

23 March 2022

RE: THE PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT OF A 67 900 M³ DAM AND THE CULTIVATION OF APPROXIMATELY 45 HA OF LAND TO MACADAMIA NUT TREES, LOCATED ON PORTION 98 AND PORTION 116 OF DRIE FONTEINEN NO. 1127, HOPEWELL FARM, WITHIN THE KWADUKUZA LOCAL AND ILEMBE DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY, UMHLALI, KWAZULU-NATAL

APPLICANT: LINNEAR SUGAR FARMING (PTY) LTD

PURPOSE OF THIS PUBLIC INFORMATION SESSION

- Provide information to Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) on the proposed project;
- Describe the Scoping and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Process;
- Present the major comments raised to date, regarding the proposed project; and
- Give I&APs an opportunity to raise any additional comments which must be addressed and ask any questions they may have.

BACKGROUND

- The Applicant, Linnear Sugar Farming (Pty) Ltd, is proposing the establishment of a 67 900 m³ dam and the cultivation of approximately 45 ha of land to macadamia nut trees, located on Portion 98 and Portion 116 of Drie Fonteinen No. 1127, Hopewell Farm, within the KwaDukuza Local and iLembe District Municipality, Umhlali, KwaZulu-Natal;
- The proposed dam site is located on Portion 116 of Drie Fonteinen No. 1127, at GPS coordinates 29°27'49.48" S and 31°07'49.87" E, and falls on a tributary of the Mhlali River;
- The currently preferred dam design is proposed to comprise a storage capacity of 67 900 m³, a surface area of 2.3 ha, a wall height of 9.5 m and a wall length of 105 m;
- The Applicant is also proposing the cultivation of approximately 45 ha of land to macadamia nut trees;
- The proposed cultivation sites are located on Portion 98 and Portion 116 of Drie Fonteinen No. 1127;
- Although the majority of this land has been cultivated prior to 1998 and currently comprises sugar cane, several macadamia nut trees are proposed to be planted on uncultivated land and within 32 m of a watercourse;
- This in turn will result in the clearance of land which has not previously been cultivated, or not cultivated within the past ten years (i.e. indigenous vegetation);
- The exact number of hectares of land to be cultivated from indigenous vegetation will be confirmed during the EIA Phase of the proposed project once feedback from the Specialist Studies has been received;
- Water from the dam is proposed to be pumped via pipelines to the lands for irrigation purposes; and
- The proposed dam will thus serve as a storage mechanism to be used for supplementary irrigation to support the critical flowering phase of the macadamia nut tree growth cycle.

Refer to **Figure 1 and 2** for maps showing the proposed cultivation site and surrounding area.



Figure 1: Locality Map showing the proposed study site and surrounding area, Umhlali, KwaZulu-Natal (Source: Google Earth).

