

# **BASIC ASSESSMENT PROCESS**

## **PONDERS END PACKHOUSE EXPANSION**

***Proposed Expansion of Ponders End Packhouse on Portion 316 of Farm Commando Kraal No. 113, Sundays River Valley Municipality***

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT: September 2017**



### **INTRODUCTION**

The proponent, San Miguel Fruits SA (Pty) Ltd, proposes to expand their existing Packhouse, namely Ponders End Packhouse, located on Portion 316 of Farm Commando Kraal No. 113, near Sunland in the Sundays River Valley Municipality. The site is currently zoned as Agriculture I and located on the site is an existing Packhouse (~8155m<sup>2</sup>), which consists of one production line and associated infrastructure. It is proposed that the existing Packhouse be expanded by ~29 055m<sup>2</sup> to include two additional lines under roof, as well as associated infrastructure. The total development footprint is thus anticipated to be ~37 210m<sup>2</sup> (~3.72ha).

In terms of the NEMA EIA Regulations, 2014 (as amended), published in GN R326, 327, 325 and 324, promulgated under Chapter Five of the National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998) (NEMAA), and published in Government Gazette 40772 on the 7 April 2017, the project requires a Basic Assessment, because it triggers, amongst others, the following listed activity, in Listing Notice 1 (GN R327):

*“43. The expansion and related operation of hatcheries or agri-industrial facilities outside industrial complexes, where the development footprint of the hatcheries or agri-industrial facilities will be increased by 2 000 square metres or more.”*

### **PROJECT LOCALITY**

Portion 316 of Farm Commando Kraal No. 113 is located ~3km east of Sunland and is zoned as Agriculture I. The site can be accessed via the gravel road (DR01988) which intersects with R336 approximately 570m west of the existing entrance to the packhouse. The nearest boundary of the Addo Elephant National Park is located ~3km west of the site.

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

In terms of regulation 42(b) of Government Notice R326, interested and affected parties (I&APs) are to request in writing that their names be placed on the register of interested and affected parties. To register as an I&AP, complete the comment and registration form included with 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. In terms of regulation 43(1), a registered I&AP is entitled to comment in writing on all reports and plans submitted as part of the public participation process and raise any issues which may be of significance to the consideration of the application. Additionally, I&APs are required to disclose any direct business, financial, personal or other interest which they may have in the approval or refusal of the application. By registering on the project register, you will be notified as and when information on the project is available for I&AP review and comment.

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

This document provides you, as an I&AP, with background information on the proposed project, the Basic Assessment, as well as Public Participation process that will be undertaken. 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 Basic Assessment process from the outset. Public Participation is an important component of the Basic Assessment process and together with scientific investigations assists the competent authority, in this instance the Department of Economic Development Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEDEAT), Cacadu Region, with their decision-making.

### **PROJECT OVERVIEW**

The proposed future expansion consists of two additional production lines by ~29 055m<sup>2</sup> (~2.9ha), thus the expansion to the Packhouse will consist of a total of three production lines. The Packhouse will provide for the sorting and

packing of fresh whole fruit for local and international markets. Fruit that is deemed unsuitable for sale as fresh whole fruit will be sent for further processing (juicing) at a local juicing factory.

In addition, and in order to ensure that the associated services (access, water, stormwater, process water and effluent) are effectively provided and managed, the expansion is proposed to include the following components:

- Wash water dam and associated embankment (1368m<sup>2</sup>)
- Semi-dry stormwater pond (4376m<sup>2</sup>)
- Expansion of existing irrigation water storage pond (924m<sup>2</sup>)
- Pipeline (450mm diameter) to supply irrigation water from the LSRWUA canal (326m)
- New exit point
- Internal roads (7633m<sup>2</sup>)
- Sewer batch plant (Clearedge Sewage Treatment System (168m<sup>2</sup>))
- 110mm sewer pumping main (153m)
- Maturation pond (1600m<sup>2</sup>)
- 110mm water main (784m)
- Relocation of existing pumphouse and fire tank (30kl; 40m<sup>2</sup>)
- Expansion of existing building (21101m<sup>2</sup>)
- Additional electricity demand (potentially LPG gas or Eskom supply – to be confirmed through the assessment process)

The total expanded development footprint is thus anticipated to be ~37 210m<sup>2</sup> (~3.72ha).

