent environmental consultancy has been appointed by Exxaro Coal Mpumalanga to function as the independent environmental assessment practitioner responsible for conducting the required Environmental Reports, Specialist Studies, Public Participation Process (PPP) and liaising with Relevant Authorities and Government Departments for the proposed Paardeplaats Coal Mine.

#### Aim of the Background Information Document (BID):

The aim of the BID is to:

Provide an overview of the Environmental Authorisation Process which will be undertaken for the proposed Paardeplaats Coal Mine in terms of the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act (MPRDA, Act 28 of 2002); the listed activities in terms of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA, Act 107 of 1998) and the Integrated Water Use License Application (IWULA) in terms of the National Water Act (NWA, Act 36 of 1998).

Allow I&AP's the opportunity to obtain a broad understanding of the proposed project and submit any initial comments, concerns and objections with regard to the project.

Compilation of an Issues and Responses Report (IRR) which will take cognisance of all comment received, which will be addressed in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report and in turn will be submitted to the Relevant Authority for decision making.



### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

The proposed Paardeplaats project entails the development of a new coal mine located directly south of the existing Exxaro owned Glisa coal mine in Mpumalanga. The proposed Paardeplaats project requires environmental authorisation/ approval in terms of the MPRDA, NEMA and NWA prior to commencement. The proposed Paardeplaats coal mine will utilise the approved and existing Glisa mine's Mineral Processing Infrastructure.

Initial activities that are planned to be carried out at Paardeplaats entail: the creation of Open Pits; construction and operation of Pollution Control Dams (PCD's); construction and operation of Haul Roads; construction and operation of Pipelines for the abstraction of water from the pits; Run of Mine (RoM) Stockpiles; Diesel Storage; the construction and operation of a Mobile Office and Ablution Block for workers; and construction and operation of a General Waste Storage Facility. All activities currently identified will be confirmed during the EIA process to be conducted. The mining method proposed is a hybrid of rollover and bench mining designed to target shallow and deeper coal seams. All RoM from the Paardeplaats will be transported to the adjacent Glisa Mine for minerals processing.

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

The proposed Paardeplaats project entails the development of a new coal mine located directly south of the existing Exxaro owned Glisa coal mine in Mpumalanga. The proposed Paardeplaats project requires environmental authorisation/ approval in terms of the MPRDA, NEMA and NWA prior to commencement. The proposed Paardeplaats coal mine will utilise the approved and existing Glisa mine's Mineral Processing Infrastructure.

Initial activities that are planned to be carried out at Paardeplaats entail: the creation of Open Pits; construction and operation of Pollution Control Dams (PCD's); construction and operation of Haul Roads; construction and operation of Pipelines for the abstraction of water from the pits; Run of Mine (RoM) Stockpiles; Diesel Storage; the construction and operation of a Mobile Office and Ablution Block for workers; and construction and operation of a General Waste Storage Facility. All activities currently identified will be confirmed during the EIA process to be conducted. The mining method proposed is a hybrid of rollover and bench mining designed to target shallow and deeper coal seams. All RoM from the Paardeplaats will be transported to the adjacent Glisa Mine for minerals processing.

### **LOCATION AND EXTENT OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT:**

The proposed mining right application area is approximately 1,415 Hectares and is located on the Farm Paardeplaats 380 JT (portions 13,28,29,30 & 40) and the Farm Paardeplaats 425 JS (portion 2 & Remaining Extent), approximately 4Km south west of the town of Belfast in the Mpumalanga Province (See attached map).

### **LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS:**

The anticipated environmental applications require adherence to the following regulations as stipulated by the MPRDA, NEMA and NWA respectively:

An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Environmental Management Programme (EMPR), according to the requirements of Section 39 of the MPRDA and Regulation 48 (GNR527) of the MPRDA, in support of the Mining Right Application;

An application for Environmental Authorisation (EA) for relevant ancillary activities, as required by Chapter 5 of the National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998-NEMA) and subsequent EIA Regulations (GNR 543, 544, 545, and 546). This will include the preparation of an EIA and EMP; and

An application for Water Use Licences (WUL) for various water uses applicable to the proposed mining activity, as required by Section 21 of the National Water Act (Act 36 of 1998- NWA).

