

THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION OF GRAPE VINEYARDS ON PORTION 13 OF ORANGE FALLS FARM NO. 16, AUGRABIES FALLS WAY, NORTHERN CAPE



BASIC ASSESSMENT REPORT FOR COMMENT JANUARY 2020

**PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION OF
GRAPE VINEYARDS ON PORTION 13 OF ORANGE
FALLS FARM NO. 16, AUGRABIES FALLS WAY,
NORTHERN CAPE**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Proposed Activity

The proposed development and expansion of grape vineyards on Portion 13 of Orange Falls Farm No. 16, Augrabies Falls Way, Northern Cape.

It is proposed that an area of 19.5 ha be cleared of vegetation for the proposed establishment of vineyards and dryland agricultural activities. It is proposed that a small reservoir be developed with a combined storage capacity of 2000m³ and will have a development footprint of approximately 2827m². This dam will be located on the north-western part of the property. No roads will be constructed as existing farm dirt roads will be used to gain access to the proposed site. The total development footprint will not exceed 20 ha. The proposed site is approximately 8.9 km north-west of the town of Augrabies. The property (Portion 13 of the Farm Orange Falls No. 13, Kenhardt) is located, just off the R359 (Augrabies Road) about 8.9 km north-west of the small town Augrabies within the Kai !Garib Local Municipality of the Northern Cape Province. The site co-ordinates are **28°39'42.28"S, 20°20'22.42"E**.

Environmental Requirements

The National Environmental Management Act (NEMA, Act 107 of 1998), as amended, makes provision for the identification and assessment of activities that are potentially detrimental to the environment and which require authorisation from the competent authority based on the findings of an Environmental Assessment. NEMA is a national act, which is enforced by the Department: Environment and Nature Conservation (DENC). In the Northern Cape, these powers are delegated to the Department: of Environmental and Nature Conservation (DENC).

According to the regulations of Section 24(5) of NEMA, authorisation is required for the following:

Government Notice R327 (Listing Notice 1):

Activity No. 27: The clearance of an area of 1 hectares or more, but less than 20 hectares of indigenous vegetation, except where such clearance of indigenous vegetation is required for—

- (i) the undertaking of a linear activity; or
- (ii) maintenance purposes undertaken in accordance with a maintenance management plan.

Activity No. 19: The infilling or depositing of any material of more than 10 cubic metres into, or the dredging, excavation, removal or moving of soil, sand, shells, shell grit, pebbles or rock of more than 10 cubic metres from a watercourse;

but excluding where such infilling, depositing, dredging, excavation, removal or moving—

- (a) will occur behind a development setback;
- (b) is for maintenance purposes undertaken in accordance with a maintenance management plan;
- (c) falls within the ambit of activity 21 in this Notice, in which case that activity applies;
- (d) occurs within existing ports or harbours that will not increase the development footprint of the port or harbour; or
- (e) where such development is related to the development of a port or harbour, in which case activity 26 in Listing Notice 2 of 2014 applies.

Activity No. 12: The development of—

- (i) dams or weirs, where the dam or weir, including infrastructure and water surface area, exceeds 100 square metres; or
- (ii) infrastructure or structures with a physical footprint of 100 square metres or more;

where such development occurs—

- (a) within a watercourse;
- (b) in front of a development setback; or
- (c) if no development setback exists, within 32 metres of a watercourse, measured from the edge of a watercourse; —

excluding—

- (aa) the development of infrastructure or structures within existing ports or harbours that will not increase the development footprint of the port or harbour;
- (bb) where such development activities are related to the development of a port or harbour, in which case activity 26 in Listing Notice 2 of 2014 applies;
- (cc) activities listed in activity 14 in Listing Notice 2 of 2014 or activity 14 in Listing Notice 3 of 2014, in which case that activity applies;
- (dd) where such development occurs within an urban area;
- (ee) where such development occurs within existing roads, road reserves or railway line reserves; or
- (ff) the development of temporary infrastructure or structures where such infrastructure or structures will be removed within 6 weeks of the commencement of development and where indigenous vegetation will not be cleared.

