

**PROPOSED EXPANSION AND UPGRADE OF POULTRY LAYING AND
REARING FACILITIES ON PORTIONS 8 & 9 OF THE FARM
WOODBURN NO/ 13614, UMGENI MUNICIPALITY:
BASIC ASSESSMENT
BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT
EIA REF: DC22/0039/2013**

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1. INTRODUCTION

Terratest (Pty) Ltd has been appointed by Merrivale Poultry Farm cc. to conduct the Environmental Authorisation Process for the proposed expansion and upgrade of laying and rearing facilities on Portions 8 and 9 of the Farm Woodburn No. 13614, uMngeni Municipality. The application for Environmental Authorisation will be conducted in accordance with the regulations contained within the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA, Act 107 of 1998) which came into effect on 2 August 2010. Under these regulations, a Basic Assessment process will be followed.

The following listed activity contained in GNR 544 of the NEMA regulations (2010 will be applied for:

Number and date of relevant notice	Activity No (s) (in terms of the relevant notice)	Description of each listed activity as per project description
GNR 544, 18 June 2010	32	<p><i>The expansion of facilities for the concentration of poultry, excluding chicks younger than 20 days, where the capacity of the facility will be increased by:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>(i) More than 1 000 poultry where the facility is situated in an urban area; or</i> <i>(ii) More than 5 000 poultry where the facility is situated outside an urban area.</i> <p>The proposed facility is located within the urban edge of Howick according to the Department of Land Affairs Urban Edge delineation contained with the Departmental Listing Notice 3 maps. The proposed facility will result in an increase in capacity of approximately 82 000 birds.</p>

According to the above-mentioned regulations, it is necessary for the Applicant to appoint an independent Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) who will adhere to the environmental requirements and complete the applicable environmental process on behalf of the Applicant. In this case, the relevant role players for the proposed development are as follows:

Applicant	Merrivale Poultry Farm cc.
Environmental Assessment Practitioner	Terratest (Pty) Ltd
Competent Authority	KwaZulu-Natal Department of Agriculture and Environmental Affairs (DAEA)

The Public Participation Process, as promulgated in terms of Chapter 6 of the NEMA Regulations (GN R543, 2010) is a fundamental process whereby the proponent, technical team, government authorities,

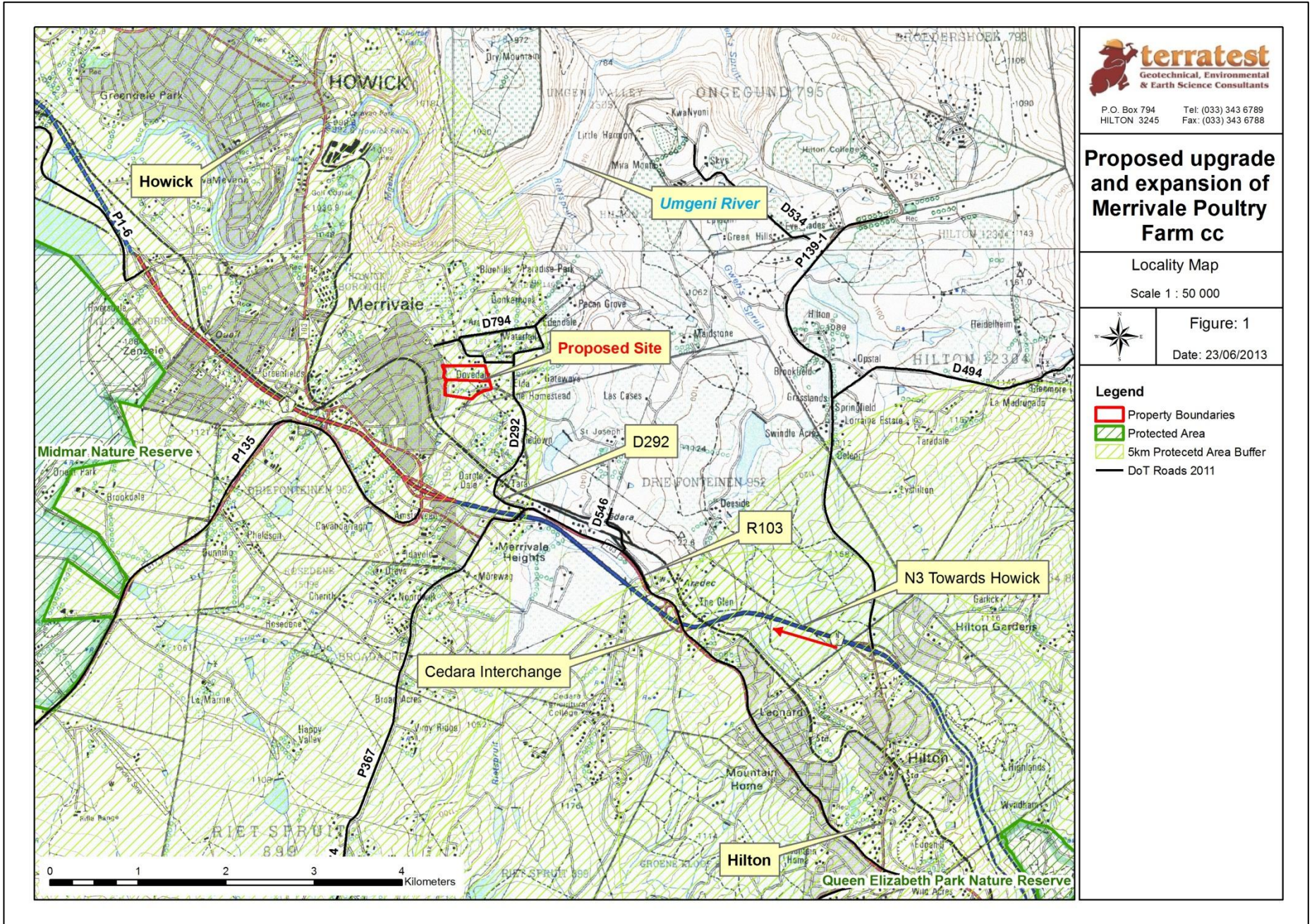
key stakeholders and Interested and Affected Parties (IAPs) can engage in an informed decision-making process. This Public Participation Process will be conducted according to the requirements stipulated in Sections 54 - 57 of the NEMA EIA Regulations (2010).

2. SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The properties on which the activity is proposed are described as Portions 8 and 9 of the Farm Woodburn No. 13614, uMngeni Municipality. These properties are owned by the Project Applicant. The location of the proposed development sites is indicated in Figures 1. The properties measure 8.8 ha and 8.3 ha in extent respectively, though the footprint of the proposed development will be limited to approximately 1.56 ha.

The property is currently the site of an existing poultry operation. The sites identified for development have been developed in the past, previously comprising wattle stands which have been de-stumped and replanted to kikuyu pasture approximately 7 years ago. No sensitive environments such as watercourses, wetlands or natural forests occur in close proximity to the development sites or are anticipated to be disturbed by the proposed expansion. The centre points of the proposed site is approximately: 30°15'10.688"E; 29°30'47.318"S.

The site can be accessed by travelling north on the N3 Freeway from Pietermaritzburg towards Howick and taking the Cedara off-ramp (Exit 97). At the top of the ramp, turn right onto the R103 and drive for approximately 2.4 km, turning right onto the D292. Travel along the D292 for approximately 2.05 km where there is a sharp left hand turn to remain on the D292. Travel for approximately 650 m and the entrance to the property is located on your left (just before the sharp right hand turn in the D292).



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Proposed upgrade and expansion of Merrivale Poultry Farm cc

Locality Map
 Scale 1 : 50 000

Figure: 1
 Date: 23/06/2013

- Legend**
- Property Boundaries
 - Protected Area
 - 5km Proteced Area Buffer
 - DoT Roads 2011

Figure 1: Topographic map indicating the location of the proposed development site



Figure 2: The layout of the proposed development

3. PROPOSED ACTIVITY

It is proposed that the existing poultry operations currently owned and operated by Merrivale Poultry Farm cc. be expanded. This expansion would constitute the demolition and removal of seventeen existing, smaller houses and the construction of nine new laying houses and two new rearing houses as well as associated internal access roads and infrastructure.

The proposed laying houses would measure 74m x 7m each and the rearing houses would measure 48m x 7m each. These houses would have the capacity to hold approximately 12 000 birds each. The proposed development will result in a total capacity increase of approximately 82 000 birds on the property. The proposed layout of the expanded and upgraded facility is indicated in Figure 2 above.

4. EXISTING AND PROPOSED INFRASTRUCTURE

An operational poultry facility currently exists on the property. Many of the services and infrastructure required for poultry production therefore already exist on the property.

4.1 Electricity

Electricity for the proposed expansion will be sourced from existing Eskom supply on the property. Should there be a need to upgrade the transformer, this will be negotiated between the Applicant and Eskom directly.

4.2 Water

Water for the proposed facilities will be sourced from an existing supply (a borehole, or alternatively from the agricultural water supply scheme which services the general area). Water use for the proposed facilities is anticipated to be approximately 27 000 litres per day (9 855 000 litres per annum) based on a maximum bird count of 108 000. It will need to be established whether the existing water supply rights for the property are sufficient for the proposed expansion as the general authorisation for water use on these properties is approximately 769 500 litres per annum. Should the water rights not be sufficient, then a Water Use License from the Department of Water Affairs (DWA) will need to be applied for.

4.3 Litter

Litter generated within the proposed new houses will be fed into the existing litter disposal system on the site; i.e. will be spread on agricultural lands or sold to local farmers as fertiliser. No temporary or permanent storage facilities for chicken litter will be required as it will be removed directly from the facilities and spread on the agricultural land or sold to surrounding farmers.