### **NEMA LISTED ACTIVITIES APPLICATION:**

The listed activities applied for under the NEMA process in terms of Government Regulation (GNR) 544 Listing Notice 1, are as follows:

The construction of facilities exceeding 1000 metres in length for the bulk transportation of water;

The construction of (1) canals; (2) channels and (3) dams exceeding 50 square m in size;

The construction of facilities for the off-stream storage of water with a combined capacity of 5000 cubic m or more;

The construction of facilities/infrastructure for the storage and handling of a dangerous good;

The construction of a road outside an urban area;

The widening of a road by more than 6 m or lengthening by more than 1Km;

Any process or activity identified in terms of Section 53(1) of the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act, 2004 ( Act No.10 of 2004); and

The widening of a road by more than 6 metres or the lengthening of a road by more than 1 kilometre.

The listed activities applied for under the NEMA process in terms of Government Regulation (GNR) 545 Listing Notice 2, are as follows:

The construction of facilities or infrastructure which is included in the list of waste management activities published in terms of Section 19 of the National Environmental Management: Waste Act (Act No. 59 of 2008) namely, the storage of waste, including temporary storage of general waste in excess of 100 cubic m;

Physical alteration of undeveloped or vacant land for industrial use where the total area transformed is 20 Hectares or more;

The construction of a dam where the highest part of the dam wall is 5m or more; and

An activity which requires a mining right as contemplated in Section 22 and 24 of the MPRDA.

The listed activities applied for under the NEMA process in terms of Government Regulation (GNR) 546 Listing Notice 3, are as follows:

The clearance of an area of 300 square metres or more of which 75% or more vegetative cover constitutes indigenous vegetation within a critically endangered ecosystem (eastern Highveld grassland);

The clearance of an area of 5 hectares or more of which 75% or more vegetative cover constitutes indigenous vegetation outside urban areas; and

The construction of infrastructure covering 10 square metres or more within a watercourse or within 32 metres of a watercourse.

#### **NWA SECTION 21 IWULA APPLICATION:**

According to Section 21 of the NWA, the following water uses will be applied for:

Section 21(a): taking water from a water resource;

Section 21(b): storing water;

Section 21(c): impeding or diverting the flow of water in a watercourse;

Section 21(d): engaging in a stream flow reduction activity contemplated in Section 36;

Section 21(f): discharging waste or water containing waste into a water resource through a pipe, canal, sewer, sea outfall or other conduit;

Section 21(g): disposing of waste in a manner which may detrimentally impact on a water resource;

Section 21(i): altering the beds, banks, course or characteristics of a water course; and

Section 21(j): removing, discharging or disposing of water found underground if it is necessary for the efficient continuation of an activity or for the safety of people.

### **SPECIALIST STUDIES:**

For the purpose of conducting an EIA in terms of the MPRDA and applying for activities in terms of the NEMA, the following specialist studies have been initiated. The results of these specialist studies will be used to inform and guide the Environmental Impact Assessment and Management Program (EIA/EMP) for the proposed Paardeplaats coal mine. Specialist studies identified and underway include:

Air Quality;

Archaeology and Heritage;

Blasting and Vibration;

Ecological Impact Assessment ( Flora and Fauna);

Wetland and Aquatic Ecology;

Hydrological Assessment;

Hydrogeological Assessment;

Soil, Land Use and Land Capability Assessment;

Traffic Impact Assessment; and

Visual Impact Assessment.

### **SUMMARY OF THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS :**

EIMS intends to undertake an Integrated Public Participation Process in order to satisfy the requirements for public involvement in terms of the MPRDA, NEMA and NWA. The process that is to be followed will consist of the following key steps:

- Initial notification and call to register for I&AP's through the following means: Newspaper Advertisements, Site Notices, Posters, Registered Letters, E-mails and Faxes with an aim to inform all I&AP's of the proposed project and encourage comment and feedback to be incorporated into the reports- as well as to invite I&AP's to register for further involvement on the process;
- Undertake an initial Public Participation Open Day to better inform I&AP's of the project, the process to be followed and to solicit comment, concerns and objection to be incorporated into the reports;
- Provision of the Draft Scoping Report to I&AP's for comment and inclusion of said comment into the report to be submitted to the Relevant Authorities and Government Departments;
- Undertake a second Public Participation Open Day to present the finding of the EIA to the I&AP's and to solicit comment, concerns and objection to be incorporated into the reports;
- Provision of the Draft EIA Report to I&AP's for comment and inclusion of said comment into the report to be submitted to the Relevant Authorities and Government Departments;
- Continue with on-going consultation with I&AP's during the entire process in order to provide all I&AP with the opportunity to comment on the proposed project and reports prior to submission to the Relevant Authorities and Government Departments.

