

PROPOSED INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ON ERF 755, OLYVENHOUTSDRIFT, UPINGTON, NORTHERN CAPE



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POST-APPLICATION BASIC ASSESSMENT REPORT

May 2017

PROPOSED INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ON ERF 755, OLYVENHOUTSDRIFT, UPINGTON, NORTHERN CAPE

PREPARED FOR:

Kobus Duvenhage Bouers (Pty.) Ltd.
Private Bag X5879,
Upington,
8800

PREPARED BY:

EnviroAfrica

P.O. Box 5367
Helderberg
7135

Tel: 021 – 851 1616

Fax: 086 – 512 0154

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

It is proposed that a portion (approximately 3.2ha) of Erf 755, Olyvenhoutsdrift Settlement be rezoned for the development of a light industrial park. The rest of the property (6.7ha) will remain zoned for agricultural use.

The site is located on a portion of Erf 755 Olyvenhoutsdrift Settlement, within the Dawid Kruiper Municipality. The site is approximately 4km south of Upington, along the N10.

Site Coordinates: S 28°28'26.95", E 21°16'19.98".

Erf 755 Olyvenhoutsdrift Settlement is currently zoned Agricultural (C.a.2), however, the site is vacant and not used.

The proposed industrial park development will include 10 736m² of floor space and 178 parking bays. There will be approximately 31 industrial units, ranging in size from 150m² to 1985m².

The N10 runs along the eastern boundary of the site. An existing gravel access road running along the northern boundary of the site intersects with the N10 and is the current access road to neighbouring industrial sites. Entrance to the newly proposed development will be from the north, also via the existing gravel access road. SANRAL has indicated that the use of the existing access from the N10 will be allowed.

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

Government Notice R327 (Listing Notice 1):

Activity 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.

Site Description

- Vegetation

According to the Biodiversity Assessment (**Appendix D3**), Bushmanland Arid Grassland is normally described as a sparsely vegetated, grassland dominated vegetation type, sometimes structurally transformed into a low shrubs vegetation layer, which was the case on this property, although historical and present day disturbances were evident throughout the property. Two different plant communities were observed. To the east (not within the development footprint) on a slightly more sandy substrate an open grassy community dominated by *Mesembryanthemum coriarium* and white grasses (*Stipagrostis* species). To the west (part of the development footprint) on shallow limestone a lower shrub community was encountered, absolutely dominated by *Justicia australis* and *Tetraena decumbens* (to a lesser degree) with *Senegalia mellifera* also occasionally present

The site has been relatively heavily impacted on by previous activities on the site, and parts of the site has been completely transformed, through old building foundations, old excavations and quarries, vehicles tracks/roads, footpaths and other disturbances.

- Freshwater

No aquatic ecosystems were identified on the site.

There are no watercourses (streams or wetlands) on the property, or within 32m of the property. The closest watercourse is a small ephemeral stream located approximately 80m to the west of the property. The proposed development is therefore expected to have no direct impacts on this watercourse.

- Heritage

According to the Archaeological Assessment (**Appendix D5**), the proposed development site comprises a severely transformed and degraded industrial landscape.

More than 70 Later Stone Age implements, mostly flakes, chunks and cores were recorded on the proposed development site, but these are spread very thinly and unevenly over the area. Two scrapers were found, but no pottery or ostrich eggshell was encountered. More than 95% of the implements are in banded ironstone. Several indurated shale Middle Stone Age flakes were also recorded. No Early Stone Age tools were found.

No graves, or typical grave markers were encountered during the field assessment

The severely disturbed and degraded context in which they were found means that the archaeological resources have been rated as having *low* (Grade 3C) significance.

The results of the study indicate that the proposed development of an industrial park on Erf 755 Olyvenhoutsdrift will not have an impact of great significance on archaeological heritage.

The Archaeological Assessment (**Appendix D5**) concluded that the proposed development site is not a sensitive archaeological landscape. No settlement sites or evidence of human occupation were found. Most of the tools are assigned to the Later Stone Age, while a few Middle Stone Age lithics were also recorded. The majority of the tools recorded (flakes, chunks & a few cores) most likely represent discarded flakes or flake debris.

The impact significance of the proposed development on important archaeological heritage is assessed as LOW.

Need and Desirability

There are 12 REDZ (Renewable Energy Development Zones) that have been gazetted, which includes the Upington Zone, which is indicated to have 600 MW in wind energy potential, 34000 MW in solar energy potential (total potential of 34600 MW). Promotion and encouragement of these development opportunity brought about by the mentioned zone, will increase economic and employment opportunities in the Dawid Kruiper Municipality.

In support to the growing renewable energy sector, the development of an increased amount of industrial premises will provide a platform for the stimulation of even more industrial developments (indirectly necessitated by renewable energy developments) as well as other sectors of the economy of Upington and the area surrounding thereto, due to the fact that Upington will be ready to accommodate such economic activities.

In the light of the above mentioned, the land owner of the involved property has set out to purchase a 10ha portion of Plot 755, Olyvenhoutsdrif Settlement, from the //Khara Hais Municipality. It is the intention of the developing entity, Kobus Duvenhage Bouers (Pty.) Ltd. to develop a 3.2ha portion, of the 10ha area, as an industrial park.

This development has the potential to positively contribute to, amongst others, the renewable energy sector of the surrounding area, by means of providing space for industrial activities, supplementary to this sector, to be more readily accommodated when needed.

This development has the potential to provide an economic injection in the local community, by means of creating employment opportunities.

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The proposed development will increase the income generated by the study area, which is currently non-existent.

Conclusion

The overall environmental impact is expected to be low (negative), with the following mitigation measures proposed:

- Botanical
- All invasive alien plant species encountered on the property should be removed responsibly and follow-up work must be done during the construction period.

- Heritage
- No archaeological mitigation is required.
- Should any unmarked human burials/remains or ostrich eggshell water flask caches be uncovered, or exposed during preparation of the lands for cultivation, , these must immediately be reported to the archaeologist (Jonathan Kaplan 0823210172), or the South African Heritage Resources Agency (Ms Natasha Higgitt 021 4624502). Burials, etc. must not be removed or disturbed until inspected by the archaeologist.

Considering all the information, it is not envisaged that this proposed development will have a significant negative impact on the environment, and the environmental and socio-economic benefits are expected to outweigh any negative impacts.

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