

**BASIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
FOR
THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND OPERATION OF A
GUEST LODGE ON PORTION 228 OF THE FARM
WATERKLOOF 305 JQ, RUSTENBURG, NORTH WEST
PROVINCE**

REF: NWP/EIA/53/2014

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT (BID)

Prepared by



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BA	Basic Assessment
BAR	Basic Assessment Report
BID	Background Information Document
CBD	Central Business District
DAFF	Department of Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries
DWA	Department of Water Affairs
EAP	Environmental Assessment Practitioner
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EMF	Environmental Management Framework
EMP	Environmental Management Programme
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNR	Government Notice Regulation
GPS	Global Positioning System
I&AP	Interested and Affected Party
NEMA	National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act 107 of 1998) as amended
NW READ	North West Department of Rural, Environmental and Agricultural Development
PPP	Public Participation Process
RLM	Rustenburg Local Municipality
SDF	Spatial Development Framework
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SAHRA	South African National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act 25 of 1999)
WULA	Water Use Licence Application

1. INTRODUCTION

HydroScience cc, an independent Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP), has been appointed by Steenstraat Beleggings cc, to undertake a Basic Assessment (BA) process and to submit a Basic Assessment Report (BAR) to the relevant authority to apply for environmental authorisation for the proposed development and operation of a guest lodge on Portion 228 of the farm Waterkloof 305 JQ, Rustenburg, in the North West Province.

As part of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) BA process (Figure 1), an application, in terms of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA), 1998 (Act 107 of 1998), as amended, and associated Regulations of 2010, has been submitted to the North West Department of Rural, Environmental and Agricultural Development (NW READ). A Water Use Licence Application (WULA) for the use and storage of groundwater according to the National Water Act, 1998 (Act 36 of 1998), will be submitted to the Department of Water Affairs (DWA).

2. PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

The purpose of this document is to provide background information (in addition to the notices on the site and published in the newspaper) in terms of Government Notice Regulation (GNR) 543 (Sections 54 through 57) of NEMA to all Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) regarding the intention of the proposed project as described above.

In addition, this document will provide a platform from which to obtain comments and contributions from stakeholders with regard to the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project as part of the Public Participation Process (PPP). The aim of the PPP is not only to adhere to the required legislation, but also to give as many stakeholders and I&APs as possible an opportunity to be actively involved in this process.

The PPP will be carried out in accordance with Chapter 6 of NEMA as amended and in support of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2010 and associated guidelines.

3. ROLE OF I&APs

You are invited to register as an I&AP (see contact details and registration form attached) and to assist us in:

- Identifying issues of concern that need to be investigated as well as possible impacts of the proposed project on the environment; and
- Suggesting alternatives to mitigate possible negative impacts and enhance positive impacts.

Your input is considered valuable as it contributes to:

- The decision-making process;
- Information on public needs, values and expectations; and
- Local and traditional knowledge.

The following authorities will also be notified and requested to provide comments:

- Department of Water Affairs (DWA) in terms of the National Water Act (NWA), 1998 (Act 36 of 1998) and the WULA that forms part of the project.
- The South African Heritage Resources Agency in terms of the South African National Heritage Resources Act (SAHRA), 1999 (Act 25 of 1999).
- The Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) as the property is currently zoned for agricultural use.

- The Rustenburg Local Municipality (RLM), who is the local authority under whose jurisdiction it falls and who needs to ensure that the development fits in with their Spatial Development Framework (SDF), Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Environmental Management Framework (EMF).

