

## **BASIC ASSESSMENT PROCESS**

### **CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF A POULTRY BROILER HOUSING FACILITY, DISCO CHICKS FARM 2, ON FARM 713, SUNDAYS RIVER VALLEY MUNICIPALITY**

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT, APRIL 2013**



## **INTRODUCTION**

The applicant (Venter Wildlife Trust) intends to establish a poultry broiler housing facility and associated infrastructure on Farm 713 (~555ha) in the Sundays River Valley Municipality. The facility will consist of 12 broiler houses, for the rearing of chicks from 1 day to approximately 42 days and associated infrastructure. Each broiler house will contain 45 000 to 50 000 birds at any one time, totaling 480 000 to 600 000 birds for the site. The affected farm portions are currently zoned for Agriculture. It is anticipated that the portion of the site to be occupied by the facility will require rezoning to Special Consent. The site is located in the Sundays River Valley Municipality, and is located directly off the gravel road between the R335 (Zuurberg Road) and the town of Kirkwood.

In terms of the NEMA EIA Regulations 2010: GN R543, 544 and 546 promulgated under Chapter 5 of the National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998) ("NEMA"), and published in Government Gazette 33306 on 18 June 2010 (as amended); a Basic Assessment is required for this project. The applicant has appointed Public Process Consultants as the independent Environmental Assessment Practitioner to undertake the Basic Assessment including public participation for this project.

## **PROJECT LOCALITY**

The site is located in the Sundays River Valley Municipality; the nearest towns are Addo and Kirkwood. The town of Addo is located approximately 17 kilometres southeast of the site, while Kirkwood is situated about 20 kilometres to the west. The farm is situated between the gravel road between Kirkwood/Enon and the R335 regional road (Zuurberg Road) and the gravel Sunlands Road. The entrance to the site is located approximately 20 kilometres to the east of the town of Kirkwood on the former gravel road (see attached locality map).

## **HOW CAN I PARTICIPATE IN THIS PROCESS?**

In terms of regulation 55 (1) (b) of Government Notice R 543 interested and affected parties are to request in writing that their names be placed on the register of interested and affected parties. In order to register on the database complete the comment and registration form attached to this correspondence or submit your contact details (via fax or email), stating your full name, address and contact numbers to the consultant indicated in this documentation. Clearly state any interest that you may have in this matter. By registering on the project database you will be notified as and when information on the project is available.

## **WHAT DOES THIS DOCUMENT TELL YOU**

This document provides you, as an interested and or affected party (I&AP), with background information on the proposed project, the Basic Assessment as well as public participation process. It indicates how you can become involved in the project, receive information and raise issues that may interest and/or concern you. The sharing of information forms an important component of the public participation process and provides you with the opportunity to become actively involved in the environmental assessment process from the outset. The input received from I&APs together with scientific and technical investigations assists the responsible authority, in this instance the Eastern

Cape Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEDEAT), with their decision-making.

### **WHAT DOES THE PROJECT ENTAIL**

The applicant intends to establish 12 broiler house facilities and associated infrastructure on Farm 713 (~555ha) in the Sundays River Valley Municipality. The facility will consist of 12 broiler houses, for the rearing of chicks from 1 day to approximately 42 days. Each broiler house will contain 45 000 to 50 000 birds at any one time, totaling 480 000 to 600 000 birds for the site. The affected farm portions are currently zoned for Agriculture. It is anticipated that the affected portion of the site to be occupied by the facility will require Special Consent zoning.

The proposed project will entail the following activities on the site:

#### **Construction Phase**

Construction Phase activities are anticipated to be as follows;

- Clearing of vegetation for the establishment of broiler houses and associated infrastructure
- Levelling of the site for the foundations for the broiler houses

12 broiler houses are proposed for construction which will be fully enclosed (fenced in). It is proposed that the broiler farm is divided into four operational areas, which will be separately fenced in. Access to the site is proposed from the north and south, the southern entrance is the preferred access route.

The 12 broiler houses will require the establishment of the following infrastructure.

- 12 broiler houses of 120 x 15 meters
- A Storeroom/Toolshed and Coal Bunker
- A pump station (will be shared with the citrus farm which forms part of a separate Basic Assessment application)
- Water treatment facilities
  - Flocculation tank slab
  - Chlorine dioxide aqueous solution stand (ClO<sub>2</sub>)
- Northern (new access) and southern access road (upgrading of existing road)
- Farm Managers house including an office
- Establishment of a storage dam for water (will be shared with the citrus farm which forms part of a separate Basic Assessment application)
- Install water transfer infrastructure (will be shared with the citrus farm which forms part of a separate Basic Assessment application)
- Generator room, substation and meter room
- Connection and internal reticulation of water and electricity supply
- Installation of stormwater management infrastructure

Associated with each of the four operational areas will be the following infrastructure:

- 4 water reservoirs/ tanks
- 9 conservancy tanks (farm manager, 4 labourers, 4 shower rooms)
- 4 mortality freezer rooms
- Internal roads and turning circles (5 to 6 meters wide)
- 4 dwellings for labourers

The total developed area is anticipated to be approximately 45 000m<sup>2</sup> or 4.5 hectares. It is proposed that in order to meet the operational water requirements for the proposed facility water transfer infrastructure will have to be installed in order to transfer the water from the LSRWUA canal to a storage dam to be constructed on site.

