

APPENDIX B: CORRESPONDENCE WITH DEDEAT

Approach to the EIA submitted to DEDEAT

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6 April 2016

Attention: Mr Dayalan Govender

Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism
Collegiate House, cnr Belmont Terrace & Castle Hill, Central, Port Elizabeth
Private Bag X 5001, Greenacres 6057
Fax: 041-585 1958

cc. Andries Struwig

Dear Sir,

Re: Proposed Expansion of Agriculture on Falcon Ridge Farm, Portion 274 of Strathsomers Estate No. 42, Sundays River Valley Municipality

With regards to our telephonic discussion of this morning, 5 April 2016, the following has reference.

The applicant, Mr Hannes Joubert, is proposing the expansion of agriculture on Falcon Ridge Farm, Portion 274 of Strathsomers Estate No. 42, Sundays River Valley Municipality. Falcon Ridge Farm measures approximately 671 hectares in extent and it is proposed that 80 hectares is cleared for agricultural activities, including the enlargement of an existing dam, internal roads, laydown areas and windbreaks. In terms of the NEMA EIA Regulations 2014, this will require full Scoping and EIA, prior to the commencement of any activities on site.

Historically the area on the farm that has been cleared for agricultural activities is 171.4 hectares. In addition, and on the 23 March 2013, Environmental Authorisation (DEDEAT Reference Number: EC06/LN1&3/M/12-31) was granted for the clearing of an additional 31 hectares on the same farm. Prior to authorisation this required a Basic assessment, which focussed specifically on the 31 hectares proposed for agriculture and did not assess the remainder of the farm. Thus approximately 201.4 hectares of the 671 hectares of the farm has subsequently been cleared, with 496.6 hectares (approximately 69% of the farm) remaining intact, that is, not having been transformed for cultivation.

This correspondence pertains to the Environmental Authorisation of the 23 March 2013 (EC06/LN1&3/M/12-31) and the proposed new application for authorisation which requires full Scoping and EIA for the additional approximately 80 hectares on Falcon Ridge.

On the 25 February 2016, Public Process Consultants had preliminary discussions with Andries Struwig on this matter and the potential need for an amendment to the authorisation of the 23 March 2013, to run in parallel to the proposed Scoping and EIA application for the additional 80 hectares.

We have subsequently reviewed the environmental authorisation of the 23 March 2013 in order to identify, which conditions, if any, in the environmental authorisation may require amendment and have come to the following conclusions.

No	Reviewed Conditions of the Environmental Authorisation of the 23 March 2013 (EC06/LN1&3/M/12-31)	Comment
1.	<p><u>Page 2 of 11</u> Detailed Description of activity</p>	<p>No changes to this section of the authorisation is required as it is specific to the 31 hectares assessed in the Basic Assessment and authorised on the 23 March 2013. The remainder of the farm Falcon Ridge, 496.6 hectares, was not assessed in this Basic Assessment.</p> <p>Recommendation: The proposed new application must make reference to the historical transformation on the site, including the 31 hectares authorised on the 23 March 2013.</p>
2.	<p><u>Page 5 of 11</u> Condition 3.3.2. A planting plan to be submitted to the Department for approval prior to any vegetation clearing commencing on site. Such planting plan must: Condition 3.3.2.1. accurately reflect the 31 hectares to be planted; Condition 3.3.2.2. indicate the buffer zones along the site boundaries; and Condition 3.3.2.3. indicate the No-go areas, inclusive Brakkloof Valley in relation to the proposed plantings.</p>	<p>In compliance with these conditions of the environmental authorisation and on the 2 May 2013, a planting plan indicating the No-go areas, inclusive of Brakkloof Valley and buffer zones, <u>in relation to the proposed plantings</u>, (31 hectares) was submitted to DEDEAT. Approval thereof was received from DEDEAT on the 7 June 2013.</p> <p>These conditions of the environmental authorisation have thus been complied with and no changes are proposed to the planting plan (31 hectares), buffer zone and No-go areas approved in the environmental authorisation of the 23 March 2013 and the planting plan of the 7 June 2013.</p> <p>Recommendation: The proposed new application must reflect the cultivated area and No-go areas approved in the environmental authorisation on the 23 March 2013 and the planting plan approved on the 7 June 2013.</p>
3.	<p><u>Page 7 of 11</u> Condition 3.3.22. The vegetation on the remainder of the site that has not been developed must be conserved and managed in its natural state.</p>	<p>As per point 1 and 2 above, the Basic Assessment assessed 31 hectares on the farm Falcon Ridge. In relation to the planting plan the no-go areas on the site were identified and approved on the 7 June 2013. The Basic Assessment did not assess the remainder of the farm Falcon Ridge, 496.6 hectares.</p> <p>No changes are proposed to the planting plan approved on the 7 June 2013.</p> <p>Recommendation: However, a new application for environmental authorisation is required for the proposed additional 80 hectares, which must take into account and reflect the cultivated area and no-go areas approved in the environmental authorisation on the 23 March 2013 and the planting plan approved on the 7 June 2013.</p>
4.	<p><u>Page 7 of 11</u> Condition 3.3.25. No further removal of vegetation will be contemplated in the event of any subdivision on Portion 274 of Strathsomers Estate No. 42.</p>	<p>No subdivision of Portion 274 of Strathsomers Estate No. 42 is being proposed thus no amendments are required to this condition of the environmental authorisation.</p>