### **DOCUMENT REVIEW BY I&AP's:**

All documents compiled by EIMS and the independent Specialists which are to be submitted to the Department of Mineral Resources (DMR) and the Mpumalanga Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism (MDEDET) for consideration in their respective decision making, will be made available for download on the EIMS website ([www.eims.co.za](http://www.eims.co.za)) and in hard copy at the Belfast Public Library.

Please note that the Draft Scoping Report is currently available for comment and review. The comment and review period for the Draft Scoping Report concludes on 15 September 2012. All comments, concerns and relevant queries will be incorporated into the Final Scoping Report to be submitted to the competent authorities for decision making.

## HOW TO GET INVOLVED :

As an I&AP you need to ensure that you are registered as an I&AP for the Paardeplaats project and that you forward through any comments, concerns or objections to EIMS within the stipulated timeframes provided. You may register an I&AP in any of the following ways by the 15 September 2012:

Via E-mail, Fax, Letter or Telephone Call addressed to the contact person stipulated at the end of this document;

Via attendance at Public Open Days; and

Through the review and comment on Reports.

Please note that only registered I&AP's will be notified of further opportunities to participate in the process.

An initial Public Open Day will be held to introduce the proposed project, discuss the application procedure and provide I&AP's with an opportunity to comment on the project and the Draft Scoping Report compiled. The details of the initial Public Open Day are as follows:

**Where:** Belfast Golf Club

**When:** 31 August 2012

**Time:** 9am – 6pm

The date of the second Public Participation Open Day will be decided on at a later date and all registered I&AP's will be informed prior to the meeting of the location, date and time. In order to ensure your continued and valuable involvement in the project please complete the attached I&AP registration form and return it to EIMS by 15 September 2012 (please note that only registered I&AP's will be included in future correspondence regarding this EIA process):