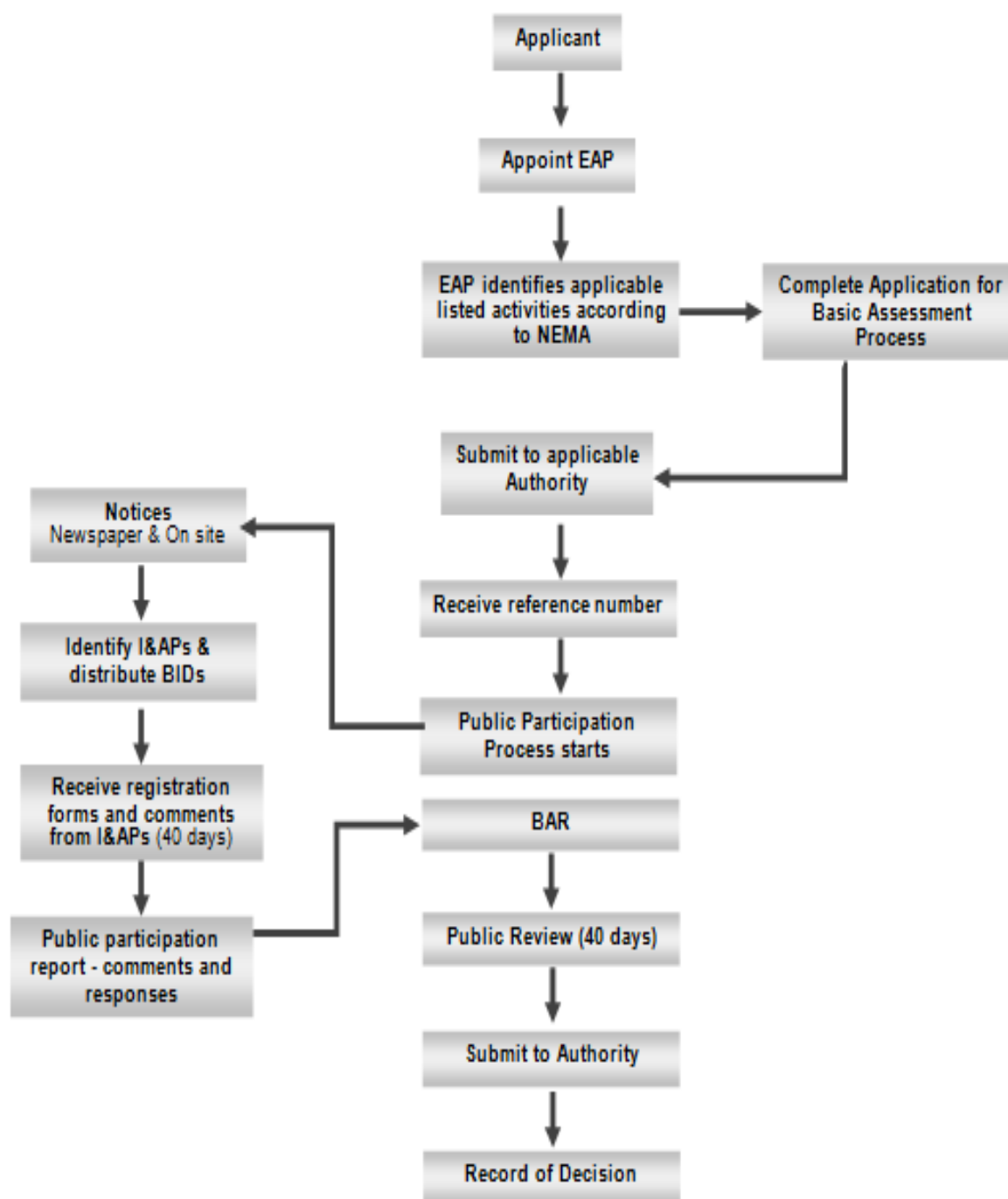


Figure 1: Simplified diagram presenting the Basic Assessment process

4. PROPOSED PROJECT

4.1. Project motivation

The Magaliesberg area has several features that make it exceptional attractive for adventure tourists, including:

- Proximity to the major urban areas of Gauteng;
- Pleasant climate suitable for year-round hiking;
- Malaria free area;
- Presence of numerous mountain pools with crystal clear water, suitable for drinking and swimming;
- Beautiful surroundings, including a complex topography, rock formations, near pristine bushveld, presence of small wildlife and birds, and beautiful vistas;
- Northern slope topography marked by alternating gradients - not too steep slopes, followed by flatter areas along routes – ideal for hiking and biking; and
- Presence of cliffs at the southern slope, and in the kloofs on the northern slope – attractive to mountaineers and suitable for abseiling (MPE EMF, 2007).

The spatial distribution of tourism accommodation facilities indicates that the majority of the tourism facilities in the Rustenburg area are concentrated around Rustenburg, Kroondal and Olifantsnek (71%) (such as the proposed project area) as well as in the Buffelspoort, Mooinooi and Maanhaarrand area (16%).

