



# BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT



## THE DEVELOPMENT OF A RESIDENTIAL AREA ON PORTION 52 OF THE FARM RONDEBOSCH 403 JS, MIDDELBURG

Reference number assigned by the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs: 17/2/3 N-404

### 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

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## Introduction and Legal Requirements

The applicant, **Ivy Jewel 35 (Pty) Ltd.**, intends to develop a residential area on Portion 52 of the farm Rondebosch 403 JS, Middelburg. Stands for a school, community facility, churches, businesses and three parks will also be included. The site (i.e. old Towers Hotel establishment) is located adjacent to the Middelburg-Belfast (R104) provincial road on the outskirts of Middelburg (Figure 1).

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 activity would involve the following listed activities as identified in terms of Section 24(2) and 24D of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Government Notice R544, R545 and R546 of 18 June 2010):

- **GN R544-Listing Notice 1, Listed Activity 9:** The construction of facilities or infrastructure exceeding 1000 metres in length for the bulk transportation of water, sewage or storm water – (i) with an internal diameter of 0.36 metres or more; or (ii) with a peak throughput of 120 litres per second or more, excluding where: a. such facilities or infrastructure are for bulk transportation of water, sewage or storm water or storm water drainage inside a road reserve; or b.

where such construction will occur within urban areas but further than 32 metres from a watercourse, measured from the edge of the watercourse.

- **GN R544-Listing Notice 1, Listed Activity 11:** The construction of: (i) canals; (ii) channels; (iii) bridges; (iv) dams; (v) weirs; (vi) bulk storm water outlet structures; (vii) marinas; (viii) jetties exceeding 50 square metres in size; (ix) slipways exceeding 50 square metres in size; (x) buildings exceeding 50 square metres in size; or (xi) infrastructure or structures covering 50 square metres or more where such construction occurs within a watercourse or within 32 metres of a watercourse, measured from the edge of a watercourse, excluding where such construction will occur behind the development setback line.
- **GN R544-Listing Notice 1, Listed Activity 18:** The infilling or depositing of any material of more than 5 cubic metres into, or the dredging, excavation, removal or moving of soil, sand, shells, shell grit, pebbles or rock from (i) a watercourse (ii) the sea (iii) the seashore (iv) the littoral active zone, an estuary or a distance of 100 metres inland of the high-water mark of the sea or an estuary, whichever distance is the greater but excluding where such infilling, depositing, dredging, excavation, removal or moving (i) is for maintenance purposes undertaken in accordance with a management plan agreed to by the relevant environmental authority; or (ii) occurs behind the development setback line.
- **GN R544-Listing Notice 1, Listed Activity 55A:** The construction of facilities for the treatment of effluent, waste water, or sewage with a daily throughput capacity of greater than 2000 cubic metres but less than 15000 cubic metres.
- **GN R545-Listing Notice 2, Listed Activity 15:** Physical alteration of

undeveloped, vacant or derelict land for residential, retail, commercial, recreational, industrial or institutional use where the total area to be transformed is 20 hectares or more; except where such physical alteration takes place for: (i) linear development activities; or (ii) agriculture or afforestation where activity 16 in this Schedule will apply.

- **GN R546-Listing Notice 3, Listed Activity 12:** The clearance of an area of 300 square metres or more of vegetation where 75% or more of the vegetative cover constitutes indigenous vegetation.
- **GN R546-Listing Notice 3, Listed Activity 13:** The clearance of an area of 1 hectare or more of vegetation where 75% or more of the vegetative cover constitutes indigenous vegetation, except where such removal of vegetation is required for: (1) the undertaking of a process or activity included in the list of waste management activities published in terms of section 19 of the National Environmental: Waste Act, 2008, in which case the activity is regarded to be excluded from this list. (2) the undertaking of a linear activity falling below the thresholds mentioned in Listing Notice 1 in terms of GN No. 544 of 2010.

In order to obtain approval (authorization) for this activity, a **Scoping and Environmental Impact Assessment** must be conducted since the proposed project triggers a listed activity identified in GN R545 – Listing Notice 2 (see above).

In addition, a specific procedure must be followed as regulated by GN R543 requiring specific documentation 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).

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.***

## Environmental Consultant

Clean Stream Environmental Services was appointed as independent environmental consultant to conduct the required environmental impact assessment and compile the necessary documentation.

### Clean Stream Environmental Services

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!

[www.cleanstreams.co.za](http://www.cleanstreams.co.za)



## 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 **1 December 2014**).*

*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 Clean Stream Environmental Services.*

### 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 timely 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);
- Scoping Report;
- Environmental Impact Report;
- Environmental Authorisation and Reasons for Decision.