Government Notice R324 (Listing Notice 3):

Activity No. 12: The clearance of an area of 300 square metres or more of indigenous vegetation except where such clearance of indigenous vegetation is required for maintenance purposes undertaken in accordance with a maintenance management plan.

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- i. Within any critically endangered or endangered ecosystem listed in terms of section 52 of the NEMBA or prior to the publication of such a list, within an area that has been identified as critically endangered in the National Spatial Biodiversity Assessment 2004;
- ii. Within critical biodiversity areas identified in bioregional plans;
- iii. Within the littoral active zone or 100 metres inland from high water mark of the sea or an estuary, whichever distance is the greater, excluding where such removal will occur behind the development setback line on erven in urban areas; or
- iv. On land, where, at the time of the coming into effect of this Notice or thereafter such land was zoned open space, conservation or had an equivalent zoning.

Site Description

The proposed development footprint is located on private property, zoned for agriculture and is surrounded by agricultural land uses. The proposed vineyards will be located south of the existing vineyards. As is typical of this part of the Northern Cape, ephemeral drainage lines tend to criss-cross the landscape and the proposed site will cross a number of such drainage lines. The site is located within a Critical Biodiversity Area (CBA) and a number of protected plant species in terms of the NCNCA were observed. The land is currently fallow-land, sometimes used for livestock grazing. The vegetation on the property in general can be described as a sparse, slightly disturbed, low shrubland, with the small ephemeral drainage lines the most prominent feature, especially in the area to the west of the proposed site. Bushmanland Arid Grassland is not considered a threatened vegetation type (least threatened), with more than 99% remaining. However only 4% is formally conserved (Augrabies Falls National Park). No special features were observed on the property and the site itself is not considered of any special significance in terms of vegetation other than potential migration route and the fact that it supported a number of protected plant species. Please refer to Appendix A1 for the locality map as well as Appendix C (site layout) and Appendix B for photographs of the proposed site.

Civil and Electrical Services

The electricity is supplied by Eskom. The sewerage on the farm gets emptied by a honey sucker by the Kai Garib Local Municipality when full, and the effluent disposed at a municipal safe zone.

Access

The R359 that passes the involved property will provide a high rate of visibility as well as accessibility to the proposed development. The proposed site will be accessed via existing farm roads on the property.

Conclusion

The best environmental option would be the no-go alternative. However, the massive social benefits of the proposed project would not be realised. The development is relative small and may result in potential beneficial socio-economic gain, while the no-go option will not contribute significantly to national or provincial conservation targets.

The proposed agricultural development is not expected to have any adverse effects on people's health and well-being. It is also not expected to produce any noise or odours during the operational phase. Some noise can be expected during the construction phase, but this will be temporary and the impact is expected to be low. The activity is expected to have a low impact on the visual character of the area.

According to SANBI BGIS National Vegetation Map (Appendix 2) as well as the Botanical Impact Assessment (Appendix D1), the vegetation type expected at the proposed site and its immediate vicinity, is Bushmanland Arid Grassland. Bushmanland Arid Grassland is not considered a threatened vegetation type (least threatened), with more than 99% remaining. However only 4% is formally conserved (Augrabies Falls National Park). Botanically the proposed site is not considered sensitive, but it does overlap a proposed CBA and will impact on a small number of protected species. No cultural or historical aspects were identified on the site (refer to Appendix D2). Any potential negative impacts during the construction phase are expected to be adequately mitigated through the implementation of the Environmental Management Programme ("EMPr") and the appointment of an Environmental Control Officer ("ECO") during the construction phase.

Considering all the information, it is not envisaged that this proposed development will not have a significant negative impact on the environment.

It is therefore recommended that this application be authorised with the necessary conditions of approval as described throughout this draft BAR for comment.