5.	<p>Key factors considered in making the decision <u>Page 9 of 11</u> 4.2.4 Portion 274 of Strathsomers Estate No. 42 is approximately 671 hectares in extent. The area that has already been transformed for agricultural purposes is approximately 171.4 hectares in extent. Approximately 30¹ hectares of vegetation will in addition be cleared for the establishment of agricultural crops and it will result in the loss of indigenous Sundays Spekboom Thicket and subsequent destruction of a component of the biodiversity for the area. However, approximately 496.6 hectares (approximately 69% of Falcon Ridge Farm) of natural vegetation will remain intact on the site. This is deemed as a reasonable compromise between intensive development of the farm and conservation of biodiversity.</p>	<p>This section of the authorisation reflects the key factors considered in making the decision for the clearing of 31 hectares on the farm Falcon Ridge and would, for the purposes of the authorisation of the 23 March 2013, not change.</p> <p>Recommendation: The Scoping and EIA for the proposed additional 80 hectares to be cleared for cultivation, on the Farm Falcon Ridge, would clearly need to motivate the need and desirability for the proposed expansion. This should take into account, amongst others, the conservation of the remainder of the vegetation on the farm Falcon Ridge. A preliminary assessment of the conservation targets for the farm Falcon Ridge, inclusive of the additional 80 hectares proposed to be cleared, has identified that conservation targets for the vegetation types occurring on the site will continue to be met, should environmental authorisation be received to clear the additional 80 hectares.</p>
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Concluding Remarks and Way Forward

Based on the review of the conditions of the Environmental Authorisation of the 23 March 2013 it would appear that an amendment to the current conditions of the environmental authorisation for Portion 274 of Strathsomers Estate No. 42 is not required. However, the proposed new application for environmental authorisation for the clearing of an additional 80 hectares on the same property would need to make clear reference to the existing authorisation. The proposed Scoping and EIA process must fully assess, amongst others, the vegetation types and conservation targets for the property and all areas to be indicated as no-go areas on the property and will include the assessment of cumulative impacts.

We would appreciate confirmation or otherwise of our understanding and interpretation of the existing environmental authorisation for the Farm Falcon Ridge, as well as the proposed approach to the new application for environmental authorisation which must take into consideration the current authorisation for this property.

Should you have any queries or wish to discuss further please contact Sandy Wren or Marisa Jacoby.