As part of the expansion process the following facilities will require removal and/ or decommissioning, as they are located within portions of the development footprint:

- Electric fencing, a house and a concrete structure
- An existing earth canal on the site which will be infilled, as well as the existing wash water pond, which will also be infilled

## ALTERNATIVES AND SITE SELECTION

A key component of the Basic Assessment process is the identification and assessment of reasonable and feasible alternatives. Reasonable and feasible alternatives as raised by I&APs, specialists and the technical team will be considered in the assessment process. The following alternatives have been identified and will be considered in the assessment process:

- No-go alternative
- Layout/ footprint alternatives
- Alternatives as identified by I&APs
- Technology (Electricity) alternatives

## OVERVIEW OF THE BASIC ASSESSMENT PROCESS AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

In terms of the NEMA EIA Regulations 2014 (as amended), published in GN R326, 327, 325 and 324, promulgated under Chapter Five of the National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998) (NEMAA), and published in Government Gazette 40772 on the 7 April 2017, the project requires a Basic Assessment and Environmental Authorisation is required prior to the commencement of any activities on site. The table below lists potential listed activities in GN R327 and 324, which trigger a Basic Assessment. A cautious approach has been adopted towards the identification of listed activities. Where there is currently uncertainty with regards to the applicability of a listed activity, it has been included in the table below, in terms of the following:

EIA Regulations (2014), as amended on 7 April 2017	Project Component
<b>GN R327 (Listing Notice 1)</b>	
<p>12. The development of—</p> <p>(ii) infrastructure or structures with a physical footprint of 100 square metres or more;</p> <p>where such development occurs—</p> <p>(c) if no development setback exists, within 32 metres of a watercourse, measured from the edge of a watercourse; —</p>	<p>An existing stormwater detention pond is located adjacent to the northern boundary of the site. Given that water flows into and out of the existing stormwater pond it is considered to be a watercourse in terms of the definition contained in the EIA Regulations, 2014 (as amended).</p> <p>Infrastructure or structures exceeding 100 square metres may be constructed within 32 metres of the stormwater detention pond.</p>

	The applicability of this listed activity will be determined through the assessment process.
27. The clearance of an area of 1 hectares or more, but less than 20 hectares of indigenous vegetation,	The existing Packhouse facilities and associated infrastructure is proposed to be expanded by ~2.9 hectares. The total development footprint is thus anticipated to be ~3.72 hectares. Some indigenous vegetation occurs within the proposed expansion footprint and will therefore be required to be cleared.
28. Residential, mixed, retail, commercial, industrial or institutional developments where such land was used for agriculture, game farming, equestrian purposes or afforestation on or after 01 April 1998 and where such development:  (ii) will occur outside an urban area, where the total land to be developed is bigger than 1 hectare;	The proposed Packhouse facility represents an agri-industrial development in terms of the NEMA EIA Regulations 2014 (as amended). The site is currently zoned Agriculture I and a portion thereof is being utilised for agriculture (citrus orchards).  The total development footprint is anticipated to be ~3.72 hectares and the site falls outside of an urban area.
43. The expansion and related operation of hatcheries or agri-industrial facilities outside industrial complexes, where the development footprint of the hatcheries or agri-industrial facilities will be increased by 2 000 square metres or more.	The existing Packhouse facilities and associated infrastructure measures approximately 8155 square meters and is proposed to be expanded by 29 055 square meters. The total development footprint is thus anticipated to be 37 210 square meters.
48. The expansion of—  (i) infrastructure or structures where the physical footprint is expanded by 100 square metres or more; or  where such expansion occurs—  (c) if no development setback exists, within 32 metres of a watercourse, measured from the edge of a watercourse	An existing stormwater detention pond is located adjacent to the northern boundary of the site. Given that water flows into and out of the existing stormwater pond it is considered to be a watercourse in terms of the definition contained in the EIA Regulations, 2014 (as amended).  Infrastructure or structures may be expanded by 100 square metres or more within 32 metres of the stormwater detention pond.  The applicability of this listed activity will be determined through the assessment process.
56. The widening of a road by more than 6 metres, or the lengthening of a road by more than 1 kilometre-  (ii) where no reserve exists, where the existing road is wider than 8 metres;	The existing internal road network is anticipated to be expanded in order to enable internal access of the expanded facilities.  Some of the existing internal roads may exceed 8 meters in width and may be widened by more than 6 meters.  The applicability of this listed activity will be determined through the assessment process.
<b>GN R324 (Listing Notice 3)</b>	
2. The development of reservoirs, <b>excluding dams</b> , with a capacity of more than 250 cubic metres.  <b>a. Eastern Cape</b>  ii. Outside urban areas, in:  (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;	The capacity of the existing wash water dam is 970 cubic metres. However, the current location and capacity of the existing wash water dam is not considered suitable to service the proposed expansion of the packhouse. The existing wash water dam is proposed to be infilled. Therefore, a new wash water dam, with a capacity of 1 470 cubic metres, is proposed to be constructed, which will also receive a portion of the overland stormwater flow.  The site is located in the Eastern Cape and outside of an urban area. The site is ~3 kilometres from the nearest boundary of the Addo Elephant National Park.

