

# NOTICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT PROCESS FOR THE PROPOSED UPGRADE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE TRAINING FACILITY VERDRAG, NEAR THABAZIMBI [NEAS REF: DEA/EIA/0001130/2012 AND 14/12/16/3/3/38]

## NOTIFICATION & INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE 2 MAY 2012

### 1. PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

The purpose of this document is to:

- Provide preliminary information about the proposed upgrade and associated infrastructure at the Verdrag SAPS Training facility, as well as the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Process to be followed;
- Indicate how you, as an Interested and Affected Party (I&AP), can become involved in the EIA Process.

### 2. LOCALITY

The application properties comprise the following farm Portions:

- Portion 1 of the Farm Groenfontein 458-KQ [428,2660 ha];
- The Remaining extent of the Farm Groenfontein 458-KQ [1728,800 ha];
- Portion 1 of the Farm Buffelspoort 459-KQ [685,2256 ha];
- The Remaining extent of the Farm Buffelspoort 459-KQ [630,3804 ha];
- The Farm Buffelskloof 452-KQ [3994,4484 ha].

The farm portions are situated between Thabazimbi and Modimolle within the Limpopo Province. Thabazimbi is approximately 35km to the west and Modimolle approximately 70km to the south east of the site. The site is accessed from the P240 gravel road which leads to Alma in the east and to the D1485 intersection in the northwest toward Thabazimbi. The subject properties are located both directly to the north of and south of the P240. Refer to Figure 1 for the locality map & Figure 2 for co-ordinates of existing and proposed facilities.