Yours sincerely



SANDY WREN

¹ The environmental authorisation dated 23 March 2013, approved the clearing of 31 hectares. The reference to approximately 30 hectares in this section of the authorisation appears to be an error.

From: Andries Struwig <Andries.Struwig@dedea.gov.za>
Sent: 08 April 2016 04:18 PM
To: Sandra Wren; Dayalan Govender
Cc: Marisa Jacoby; Zandri Bekker; Charmaine Struwig
Subject: RE: Proposed Expansion of Agriculture on Falcon Ridge Farm, Portion 274 of Strathsomers Estate No. 42, Sundays River Valley Municipality

Good afternoon Sandy

The content of your letter has been perused and the Department accepts your conclusions / recommendations as contained in the letter.

Thank you.

Andries Struwig
Assistant Director: EIM
Cacadu Region



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From: Sandra Wren [<mailto:sandy@publicprocess.co.za>]
Sent: 06 April 2016 11:02 AM
To: Andries Struwig; Dayalan Govender
Cc: Marisa Jacoby; Zandri Bekker
Subject: Proposed Expansion of Agriculture on Falcon Ridge Farm, Portion 274 of Strathsomers Estate No. 42, Sundays River Valley Municipality

Hi Jeff and Andries

Jeff, as discussed on Tuesday, attached is correspondence with regards to the proposed expansion of agricultural activities on Falcon Ridge Farm, Portion 274 of Strathsomers Estate No. 42, Sundays River Valley Municipality and a previous environmental authorisation received for the same property. We would appreciate confirmation of / or not our interpretation of the approach the Scoping and EIA process for the clearing of the additional 80 hectares on the same property, as outlined and requested in the attached.

A hard copy of this correspondence will be delivered to your offices today.

Regards

Sandy Wren
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Notice of Intention to Commence with Scoping and EIA submitted to DEDEAT

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120 Diaz Road Adcockvale, PE 6001
Phone 041-3748426 Fax 041-3732002
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5 December 2016

Attention: Mr Andries Struwig

Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism
Private Bag X 5001
Greenacres
6057

Dear Sir,

RE: NOTICE OF INTENTION TO COMMENCE WITH A SCOPING AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT PROCESS: AGRICULTURAL EXPANSION ON PORTION 274 OF FARM 42 STRATHSOMERS ESTATE, FALCON RIDGE FARM, IN THE SUNDAYS RIVER VALLEY MUNICIPALITY.

In terms of the NEMA EIA Regulations, 2014: GN R982, 983, 984 and 985 promulgated under Chapter 5 of the National Environmental Management Act (as amended), and published in Government Gazette 38282 on 4 December 2014, this serves as notification to the competent authority, in this case the Provincial Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism, Cacadu Region, that a Scoping and Environmental Impact Assessment Process is being conducted on behalf of Habata Boerdery (the project proponent) for the proposed agricultural expansion on Portion 274 of Farm 42 Strathsomers Estate (~691ha in extent), in the Sundays River Valley Municipality. The project proponent intends to expand existing agricultural activities on the farm known as Falcon Ridge by transforming approximately 135ha of indigenous vegetation, for the cultivation of a variety of fruit (citrus cultivars, melons) as well as a variety of vegetables (cabbages, mealies). In order to irrigate the proposed agricultural development an existing farm dam (~28 000m³ capacity) is proposed to be expanded by approximately 42 000m³ to have a total capacity of approximately 70 000m³.

PROJECT PROPONENT

Habata Boerdery

PROJECT NAME

Agricultural Expansion on Portion 274 of Farm 42 Strathsomers Estate, Falcon Ridge Farm, Sundays River Valley Municipality.

PROJECT LOCALITY

The town which is located the nearest to Falcon Ridge farm, is Kirkwood, in the Sundays River Valley Municipality, located approximately 4km to the west of the farm. The site can be accessed off the gravel "Enon" road (DR02006), which extends between Kirkwood and Enon. The nearest boundary of the Addo Elephant National Park is located approximately 4km north of Falcon Ridge Farm. The locality map attached provides an overview of the location of the property under assessment.