The applicant is in the process of undertaking a separate Basic Assessment Process for the establishment of ~90ha of citrus orchards on the same farm (Farm 713). It is proposed that one dam is constructed to meet the water requirements of the broiler houses as well as the additional area for citrus. However, a positive environmental authorisation is not guaranteed for both projects. The project description will therefore reflect the size of the dam for the broiler house facilities alone, and a combined capacity for both projects.

### Operational Phase

The standard 56 day grower model will apply, as follows:

- Stocking of broiler units with day old chicks
- Rearing of chicks
- From 42 days catching the broilers and transport to the factory in Uitenhage for processing.
- A 14 day cleaning, disinfecting and removal of all litter from the broiler houses
- Washing and disinfecting the broiler houses and placement of fresh bedding
- Mechanical maintenance of broiler houses and finally placement of new chicks

The final, design and layout of the proposed facility will be informed by technical and environmental specialist input during the Basic Assessment process.

### OVERVIEW OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL BASIC ASSESSMENT (BAR) PROCESS

In terms of Regulations 543, and 546 promulgated under Chapter 5 of the NEMA in Government Gazette 33306 on 18 June 2010, the project requires Basic Assessment because it includes, amongst others, the following listed activities in GN R544 and GN R546:

<b>NEMA EIA Regulations, 2010, GN R 544, requiring Basic Assessment</b>	
<p>5. The construction of facilities or infrastructure for the concentration of:</p> <p>(ii) more than 5 000 poultry per facility situated outside an urban area, excluding chicks younger than 20 days</p>	<p>The proposed facility will be constructed to house between 480 000 and 600 000 birds between 1 and 42 days old.</p>
<p>9. The construction of facilities or infrastructure exceeding 1000 metres in length for the bulk transportation of water, sewage or storm water -</p> <p>(i) with an internal diameter of 0,36 metres or more; or</p> <p>(ii) with a peak throughput of 120 litres per second or more,...</p>	<p>The specifications of the water transfer infrastructure that will be required to provide irrigation water to the proposed development from the LSRWUA canal are not known at present. This listed activity may be triggered by the proposed development. The applicability of this listed activity will be determined through the Basic Assessment Process.</p>
<p>10. The construction of facilities or infrastructure for the off-stream storage of water, including dams and reservoirs, with a combined capacity of 50000 cubic metres or more, unless such storage falls within the ambit of activity 19 of Notice 545 of 2010;...</p>	<p>The proposed development will include the construction of a water storage dam, the capacity of which is not currently known, but will be determined through the Basic Assessment Process. This listed activity may be triggered by the proposed development.</p>
<b>NEMA EIA Regulations, 2010, GN R 546, requiring Basic Assessment</b>	
<p>2. The construction of reservoirs for bulk water supply with a capacity of more than 250 cubic</p>	<p>The proposed development will include the construction of a water storage dam, the capacity</p>