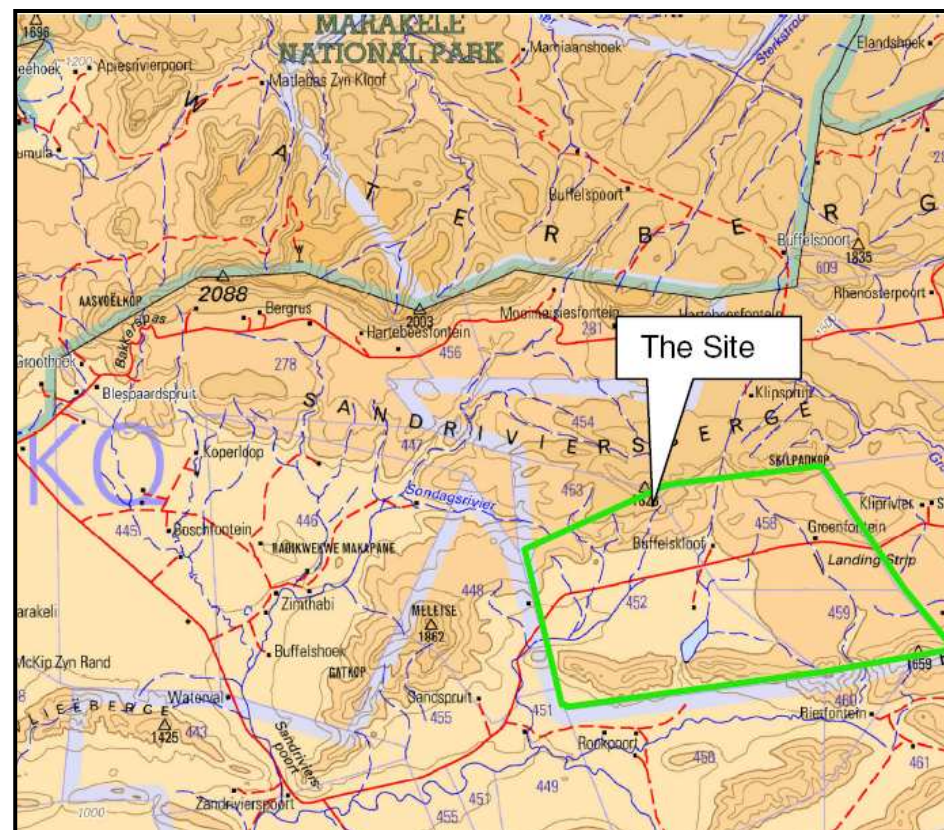


Figure 1: Location of application site

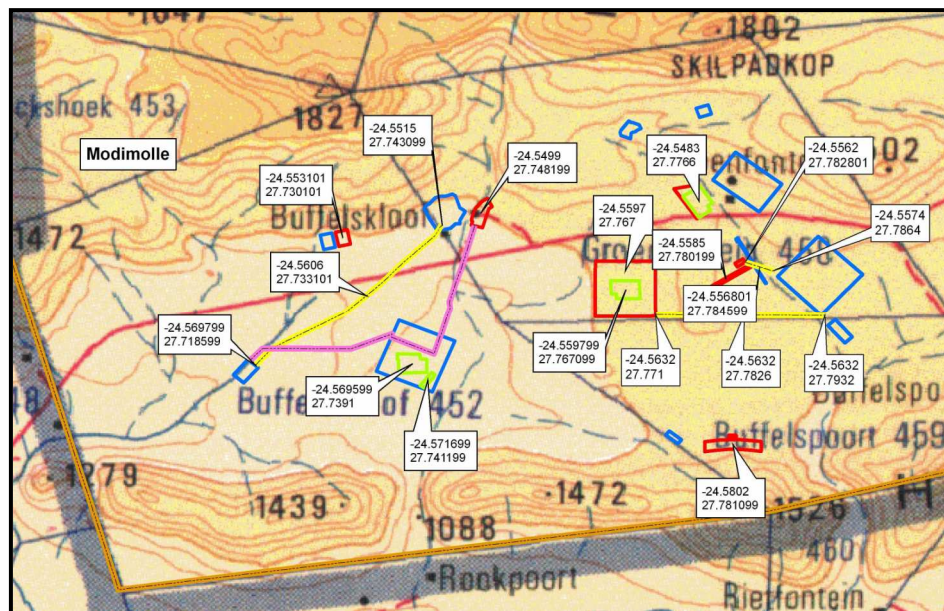


Figure 2: Co-ordinates of existing and proposed facilities

The SAPS Training institute facilities are situated on the valley floor between the Sandriviersberge to the north and the Hoekberge to the south. The site has been used as an advanced training institute for SAPS personnel. Training and accommodation is located in a number of small and well circumscribed localities whereas the greatest portion of the site is, for all intents and purposes, managed as a game reserve.

A significant feature on the Farm Buffelskloof 452-KQ is the Rookpoort Dam which was constructed in 1993. A permit for construction of the dam was issued by the then Department of Water Affairs and Forestry.

Ownership of the properties vests with The Republic of South Africa

### 3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Applicant is *the Department of Public Works*.

*Interdesign Landscape Architects (Pty) Ltd* has been commissioned to act as the independent Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) for the application required to apply to the National Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) for the proposed upgrade of facilities at the Verdrag Training Facility in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 [Act 107 of 1998] as well as to apply for authorisation of the existing sewerage treatment works in terms of the requirements of the National Environmental Management: Waste Act, 2008 [Act 59 of 2008]. Activities requiring registration with the Department of Water Affairs will be registered in terms of the National Water Act, 1998 [Act 36 of 1998].

Additional facilities and upgrades to existing facilities proposed as part of this application process are indicated in the table below.

Also refer to Appendix A for a copy of the preliminary site lay out.

EXISTING ADMINISTRATION CAMP	NEW ALPHA CAMP [A TRAINING CAMP] - CONSTRUCTION OF :	EXISTING BRAVO CAMP [B TRAINING CAMP]	NEW ECHO CAMP [E TRAINING CAMP] - CONSTRUCTION OF:	EXISTING DELTA CAMP [D TRAINING CAMP] - CONSTRUCTION OF:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Renovation and maintenance of existing structures;</li> <li>Construction of new residential units;</li> <li>Construction of new ammunition safe;</li> <li>New gravity feed sewer pipeline</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trainer's accommodation;</li> <li>Student accommodation;</li> <li>Lecture facilities;</li> <li>Recreation Facilities &amp; Gym;</li> <li>Admin block;</li> <li>Tactical training area;</li> <li>Ablution facilities</li> <li>New gravity feed sewer line</li> </ul>	<p>All existing structures to be demolished and replaced with similar facilities. Replacement structures include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lecture facilities;</li> <li>Student accommodation;</li> <li>Trainer's accommodation;</li> <li>Recreation facilities &amp; Gym;</li> <li>Tactical training area;</li> <li>Existing sewer pump line will be replaced</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student accommodation;</li> <li>Trainers accommodation;</li> <li>Admin block;</li> <li>Recreational facilities and Gym;</li> <li>Ablution facilities;</li> <li>Lecture facilities;</li> <li>Shooting range</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional accommodation units;</li> <li>Lecture facilities;</li> <li>Admin block</li> </ul>