BRIEF PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The area under assessment forms part of a working farm, known as Falcon Ridge just outside of Kirkwood, within the SRVM. The proponent intends to transform indigenous vegetation on Portion 274 of Farm 42 Strathsomers Estate (Falcon Ridge). The total area to be cleared, including associated infrastructure is approximately 135ha, of which 120.8ha will be for cultivated fields, internal roads and wind breaks and an additional, approximately 15ha, will be for the expansion of an existing dam, access roads, and the installation of irrigation pipelines of varying capacities.

The existing dam (~28 000m³ capacity) is proposed to be expanded by approximately 42 000m³ to have a total capacity of approximately 70 000m³. The existing dam footprint is approximately 1.43ha in extent and will be expanded by approximately 1.32ha, to measure in total extent approximately 2.75ha.

The farm portion under assessment is currently zoned for agriculture. The existing infrastructure on the farm Falcon Ridge will be used to provide technical and logistical support to the proposed expanded farming operation. To accommodate the dam and associated infrastructure (i.e. roads, lay-down areas and irrigation pipelines) a total area of 135ha is being proposed for transformation. In addition, the proposed development will entail the following activities on the site:

- Levelling and landscaping the site to provide runoff control
- Establishment of unpaved internal roads to provide access to the cultivated areas
- Establishment of a new access road to access proposed orchards on the northern side of the DR02006 (Enon Road)
- Expansion of an existing irrigation dam
- Installation of irrigation infrastructure
- Planting crops / orchards and windbreaks (if applicable)

Once the necessary infrastructure has been established, the area will be used for the cultivation of a variety of fruit and vegetable crops including melons, butternut, cabbage, maize and citrus. The proponent proposes to use existing offices and service buildings on the Falcon Ridge Farm, thus negating the need for any additional associated services infrastructure such as electricity, sanitation or water, other than that which is required for the irrigation of the crops. Water for the development will be supplied from the Lower Sundays River Water Users Association canals, via an existing storage dam located on the Falcon Ridge farm, which is proposed to be expanded.

The final design and layout of the development will be informed by technical and environmental specialist input during the Environmental Assessment process.

APPLICABLE LEGISLATION

The Scoping and EIA process is being undertaken in terms of the NEMA EIA Regulations, 2014: GN R982, 983, 984 and 985 promulgated under Chapter 5 of the National Environmental Management Act (as amended), and published in Government Gazette 38282 on 4 December 2014. The need for Scoping and EIA is triggered by the inclusion of activities listed in GN R 984, in particular:

“15. The clearance of an area of 20 hectares or more of indigenous vegetation, excluding where such clearance of indigenous vegetation is required for -...”

Public Process Consultants has been appointed by Habata Boerdery (the proponent), as the Environmental Assessment Practitioner to undertake the Scoping and Environmental Impact Assessment process including Public Participation. The purpose of this letter is to notify the competent authority and other relevant organs of state that have jurisdiction over any aspect of the proposed project, of the intention to submit an application for Environmental Authorisation in respect of the above project, as well as commence with the Scoping and EIA process for the proposed project. The other organs of state to which this notification is being sent are indicated below.

Please find attached with this correspondence the following documentation:

- Background Information Document including the approach to the assessment process and locality map
- Comment form

We trust that you will find the above in order. Please do not hesitate to contact Sandy or Marisa at the contact details above, should you have any comments or queries with regards to this submission.