The MPE boundary is largely still undisturbed and in a fairly pristine condition. Existing transformed areas within the MPE mostly consists of a number of access roads and tracks and some infrastructure such as telecommunication towers, power lines and individual isolated residential and other structures. However, the land use in the 2.5 km analysis buffer area has largely been transformed through a variety of land uses. The status of the land use within this buffer indicates that approximately 41% of the total land area within this analysis buffer has been transformed into a variety of uses. The most prominent categories include old or abandoned agricultural fields (9 113 ha), built up areas (including guest lodges) and surrounding gardens and disturbed areas (4 764 ha), cultivated land (3 700 ha) and orchards (2 067 ha) (MPE EMF, 2007).

The establishment of the guest lodge within the buffer of the Magaliesberg provides an opportunity to enhance ecotourism in the Rustenburg area. The construction of accommodation and conference venue will expose local communities and visitors to experience the serene environment of the Magaliesberg Biosphere.

4.2. Project objective

The main objective of the project is to establish a guest lodge that will contribute to the development and growth of Rustenburg through ecotourism, consequently adding to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the city as a whole.

4.3. Project locality

The proposed guest lodge will be established on the Portion 228 of the farm Waterkloof 305 JQ, Rustenburg, North West Province. The proposed portion of land is located approximately 11 km south from the Rustenburg Central Business District (CBD). This farm portion can be accessed via a gravel road, on the eastern boundary of the site, which connects to the P16-1 (R24). Global Positioning System (GPS) coordinates are 25° 45' 15.96" South; 27° 15' 45.99" East (please refer to the topographical map – Figure 2 and the

Locality map – Figure 3). The farm portion is bordered by agricultural land (Figure 4) (west, south), residential houses (east) and industry (pre-casting business north of property).

4.4. Project description

The project area is 3.5ha in size and is currently zoned for agricultural purposes, used mainly for the harvest of macadamia nut trees. An old farm house, two workers units and two chalets already exist on site. The development will extend over the entire property and in the process of developing the site into a guest lodge; the following main activities will take place:

- Vegetation will be cleared during earth works and the construction phase;
- Services supply (sewage and water supply) will be established; and
- Infrastructure (units and guest facilities) will be built during the construction phase.

The planned infrastructure will include:

- additional 8 guest units
- Conference facility
- Dining/Kitchen facility
- Swimming pool/Recreational area
- Owners dwelling
- Managers dwelling

4.5. Project schedule

The projected leading time on completion is five (5) years once environmental authorisation has been obtained. The environmental authorisation process will take approximately 6 months.

4.6. Additional Work

The following additional work will be conducted:

- A geotechnical study will be conducted to establish soil conditions and stipulate building and foundation requirements.
- A fauna and flora study will be conducted to assess the biodiversity in the project area.
- A visual impact assessment will be conducted to assess how the development will relate to the surrounding MPNE.
- An application in terms of the Township Ordinance will be submitted by the Town Planner to the RLM in terms of Town Planning requirements.
- An archaeological study to assess the cultural heritage of the project area.