A copy of the above-mentioned documents will also be provided on our website: [www.cleanstreams.co.za](http://www.cleanstreams.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

### Proposed activity

The applicant, Ivy Jewel 35 (Pty) Ltd., intends to develop a residential area on Portion 52 of the farm Rondebosch 403 JS, Middelburg. The site (i.e. old Towers Hotel establishment) is located adjacent to the Middelburg-Belfast (R104) provincial road on the outskirts of Middelburg (Figure 1). The site is 48.4292 ha in extent. Co-ordinates for the centre of the site are: 25°46'24.90"S and 29°30'40.59"E.

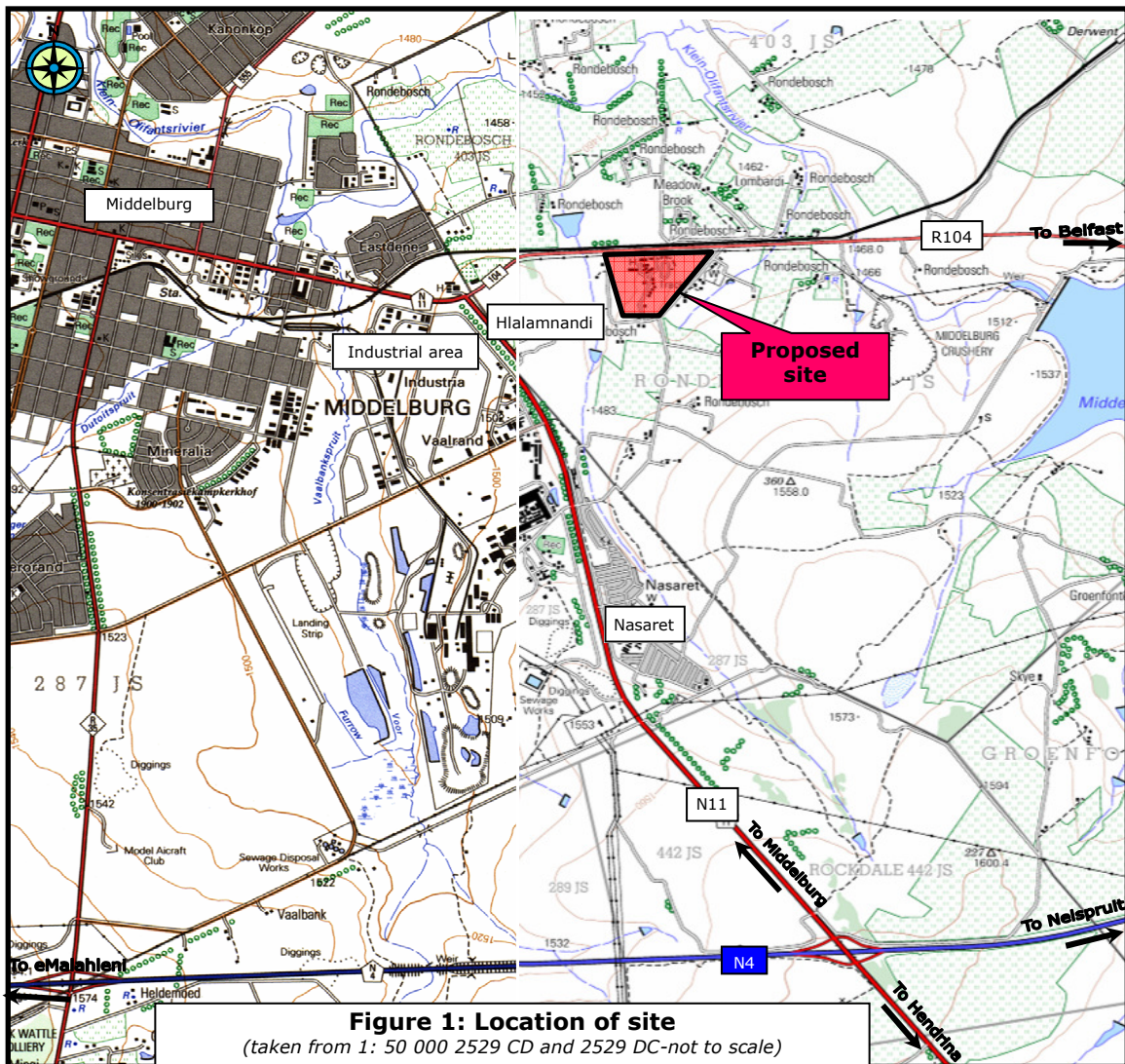
Figure 2 provides a proposed layout plan for the residential development. Stands for a school, community facility, churches, businesses and three parks will also be included.

