

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A RETAIL CENTRE ON ERVEN 20, 21 AND 22 OF PRESIDENT PARK X6,
EMALAHLENI (WITBANK)

Reference number assigned by AdiEnvironmental cc: BA2020/03



Introduction and Legal Requirements

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The applicant, **MeronoX (Pty) Ltd.**, intends to develop a retail centre on Erven 20, 21 and 22 of President Park X6, eMalahleni.

The proposed site is ±3 ha in extent and located on the corner of Nita Avenue and Mandela Drive, adjacent to the Portuguese Club and opposite the Nissan dealership, eMalahleni.

The Minister of Environmental and Water Affairs listed in terms of Sections 24(2) and 24D of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998), a number of activities that require an environmental impact assessment (either a Basic Assessment or a full Environmental Impact Assessment) before undertaking these activities.

The proposed project could involve the following listed activities as identified in the EIA Regulations Listing Notice 1 of 2014 (as amended):

- **Listed Activity 19:** *The infilling or depositing of any material of more than 10 cubic metres into, or the dredging, excavation, removal or moving of soil, sand, shells, shell grit, pebbles or rock of more than 10 cubic metres from a watercourse; but excluding where such infilling, depositing, dredging, excavation, removal or moving (a) will occur being a development setback; (b) is for maintenance purposes undertaken in accordance with a maintenance management plan; (c) falls within the ambit of activity 21 in this Notice, in which case that activity applies; (d) occurs within existing ports or harbours that will not increase the development footprint of the port or harbor; or (e) were such development is related to the development of a port or harbor, in which case activity 26 in Listing Notice 2 of 2014 applies.*
- **Listed Activity 27:** *The clearance of an area of 1 hectares or more, but less than 20 hectares of indigenous vegetation, except where such clearance of indigenous vegetation is required for— (i) the undertaking of a linear activity; or (ii) maintenance purposes undertaken in accordance with a maintenance management plan.*

In order to obtain approval (authorization) for this project, a specific procedure must be followed as stipulated in the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014 (as amended), which requires specific documentation (Basic Assessment Report) to be submitted.

Once all the required documentation has been submitted and the environmental process completed, the responsible authority must make a decision on the application.

The environmental decision making authority for this application is the Mpumalanga Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs (DARDLEA).

Applications in terms of the National Water Act, 1998 and the National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 will also be submitted (if required).

Part of the above-mentioned process is to inform Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) of the proposed project and to obtain any issues of concern. You are hereby invited to register as an I&AP and provide input with regards to the proposed activity.

Purpose of this document

- *Overview of the proposed project;*
- *Overview of the Environmental Impact Assessment Process (EIA) to ensure that Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) understand the process;*
- *Invitation to I&APs to participate in the EIA Process by:*
 - ⇒ *Indicating their view points, issues and concerns regarding the activity;*
 - ⇒ *Suggesting alternatives or ways of mitigating negative impacts and enhancing positive impacts.*

Environmental Consultant

AdiEnvironmental was appointed as independent environmental consultant to conduct the required environmental impact assessment and compile the necessary documentation.

AdiEnvironmental cc

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Public Participation

Aim of Public Participation

- To inform Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) and Stakeholders of the proposed project.
- To allow for the registration of I&APs and thereby present I&APs with the opportunity to comment on the project, contribute ideas, raise concerns and review reports.

*In order to ensure that you are identified as an Interested and/or Affected Party; please submit your name, contact information and interest in the matter to the contact person within 30 days of receipt of this document (i.e. no later than **25 August 2020**).*

If you know of any other Interested and Affected Party who should be registered as an I&AP, it would be appreciated if you could forward the relevant contact details to AdiEnvironmental.

Public meeting

At this stage, it is not anticipated that a public meeting will be held. Should this change, the public meeting will be announced and all I&APs will be invited to attend the meeting.

Who are interested and affected parties?

An interested and affected party (I&AP) can be defined as any person, group of persons or organisation interested in or affected by a proposed activity or any organ of state that may have jurisdiction over any aspect of the activity.

The public participation process allows I&APs the opportunity to:

- Obtain clear and accurate information about the proposed activity;
- Indicate their viewpoints, issues and concerns regarding the activity;
- Suggest alternatives or ways of mitigating negative impacts and enhancing positive impacts.

What are the responsibilities of an Interested and Affected Party?

In order to participate effectively, I&APs should:

- Become involved in the process as early as possible;
- Register as I&APs;
- Advise the consultant of other I&APs who should be consulted;
- Contribute towards the design of the public participation process to ensure that it is acceptable to all I&APs;
- Follow the process once it has been accepted;
- Read the material provided and actively seek to understand the issues involved;
- Give timeous responses to correspondence;
- Be respectful and courteous towards other I&APs and the environmental consultant;
- Refrain from making subjective, unfounded or ill-informed statements;
- Recognize that the process is confined to issues that are directly relevant to the application.