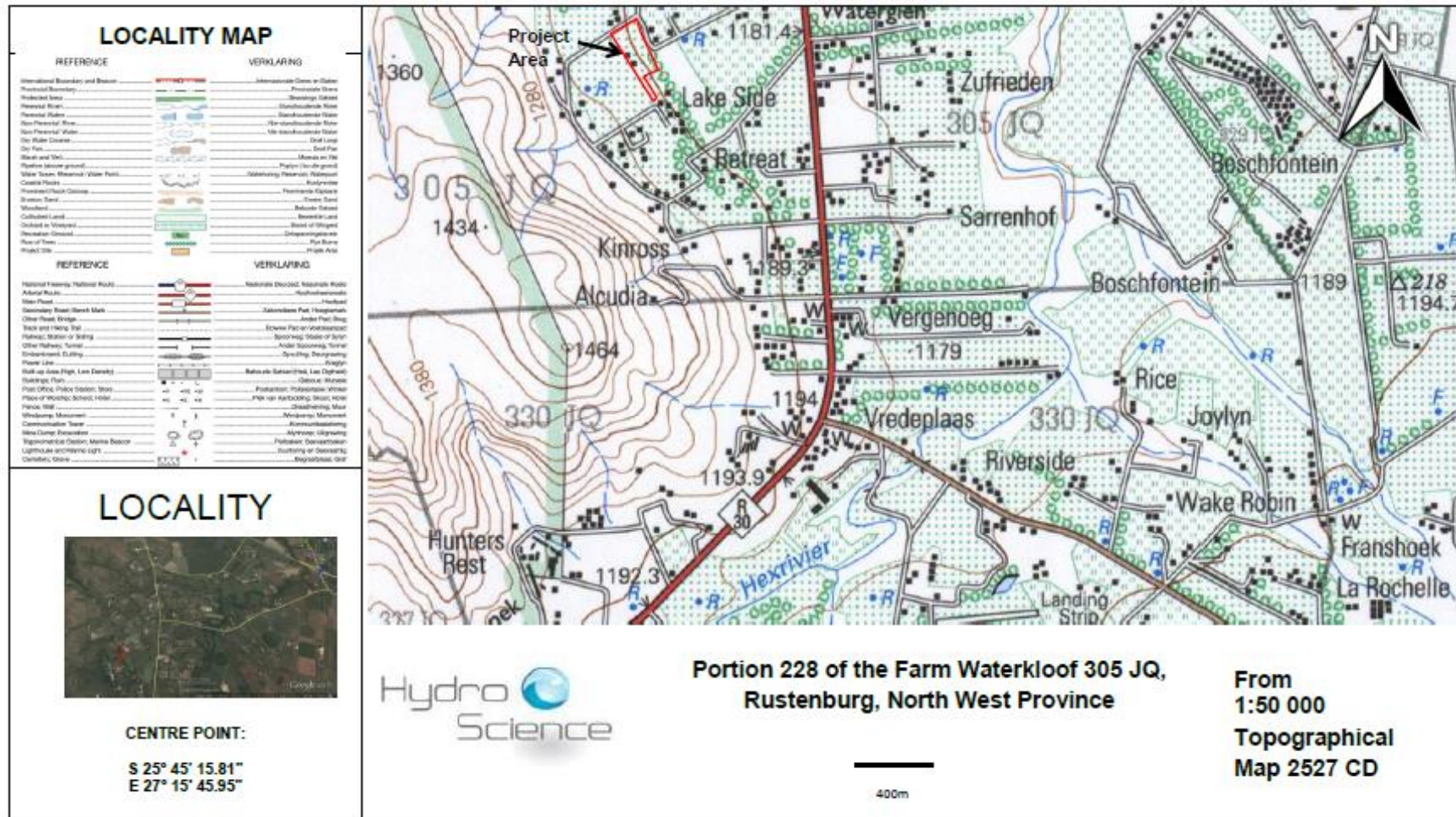


Figure 2: Topographical map indicating the proposed project area, Rustenburg, North West Province