#### OTHER

- New landing strip and admin building;
- New shooting range and admin block;
- New ammunition safe;
- Maintenance of existing wastewater treatment facility [Aerobic-Anaerobic Stabilisation Ponds];
- Upgrade and maintenance of existing stormwater management infrastructure including upgrade of stormwater outlets [detail to be confirmed];
- Upgrade and maintenance of existing road infrastructure [ roads leading from P240 to training camps will be tarred];
- Upgrade and maintenance of existing water supply and reticulation[detail to be confirmed];
- Upgrade of existing sewerage reticulation infrastructure[ replacement of old pipes, maintenance/replacement of existing sewerage pump station, embankments of the sewerage pond system require maintenance as trees are growing on it and it can cause the embankment to collapse once filled with water, maintenance of reed bed].
- Alternative methods for treatment of wastewater will be investigated as part of the EIA Process. Such alternatives will investigate the possibility of replacing the existing system [oxidation ponds] with a treatment system which will provide purified effluent which can be utilised for irrigation purposes and as fire water. Impacts associated with such alternatives will be investigated

#### LICENSING OF EXISTING WASTE WATER TREATMENT WORKS AND INVESTIGATION OF ALTERNATIVES

The training facility currently treats its sewerage through the use of two Aerobic-Anaerobic Stabilization Pond systems.

The treatment ponds situated near the western boundary of the property services the existing Admin Camp, Alpha Camp and Bravo Camp. The treatment ponds situated near the eastern boundary of the site services the Charlie Camp, Delta Camp and Echo Camp .As the sewage enters the pond most of the solids settle to the bottom to form a sludge layer. At temperatures greater than 15°C intense anaerobic digestion of the sludge solids occurs: as a result, the thickness of the sludge layer depth is rarely more than about 250mm and often much less. Refer to Figures 3 below.

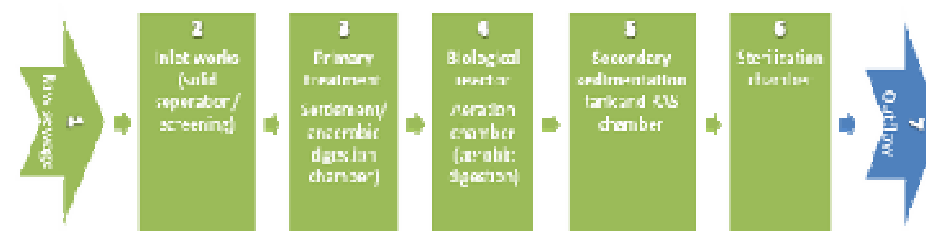
An alternative method of sewage treatment at the SAPS Verdrag Training Centre which will be investigated is the construction of a Modular type Submerged Media Reactor wastewater treatment works to treat domestic raw sewage with final effluent that complies with Department of Water Affairs General Limits. Refer to Figure 4 for flowchart.

**NOTE :** The specifications above exclude existing structures and infrastructure which will not be subject to upgrade or maintenance [existing shooting range A & B, existing Echo Camp, existing Charlie Camp, existing landing strip, existing urban training facility].





Figure 3: Existing Waste Water Treatment Works



#### Aeration

- 1 Domestic raw sewage inflow from development
- 2 Inlet works consisting of mild steel inlet screening box for hand held raking.
- 3 Primary treatment consisting of two chamber settling tanks
- 4 Biological reactor consisting of internal fixed packing media with diffused bubble aeration proprietary type process.
- 5 Secondary Sedimentation consisting of a final settling tank with return activated sludge pump.
- 6 Sterilization consisting of chlorine dosing
- 7 Outflow which will be utilized for controlled communal garden irrigation

Figure 4: Proposed Alternative method for treatment of waste water

#### 4. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT: SCOPING AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT PROCESS (S&EIR) - LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998) (**NEMA**), as amended, identifies certain activities associated with the upgrade of the training facility as activities which could result in significant harmful impacts to the environment. The activities which require authorisation in terms of the NEMA are required to be subject to a Basic Assessment Process.

The existing Waste Water Treatment Works [**WWTW**] consists of two Aerobic-Anaerobic Stabilization Pond systems. It has been confirmed that no permit had previously been issued by the Department of Water Affairs for operation of the WWTW. The Applicant is therefore applying to the National Department of Environmental Affairs for issuing of a Waste Management License for continued operation of the WWTW as this is an activity which

requires authorisation in terms of the National Environmental Waste Management Act (Act 59 of 2008) (**NEMWA**). The maximum storage capacity of the WWTW requires the system to be subject to a Full Environmental Impact Assessment Process.

