

## The Proposed Cultivation of Less than 99 ha of Virgin Veld, on Leydenburg 45 and Middel Valley 46, near Swartburg, KwaZulu-Natal

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

January 2013



#### WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT?

The purpose of this document is to:

- ◆ Inform Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) about the proposed project, and to invite them to participate;
- ◆ Provide a brief background on the proposed project; and
- ◆ Explain the aims and objectives of the Environmental Basic Assessment process.



#### WHAT IS THE BACKGROUND TO THIS DEVELOPMENT?

It is proposed that approximately 99 ha of virgin veld on Leydenburg 45 and Middel Valley 46, be broken for agricultural purposes.

In terms of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations under Section 24(5), 24M and 44 of the National Environmental Management Act (Act No 107 of 1998) published in Government Notice No. R. 543 of 2010, the proposed development triggers Listed Activities published in Government Notice No R. 544 and 546 thus a Basic Assessment is required.

**GNR 544 - Part 9:** *The construction of facilities or infrastructure exceeding 1000 metres in length for the bulk transportation of water, sewage or storm water –*

- i. *with an internal diameter of 0.36 metres or more; or*
- ii. *with a peak throughput of 120 litres per second or more.*

**GNR 544 - Part 11:** *The construction of:*

- xi. *infrastructure or structures covering 50 square metres or more where such construction occurs within a watercourse or within 32 metres of a watercourse, measured from the edge of the watercourse, excluding where such construction will occur behind the development setback line.*

**GNR 546 - Part 14:** *The clearance of an area of 5 hectares or more of vegetation where 75% or more of the vegetative cover constitutes indigenous vegetation, except where such removal of vegetation is required for:*

- i. *Purposes of agriculture or afforestation inside areas identified in spatial instruments adopted by the competent authority for agriculture or afforestation purposes;*
- ii. *The undertaking of a linear activity falling below the thresholds in Notice 544 of 2010;*

*In KwaZulu-Natal: All areas outside urban areas.*

The Applicant is required to appoint an independent Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) to conduct the environmental authorisation process. The Applicant, Chestnut Hill Investments (Pty) Ltd, has appointed Green Door Environmental to conduct the Basis Assessment Process for the proposed development.



## WHAT IS PROPOSED?

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The Applicant proposes to break approximately 99 ha of virgin veld for agricultural purposes on Leydenburg 45 and Middel Valley 46, be broken for agricultural purposes. The site is located on the following GPS co-ordinates:  
30° 03' 27.81" S    29° 07' 42.14" E

Refer to Figure 1 for a locality map and approximate positioning of the pivots.