<p>4. The development of a road wider than 4 metres with a reserve less than 13,5 metres.</p> <p><b>a. Eastern Cape</b></p> <p>i. Outside urban areas:</p> <p>(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, <b>excluding disturbed areas;</b></p>	<p>The preferred width of the main internal distributor area is anticipated to be a minimum width of 8m near the entrance to the site. Subject to the applicable trip generation figures, the width of the other main internal access areas are proposed to vary between 8m and 4m.</p> <p>The site is located in the Eastern Cape and outside of an urban area. The site is ~3 kilometres from the nearest boundary of the Addo Elephant National Park.</p>
<p>12. The clearance of an area of 300 square metres or more of indigenous vegetation except where such clearance of indigenous vegetation is required for maintenance purposes undertaken in accordance with a maintenance management plan.</p> <p><b>a. Eastern Cape</b></p> <p>i. Within any critically endangered or endangered ecosystem listed in terms of section 52 of the NEMBA or 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;</p>	<p>The existing Packhouse facilities and associated infrastructure is proposed to be expanded by ~29 000 square metres. The total development footprint is anticipated to be ~37 200 square metres. Therefore, it is anticipated that the development will require the clearance of an area of 300 square metres or more of indigenous vegetation.</p> <p>The vegetation on site has been identified as Albany Alluvial Vegetation in terms of the NBA mapping resources. This vegetation type has been listed as an Endangered ecosystem in terms of section 52 of the NEMBA.</p> <p>The vegetation type that occurs on the site and therefore, the applicability of this listed activity, will be confirmed through the assessment process.</p>
<p>14. The development of—</p> <p>(ii) infrastructure or structures with a physical footprint of 10 square metres or more;</p> <p>where such development occurs—</p> <p>(c) if no development setback has been adopted, within 32 metres of a watercourse, measured from the edge of a watercourse;</p> <p><b>a. Eastern Cape</b></p> <p>i. Outside urban areas:</p> <p>(hh) 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;</p>	<p>An existing stormwater detention pond is located adjacent to the northern boundary of the site. Given that water flows into and out of the existing stormwater pond it is considered to be a watercourse in terms of the definition contained in the EIA Regulations, 2014 (as amended).</p> <p>Infrastructure or structures exceeding 10 square metres may be constructed within 32 metres of the stormwater detention pond.</p> <p>The site is located in the Eastern Cape and outside of an urban area. The site is ~3 kilometres from the nearest boundary of the Addo Elephant National Park.</p> <p>The applicability of this listed activity will be determined through the assessment process.</p>
<p>16. The expansion of reservoirs, excluding dams, where the capacity will be increased by more than 250 cubic metres.</p> <p><b>a. Eastern Cape</b></p> <p>i. Outside urban areas:</p> <p>(hh) 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; or</p>	<p>In order to meet the water requirements of the facility it is proposed that water will be sourced from treated irrigation water from the LSRWUA canal.</p> <p>An existing irrigation water storage pond which has a current capacity of 2 850 cubic metres is proposed to be expanded by 1 247 cubic metres. The total capacity of the expanded irrigation water storage dam is therefore anticipated to be 4 097 cubic metres.</p> <p>The site is located in the Eastern Cape and outside of an urban area. The site is ~3 kilometres from the nearest boundary of the Addo Elephant National Park.</p>
<p>22. The expansion and related operation of facilities or infrastructure for the storage, or storage and handling of a dangerous good, where such storage facilities or infrastructure will be expanded by 30 cubic metres or more but no more than 80 cubic metres.</p> <p><b>a. Eastern Cape</b></p>	<p>Various chemicals are used in the Packhouse for the processing of the citrus. The current chemical store consists of a 15m<sup>3</sup> store which serves 1 x production line. The existing store still has spare capacity and is anticipated to be able to accommodate the additional chemicals that will be required for the proposed expansion. However, should additional storage space be required it is proposed that an existing store room (approximately 15m<sup>3</sup>) located adjacent to</p>