### Reason for development

The extension possibilities of Middelburg are restricted due to mining activities and

topographical factors. According to Urban Dynamics Inc. (2009), the future direction of development would be to the northern, north eastern and eastern side of Middelburg. The proposed site is located to the eastern side of Middelburg and ideally located for development. According to the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality Spatial Development Framework (2010), the site has been earmarked for residential development. The proposed development can be viewed as a natural extension to the existing residential areas (Hlalamnandi and Nasaret) .

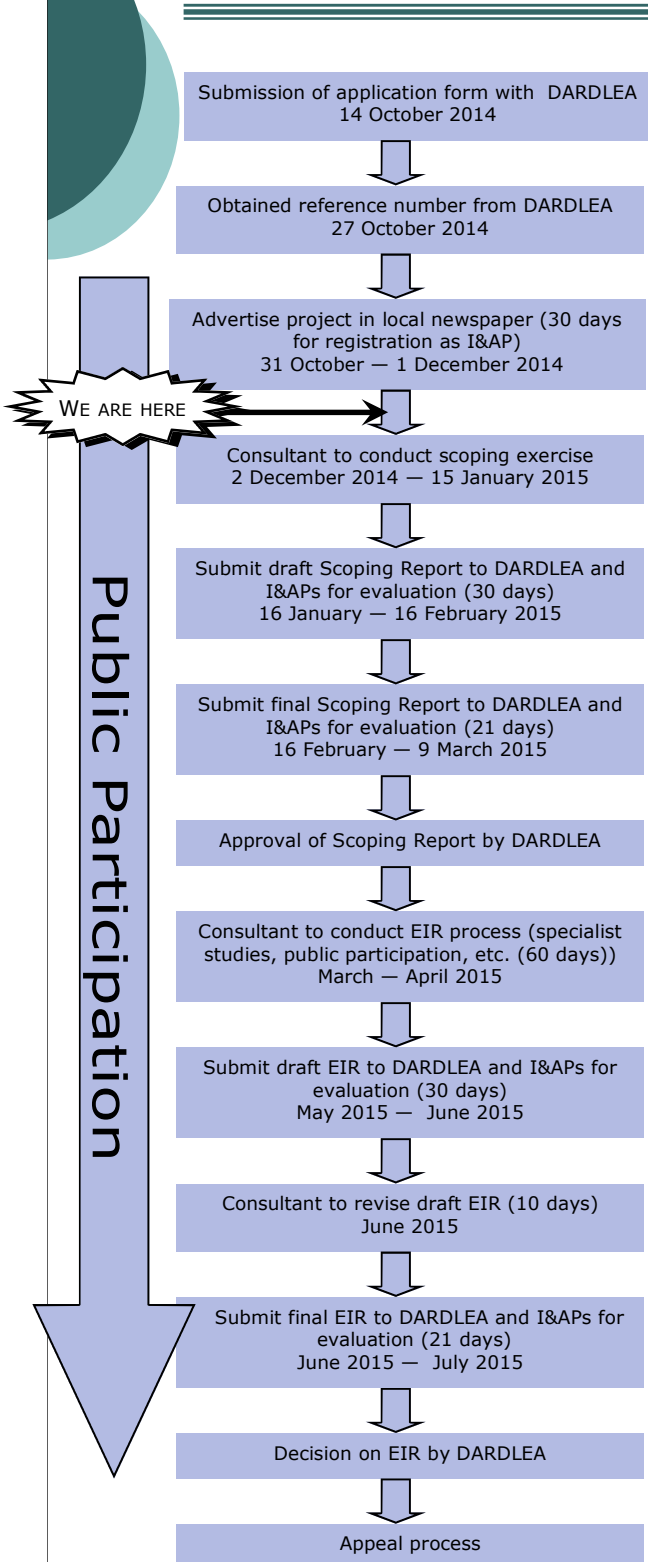
In addition, the main industrial area of Middelburg (Figure 1) is located in close proximity of the site, which would give people the opportunity to reside closer to the workplace.



**Figure 1: Location of site**  
(taken from 1: 50 000 2529 CD and 2529 DC-not to scale)



## 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 R543 regulates the procedure for the submission, processing and consideration of applications. In short, the Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) must apply the following:

- complete an application form (Regulation 26);
- compile a draft and final scoping report (Regulation 27 to 30);
- follow a public participation process (Regulation 54);
- compile a draft and final environmental impact assessment report (Regulation 31 to 32);
- compile a draft and final environmental management plan (Regulation 33).

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 Scoping Report and Environmental Impact 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 Environmental Impact 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 Clean Stream Environmental Services by **1 December 2014**.*

PLEASE NOTE: TIME TABLE SUBJECT TO CHANGE THROUGH PROCESS FOLLOWED

