

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

For the Construction of a Christian Community Center for the purposes of Community Upliftment on Plot 34 of the Farm Avontuur 725 JT.

PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

The purpose of this document is to provide background information to the proposed project and to obtain comments and contributions from stakeholders with regards to potential environmental impacts – which includes (but is not limited to): ecological, social, economic, physical, aesthetic, etc.

You are invited to register as an Interested and Affected Party (I&AP) and to assist us in identifying possible impacts of the proposed development on the environment and to make suggestions for mitigation and/or alternatives.

Please complete the enclosed reply sheet and forward it to the address provided below:

Postal Address: P.O. Box 12340, STEILTES, NELSPRUIT, 1213

Fax: 086 719 6216

E-mail: Steven Henwood shenwood@mweb.co.za

For any enquiries or further information contact us at:

Tel: 078 672 3645

APPLICABLE LEGISLATION

The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process is a planning and decision-making tool that is used to identify the potential environmental impacts of a proposed development or project. It is conducted in compliance with Chapter 6 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (NEMA) 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998), as amended and the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014. The regulations identify a list of activities (Government Gazette GN983, GN984 and GN985) for which an EIA must be conducted.

The proposal has the following listed activities:

GN 983, Listing Notice 1 of 2014

Activity: 12

"The development of-

(i) canals exceeding 100 square metres in size;

(ii) channels exceeding 100 square metres in size;

(iii) bridges exceeding 100 square metres in size;

(iv) dams, where the dam, including infrastructure and water surface area, exceeds 100 square metres in size;

(v) weirs, where the weir, including infrastructure and water surface area, exceeds 100 square metres in size;

(vi) bulk storm water outlet structures exceeding 100 square metres in size;

(vii) marinas exceeding 100 square metres in size;

(viii) jetties exceeding 100 square metres in size;

(ix) slipways exceeding 100 square metres in size;

(x) buildings exceeding 100 square metres in size;

Activity: 19

The infilling or depositing of any material of more than 5 cubic metres into, or the dredging, excavation, removal or moving of soil, sand, shells, shell grit, pebbles or rock of more than 5 cubic metres from-

(i) a watercourse;

(ii) the seashore; or

(iii) the littoral active zone, an estuary or a distance of 100 metres inland of the high-water mark of the sea or an estuary, whichever distance is the greater 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; or

(c) falls within the ambit of activity 21 in this Notice, in which case that activity applies.

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."

GN 985 Listing Notice 3 of 2014

Activity: 5

"The development of resorts, lodges, hotels and tourism or hospitality facilities that sleeps less than 15 people."

Activity: 12

"The clearance of an area of 300 square metres or more of indigenous vegetation except where such clearance of where such clearance of indigenous vegetation is required for maintenance purposes undertaken in accordance with a maintenance management plan.

(a) In Mpumalanga, Eastern Cape, Free State, Gauteng, Limpopo, North West and Western Cape provinces:

i. Within any critically endangered or endangered ecosystem listed in terms of section 52 of the

NEMBA or indigenous vegetation is 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;"

Activity: 14

The development of-

- (i) canals exceeding 10 square metres in size;
 - (ii) channels exceeding 10 square metres in size;
 - (iii) bridges exceeding 10 square metres in size;
 - (iv) dams, where the dam, including infrastructure and water surface area, exceeds 10 square metres in size;
 - (v) weirs, where the weir, including infrastructure and water surface area, exceeds 10 square metres in size;
 - (vi) bulk storm water outlet structures exceeding 10 square metres in size;
 - (vii) marinas exceeding 10 square metres in size;
 - (viii) jetties exceeding 10 square metres in size;
 - (ix) slipways exceeding 10 square metres in size;
 - (x) buildings exceeding 10 square metres in size;**
 - (xi) boardwalks exceeding 10 square metres in size; or
 - (xii) infrastructure or structures with a physical footprint of 10 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; or
 - (ee) where such development occurs within existing roads or road reserves.

Therefore, a Basic Assessment is required.

When an applicant proposes to undertake a listed activity, an application must be made for environmental authorisation. The application must be supported by a report, which has been compiled as a result of an assessment procedure. After the competent authority has made a decision on the application, an appeal may be made against the decision, or parts thereof.

Henwood Environmental Solutions (HES), as the independent Environmental Consultant, has been appointed by the proponent/applicant to compile the Basic Assessment Report, which will be reviewed by the relevant competent authority (e.g. Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs) after a thorough public participation process has been conducted.

This includes the opportunity to review all draft documentation before submission to DARDLEA.

The phases of a Basic Assessment are:

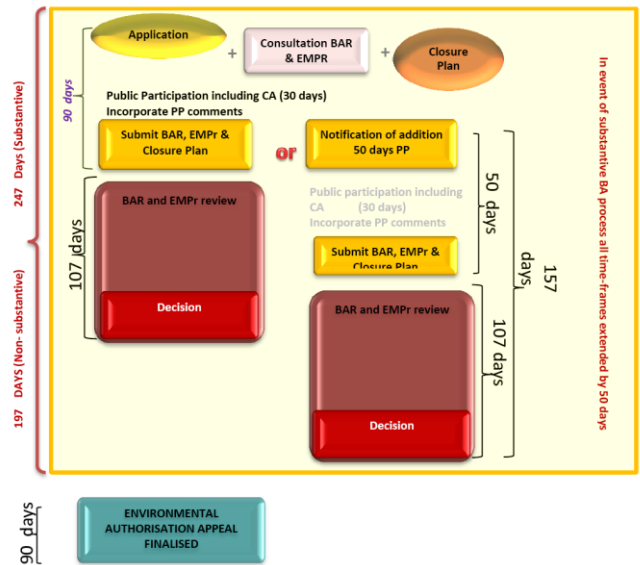


Figure 1

The aim of this report is to ensure that the environmental impacts are taken into consideration, to ensure stakeholder engagement, and to provide decision makers with sufficient information to make an informed decision on the proposed activities.

