

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

Proposed Klippoort Dam, near Ladysmith, Emnambithi / Ladysmith Local Municipality

November 2013



WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT?

The purpose of this document is to:

- ◆ Inform Interested and Affected Parties (IAPs) about the proposed activity and request their participation;
- ◆ Provide a brief background on the proposed project; and
- ◆ Explain the aims and objectives of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Process.



WHAT IS PROPOSED?

The Applicant is Arnut Hill (Pty) Ltd. and is represented by Dr Bryan Drew. The Applicant wishes to establish a dam on his property for the purposes of diversifying the farm, by introducing irrigated crops. This will allow the Applicant to produce sufficient food for his own livestock.

The proposed dam site also encompasses properties owned by emerging farmers and the local community, thus the dam is also proposed to assist two neighbouring emerging farmers (Mr Albert Buthelezi and the Mbulawa Langa Family Trust) and the local Roosboom community with access to water for agricultural purposes.

The proposed dam would hold approximately 2.3 million m³ (KL) and would cover approximately 100ha at full capacity. The proposed dam is to have an earthen wall of approximately 10m in height.

The proposed dam will reduce the impact of flash flooding and erosion on the farm, which currently prevents parts of the farm from being used. Floods in this area in previous years have also impacted on the N11 road to Ladysmith and the water pipeline feeding Ladysmith from Spioenkop Dam.

JEC Environmental Services (JEC) has been appointed by Arnut Hill (Pty) Ltd to act as the Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) and conduct the necessary Scoping and EIA Process for the proposed dam and associated cultivation areas, on behalf of the Applicant.



WHERE IS THE PROPERTY?

The proposed dam site is located on Klippoort Farm, near Ladysmith, Emnambithi / Ladysmith Local Municipality, Uthukela District Municipality. The proposed dam site traverses four properties, namely:

- Farm Driehoek No. 2247 (owned by the Applicant);
- Rem of Portion 14 of Farm Klip Poort No. 1082 (owned by the Applicant);
- Portion 23 of Farm Klip Poort No. 1082 (owned by the Mbulawa Langa Family Trust); and
- Portion 15 of Farm Klip Poort No. 1082 (owned by Ntokozweni Developers).

The proposed dam site is within an eroded drainage line, which is a tributary of the Middlespruit, a non-perennial stream which feeds the Sand River. The surrounding grassland is currently degraded, with limited grazing potential.

The site is situated approximately 12km south west of Ladysmith and can be accessed as follows: From Pietermaritzburg, travel on the N3 Freeway, towards Ladysmith. Take the Bergville / Ladysmith off-ramp (N11) and turn right to Ladysmith. Travel for 6km, then turn right onto District Road D142. Travel for approximately 4.5km (keep left at the two forks), then turn left onto the property. The site is approximately 2km from the D142 and is accessed via farm tracks (see Figures 1 and 2).