Availability of Reports

The following reports will be made available to interested and affected parties for evaluation purposes-

- Background Information Document (BID);
- Basic Assessment Report (BA) (including Environmental Management Programme (EMPr));
- Environmental Authorisation and Reasons for Decision.

A copy of the above-mentioned documents will also be provided on our website: www.adienvironmental.co.za

How to comment

Comments, questions, issues of concern or objections can be made in writing (by fax, e-mail or post). For your convenience, a comment sheet is attached to this document. Should you not be able to provide us with written comment, please give us a call.

If you do not wish to submit comments, please still provide us with your contact details and indicate whether you would like to remain on the mailing list.

Project Description

The applicant, **Meronox (Pty) Ltd.**, intends to develop a retail centre on Erven 20, 21 and 22 of President Park X6, eMalahleni.

The proposed site is located on the corner of Nita Avenue and Mandela Drive, adjacent to the Portuguese Club and opposite the Nissan dealership, eMalahleni (Figure 1). Co-ordinates of the site are: 25°52'59.34"S and 29°15'27.16"E.

The entire site is ±3 ha in extent, with the specific stand sizes as follows: Erf 20 (0.99ha), Erf 21 (0.98ha) and Erf 22 (1.08ha). See Figure 2 for the proposed site development plan.

The erven are zoned 'Business 2', which permits a number of land uses (e.g. shops, liquor outlets, laundromat, car wash, motor dealership, offices, etc.) in terms of the eMalahleni Land Use Scheme, 2020. The specific land uses to be established on site must still be finalized.

Services will be provided by the eMalahleni Local Municipality. An access road will be provided along the southern boundaries of the business stands, linking Mandela Drive with Nita Avenue (Figure 2).

Reason for development

The proposed retail centre will be located adjacent to Mandela Drive and would be highly visible and easily accessible.

Mandela Drive was identified in the Spatial Development Framework as one of the activity spines where the Municipality would allow non-residential uses to take place in order to optimally utilize the visual exposure from the high traffic volumes along this road.