Regards,



Sandy Wren
Environmental Assessment Project Leader

cc. Mr Sello Mokhanya, Eastern Cape Provincial Heritage Resources Agency
Mr Ruffus Maloma, Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform
Ms Marisa Bloem, Department of Water and Sanitation

FULL SCOPING AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT PROCESS

*Agricultural Expansion on Portion 274 of Farm 42 Strathsomers Estate,
Falcon Ridge Farm, in the Sundays River Valley Municipality*

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT, DECEMBER 2016



INTRODUCTION

The project proponent, Habata Boerdery, intends to expand existing agricultural activities on the farm known as Falcon Ridge by transforming approximately 135ha of the indigenous vegetation on Portion 274 of Farm 42 Strathsomers Estate (~691ha in extent), for the cultivation of a variety of fruit (citrus cultivars, melons) as well as a variety of vegetables (cabbages, mealies). In order to irrigate the proposed agricultural development an existing farm dam (~28 000m³ capacity) is proposed to be expanded (by ~42 000m³) and associated irrigation infrastructure will be required to be installed. The farm portion under assessment falls within the Sundays River Valley Municipal area (SRVM) and the nearest town is Kirkwood, which is located approximately 4km west of the site.

In terms of the NEMA EIA Regulations, 2014, GN R982, 983, 984 and 985 promulgated under Chapter 5 of the National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998) ("NEMA"), and published in Government Gazette 38282 on the 4 December 2014, the project requires full Scoping and Environmental Impact Assessment (S&EIR). The applicant has appointed Public Process Consultants as the independent Environmental Assessment Practitioner to undertake the assessment including public participation for this project.

PROJECT LOCALITY

The town which is located the nearest to Falcon Ridge farm is Kirkwood, in the Sundays River Valley Municipality, located approximately 4km to the west of the farm. The site can be accessed off the gravel "Enon" road (DR02006) which extends between Kirkwood and Enon. The nearest boundary of the Addo Elephant National Park is located approximately 4 km north of Falcon Ridge Farm. The locality map attached provides an overview of the location of the property under assessment.

HOW CAN I PARTICIPATE IN THIS ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS?

In terms of regulation 42 (b) of Government Notice R 982 interested and affected parties (I&APs) 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. 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. I&APs are required to state any direct, business, financial, personal or other interest they may have in the approval or refusal of the application. By registering on the project database 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 interested and or affected party (I&AP), with background information on the proposed agricultural development as well as the Scoping and Environmental Impact Assessment and 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 competent authority, in this instance the Eastern Cape Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEDEAT), Cacadu Region, with their decision-making.

ALTERNATIVES AND SITE SELECTION

A key component of the Environmental Impact Assessment process is the identification and assessment of reasonable and feasible alternatives. The following alternatives have been identified and will be considered in the assessment process:

- No-go alternative
- Layout alternatives
- Alternatives as identified by I&APs

Reasonable and feasible alternatives as raised by I&APs, specialists and the technical team will be considered in the assessment process.

WHAT DOES THE PROJECT ENTAIL?

The area under assessment forms part of a working farm, known as Falcon Ridge just outside of Kirkwood within the SRVM. The proponent intends to transform indigenous vegetation totalling 135 hectares in extent on Portion 274 of Farm 42 Strathsomers Estate (Falcon Ridge). The total area to be cleared, including associated infrastructure is approximately 135 ha, of which 120.8 ha will be for cultivated fields, internal roads and wind breaks and an additional approximately 15 ha will be for the expansion of an existing dam, access roads, and the installation of irrigation pipelines of varying capacities.

The existing dam (~28 000m³ capacity) is proposed to be expanded by approximately 42 000m³ to have a total capacity of approximately 70 000m³. The existing dam footprint is approximately 1.43ha in extent and will be expanded by approximately 1.32ha to measure in total extent approximately 2.75ha.