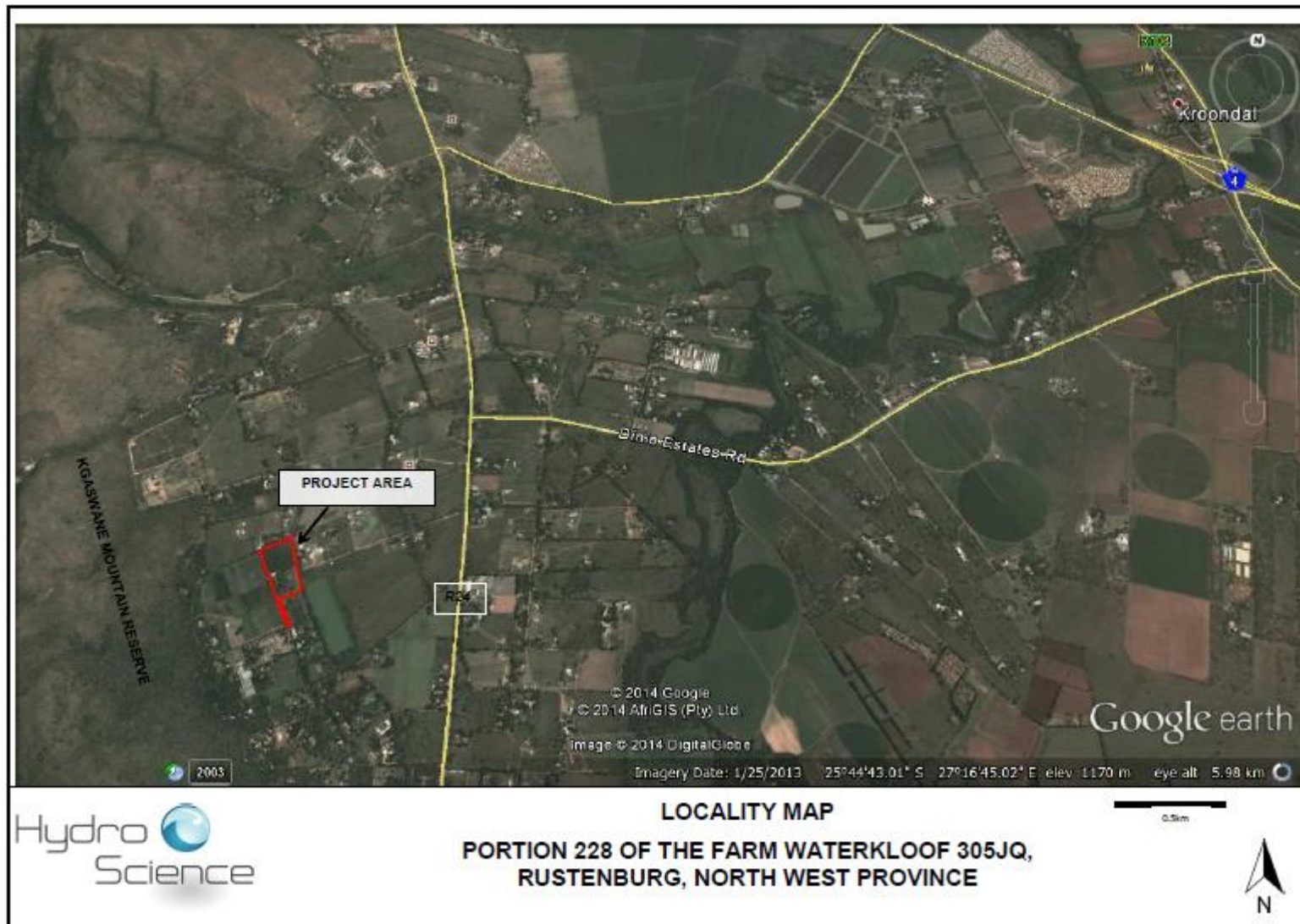


Figure 3: Google™ locality map of project area on portion 228 on the farm Waterkloof 305 JQ