Figure 2: Site Development Plan

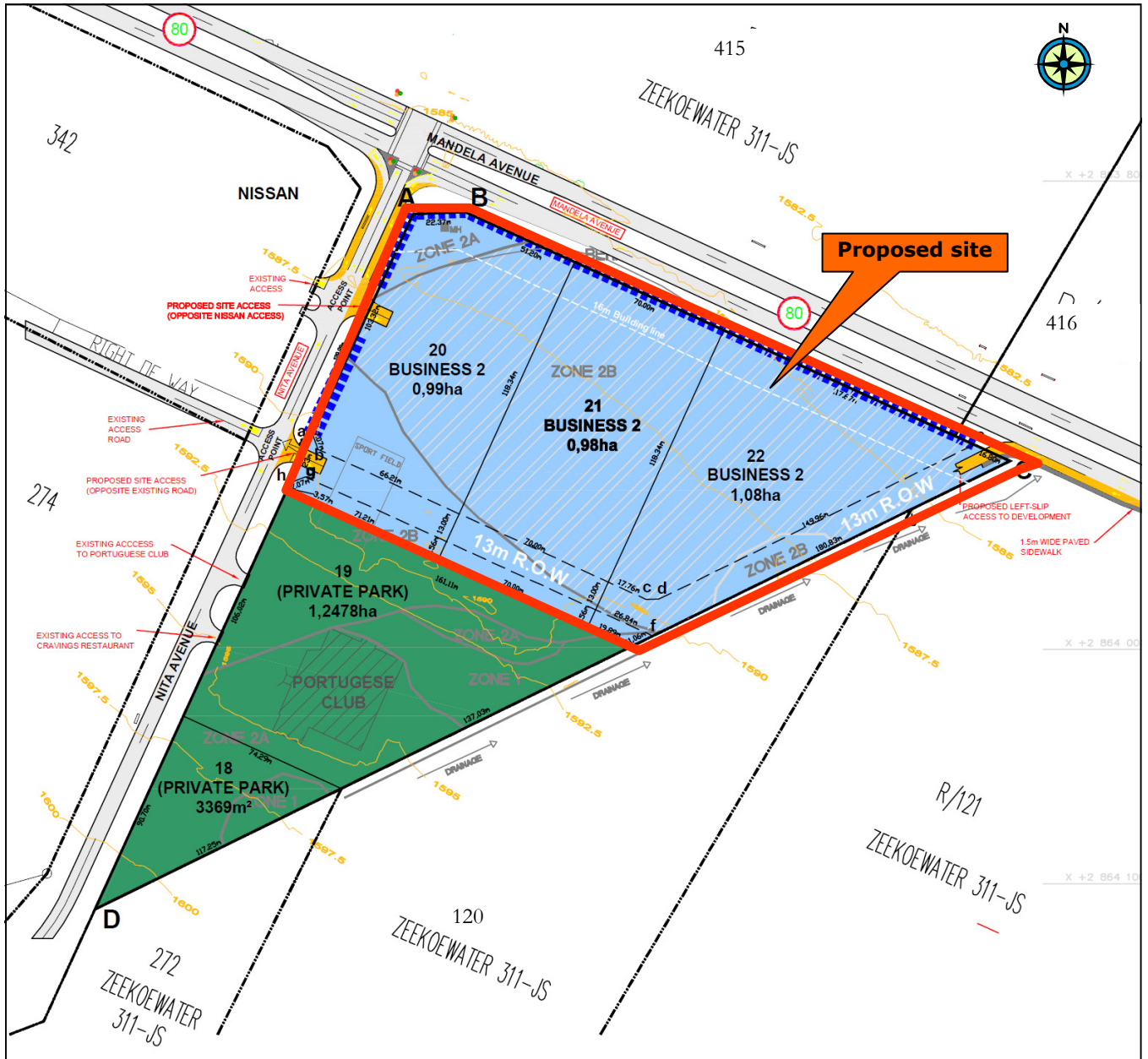


Figure 2: Site Development Plan (drafted by Urban Dynamics, 2013)

Process to be followed

In order to determine whether approval can be obtained for a proposed activity, a specific procedure must be followed. Government Notice R326 regulates the procedure for the submission, processing and consideration of applications. In short, the Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) must:

- complete an application form (Regulation 16);
- compile a Basic Assessment Report (Regulation 19 and Appendix 1 to the Regulations);
- follow a public participation process (Regulations 39–44).

The process that will be followed by the EAP as well as the anticipated timeframes are attached for perusal. The aim of the process is to ensure that the environmental impacts are considered, the relevant I&APs are consulted and the decision making authorities are provided with sufficient information to make an informed decision.

Information with regards to the following environmental features of the said site will be provided in the Basic Assessment Report:

- Topography
- Geology
- Soil
- Land use
- Natural vegetation/plant life
- Animal life
- Surface water
- Groundwater
- Air quality
- Noise
- Sites of archaeological or cultural interest
- Sensitive landscapes
- Visual aspects
- Traffic
- Sense of place
- Interested and affected parties

The Basic Assessment Report will thus provide information regarding the planned activity, the environmental features of the said site and the public participation process followed. It will also provide an indication of the potential impacts that could result during the construction and operational phases of this project as well as possible mitigation/management measures to be implemented.

*It would be appreciated if you could complete the attached comment sheet indicating your issues of concern and/or objections and could forward this comment sheet to AdiEnvironmental by **25 August 2020**.*

WE ARE HERE

Public Participation

Advertise project in local newspaper
(30 days for registration as I&AP)
24 July 2020 – 25 August 2020

Consultant to conduct basic assessment
exercise (60 days) and compile Basic
Assessment Report
August–September 2020

Submission of application form with DARDLEA
September 2020

DARDLEA to acknowledge receipt
(10 days)
October 2020

Submit Draft Basic Assessment Report to I&APs
for evaluation (30 days)
October–November 2020

Revise Basic Assessment Report (10 days)
November 2020

Submit Final Basic Assessment Report and
comment from I&APs to DARDLEA for
evaluation
November/December 2020

DARDLEA to grant or refuse authorisation
(107 days)
February 2021

Inform I&APs of DARDLEA's decision
(within 14 days)
February 2021

Appeal process

PLEASE NOTE: TIMETABLE SUBJECT TO
CHANGE THROUGH PROCESS FOLLOWED

**THE DEVELOPMENT OF A RETAIL CENTRE ON ERVEN 20, 21 AND 22 OF
PRESIDENT PARK X6, EMALAHLENI (WITBANK)
Reference number assigned by AdiEnvironmental cc: BA2020/03**

It would be appreciated if you could indicate on this form whether you have any comments with regards to the proposed activity.

FIRST NAME:	POSTAL ADDRESS:
SURNAME:	
ORGANIZATION / FARM NAME:	TEL:
	FAX:
PHYSICAL ADDRESS:	CELL:
	E-MAIL:

Do you wish to remain on the mailing list? Y N

How do you think the proposed activity will impact on you?
Any suggestions to mitigate potential impacts?
Please provide details of any other parties (e.g. Tribal Authorities, land-owners, community members, etc.) who should be consulted.
Please disclose any direct business, financial, personal or other interest that you may have in the approval or refusal of the application.
Please use additional sheet(s) if necessary

.....
Signed

.....
Date

NOTE:

Please forward the completed form to AdiEnvironmental cc.



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Contact person: Riana van Rensburg