The farm portion under assessment is currently zoned for agriculture. The existing infrastructure on the farm Falcon Ridge will be used to provide technical and logistical support to the proposed expanded farming operation. In order to accommodate the dam and associated infrastructure (ie roads, lay-down areas and irrigation pipelines) a total area of 135 hectares is being proposed for transformation. In addition, the proposed development will entail the following activities on the site:

- Levelling and landscaping the site to provide runoff control
- Establishment of unpaved internal roads to provide access to the cultivated areas
- Establishment of a new access road to access proposed orchards on the northern side of the DR02006 (Enon Road)
- Expansion of an existing irrigation dam
- Installation of irrigation infrastructure
- Planting crops / orchards and windbreaks (if applicable)

Once the necessary infrastructure has been established, the area will be used for the cultivation of a variety of fruit and vegetable crops including melons, butternut, cabbage, maize and citrus. The applicant proposes to use existing offices and service buildings on the Falcon Ridge Farm, thus negating the need for any additional associated services infrastructure such as electricity, sanitation or water, other than that which is required for the irrigation of the crops. Water for the development will be supplied from the Lower Sundays River Water Users Association canals, via an existing storage dam located on the Falcon Ridge farm, which is proposed to be expanded.

The final design and layout of the development will be informed by technical and environmental specialist input during the Environmental Assessment process.

OVERVIEW OF THE SCOPING AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (S&EIR) PROCESS

In terms of the NEMA EIA regulations, 2014: GN R982, 983, 984 and 985 published in Government Gazette 38282 on the 4 December 2014, the project requires full Scoping and Environmental Impact Assessment because it includes, amongst others, the following listed activity in GN R 984:

NEMA EIA Regulations, 2014, GN R 984, requiring Full Scoping and EIA	
Listed Activity	Description of Project Activity
<i>"15. The clearance of an area of 20 hectares or more of indigenous vegetation, excluding where such clearance of indigenous vegetation is required for -..."</i>	The proposed agricultural development will entail the clearance of approximately 135 hectares of vegetation, most of which is anticipated to be indigenous.

In addition, the following listed activities contained in GN R983 and 985, requiring Basic Assessment, will also be triggered by the proposed development:

NEMA EIA Regulations, 2014, GN R 983, requiring Basic Assessment	
Listed Activity	Description of Project Activity
<i>12. The development of- (iii) bridges exceeding 100 square metres in size; (xii) infrastructure or structures with a physical footprint of 100 square metres or more; where such development occurs- (a) within a watercourse; ...</i>	A watercourse, the Southkloof drainage area, has been identified on site. It is proposed that irrigation infrastructure and unpaved, gravel roads (width of 8 metres) required for maintenance of the pipelines and in order to access the proposed agricultural area, cross the watercourse at two points.