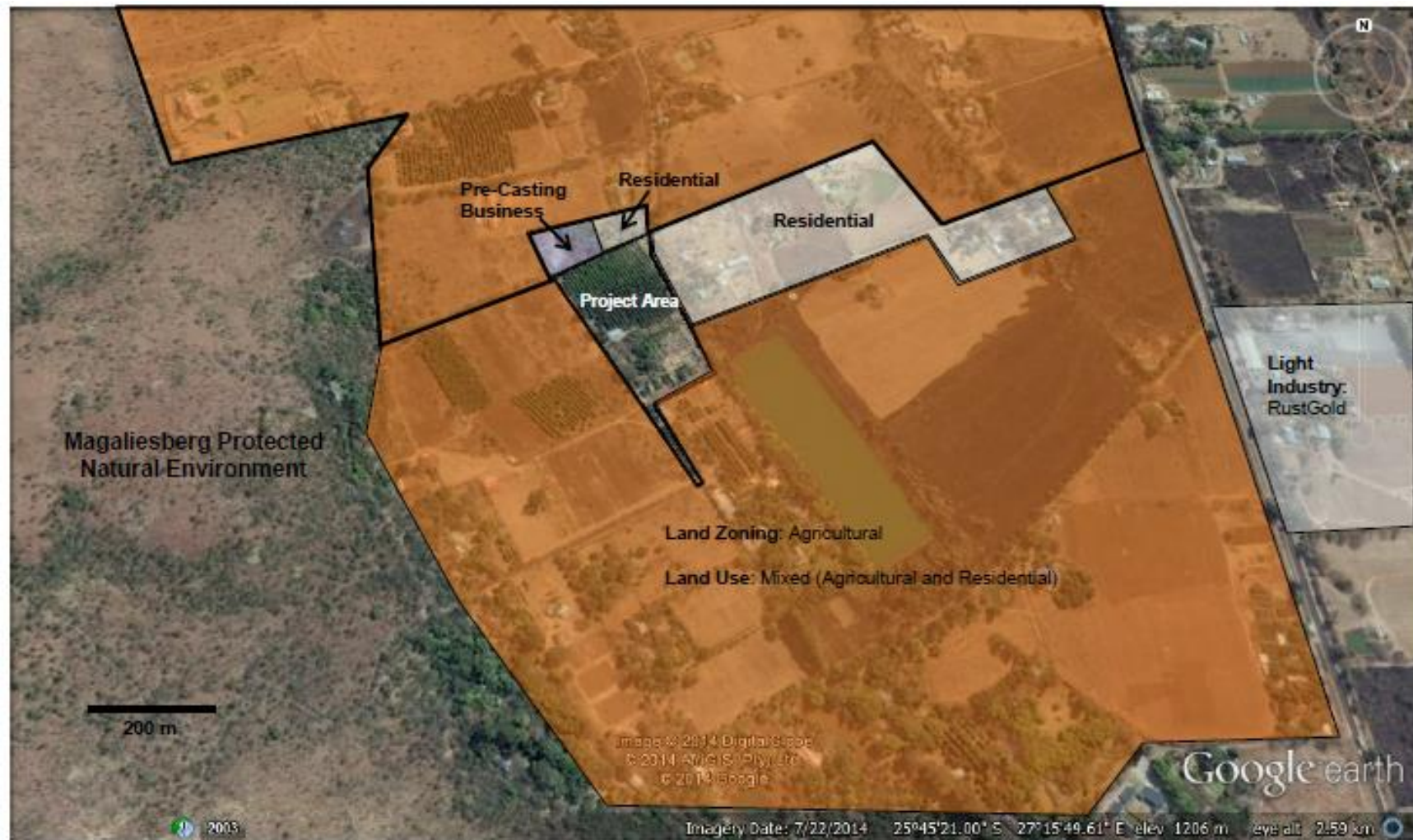


Figure 4: Google™ image showing current surrounding land use

5. POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Preliminary predictions of possible impacts that may occur and need to be managed as part of the Environmental Management Programme (EMP) include:

- Dust generation due to vegetation removal and site clearance (soils are exposed) as well as earth works and construction (construction vehicle movement etc.);
- Removal of vegetation due to site clearance;
- Erosion potential due to vegetation removal and site clearance (soils are exposed);
- Noise generation during the construction phase (workers, vehicles, machinery, equipment) and operational phase (people, vehicles, pets, traffic);
- Change of land use and visual impacts; and
- Improper waste and wastewater management during the construction phase.

6. APPLICABLE LEGISLATION

An application for environmental authorisation, in terms of the NEMA, as amended, has been submitted to the NW READ (Reference number NWP/EIA/53/2014). Notification, in the form of site notices and an advertisement placed in the Rustenburg Herald (16/17 October 2014), was given to all I&APs, as prescribed in Chapter 6 of NEMA, informing them that a BA process will be followed and a BAR will be submitted to the relevant authority to obtain environmental authorisation for the proposed development as set out in Section 4 of this document.

The following listed activity which requires environmental authorisation was identified in terms of the relevant legislation:

NEMA: GNR 544 (18 June 2010):

23 – The transformation of undeveloped, vacant or derelict land to-
(ii) residential, retail, commercial, recreational, industrial or institutional use, outside an urban area and where the total area to be transformed is bigger than 1 hectare but less than 20 hectares except where such transformation takes place for linear activities.

The proposed guest lodge is located outside of the urban edge and 3.5 hectares in size, therefore making the above listed activity applicable for this project.

NEMA: GNR 546 (18 June 2010)

4 – The construction of a road wider than 4 metres with a reserve less than 13.5 metres.

(c) In North West:

i) Outside urban areas, in:

(aa) A protected area identified in terms of NEMPAA, excluding conservancies;

(bb) National Protected Area Expansion Strategy Focus areas;

(cc) Sensitive areas as identified in an environmental management framework as contemplated in chapter 5 of the Act and as adopted by the competent authority;

(dd) Sites or areas identified in terms of an International Convention;

(ee) Critical biodiversity areas (Terrestrial Type 1 and 2 and Aquatic Type 1) as identified in systematic biodiversity plans adopted by the competent authority or in bioregional plans;

(ff) Core areas in biosphere reserves;

(gg) Areas within 10 kilometres from national parks or world heritage sites or 5 kilometres from any other protected area identified in terms of NEMPAA or from a biosphere reserve.