<p><i>i. Outside urban areas:</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;</p>	<p>the chemical store can be renovated to accommodate additional chemical storage.</p> <p>The combined chemical store area for the 3 x production lines will therefore be approximately 30m<sup>3</sup> in total.</p> <p>In addition, it may be necessary to utilise Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) to provide heat for drying, if sufficient electricity cannot be provided from the grid.</p> <p>The site is located in the Eastern Cape and outside of an urban area. The site is ~3 kilometres from the nearest boundary of the Addo Elephant National Park.</p> <p>The total storage capacity required for the storage of dangerous goods on site and the applicability of this listed activity will be determined through the assessment process.</p>
<p>23. The expansion of—</p> <p>(ii) infrastructure or structures where the physical footprint is expanded by 10 square metres or more;</p> <p>where such expansion occurs—</p> <p>(c) if no development setback has been adopted, within 32 metres of a watercourse, measured from the edge of a watercourse;</p> <p><b>a. Eastern Cape</b> <i>i. Outside urban areas:</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;</p>	<p>An existing stormwater detention pond is located adjacent to the northern boundary of the site. Given that water flows into and out of the existing stormwater pond it is considered to be a watercourse in terms of the definition contained in the EIA Regulations, 2014 (as amended).</p> <p>Infrastructure or structures may be expanded by 10 square metres or more within 32 metres of the stormwater detention pond.</p> <p>The applicability of this listed activity will be determined through the assessment process.</p> <p>The site is located in the Eastern Cape and outside of an urban area. The site is ~3 kilometres from the nearest boundary of the Addo Elephant National Park.</p>

The applicability of all the listed activities indicated above will be determined through the assessment process. The listed activities require Environmental 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, San Miguel Fruits SA (Pty) Ltd, what the consequences of their choices will be in biophysical, social and economic terms.

Public Process Consultants has been appointed as the independent Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) to undertake the Basic Assessment for the project. Public involvement forms an important component of this process, by assisting in the identification of issues and alternatives to be evaluated. The assessment process being implemented can be divided into three phases namely:

- **Pre-Application Phase**
  - Notification to DEDEAT
  - Project announcement and registration of I&APs (30 days) (**We Are Here**)
  - Preliminary specialist input
  - Draft Consultation Basic Assessment Report review (30 days)
- **Application and Basic Assessment Phase**
  - Application Form prepared and submitted to DEDEAT
  - Consultation Basic Assessment Report review (30 days)
  - Final Basic Assessment Report submitted to DEDEAT
- **Decision Making and Appeal Period**

To meet the timeframes as prescribed in the EIA Regulations, 2014 (as amended), specialist studies to be included as part of this assessment process have already commenced in parallel with the Pre-application Phase. The following specialist studies are proposed to form part of the assessment process:

- Engineering Assessment (roads, stormwater, effluent and water reticulation)
- Traffic Impact Assessment