<p><i>(c) if no development setback exists, within 32 metres of a watercourse, measured from the edge of a watercourse; -...</i></p>	<p>This may require the development of a bridge or associated infrastructure with a footprint exceeding 100 square metres in size, within 32 metres of the watercourse. In addition, the proposed irrigation infrastructure required to supply water to the proposed development area may have a footprint exceeding 100 square metres and may fall within 32 metres of the watercourse.</p> <p>The applicability of this listed activity will be determined through the assessment process.</p>
<p><i>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></p> <p><i>(i) a watercourse;</i></p>	<p>A watercourse, the Soutkloof drainage area, has been identified on site. It is proposed that irrigation infrastructure and unpaved, gravel roads (width of 8 metres) required for maintenance of the pipelines and in order to access the proposed agricultural area, cross the watercourse at two points. These project components may require the depositing or excavation of 5 cubic metres of material or more from the watercourse.</p> <p>In terms of the definition contained in GN R982 of the NEMA EIA Regulations 2014 the definition of a “watercourse” includes a dam. It is proposed that an existing dam and associated infrastructure, with a footprint of ~1.43ha will be expanded by approximately 1.32ha in order to supply the additional irrigation water required for the proposed development. The expansion will require the depositing or excavation of 5 cubic metres of material or more from the existing dam.</p>
<p><i>24. The development of-</i></p> <p><i>(ii) a road with a reserve wider than 13,5 meters, or where no reserve exists where the road is wider than 8 metres;</i></p>	<p>A number of unpaved, internal vehicle tracks, as well as proposed new access roads will be required to service the cultivated areas. These roads are proposed to vary in width between 4 metres and 16 metres.</p>
<p><i>48. The expansion of-</i></p> <p><i>(iv) dams, where the dam, including infrastructure and water surface area, is expanded by 100 square metres or more in size;</i></p> <p><i>where such expansion or expansion and related operation occurs-</i></p> <p><i>(a) within a watercourse;</i></p> <p><i>(c) if no development setback exists, within 32 metres of a watercourse, measured from the edge of a watercourse;</i></p>	<p>In terms of the definition contained in GN R982 of the NEMA EIA Regulations 2014 the definition of a “watercourse” includes a dam.</p> <p>It is proposed that an existing dam and associated infrastructure, with a footprint of ~1.43ha will be expanded by approximately 1.32ha in order to supply the additional irrigation water required for the proposed development.</p> <p>Therefore, the dam will be expanded by more than 100 square metres.</p>
<p><i>49. The expansion of –</i></p> <p><i>(v) infrastructure or structures where the physical footprint is expanded by 100 square metres or more;</i></p> <p><i>where such expansion or expansion and related operation occurs-</i></p> <p><i>(a) within a watercourse;</i></p> <p><i>(c) if no development setback exists, within 32 metres of a watercourse, measured from the edge of a watercourse;</i></p>	<p>In terms of the definition contained in GN R982 of the NEMA EIA Regulations 2014 the definition of a “watercourse” includes a dam.</p> <p>It is proposed that an existing dam and associated infrastructure, with a footprint of ~1.43ha will be expanded by approximately 1.32ha in order to supply the additional irrigation water required for the proposed development.</p> <p>Therefore, the dam will be expanded by more than 100 square metres.</p>
<p><i>50. The expansion of facilities or infrastructure for the off-stream storage of water, including dams and reservoirs, where the combined capacity will be increased by 50000 cubic metres or more.</i></p>	<p>It is proposed that an existing dam and associated infrastructure, with a capacity to store ~ 28 000m³ of water, will be expanded by ~42 000m³, to have a combined capacity of ~70 000m³, in order to supply the additional irrigation water required for the proposed development.</p>

NEMA EIA Regulations, 2014, GN R 985, requiring Basic Assessment

Listed Activity	Description of Project Activity
<p>4. The development of a road wider than 4 metres with a reserve less than 13,5 metres.</p> <p>(b) In Eastern Cape:</p> <p>ii. Outside urban areas, in:</p> <p>(ee) Critical biodiversity areas as identified in systematic biodiversity plans adopted by the competent authority or in bioregional plans;</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, excluding disturbed areas; or</p>	<p>Several unpaved, internal vehicle tracks, as well as proposed new access roads will be required to service the cultivated areas. These roads are proposed to vary in width between 4 metres and 16 metres, but will not have a reserve.</p> <p>The site is located in the Eastern Cape and falls outside an urban area. It is classified as an Aquatic CBA (ABLMC 2b) in terms of the ECBCP and a portion of the area under assessment has been identified as a Terrestrial CBA (BLMC 2).</p> <p>The nearest boundary of the Addo Elephant National Park is located approximately 4 km north of the farm boundary.</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>(a) In Eastern Cape, ...</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 proposed agricultural development will entail the clearance of approximately 135 hectares of vegetation, most of which is anticipated to be indigenous.</p> <p>The site is located in the Eastern Cape and a portion of the vegetation which is proposed for transformation has been identified as Albany Alluvial Vegetation in terms of the NSBA mapping resources. This vegetation type has been listed as an Endangered ecosystem in terms of section 52 of the NEMBA.</p> <p>The vegetation types 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>(iii) bridges exceeding 10 square metres in size;</p> <p>(xii) infrastructure or structures with a physical footprint of 10 square metres or more; where such development occurs –</p> <p>(a) within a watercourse;</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>(c) In Eastern Cape:</p> <p>ii. Outside urban areas, in:</p> <p>(ff) Critical biodiversity areas or ecosystem service areas as identified in systematic biodiversity plans adopted by the competent authority or in bioregional plans;</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>A watercourse, the Southkloof drainage area, has been identified on site. It is proposed that irrigation infrastructure and unpaved, gravel roads (width of 8 metres) required for maintenance of the pipelines and in order to access the proposed agricultural area, cross the watercourse at two points. This may require the development of a bridge or associated infrastructure with a footprint exceeding 10 square metres in size and may fall within 32 metres of the watercourse.</p> <p>The proposed irrigation infrastructure required to supply water to the proposed development area may have a footprint exceeding 10 square meters and may fall within 32 meters of the watercourse.</p> <p>The site is located in the Eastern Cape and falls outside an urban area. It is classified as an Aquatic CBA (ABLMC 2b) in terms of the ECBCP and a portion of the area under assessment has been identified as a Terrestrial CBA (BLMC 2).</p> <p>The nearest boundary of the Addo Elephant National Park is located approximately 4 km north of the farm boundary.</p>
<p>16. The expansion of reservoirs for bulk water supply where the capacity will be increased by more than 250 cubic metres.</p> <p>(a) In Eastern Cape,</p> <p>i. Outside urban areas, in:</p> <p>(ff) Critical biodiversity areas as identified in systematic biodiversity plans adopted by the competent authority or in bioregional plans;</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</p>	<p>It is proposed that an existing dam and associated infrastructure, with a capacity to store ~ 28 000m³ of water, will be expanded by ~42 000m³, to have a combined capacity of ~70 000m³, in order to supply the additional irrigation water required for the proposed development. Therefore, the capacity of the expanded dam will be increased by more than 250 cubic metres.</p> <p>The site is located in the Eastern Cape and falls outside an urban area. It is classified as an Aquatic CBA (ABLMC 2b) in terms of the ECBCP and a portion of the area under assessment has been</p>