An integrated environmental authorisation for the above will be followed through submission of a full Environmental Impact Assessment Process to the Competent Authority, The National Department of Environmental Affairs [DEA].

An integrated environmental authorisation process will be followed as the Minister is both the-

- (a) competent authority for the environmental authorisation applied for in terms of NEMA and the EIA Regulations, 2010; and
- (b) the licensing authority for the waste management licence in terms of NEMWA.

Distinguished below are the specific activities associated with the application which require authorisation from DEA in terms of the NEMA and NEMWA legislation respectively:

In terms of Sections 24 and 24(D) of the **NEMA**, as read with Government Notices R543 (Regulations 21 – 25), R544 and R546 (2010) a Basic Assessment Process is required for the following activities which are triggered by the proposal:

- The infilling or depositing of any material of more than 5 cubic metres into, or the dredging, excavation, removal or moving of soil, sand, grit, pebbles or rock of more than 5 cubic metres from a watercourse [GNR 544, Listing Notice 1, Item 18(i)] **Required for implementation of new and replacement of defunct pipelines within a watercourse, including stormwater outlets such as culverts**
- The expansion of facilities or infrastructure for the bulk transportation of water, sewerage or stormwater where (a) the facility or infrastructure is expanded by more than 1000 metres in length. [GNR 544, Listing Notice 1, Item 37(a)] **Required for the installation of additional pipelines to service new training camps.**
- The expansion of (ii) channels, (iii) bridges, (v) bulk stormwater outlet structures within a watercourse or within 32m of a watercourse, measured from the edge of a watercourse, where such expansion will result in an increased development footprint but excluding where such expansion will occur behind the development setback line [GNR 544, Listing Notice 1 Item 39(ii), (iii), (v)] **Required for stormwater management on site**
- The construction of a road wider than 4 metres with a reserve less than 13,5 metres in (a) Limpopo (ii) outside urban areas, in (cc) Sensitive areas as identified in an environmental management framework as contemplated in Chapter 5 of the Act and as adopted by the Competent Authority. [GNR 546, Listing Notice 3, Item 4 (a) (i)(cc)] **Required for the internal roads at new camp sites.**
- The construction of aircraft landing strips and runways 1,4 kilometres and shorter in (a) Limpopo (ii) outside urban areas in (dd) Sensitive areas as identified in an environmental

management framework as contemplated in chapter 5 of the Act and as adopted by the competent authority. [GNR 546, Listing Notice 3, Item 8(a)(ii)(dd)] **Required for the clearance of a new landing strip.**

- The clearance of an area of 1 hectare or more of vegetation where 75% or more of the vegetative cover constitutes indigenous vegetation in Limpopo, (ii) outside urban areas in (cc) sensitive areas as identified in an environmental management framework as contemplated in Chapter 5 of the Act and as adopted by the Competent Authority. [GNR 546, Listing Notice 3, Item 13(c)(ii)(cc)] **Required for construction of all new structures including new shooting range.**
- Phased activities for all activities listed in this Schedule and as it applies to a specific geographical area, which commenced on or after the effective date of this Schedule, where any phase of the activity may be below a threshold but where a combination of the phases, including expansions or extensions, will exceed a specified threshold. [GNR 546, Listing Notice 3, Item 26]

In terms of Section 19 of **NEMWA** as read with GNR 718 of 2009 the following activities require authorisation by means of an Environmental Impact Assessment Process:

- The storage including the temporary storage of general waste in lagoons [GNR 718, Category A, Item 3]; **Required for the WWTW**
- The treatment of effluent, wastewater or sewerage with an annual throughput capacity of 15 000 m<sup>3</sup> or more [GNR 718, Category B, Item 7] **Required for the WWTW**

The Applicant must therefore apply to the Deciding Authority, the DEA for authorisation to proceed with the development of the upgrades and for licensing of the WWTW.

#### 4.1. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) PROCESS

Herewith a brief description of what an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Process entails.

The EIA Process, which is being conducted, will investigate both biophysical and social impacts associated with the activity. Mitigation measures will be determined in order to limit and prevent detrimental impacts. The Assessment will determine whether the activities can proceed and what mitigation is required to ensure limited impacts to the environment.

