

# **BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT & INVITATION TO COMMENT**

## **BELMONT VALLEY GOLF COURSE PROJECT, ALBANY DISTRICT**

***Background to the project:*** The Belmont Dev. Co. plans to relocate and re-develop Grahamstown's current golf course to the Belmont Valley in the Albany District, Eastern Cape Province of South Africa (refer to Figure 1). The proposed site is on portions 1 and 2 of the farm Willow Glen and portion 6 of Belmont farm, totalling 200ha in size, all of which are situated approximately 8km northeast of Grahamstown. Coastal & Environmental Services (CES) has been appointed by the Belmont Dev. Co. to undertake the necessary environmental investigations for the proposed golf course, and to apply for approval from the Department of Economic Development and Environmental Affairs (DEDEA), for its construction and operation, as required by South Africa's environmental legislation. Details of the relevant laws, and an overview of the environmental impact assessment process, are provided on the next page.

***Project description:*** In addition to the eco-friendly golf course (refer to Figure 2) the Belmont Dev. Co. plan to construct a self-sustainable clubhouse of 1500m<sup>2</sup> in area. The clubhouse will use water tanks to handle rainwater, which will be used to supply the clubhouse. Solar panels will aid electrical output to the clubhouse and an anaerobic digestive plant and french-drain system will treat all sanitary sewage.

### **AIM OF THIS DOCUMENT**

The aim of this Background Information Document (BID) is to provide people affected by and interested in the proposed project with information about this project, the process being followed and to provide them with an opportunity to be involved in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process.



### **Return address for comments:**

Ms Amber Jackson

P.O. Box 934

Grahamstown, 6140

Tel: (046) 622 2364

Fax: (046) 622 6564

Email: [a.jackson@cesnet.co.za](mailto:a.jackson@cesnet.co.za)



**Figure 1: Locality map of the proposed Belmont Valley Golf Course site, Albany District, Eastern Cape**

### Relevant Legislation

The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) regulations, promulgated in terms of Section 24 of Chapter 5 of the National Environmental Management Act (Act No 107 of 1998), and the related Lists of Activities (Government Notices (GN) R.544, R.545 and R.546 of 18<sup>th</sup> June 2010) specify the activities that require either a Basic Assessment, or a full Scoping and EIA respectively. The activities triggered by the proposed development include:

Number and date of the relevant notice	Activity No(s)	Description
Listing Notice R544	(11)	<p>The construction of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. Canals,</li> <li>II. Channels,</li> <li>III. Bridges,</li> <li>IV. Weirs,</li> <li>V. Bulk storm water outlet structures,</li> </ul> <p>Within a watercourse or within 32 metres 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.</p>
Listing Notice R544	(39)	<p>The expansion of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>VI. Canals,</li> <li>VII. Channels,</li> <li>VIII. Bridges,</li> <li>IX. Weirs,</li> <li>X. Bulk storm water outlet structures,</li> <li>XI. Marinas</li> </ul> <p>Within a watercourse or within 32 metres 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.</p>
Listing Notice R544	(55)	<p>The expansion of a dam where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. The highest part of the dam wall, as measured from the outside toe of the wall to the highest part of the wall, was originally 5 metres or higher where the height of the wall is increased by 2.5 metres or more; or</li> <li>II. Where the high-water mark of the dam will be increased with 10 hectares or more</li> </ul>
Listing Notice R545	(15)	<p>(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;</p> <p>Except where such physical alteration takes place for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) linear development activities; or</li> <li>(ii) agriculture or afforestation where activity 16 in this Schedule will apply.</li> </ul>
Listing Notice R546	(4)	The construction of road wider than 4 metres with a reserve less than 13,5metres.
Listing Notice R546	(19)	<p>The widening of a road by more than 4 metres, or the lengthening of a road by more than 1 kilometre.</p> <p>(see GNR 546 for specific thresholds)</p>
Listing Notice R546	(14)	The clearance of an area of 5 hectares or more of vegetation where 75% or more of the vegetation cover constitutes indigenous vegetation
Listing Notice R546	(16)	The construction of buildings with a footprint exceeding 10 squared metres in size; or infrastructure covering 10 square metres or more

As a consequence, the proposed development will require a full Scoping and EIA. There are three key stages to the EIA process, namely the Scoping phase, the Environmental Impact Assessment phase, and the Environmental Authorisation phase. A detailed EIA process is shown in the “Approach to this EIA Process” section below.

## APPROACH TO THIS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The process required for the proposed Belmont Valley Golf Course Project is an Environmental Impact Assessment. The Process serves primarily to inform the public and relevant authorities about the proposed project and to determine any impact(s). Should all impacts and issues be adequately addressed in the Environmental Impact Report, it will serve as the final document. The EIA process is as follows:



### **The Scoping phase**

The Scoping Phase is important for informing the public and relevant authorities about the nature and size of the proposed project. A critical component of the Scoping Phase is the Public Participation Process, in which Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) are given an opportunity to raise any issues or concerns they may have about the project. The Draft Scoping Report will be made available for review by the authorities and all I&APs. This report will report on issues raised during PPP and shall set the scope for the Environmental Impact Assessment Phase.