? LOCATION OF PROPERTY

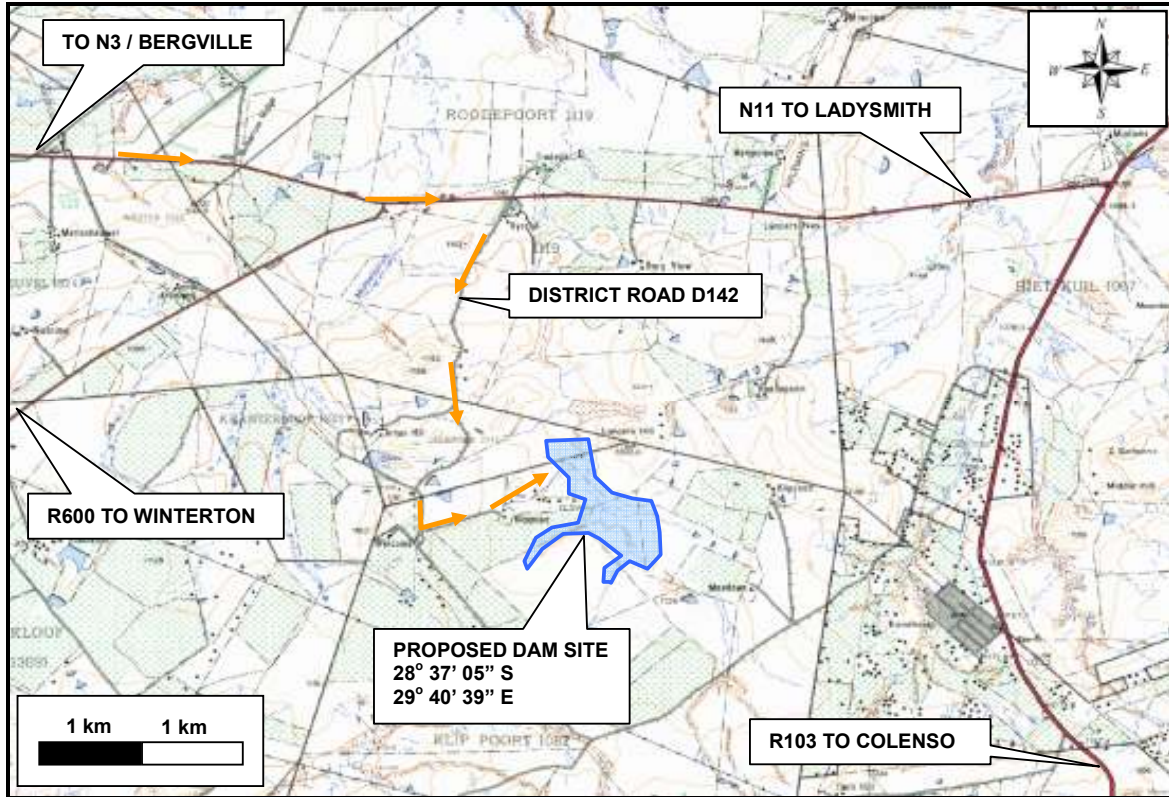


FIGURE 1: Location of Proposed Klippoort Dam Site, west of Ladysmith
(Extracted from 1:50 000 Topographical Map 2829DA)

? WHAT ARE THE ENVIRONMENTAL REQUIREMENTS?

In terms of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations promulgated in terms of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA), certain Listed Activities are specified for which either a Basic Assessment Process (Government Notice (GN) R 544 and R 546) or a Scoping and EIA Process (GN R 545) is required.

The following Listed Activities in GN R 544, GN R 545 and GN R 546 (Listing Notices 1, 2 and 3 respectively) are applicable to the proposed Klippoort Dam:

Listing Notice 1 (GN R 544):	Item 11:	<i>The construction of (iii) dams where such construction occurs within a watercourse or within 32 metres of a watercourse, measured from the edge of a watercourse, excluding where such construction will occur behind the development setback line.</i>
Listing Notice 2 (GN R 545):	Item 19:	<i>The construction of a dam, where the highest part of the dam wall, as 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>
Listing Notice 3 (GN R 546):	Item 14	<i>The clearance of an area of 5 hectares or more of vegetation where 75% or more of the vegetative cover constitutes indigenous vegetation in all areas outside urban areas.</i>

