

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

APPLICATION FOR AMENDMENT MEYERSDAL NAURE ESTATE EXTENSION 11

1 Introduction

Application has been submitted to GDARD for the amendment of Meyersdale Nature Estate Ext 11 environmental authorisation. The specific intension is to **amend the density** of Erven 552 to 555 (4 erven) from “Residential 3” with a density of 40 units /ha to a density of 60 units per ha. This will result in **31 additional** units to those approved in the ROD.

2 Reasons why amendment is required

During the last decade or more, low density development became increasingly unaffordable due to land scarcity, land and building costs and costs associated with services. Curtailment of urban sprawl, need for densification and effective use of infrastructure as well as security provided in smaller complexes further added to the trend away from low density development. This led to densities of between 20 and 40 units per hectare during early to mid-2000s.

The world-wide recession triggered by housing markets after 2007 forced families to consider even smaller and affordable units. This trend, which is supported by the current residential market, prefers higher densities of 60 units/ha due to more onerous requirements to qualify for housing bonds.

The applicant, in applying for higher density wishes to respond to needs in the housing market which is also in keeping with government policy to promote higher residential development.

3 Environmental Impacts

Environmental sensitivities

The Ervenform part of an approved township. The approval was for a township at 40u/ha, while the proposal will involve development of only 4 erven of the township at 60 u/ha. There are no additional or specific environmental sensitivities, except those investigated during the application stage that will be affected.

Cultural environment

Possible impact: Higher density development may be out of character with the present low density development in the area.

Mitigation: Large uniform low density areas are only serving a restricted segment of the overall needs of the housing market. A much greater diversity in housing will serve a wider housing market and therefore diversity in the area. Further, and amongst other advantages, life cycle housing will become available and allow children to move to smaller units near their parents and thereafter larger family units. Also designs will ensure that the character of the area is not altered.

No significant negative impacts on the cultural environment

Input-output stresses

Possible impact: More people will need more services (input stresses such as water, electricity, roads etc) and will cause more output stresses (waste water and solid waste, congestion etc).

Mitigation: Services have to be catered for irrespective of the density of the development. However, provision of services to manage input-output stresses can be dealt with at a lower cost and more manageable in confined medium density areas. Further, only a relatively small area within a low density neighbourhood with well-planned infrastructure will be affected. Increases in impacts will be marginal.

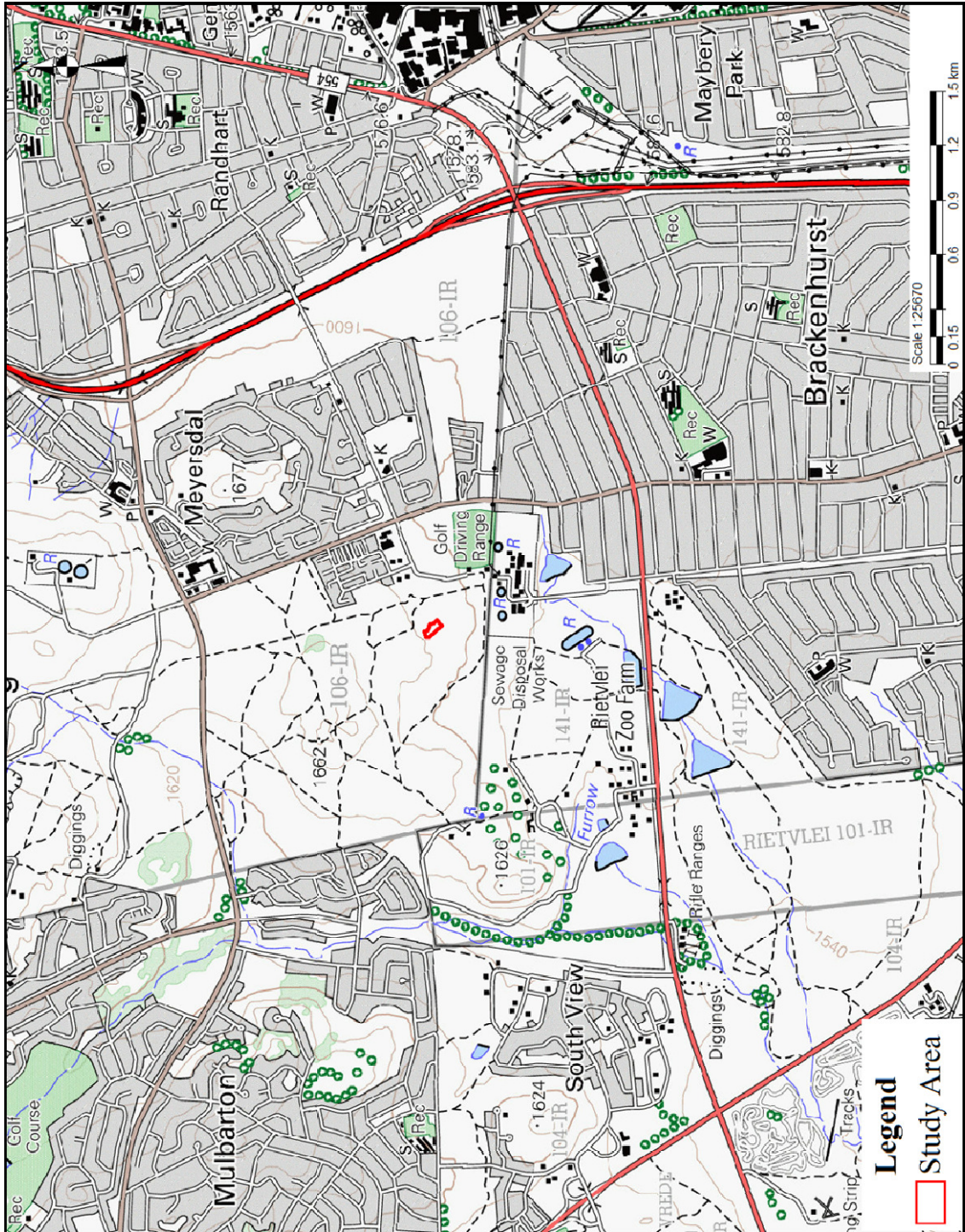
In addition, infrastructure requirements were provided for in accordance with medium density "Residential 3" development in the township layout approved by the EMM. Further, during this application process, the EMM has been requested to provide comments relative to the adequacy of services.

No negative input-output stresses are therefore envisaged that can bear any significant risk to the environment and which may exceed the capacity of services provision.

4 Advantages of the proposed development

- Low density development has larger environmental footprint, is expensive to develop and maintain and offers restricted housing opportunities;
- Not allowing the increase in density will be out of step with current government approach to mixed housing development and densification requirements;
- Negative impacts such as urban sprawl as opposed to compact development which reduces environmental footprint, ensures economies of scale in affordable housing thereby facilitating cost effective services provision and diversity housing development;
- The proposed increase in density is for the 4 erven located in the southern portion of the site, facing the open space area.
- Requirements of the EMM will be adhered to thereby ensuring appropriate levels of services provision in the area.

- PLEASE REFER TO THE ATTACHED LOCALITY MAP



Locality Map