### **The Environmental Impact Assessment phase**

This phase is more complex and more detailed than the Scoping phase, because a number of specialist studies, identified as being necessary to address issues and concerns raised during the Scoping phase are undertaken. These studies provide expert input into the EIA process based on scientific information. I&APs will be consulted again during this phase, and will be given an opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) that will contain the specialist reports. During this phase an Environmental Management Plan must also be prepared for the project.

### **Environmental Authorisation phase**

The final EIR is submitted to the Department of Economic Development and Environmental Affairs (DEDEA) formerly the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT) who, after considering the report, will issue an Environmental Authorisation either allowing the project to continue under certain conditions, or requiring additional work to be undertaken.

### **Potential issues for investigation**

Specific specialist studies still need to be identified, and once decided upon, these will be conducted within the proposed golf course site, to ascertain any potential impacts, positive and negative, that may occur as a result of pre-construction, construction and operation. phases.

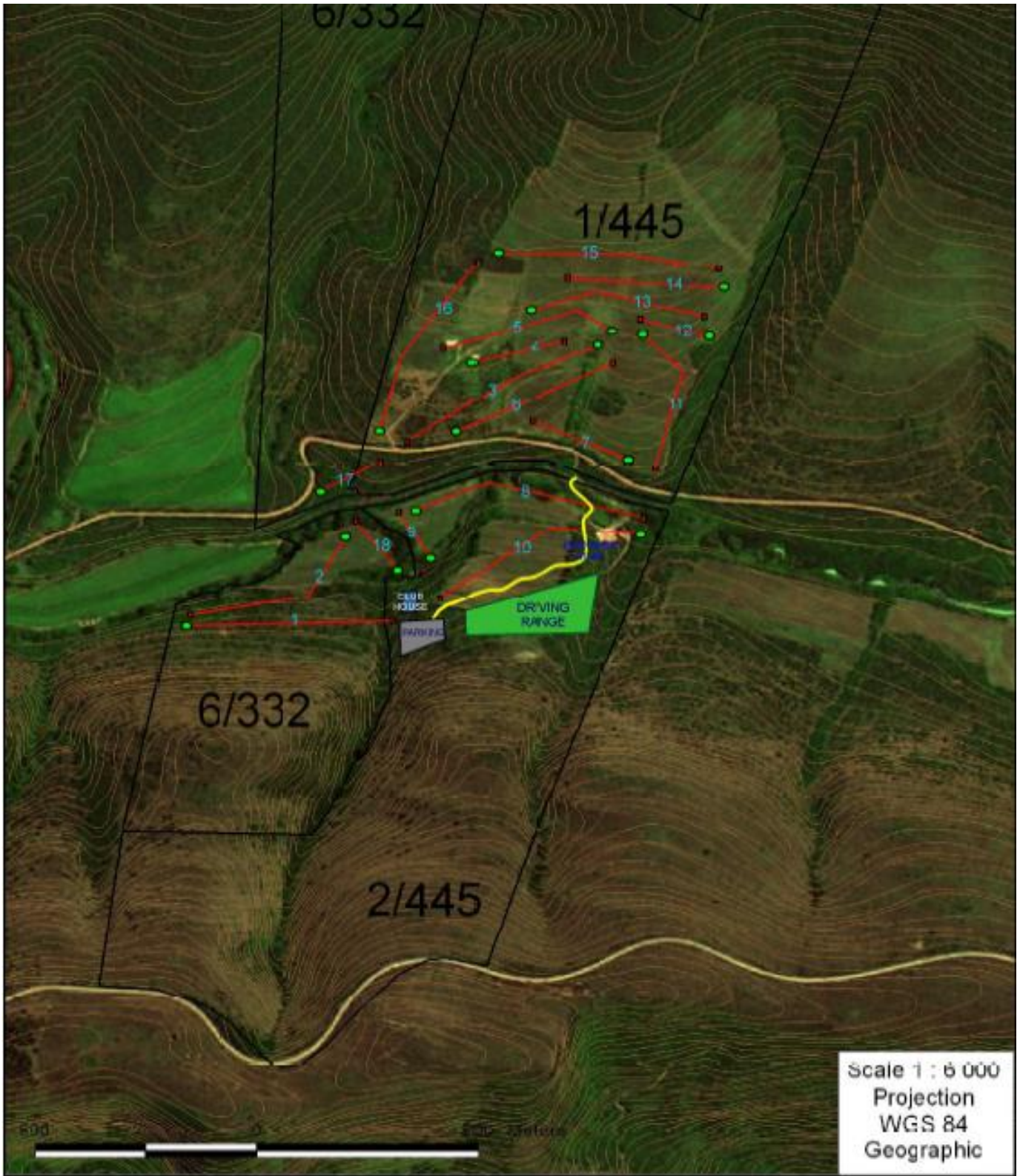


Figure 2: Locality map showing the location of the proposed Belmont Valley Golf Course, the 18 hole course layout and the central 1500m<sup>2</sup> clubhouse.

**I hereby wish to register as an Interested and Affected Party (IAP) for the Belmont Valley Golf Course EIA process**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax #: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return details to: **Ms Amber Jackson:** P.O. Box 934, Grahamstown, 6140  
Telephone: (046) 622 2364; Fax: (046) 622 6564  
Email: [a.jackson@cesnet.co.za](mailto:a.jackson@cesnet.co.za)