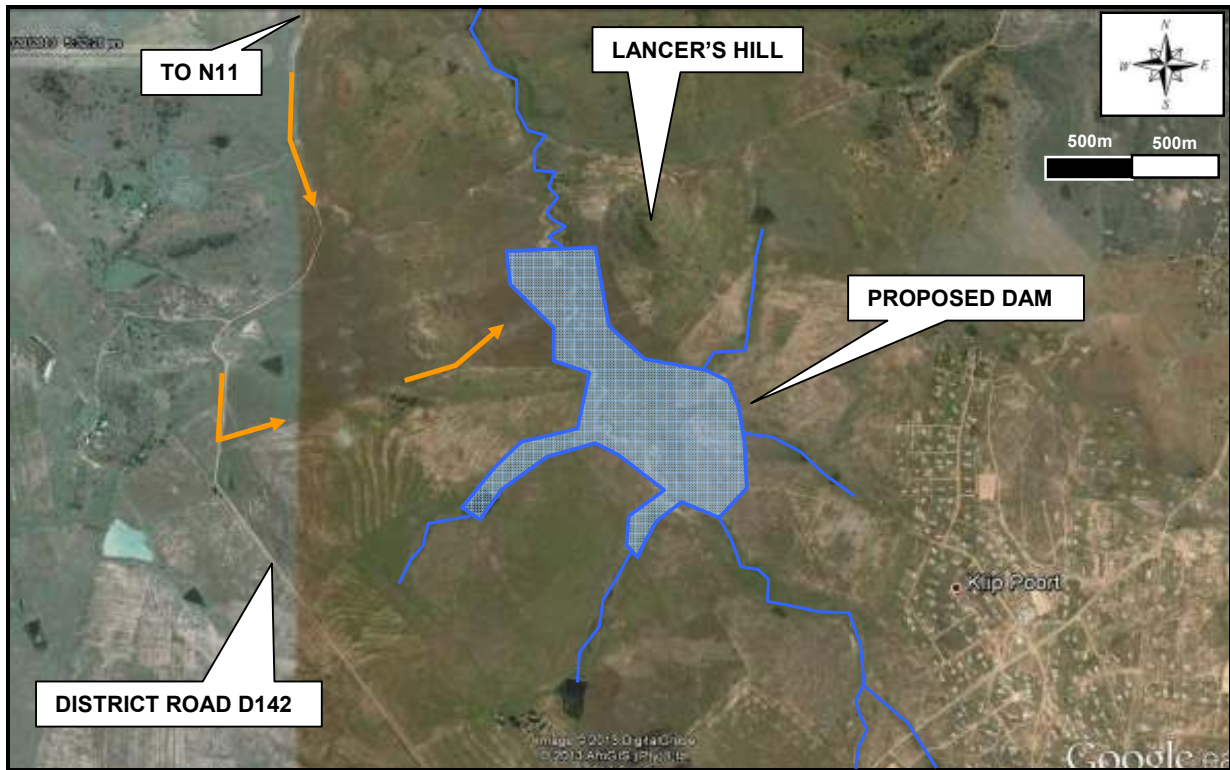


FIGURE 2: Aerial Photo showing Proposed Klippoort Dam Site and feeder streams, west of Ladysmith (Extracted from Google Earth)



WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS?

The following **POTENTIAL POSITIVE IMPACTS** have been identified for the proposed dam:

IMPACT	RESPONSE
Proposed dam would enable the Applicant to have a secure water supply for irrigation of crops.	Sustainability of farming operation would be ensured in the long-term.
Ability for Applicant to grow his own crops to feed his cattle, instead of buying in feed. Also potential for an alternative income stream through sale of surplus crops.	Expansion of farming operation would create more employment opportunities and ensure ongoing sustainability.
The dam would allow for the attenuation of flash floods in the area, which currently cause damage and erosion to the farm and to downstream infrastructure, including roads and water pipelines.	The prevention of further erosion and flooding would enable all parts of the farm to be used.
The proposed dam would also allow the Applicant to assist two neighbouring emerging farmers and the Roosboom Community with water for irrigation and cattle drinking.	This would enhance the economic sustainability of the two neighbouring emerging farmers and would also improve neighbourly relations with the local community.