- Aquatic Assessment
- Vegetation Assessment
- Desktop Archaeological and Palaeontological (Letters of Exemption)
- Potential Chemical Risk Assessment (to be confirmed)

### **Phase 1: Pre-Application Phase (Current Stage)**

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- **Project Announcement and Registration of I&APs (30 days)**

The first stage in the process entails notification to the DEDEAT, as well as I&APs of the intention to proceed with the Basic Assessment Process. Identified I&APs are provided with a Background Information Document (BID) on the project, a locality map and a comment form. An advertisement will be placed in a local newspaper and a site notice board will be erected at the site. I&APs are required to register their interest in the project to receive further project information. I&APs will be provided with a 30-day period to register their interest and raise any issues for inclusion in the Draft Consultation Basic Assessment Report (Draft CBAR).

- **Draft Consultation Basic Assessment Report (30 days)**

In terms of the NEMA EIA Regulations, 2014 (as amended), the objective of the Basic Assessment Process is to, amongst others, through a consultative process:

- determine policies and legislation relevant to the activity;
- identify the alternatives considered;
- describe the need and desirability of the proposed alternatives;
- undertake an impact and risk assessment process focussing on the geographical, physical, biological, social, economic, heritage and cultural sensitivity of the site;
- based on the impact assessment determine the preferred alternative, identify suitable mitigation measures and any residual risks that need to be managed or monitored.

A Draft CBAR will be compiled, which will include a Comments and Responses Trail – indicating the issues and concerns raised by I&APs during the 30-day project announcement period. The Draft CBAR will be made available for a 30-day review period. All registered I&APs will be notified in writing of the opportunity to comment. In order to assist I&APs with their understanding of the project and to facilitate the identification of issues for inclusion in the Consultation Basic Assessment Report (CBAR), I&APs will be provided with an executive summary of the Draft CBAR, as well as a comment form. Copies of the report will also be made available on the website [www.publicprocess.co.za](http://www.publicprocess.co.za).

### **Phase 2: Application and Basic Assessment Phase (30 days)**

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- **Application Form and Consultation Basic Assessment Report (CBAR)**

In parallel to the compilation and submission of the application form, the Consultation Basic Assessment Report (CBAR) will be compiled which will include a Comments and Responses Trail – indicating the issues and concerns raised by I&APs during the 30-day project announcement period as well as the 30-day review of the Draft CBAR (Phase 1: Pre-application phase).

Subsequent to the submission of the application form to the competent authority, the CBAR will be released for a minimum, legislated 30-day comment period. All registered I&APs will be notified in writing of the opportunity to comment. In order to assist I&APs with their understanding of the project and to facilitate the identification of issues for inclusion in the Final Basic Assessment Report (FBAR), I&APs will be provided with an executive summary of the CBAR, as well as a comment form. Copies of the report will also be made available on the website [www.publicprocess.co.za](http://www.publicprocess.co.za).

- **Final Basic Assessment Report Submission**

The Final Basic Assessment Report (FBAR), including the Comments and Responses Trail and EMPr will be compiled for submission to the competent authority (DEDEAT) for their consideration. Where Basic Assessment is applied to an application the applicant must within 90 days of receipt of the application by the competent authority, submit to the competent authority, a Basic Assessment Report, including specialist studies, which has been subject to a 30-day public participation process. This Basic Assessment Report should include all the comments received during the 30-day comment period. All I&APs on the project database will be notified in writing of the submission of the Final BAR.

### **Phase 3: Decision Making and Appeal Period**

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The competent authority must within 107 days of receipt of the Basic Assessment report grant or refuse environmental authorisation. The applicant must, within 14 days of the date of the decision, notify all registered I&APs of the decision and provide them with access to the decision and reasons for the decision, as well as indicate the manner of appeal.