4.4 Mortalities

Mortalities from the new houses will be disposed of onsite in a mortality pit.

5. SPECIALIST STUDIES

The following specialist studies are anticipated:

5.1. Geotechnical Assessment

A specialist Geotechnical Assessment would be required to investigate the sub-soil conditions of the proposed development sites in order to inform recommendations regarding founding conditions, erosion control as well as the suitability and placement of septic tanks.

5.2 Stormwater Management Plan

The need for the compilation and implementation of a Stormwater Management Plan may arise in order to control the runoff of contaminated washwater from the new houses. The need for this plan will be evaluated during the Impact Assessment phase of the process. Should the Plan be required, it will be drawn up by a suitably qualified Engineer and included in the Draft Basic Assessment Report where will be available for comment.

5.3 Heritage Impact Assessment

Comment will be sought from Amafa aKwazulu-Natali regarding the need for a Heritage Impact Assessment of the site considering the transformation / disturbance which has occurred on the site in the past. Should an assessment be required, an appropriately qualified Specialist will be employed. The findings, recommendations and a copy of the Specialist Report will be included in the Draft Basic Assessment Report.

6. GENERAL SITE DESCRIPTION

a. Land use and Vegetation

According to Mucina and Rutherford (2006), the proposed development site occurs within the Southern KwaZulu-Natal Moist Grassland (Gs 11) vegetation type (Figure 3). The vegetation within this group comprises tall mixed veld dominated by *Hyparrhenia hirta* and sparsely scattered *Acacia sieberiana*. Only a few patches of the original species-rich grasslands remain. For this reason, this vegetation group is classified as Vulnerable.

As described previously, the property is currently the site of an operational poultry facility. The sites on which the new development is proposed currently comprises a mixture of historical wattle plantation and kikuyu pasture. The site therefore in no way represents the above-mentioned vegetation type.

The Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife MINSET Database was also interrogated. This map was produced using C-Plan software and represents the optimised solution required to meet the conservation targets of the features included within the plan. According to the database the proposed development site falls outside any Critical Biodiversity Areas

b. Heritage

According to the National Heritage Resources Act No 25 of 1999, provisions are made to protect national heritage and this forms an integral part of the environmental assessment process. In accordance with the National Heritage Resources Act No 25 of 1999, comment will be obtained from Amafa regarding the need for a Heritage Impact Assessment.

c. Geology and Terrain

The geology of the site comprises apedal and plinthic soil forms derived mostly from the Ecca Group (Karoo Supergroup) shale and minor sandstone as well as less importantly from Jurassic dolerite dykes and sills. More detail on the geology of the site will be provided by the Geotechnical Specialist.



Figure 3: Vegetation types of the proposed development site

7. ENVIRONMENTAL SCOPE OF WORK

The Basic Assessment process that will be followed is in accordance with the requirements of NEMA. The EAP is required to conduct the environmental application process and manage the public participation process, which is currently underway. Terratest (Pty) Ltd will perform the following:

1. Identify key stakeholders, authorities and municipalities, environmental groups and interested or affected members of the public, hereafter referred to as IAPs;
2. Compile a detailed Background Information Document (BID) for the proposed development, providing details to IAPs of:
 - a. The listed activities that trigger the Environmental Authorisation process;
 - b. The scope of work;
 - c. The locality and current land use at the site;
 - d. A detailed site description;
 - e. The Basic Assessment process to be followed; and
 - f. The opportunity for IAPs to comment on the project.
3. Advertise the environmental application in a newspaper applicable to the region, namely: The Witness;
4. Place a notification poster/posters on and surrounding the site;
5. Obtain landowner's consent (if necessary);
6. Attend Public Liaison Committee (PLC) meetings and workshops where necessary;
7. Host a Public meeting, if necessary, providing details of issues identified by the EAP, stakeholders and IAPs;
8. Record all comments of IAPs and present such comments, as well as responses provided by Terratest, in a full Comments and Responses Report, which will be included in the Basic Assessment Report that will be submitted to the DAEA; and
9. Circulate all IAP comments to the project team.

The Basic Assessment Report will be made available to all relevant stakeholders and registered IAPs for further comment, before being submitted to the DAEA.

8. HOW DO I PARTICIPATE?

Every proposed development has the potential to significantly affect the natural and social environments, both at, as well as surrounding the proposed site. For this reason it is imperative that you as a stakeholder or an interested and/or affected party (IAP) comment on the proposed project and **highlight any issues or concerns** that you feel need to be considered during the proposed planning and implementation process. Should you wish to register as an IAP or should you have any comments

regarding the proposed development, please **state your interest** in the proposed development along with any **comments or queries** you may, on the form provided below. Please return these comments, via email, fax or post to details provided, before the **20 September 2013**. Alternatively, the Environmental Assessment Practitioner listed below can be contacted directly.