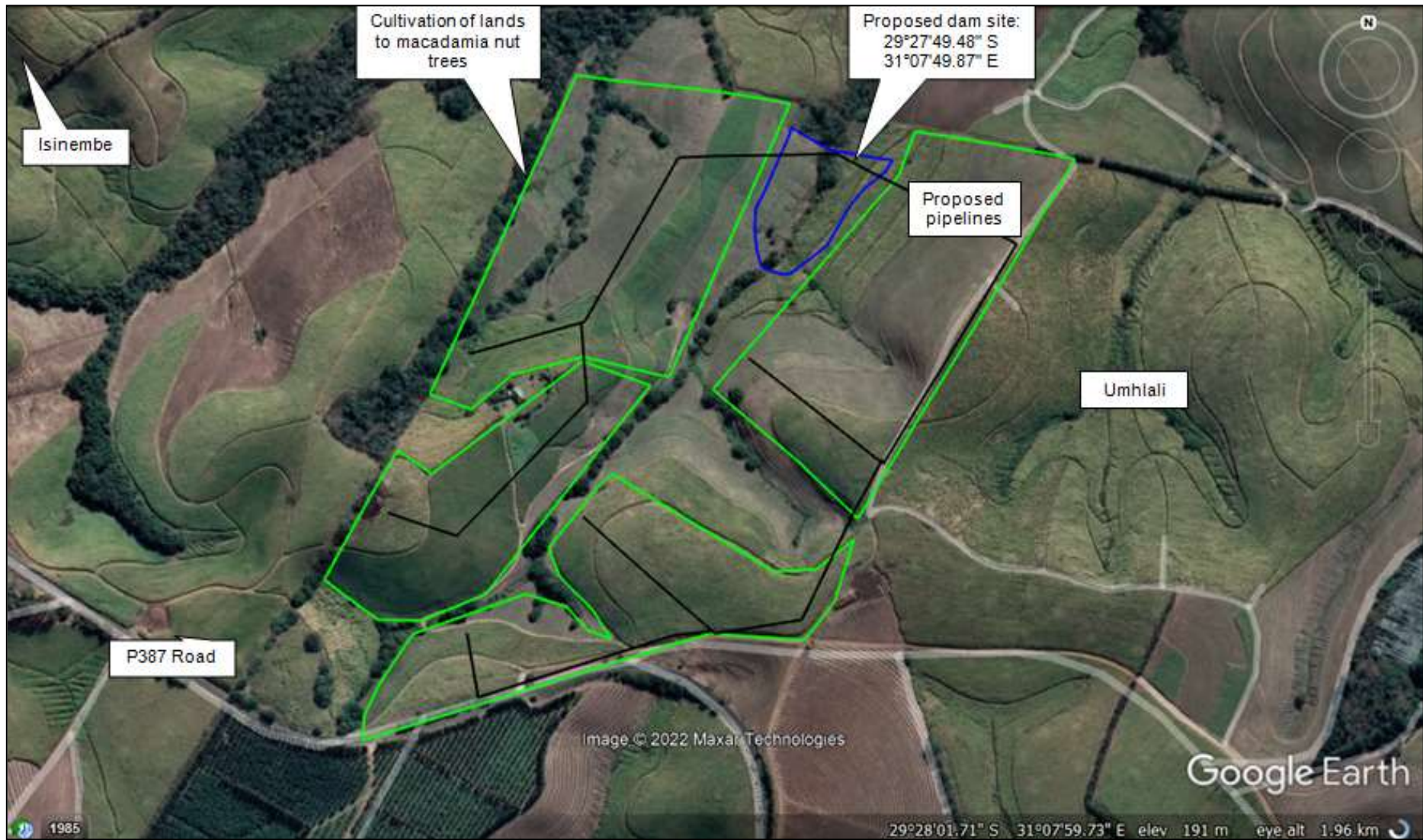


Figure 2: Map showing the proposed study site and surrounding area, Umhlali, KwaZulu-Natal (Source: Google Earth).

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The **Environmental Assessment Practitioner** (Green Door Environmental) is required to:

- Act on behalf of the Applicant (not for);
- Be independent with no vested interest in the proposed project (financial or other);
- Have the necessary qualifications, experience, expertise and knowledge of relevant legislation;
- Undertake the public participation process;
- Identify, assess and mitigate all impacts (positive & negative) a proposed project may have on the environment (social, ecological and economic); and
- Produce all information, plans and reports to the relevant authorities timeously.

The **Applicant** (Linnear Sugar Farming (Pty) Ltd) is required to:

- Appoint an Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP);
- Be responsible for all costs;
- Ensure that the EAP is independent, i.e. has no vested interest in the outcome of the proposed project;
- Ensure suitability of the EAP; and
- Ensure that the EAP provides adequate information to the competent authority.

Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs), which include authorities, community leaders, neighbouring landowners, general public, are required to:

- Provide inputs and comments on supplied documentation within the given timeframes;
- State their interest in the proposed project (business, financial, personal or other); and
- Contribute and participate openly, effectively and honestly.

LEGISLATION

In terms of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA, Act No. 107 of 1998) and the EIA Regulations of 2014 (as amended – 2017), published in Government Notice No. R. (GNR) 324, 325 and 327 of 2017, certain Listed Activities require either a Basic Assessment Process (GNR 324 and GNR 327) or a Scoping and EIA Process (GNR 325) to be undertaken for Environmental Authorisation. The proposed project triggers the following Listed Activities, thus a Scoping and EIA Process is required to be undertaken.

Listed Notice	Activity	Description
GNR 327	9	<i>“The development of infrastructure exceeding 1000 metres in length for the bulk transportation of water or stormwater – (i) with an internal diameter of 0.36 metres or more; or (ii) with a peak throughput of 120 litres per second or more...”</i> Potentially applicable as water from the dam is proposed to be pumped via pipelines to the surrounding lands for irrigation purposes. The lengths and diameters of the pipelines will be confirmed during the EIA Phase of the proposed project.
GNR 327	12	<i>“The development of – (i) dams or weirs, where the dam or weir, including infrastructure and water surface area, exceeds 100 square metres; or... (i) within a watercourse;...”</i> Applicable as the proposed dam is to have a storage capacity of 67 900 m³.
GNR 327	19	<i>“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...”</i> Applicable as the proposed dam will require the excavation of material from a watercourse. The installation of pipelines may potentially result in the excavation of material from a