Environmental Impact Management Services (Pty) Ltd

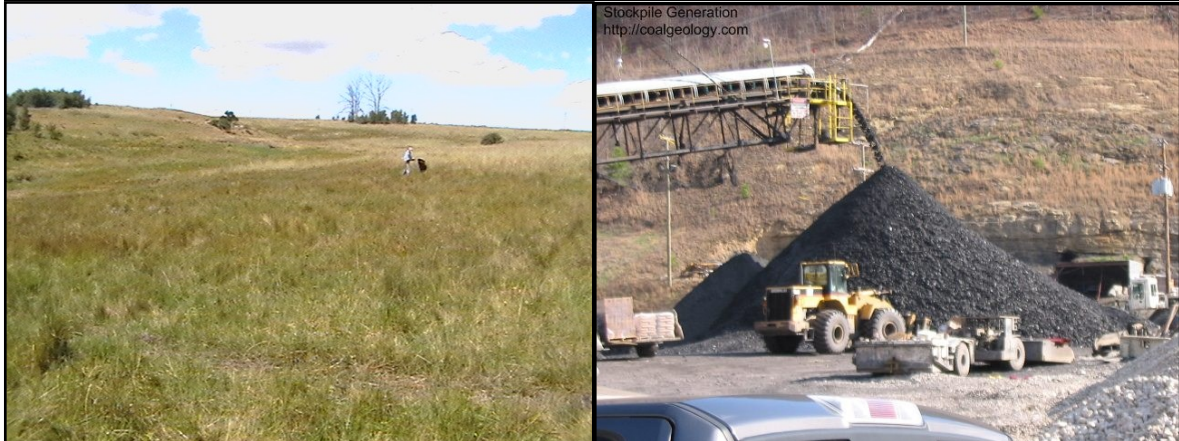
**Contact Person:** Elizabeth Cooper

**Reference Number:** 0880 Exxaro Paardeplaats

**Postal Address:** P.O.Box 2083, Pinetown, 2123

**Telephone:** (011) 789 7170 / **Fax:** (011) 787 3059

**E-mail:** paardeplaats@eims.co.za





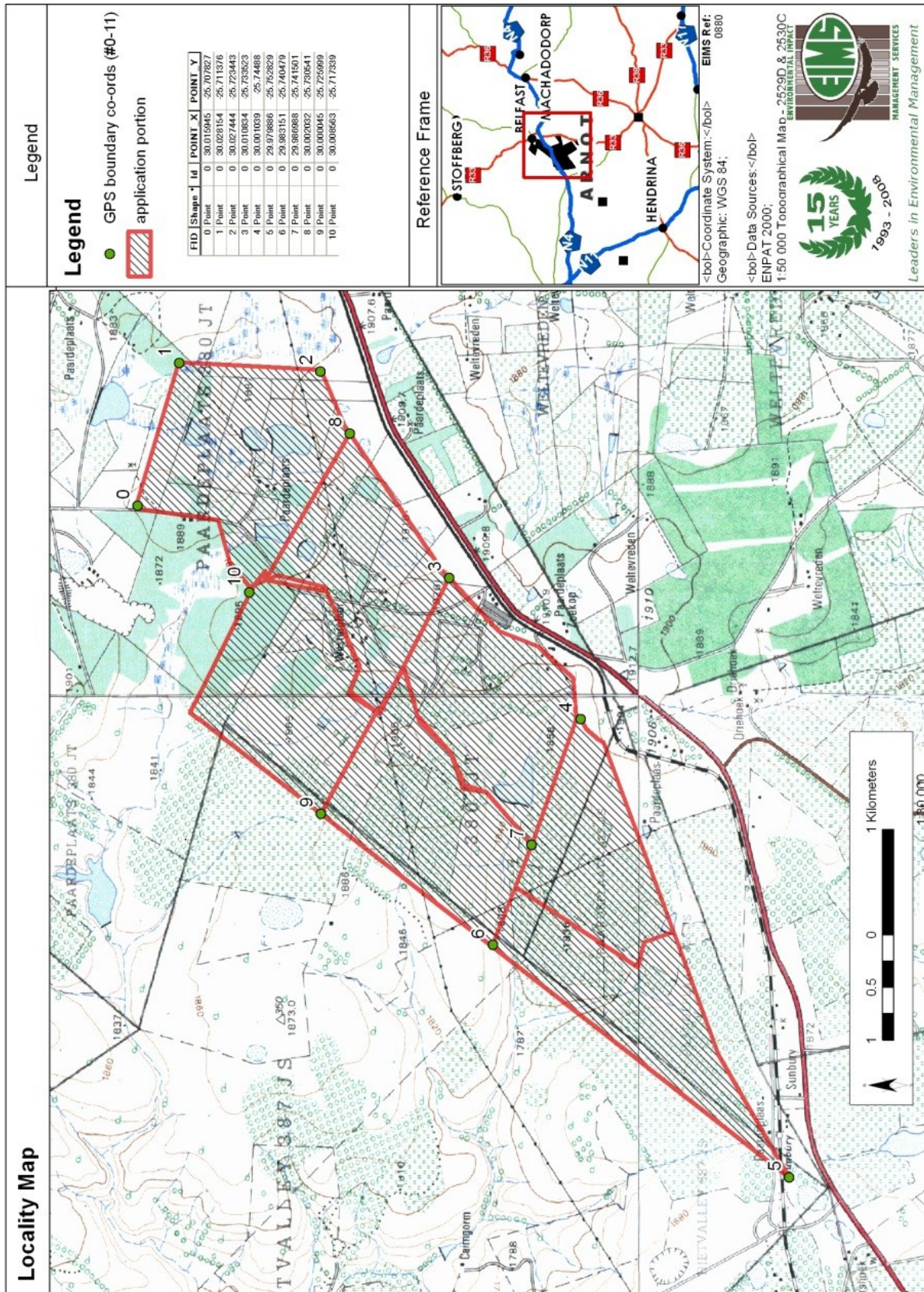


Figure 1: Locality Map of the proposed Paardeplaats Coal Mine