The Record of Decision (RoD) as to whether the proposed project should proceed will be based on information provided in the Report.

Your comments will form part of the Report.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The public has the right to be informed about any activity that might have an impact, whether desirable or undesirable, on the environment.

The purpose of the public participation process is to inform, consult, involve, collaborate with, and empower stakeholders in the decision making process.

The objective of informing is to provide balanced and objective information to the public in order to assist with understanding of all existing issues.

Consultation will allow for feedback from stakeholders on alternatives and decisions that can inform the EIA process.

LOCATION

The site is situated on on Plot 34 of the Farm Avontuur 725 JT (see the locality map as attached).

GPS Coordinates:

- 25° 57' 34.2247" S
- 30° 30' 46.7640" E

PROJECT BACKGROUND & MOTIVATION

The Background and Description

The Friends of Emoyeni Children's Village organization has been working in the Albert Luthuli District since 2004. Since then they have built 6 homes for orphans, 3 pre-schools, and a church. They currently run 2 of the pre-schools with about 70 children attending and the other preschool has over 100 children attending. They run 6 kitchens where 22 bomake prepare meals for about 1100 children weekly. They provide school uniforms and blankets, visit the sick in their homes and provide meals for the needy. Friends of Emoyeni provide full time employment for 8 people and part-time employment for 25 people.

Last year the Friends of Emoyeni organisation bought a small farm in the area (Plot 34 of the Farm Avontuur 725 JT) with the view to developing a Christian Community Center, which would in turn:

1. Grow vegetables for the kitchens
2. Grow Macadamias to sustain projects and develop new ones
3. Host kids and Youth camps
4. Host international teams who assist in the projects
5. Host international and local students in Training Programs
6. Conduct Skills development programs
7. Provide housing for orphan and vulnerable children

The Christian Community Center would consist of:

- Orphan Housing
- Mission Guest Housing
- Food Prep, cold storage and general storage
- Sheds
- Tunnel gardens
- Classrooms
- Dorms ablution
- Orchard expansion

There is a dire need for the services intended and the development of the Community Center would realise this.

See proposed layout plan for reference.

DESCRIPTION OF TASKS

An advertisement was placed under the classified section of the Hoedspruit Herald to notify the public of the proposed development:

Notice boards advertising the application have been placed at visible locations on and near the site.

Project information will be forwarded directly to registered interested parties and community leaders for their input.

PRESUMED ISSUES

Environmental issues that may be addressed in the Report could include the following:

- Services
- Ecology
- Hydrology and storm water management

Mitigation measures will also be developed for these issues. Stakeholders are however welcome to comment on these issues and provide additional observations.

Consideration of Alternatives is one of the most critical elements of the EIA process. Its role is to provide a framework for sound decision-making, based on the principle of sustainable development.

Alternatives should be identified as early as possible in the project cycle.

HES not only welcomes stakeholders' input/suggestions, but also urge the public to submit possible alternatives.

It is important to note that an alternative is defined as a possible course of action, in place of another, that would meet the same **purpose** and **need**.

When submitting alternatives, the recommended alternative must be:

- Practicable,
- Feasible,
- Relevant,
- Reasonable and
- Viable.

In order to ensure that you are registered as an interested and/or affected party, please submit your name, contact information and interest in the matter to the contact person given on the first page of this document.

Layout Map - Plot 34 of the Farm Avontuur 725



REGISTRATION AND COMMENT SHEET

For the Construction of a Christian Community Center for the purposes of Community Upliftment on Plot 34 of the Farm Avontuur 725 JT.

Title _____ **Name** _____
Surname _____
Company Name/Interest Group _____
Postal or Residential Address _____
Town/City _____
Postal Code _____
Tel () _____
Cell _____
Fax () _____
E-mail address _____

In accordance with NEMA – Regulation 56 of GN R 543 of the EIA Regulations – A registered interested and affected party is entitled to comment, in writing, on all written submissions made to the competent authority, provided that (c) – the interested and affected party discloses any direct business, financial, personal or other interest which that party may have in the approval or refusal of the application. Please supply such information in the space provided below.

Please indicate with an **x** whether you would like to be kept informed of the EIA process

YES, I would like to be informed.	YES
NO, I am not interested	NO

If **YES**, how would you like to be informed? (please mark the appropriate block with an "x")

E-mail	
Fax	

COMMENTS: (If you require more space than that which is provided, please attach additional pages)

Thank you for your participation

Please be assured that your comments will form part of the final document to be submitted to the decision-making authority

Please complete and return this response sheet to **HES**

P.O. Box 12340
Steiltes, Nelspruit
1213
E-mail: shenwood@mweb.co.za

Feel free to phone us on **078 672 3645**, should you not have access to fax or e-mail