		watercourse. This will be confirmed during the EIA Phase of the proposed project once feedback from the Specialist Studies has been received.
GNR 327	27	<i>“The clearance of an area of 1 hectare or more, but less than 20 hectares of indigenous vegetation, except where such clearance of indigenous vegetation is required for – ...”</i> Applicable as the proposed dam will occupy a surface area of approximately 2.3 ha. The cultivation of land to macadamia nut trees will also require the clearance of indigenous vegetation. The exact number of hectares of land to be cultivated from indigenous vegetation will be confirmed during the EIA Phase of the proposed project once feedback from the Specialist Studies has been received.
GNR 325	16	<i>“The development of a dam where the highest part of the dam wall, measured from the outside toe of the wall to the highest part of the wall, is 5 metres or higher, or where the high water mark of the dam covers an area of 10 hectares or more.”</i> Applicable as the proposed dam is to have a wall height of approximately 9.5 m.

The Applicant, Linnear Sugar Farming (Pty) Ltd, has appointed Green Door Environmental, to undertake the Scoping and EIA Process.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TO DATE

Newspaper Adverts

Newspaper adverts were placed in the Witness (English) on 08 February 2022 and in the Isolezwe (Zulu) on 04 February 2022.

Site Posters

Site posters, in both English and Zulu, were placed on the property and on the access road on 21 February 2022.

Background Information Document

- A Background Information Document (BID) was circulated from 10 February 2022 informing all registered I&APs that a Scoping and EIA Process was to be undertaken for the proposed project;
- The BID provided details of the aims and processes involved in the Scoping and EIA Process, and invited all I&APs to register on the proposed project and provide preliminary comments; and
- Comments were received in response to the newspaper adverts, site posters and BID. These are tabulated and responded to in **Table 1** below.

SPECIALIST STUDIES

The following Specialist Studies will be undertaken for the proposed project:

- Wetland Assessment;
- Wetland Rehabilitation and Monitoring Plan;
- Planting Plan;
- Aquatic Assessment;
- Biodiversity Assessment;
- Heritage Impact Assessment;
- Paleontological Impact Assessment;
- Hydrological and Flood Line Assessment;
- Dam Design and Engineering Report; and
- Stormwater Management Plan.

Table 1: Summary of comments received and responses provided following circulation of the newspaper adverts, site posters and BID.

COMMENT	RESPONSE
The size of the properties must be confirmed.	Portion 98 of Drie Fonteinen No. 1127 totals 21 ha and Portion 116 of Driefonteinen No. 1127 totals 47 ha.
More detailed information and Specialist Study feedback is required to provide comments.	This has been noted. The Draft Scoping Report will be circulated to all I&APs for a 30 day comment period. This Report will comprise more detailed information surrounding the proposed project.
Potential impacts on natural forests and indigenous tree species must be addressed.	This will be confirmed following feedback from the Biodiversity Specialist.

WAY FORWARD

- A summary of the comments received and responses provided at this Public Information Session will be compiled and circulated to all I&APs, who may comment further if they wish;
- The summary of all comments received and responses will be compiled for inclusion in the Draft Scoping Report;
- The Draft Scoping Report will be circulated to all I&APs for comment for a period of 30 days;
- The Final Scoping Report will then be compiled and will include a summary of the comments received and responses provided following circulation of the Draft Scoping Report;
- The Final Scoping Report sets out the issues to be addressed during the EIA Phase of the proposed project and includes a Plan of Study for the EIA Report. The Final Scoping Report will then be submitted to the Competent Authority, the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs (DEDTEA), for consideration;
- Once the Final Scoping Report has been accepted by the DEDTEA, the EIA Phase will commence;
- A second Public Information Session will be held as part of the EIA Phase, during which the results of all Specialist Studies will be presented. I&APs will then have another opportunity to provide comment. I&APs comments will be addressed and included in the Draft EIA Report, which will also be circulated to all I&APs for comment for a period of 30 days;
- The Final EIA Report will then be compiled, including all comments and responses, and submitted to the DEDTEA for consideration; and
- Once the DEDTEA have reached a decision, all I&APs will be notified and informed of this decision.

Thank you for your attendance and participation!

Please forward any comments or queries to:
 Green Door Environmental
 C/o Kerryn Arbuthnot
 (kerryn@greendoorgroup.co.za).