<p>metres.</p> <p><b>(a) In Eastern Cape,...</b></p> <p><i>iii. Outside urban areas, in:</i></p> <p><i>(dd) Critical biodiversity areas as identified in systematic biodiversity plans adopted by the competent authority or in bioregional plans;...</i></p> <p><i>(ff) 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 area of a biosphere reserve;...</i></p>	<p>of which is not currently known, but will be determined through the Basic Assessment Process.</p> <p>The proposed site falls outside an urban area and within an area that has been identified as a CBA2 in the Eastern Cape Biodiversity Conservation Plan (ECBCP). The Addo Elephant National Park (AENP) is located approximately 5km to the east of the proposed site.</p>
<p>4. The construction of a road wider than 4 metres with a reserve less than 13,5 metres.</p> <p><b>(a) In Eastern Cape...</b></p> <p><i>ii. Outside urban areas, the following:</i></p> <p><i>(ee) Critical biodiversity areas as identified in systematic biodiversity plans adopted by the competent authority or in bioregional plans;...</i></p> <p><i>(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 area of a biosphere reserve;</i></p>	<p>The proposed development will include the establishment of internal roads to provide access to the orchards. These may be in excess of 4m in width.</p> <p>The proposed site falls outside an urban area and within an area that has been identified as a CBA2 in the Eastern Cape Biodiversity Conservation Plan (ECBCP). The Addo Elephant National Park (AENP) is located approximately 5km to the east of the proposed site.</p>
<p>13. The clearance of an area of 1 hectare or more of vegetation where 75% or more of the vegetative cover constitutes indigenous vegetation,...</p> <p><i>(a) Critical biodiversity areas and ecological support areas as identified in systematic biodiversity plans adopted by the competent authority.</i></p> <p><i>(c) In Eastern Cape...</i></p> <p><i>ii. Outside urban areas, the following:</i></p> <p><i>(ff) 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 area of a biosphere reserve;...</i></p>	<p>The proposed development will entail the clearing of more than 1ha of vegetation. It is anticipated that more than 75% thereof will be indigenous.</p> <p>The proposed site falls outside an urban area and within an area that has been identified as a CBA2 in the Eastern Cape Biodiversity Conservation Plan (ECBCP). The Addo Elephant National Park (AENP) is located approximately 5km to the east of the proposed site.</p>
<p>14. The clearance of an area of 5 hectares or more of vegetation where 75% or more of the vegetative cover constitutes indigenous vegetation...</p> <p><i>(a) In Eastern Cape...:</i></p> <p><i>i. All areas outside urban areas.</i></p>	<p>The proposed development will entail the clearing of more than 5ha of vegetation. It is anticipated that more than 75% thereof will be indigenous.</p> <p>The proposed site falls within the Eastern Cape and outside an urban area.</p>

The listed activities require authorisation from the DEDEAT prior to the commencement of any activities on the site. The environmental assessment needs to show the responsible authority, DEDEAT, and the project proponent, the Venter Wildlife Trust, what the consequences of their choices will be in

biophysical, social and economic terms. The steps in the Basic Assessment Process are outlined below.

The Basic Assessment Process including Public Participation can be summarised into the following stages:

**Stage 1: Notification to Authorities and I&APs**

The first stage in the process entails notification to the DEDEAT as well as interested and affected parties (I&APs) of the intention to proceed with the BAR. I&APs are required to register their interest on the project database and raise issues of concern.

**Stage 2: Draft Basic Assessment (BAR) for Public Comment**

The Basic Assessment is undertaken in order to identify and assess potential environmental impacts, both positive and negative, that may be associated with the proposed project. This includes mitigatory measures to reduce potential negative impacts and maximise positive benefits. The Basic Assessment will include an overview of the affected environment on which the activity is proposed to take place. Specialist information for inclusion in the Draft Basic Assessment Report has been identified as follows:

- Biophysical Site Assessment (to include vegetation and ecology)
- Heritage Assessment (Archaeology and Palaeontology)

The Draft Basic Assessment, together with comments received from I&APs will be made available for a 30 day review period. Reasonable and feasible alternatives identified to date and to be included in the draft BAR are:

- No-go: to leave the land as is and not commence with the activity
- Go: the project alternative as proposed, including alternative layouts.
- Reasonable and feasible alternatives as raised by I&APs

All I&APs on the project database will be notified in writing of the 30 day comment period for the Draft Basic Assessment, copies of the Draft Report and project information can be downloaded from the following project website [www.publicprocess.co.za](http://www.publicprocess.co.za).

**Stage 3: Submit Final Basic Assessment Report and Application**

The comments received from I&APs will be included in the Final BAR before it is submitted to the DEDEAT for their decision making.

**Stage 4: Notification of Environmental Authorisation and Appeal Period**

The final step in the process entails providing written notification to all I&APs on the project database of the issuing of the environmental authorisation and appeal period, including the manner of appeal. Project construction may only commence once approval has been received from the DEDEAT.

**WHAT IS YOUR ROLE AS AN I&AP?**

1. I&APs are required to respond to the letters of notification and/or newspaper advertisements and register their interest on the project database
  - By emailing, faxing or mailing a comment form to the participation consultant indicated below.
  - By registering your interest in the project you will be kept informed of the process and will be notified of any opportunities to comment
2. I&APs are required to state their area of interest and/or concern in the matter
  - By emailing, faxing or mailing a comment form to the public participation consultant indicated below.
3. By telephonically contacting the public participation consultant if you have a query, comment, or require further project information.
4. By reviewing the Draft and Final BAR and submitting any comments within the specified comment periods.

**WHO SHOULD YOU CONTACT?**

Sandy Wren, Public Process Consultants, PO Box 27688, Greenacres, 6057, Phone 041-374 8426 Fax 041-373 2002 Email [sandy@publicprocess.co.za](mailto:sandy@publicprocess.co.za)

Information on the project can be downloaded from the following website:  
[www.publicprocess.co.za](http://www.publicprocess.co.za)