The following **POTENTIAL NEGATIVE IMPACTS** have been identified for the proposed dam:

IMPACT	RESPONSE
Loss of indigenous grassland.	Vegetation Study to be done as part of the EIA Process.
Loss of habitat for indigenous fauna.	Value of faunal habitat will be assessed in the EIA Process.
Inundation of drainage line with possible impacts on wetland habitat.	Assessment of drainage line and delineation of any wetland areas will be conducted during the EIA Process, recommending suitable off-sets to mitigate this impact.



WHAT IS THE AIM OF THE EIA PROCESS?

The EIA Process aims to:

- ◆ Inform and involve all potential IAPs of the proposed activity;
- ◆ Identify the potential impacts (positive and negative) that the proposed activity may have on the ecological and socio-economic environment;
- ◆ Provide recommendations based on the identified impacts and conduct any necessary Specialist Studies; and
- ◆ Provide the Department of Agriculture and Environmental Affairs (DAEA) with enough information to make an informed decision regarding the Environmental Authorisation of the proposed activity.



WHAT IS INVOLVED IN THE SCOPING AND EIA PROCESS?

The Scoping and EIA Process can be described as follows:

1. Submission of Application Form:

The DAEA's official Application Form has been completed with all the necessary information regarding the proposed activity and site location. This, together with relevant maps and declarations from the Applicant and EAP, will be submitted to the DAEA. The DAEA will acknowledge receipt of the Application Form and assign the Application a reference number.

2. Scoping Phase:

The purpose of the Scoping Phase is to identify all potential environmental impacts (positive and negative) associated with the proposed activity. This will be achieved by site visits to the property and consultation with relevant Authorities, community groups and neighbouring landowners.

The public and relevant Authorities will be notified of the proposed development through newspaper adverts, site posters and written notification, in the form of this BID. Public participation will also involve Focus Group / Public Meetings and the review of documentation (Draft Scoping Report (DSR)) and opportunities to comment. A Final Scoping Report will be compiled and will include comments received on the DSR and a Plan of Study for EIA. This will be forwarded to the DAEA, who will then instruct the EAP to proceed with the EIA Phase, based on the Plan of Study for EIA.

3. EIA Phase:

Environmental issues, concerns, constraints and possible alternatives will be investigated using Specialist Studies, project information and input from the Applicant, professional judgement, experience of similar projects, a review of available literature and assessment of concerns raised by Authorities and the public.

The significance of environmental issues will be evaluated in terms of their expected extent, intensity, duration and probability of occurrence. Measures to manage and prevent or minimise impacts to within acceptable levels, as well as measures to maximise the socio-economic benefits associated with the activity, will be identified and recorded in the EIA Report.

An Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) will be compiled and will contain guidelines to ensure that all aspects of the proposed activity are carried out in an environmentally responsible and acceptable manner, in all phases including the planning, construction, operation and rehabilitation phases. The EMPr will identify roles and responsibilities for the activity and will be structured to allow for environmental compliance monitoring.

The Draft EIA Report and EMPr will be circulated to IAPs for comment and a final version of the EIA Report and EMPr will then be submitted to the DAEA.

4. Authority Decision:

The EIA Report, EMPr and relevant Specialist Study Reports will be used by the DAEA as the basis for the decision on whether the proposed activity should be approved or not. The DAEA can refuse permission, or grant permission for the activity to proceed, with specific conditions.



HOW CAN IAPS COMMENT ON THIS APPLICATION?

The need for public input and involvement is of critical importance. All IAPs (neighbours, authorities, organisations etc.) are invited to comment on the proposed activity. Comments can be communicated to us by post, fax or email. Comments are accepted by any of the above forms of communication throughout the process. Please ensure that initial comments are submitted by **29 November 2013**.



Contact name and address for comment:
Janet Edmonds
E-mail: janet.jec@edelnet.co.za
Tel: 033 - 940 0450 / Fax: 086 219 9059
P O Box 239, Pietermaritzburg, 3200

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

Please record your issues regarding the proposed Klippoort Dam, near Ladysmith:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Please notify us of any other potentially interested and affected parties that we should contact:

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

Thank You