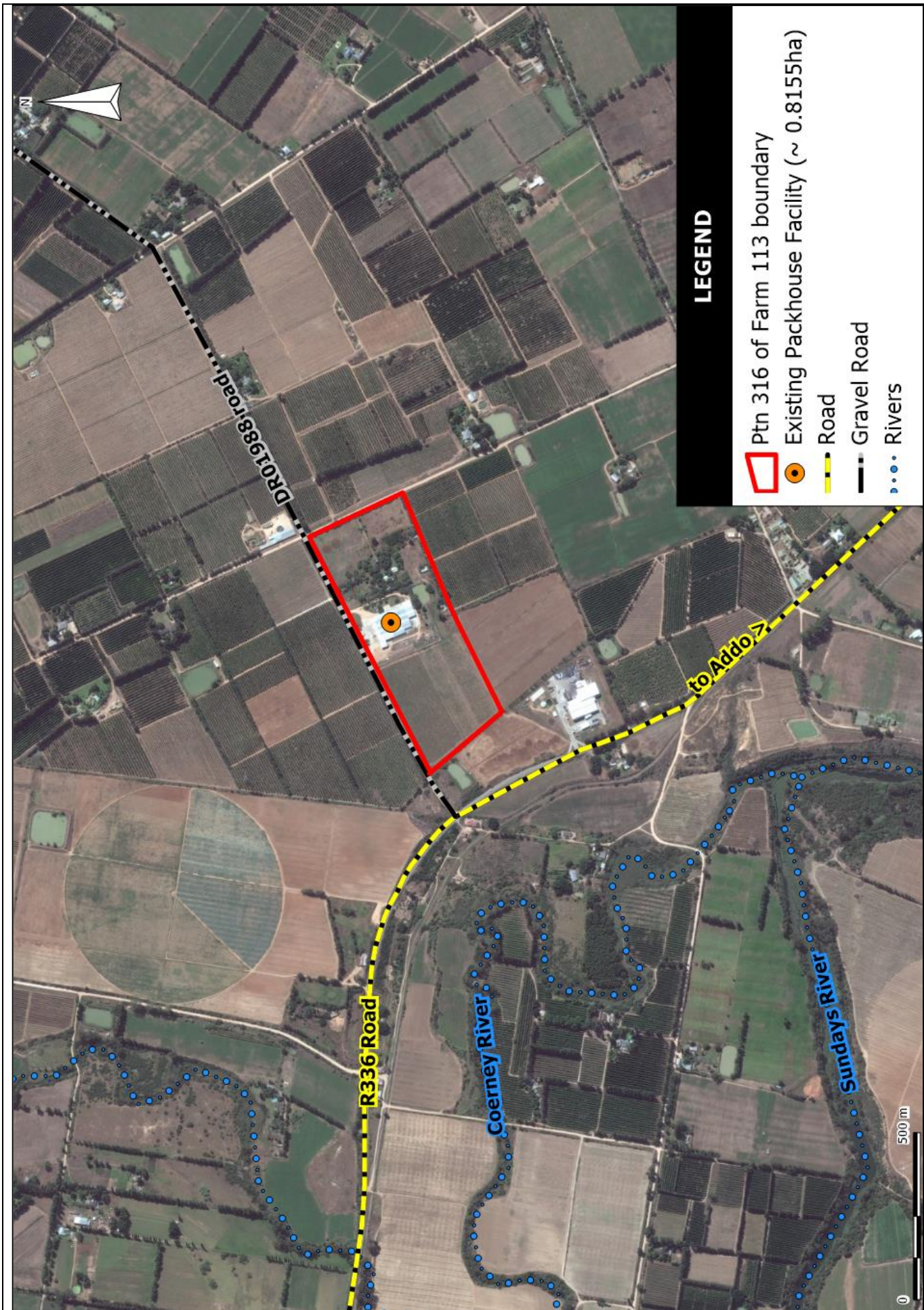
#### **WHAT IS YOUR ROLE AS AN I&AP?**

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 Reports and submitting any comments/ issues within the specified comment periods.

#### **WHO SHOULD YOU CONTACT?**

Sandy Wren,  
Public Process Consultants  
PO Box 27688  
Greenacres  
6057  
Phone: 041-374 8426 or 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)**



Locality Map: Ponders End Packhouse on Portion 316 of Farm 113, near Sunland, SRVM