If a road a larger than 4m is planned for the guest lodge this activity will be applicable, due to its proximity to the Magaliesberg Protected Environment (MPE) (350m) and it is classified as outside of the urban edge in a CBA 2 area.

6 - The construction of resorts, lodges or other tourism accommodation facilities that sleep 15 people or more.

(c) In North West:

(i) Any protected area including municipal or provincial nature reserves as contemplated by NEMPAA or other relevant legislation

The proposed project includes the construction of a guest lodge which will be able to accommodate more than 15 people, however although the site is situated in the MPE buffer, which is not a proclaimed protected area under NEMPAA, it may still be regarded as sensitive under municipal frameworks.

13 - The clearance of an area of 1 hectare or more of vegetation where 75% or more of the vegetative cover constitutes indigenous vegetation,

(a) Critical biodiversity areas and ecological support areas as identified in systematic biodiversity plans adopted by the competent authority.

(b) National Protected Area Expansion Strategy Focus areas.

(e) In North West:

i. Outside urban areas, in:

(aa) A protected area identified in terms of NEMPAA, excluding conservancies;

(bb) National Protected Area Expansion Strategy Focus areas;

(cc) Sensitive areas as identified in an environmental management framework as contemplated in chapter 5 of the Act and as adopted by the competent authority;

(dd) Sites or areas identified in terms of an International Convention;

(ee) Critical biodiversity areas (Type 1 only) and ecological support areas as identified in systematic biodiversity plans adopted by the competent authority or in bioregional plans;

(ff) Core areas in biosphere reserves;

(gg) Areas within 10 kilometres from national parks or world heritage sites or 5 kilometres from any other protected area identified in terms of NEMPAA or from the core areas of a biosphere reserve.

The proposed project area is located in the MPE buffer zone and in a CBA 2 area. The site also extends over 1 hectare, however it is estimated that the site is mostly covered in nut trees and therefore indigenous vegetation is minimal, which will have to be confirmed by a specialist.

7. PROCESS AND WAY FORWARD

- An application for environmental authorisation has been submitted to NW READ. The reference number: NWP/EIA/53/2014 has been assigned and the application will be handled by Mr Sammy Mabula in the NW READ offices at 114 Chris Hani Street Potchefstroom, reachable on 018 299 6710.
- Notices have been placed in the Rustenburg Herald (16/17 October 2014) and on the site (16 October 2014).
- Further notification and Background Information Documents (BID) are to be delivered by hand, fax, registered mail or email to other identified I&APs, including neighbours, authorities and other stakeholders in the area throughout the process.
- Comments/registration forms from I&APs should be received on or before 25th November 2014.
- A draft BAR will become available for public review during January 2015.
- A final BAR will be submitted to the NW READ for their review and a decision in 2015.

8. CONTACT DETAILS

Please complete the attached form or contact the person below should you wish to be registered as an I&AP or make any comments regarding this project.

HydroScience cc

Person: Nandipha Mabuza
Tel: 082 667 5056
Fax: 086 692 8820 / 086 588 1770
E-mail: nandipha@hydroscience.co.za
Postal address: P.O. Box 1322, Ruimsig, 1732

COMPLETE & FAX OR E-MAIL TO:

HYDROSCIENCE 086 692 8820 / 086 588 1770 / nandipha@hydroscience.co.za

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT – BASIC ASSESSMENT FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND OPERATION OF A GUEST LODGE ON PORTION 228 OF THE FARM WATERKLOOF 305 JQ, RUSTENBURG, NORTH WEST PROVINCE REFERENCE: NWP/EIA/53/2014
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INTERESTED AND AFFECTED PARTY REGISTRATION AND COMMENT SHEET

Title:	Mr		Mrs		Ms		Dr	
Surname:				First name & initials:				
Organisation / Company:								
Postal / physical address:				Postal code:				
Tel:				Fax:				
Email:				Cell:				
Interest in approval or refusal:	Business:	YES	NO	Preferred method of notification / communication	Post/mail:			
	Financial:	YES	NO		Fax:			
	Personal:	YES	NO		Email:			
Details of interest:								
Name of other I&AP to be contacted:								
Contact details:								

Comments: (please use separate sheets if you wish/require)

Thank you for your comments, participation and time. Your contribution is appreciated and will form part of the final submission to the authority for decision-making.