## WHERE IS THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT?

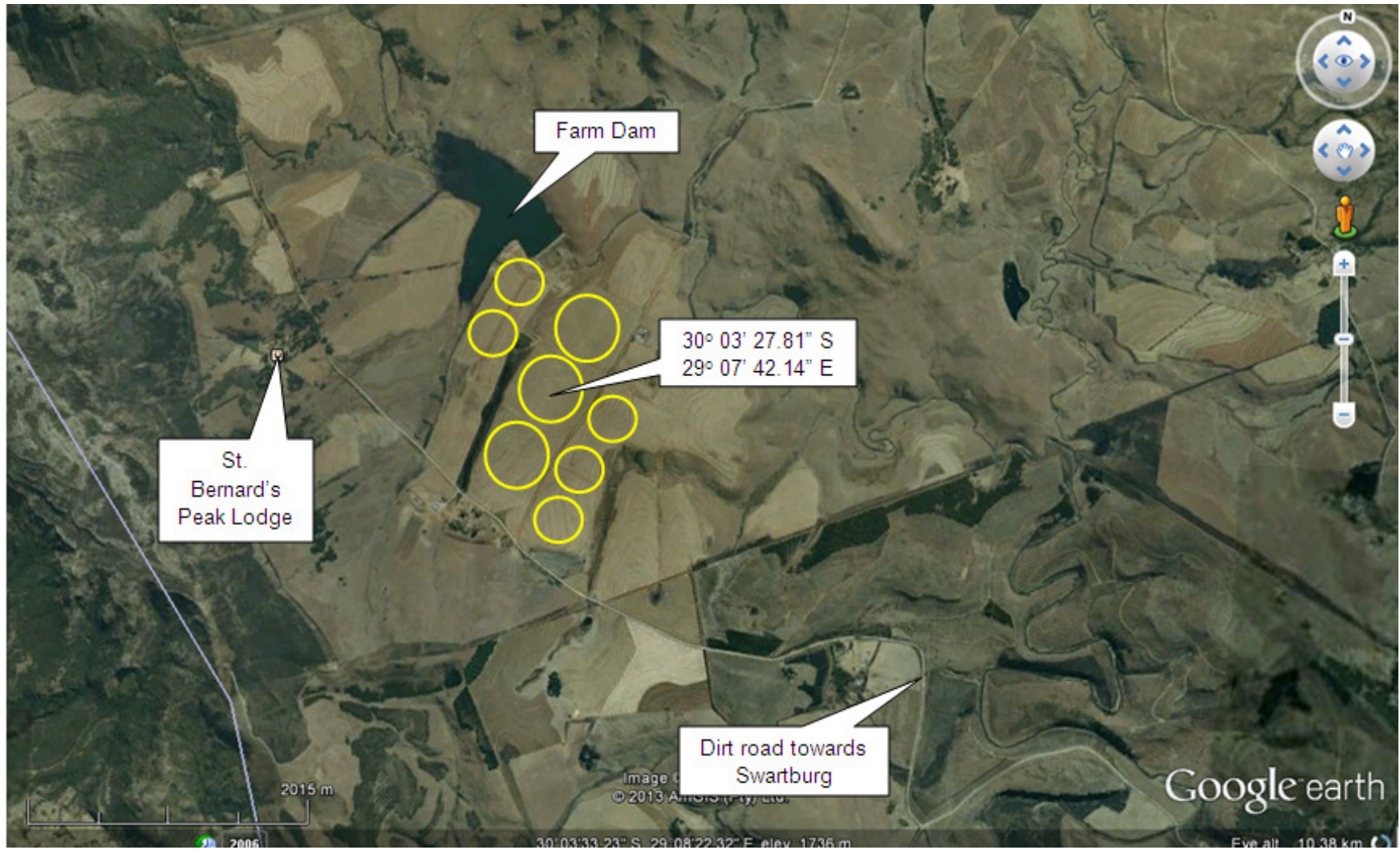


Figure 1: Aerial Map showing the location of the proposed pivots and the surrounding land uses (Source: Google Earth)



## **WHAT IS THE AIM OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL BASIC ASSESSMENT (BA)?**

The Basic Assessment process aims to:

- ◆ Inform and involve all potentially Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) of the proposed development;
- ◆ Identify the potential impacts (positive and negative) that the proposed development may have on the ecological and socio-economic environment;
- ◆ Provide recommendations based on the identified impacts and conduct further specialist studies if necessary; and
- ◆ Provide the Department of Agriculture and Environmental Affairs (DAEA) with enough information to make an informed decision regarding the proposed development.



## **WHAT IS INVOLVED IN THE EIA PROCESS FOR BASIC ASSESSMENT?**

The Basic Assessment process can be described as follows:

1. Application Form:

An official Application Form is required to be completed and submitted to the Competent Authority. This Form provides information on the property, a description of the proposed development and lists the relevant listed activities which are triggered by this proposed development.

2. Public Participation:

The general public and relevant Authorities are notified of the proposed development through newspaper adverts, site notices and direct consultation. Alternative methods will be employed to inform those I&APs who may be illiterate, disabled or otherwise disadvantaged. Should you be aware of anyone who might be interested in this project, but has not been notified, please send the relevant contact details to Green Door Environmental. This Background information Document will be circulated to neighbouring landowners, relevant authorities and any other persons registered as I&APs following the adverts and site notices.

3. Identification of Impacts and Alternatives

Environmental issues, concerns, development constraints and possible development alternatives will be identified using professional judgement, project information, experience of similar projects, a review of available literature, site visits, and consultation with authorities and the public.

4. Impact Evaluation

The significance of environmental issues will be evaluated in terms of their expected extent, intensity, duration and probability of occurrence.

5. Mitigation and Management Measures

Measures to manage and minimise impacts to within acceptable levels, as well as measures to maximise the socio-economic benefits associated with the development, will be identified and recorded in the Basic Assessment Report. An Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) will be compiled to facilitate the implementation of mitigation measures.

6. Reporting

The Basic Assessment Report and Draft EMPr will be made available for review and comment by all I&APs and relevant authorities. A Final Basic Assessment Report and EMPr will be compiled and will include comments received on the circulated Basic Assessment Report.

7. Authority Decision

The Final Basic Assessment Report will be used by DAEA as the basis for the decision on whether the proposed development should be approved or not.



## **WHAT POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS HAVE INITIALLY BEEN IDENTIFIED?**

The following issues have been identified as potentially problematic and will, amongst other issues, be investigated during the Basic Assessment Process:

- Erosion control measures; and
- Indigenous vegetation.



## HOW CAN I&APs COMMENT ON THIS DEVELOPMENT?

The need for public input and involvement is of critical importance. All I&APs (neighbours, authorities, organisations etc.) are invited to comment on the proposed development. Comments can be communicated to us by post, telephone or email (contact details are provided below).

In order to ensure that your comments are addressed and incorporated, please ensure that we have received all comments by **8 March 2013**.



**Postal:** PO Box 11 Hilton, 3245  
**Physical:** Block H, Quarry Office Park,  
 400 Old Howick Road, Hilton, 3245  
**Phone:** 033 343 4176 **Fax:** 033 343 4201  
**Cell:** 072 181 4236  
**Email:** rebecca@greendoorgroup.co.za  
**Website:** www.greendoorgroup.co.za

Title:	First Name:	Surname:	Initials:
Organisation / Property Name:			
Interest in project (e.g. authority, neighbour, competitor, supplier):			
Postal Address:			
		Post Code:	
Tel Number:		Cell Number:	
Fax Number:		Email:	

- The following issues must be noted regarding the proposed cultivation of less than 99 ha of virgin veld, on Leydenburg 45 and Middel Valley 46, near Swartburg, KwaZulu-Natal:

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- The following potentially interested and affected parties should also be contacted:

Name:	Organisation:
Tel Number:	
Address:	
Name:	Organisation:
Tel Number:	
Address:	

- Additional comments?

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**Should you be aware of anyone who might be interested in this project, but may be illiterate, disabled or otherwise disadvantaged, please send the relevant contact details to Green Door Environmental.**

*Thank you*