Upon submission of an EIA Report which comprises information on the impacts investigated and in depth detail on the proposed activities as well as an Environmental Management Programme - the DEA issues a decision on whether the activity should be allowed to proceed. The DEA will also specify specific conditions which must be implemented should the activity be authorised and allowed to proceed.

A Public Participation Process (PPP) forms an important part of the EIA Process. This process deals with stakeholder engagement, where affected stakeholders are involved in the process in order to provide them with an opportunity to voice their concerns and provide input on potential impacts (environmental and social), as they are familiar with the area where the activity is proposed. State Departments that may govern legislation other than the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA), which relates to the activity, are also engaged to provide comment. Stakeholders include amongst others, adjacent property owners, Ward Councillor, affected communities, Local Municipalities and other such as the Department of Water Affairs (DWA). Once stakeholders have registered in the EIA Process they remain registered throughout the process and will be afforded an opportunity to review and comment on both the draft and final Scoping Reports as well as the draft and final EIA Reports. All comments received from stakeholders are included in the Scoping and EIA Reports for consideration by the Competent Authority. A response to comments received will also be prepared by the Environmental Practitioner with inputs from the specialist project team. Such response will be included in all reports.

The professional team commissioned to investigate impacts associated with the proposed development and to determine recommendations, mitigation measures and highlight any possible fatal flaws are listed below.

Details of the Environmental Assessment Practitioners [EAP] responsible for the EIA Procedure is indicated below:

- **Interdesing Landscape Architects (ILA):** Environmental Assessment Practitioners Karen Botes, Claudia Coetzee, Alicia De Swardt
- **EcoAgent CC:** Fauna and Flora Specialist studies Prof. George Bredenkamp, Dr. Naas Rautenbach
- **EcoAgent CC:** Water Use License Application - Cherie Matebesi
- **WSM Leshika** Hydrogeological Evaluation [Preliminary assessment] - Carel Haupt
- **Soilkraft CC:** Geotechnical Investigation [Phase I] - Izak Breytenbach
- **Dr. Johnny van Schalkwyk** Heritage Impact Assessment

## 5. WATER USE LICENSE APPLICATION [WULA]

A separate process is underway for the registration of existing water uses and for licensing of new water uses as per the requirements of Section 21 of the National Water Act, 1998 [Act 36 of 1998]. Current uses are required to be registered prior to the application for new uses commencing.

Details regarding the Water Uses will be confirmed in the Scoping and EIA Reports. This registration and licensing process is being managed by EcoAgent CC represented by Mrs Cherie Matebesi.

## 6. INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE NEMA & NEMWA

Should you wish to be involved in the EIA process, please register as an Interested & Affected Party (I & AP). You can do so by completing the enclosed registration sheet [Appendix B]. A space has been provided for the submission of any preliminary comments. Please include any comments or concerns which you may wish to bring to our attention in order for us to take such into consideration during the Scoping Process. Please note that registrations and comments must be submitted to ILA on or before 4 June 2012, at the following details:

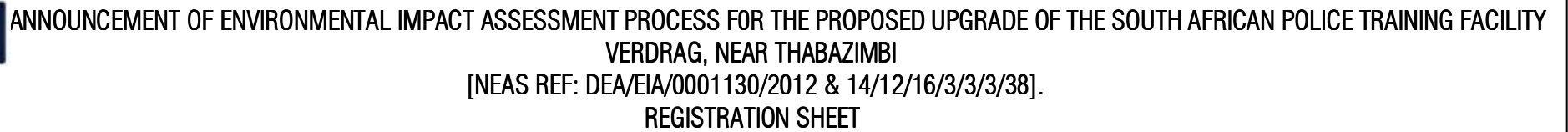
Ms Alicia de Swardt  
 INTERDESIGN LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS  
 P O Box 74648, Lynnwood Ridge, 0040  
 Tel: (012) 348 1922  
 Fax: (012) 348 7154  
 E-mail: info@ilaweb.co.za

As there are different legislations applicable to this integrated process we would appreciate if you could please specify [where relevant] whether your comment or concern is related to the **NEMA**, **NEMWA** or **WULA** processes.

**A legal advert will also appear in Die Pos & Die Kwêvoel on Friday 4 May 2012.**



[illegible]



<b>Title:</b>	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Surname:</b>
<b>Nature of Interest:</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Preferred means of communication:</b>
<b>Postal address:</b>	<b>Email:</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>

[illegible]

Fax: (012) 348 7154 / E-mail: [info@ilaweb.co.za](mailto:info@ilaweb.co.za)