<p><i>reserve; or</i></p>	<p>identified as a Terrestrial CBA (BLMC 2). The nearest boundary of the Addo Elephant National Park is located approximately 4 km north of the farm boundary.</p>
<p>23. <i>The expansion of-</i> (iv) <i>dams where the dam is expanded by 10 square metres or more in size;</i> (xii) <i>infrastructure or structures where the physical footprint is expanded by 10 square metres or more;</i> Where such development occurs – (a) <i>within a watercourse;</i> (c) <i>if no development setback has been adopted, within 32 metres of a watercourse, measured from the edge of a watercourse; ...</i> (b) <i>In Eastern Cape:</i> ii. <i>Outside urban areas, in:</i> (ee) <i>Critical biodiversity areas as identified in systematic biodiversity plans adopted by the competent authority or in bioregional plans;</i> (gg) <i>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...</i></p>	<p>In terms of the definition contained in GN R982 of the NEMA EIA Regulations 2014 the definition of a “watercourse” includes a dam. It is proposed that an existing dam and associated infrastructure, with a footprint of ~1.43ha will be expanded by approximately 1.32ha in order to supply the additional irrigation water required for the proposed development. Therefore, the dam and associated infrastructure will be expanded by more than 10 square metres. The site is located in the Eastern Cape and falls outside an urban area. It is classified as an Aquatic CBA (ABLMC 2b) in terms of the ECBCP and a portion of the area under assessment has been identified as a Terrestrial CBA (BLMC 2). The nearest boundary of the Addo Elephant National Park is located approximately 4 km north of the farm boundary.</p>

A conservative approach has been adopted towards the identification of listed activities which might be triggered by the proposed development. 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, Habata Boerdery, 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 Scoping and Environmental Impact 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 Environmental Assessment Process being implemented can be divided into four phases namely:

- **Pre-Application Scoping Phase**
 - Project Announcement and registration of I&APs (30 days)
 - Draft Consultation Scoping Report review (30 days)
- **Application and Scoping Phase**
 - Submit Application form for Environmental Authorisation to DEDEAT
 - Review of the Consultation Scoping Report (30 days)
 - Submit Final Scoping Report to DEDEAT
- **Environmental Impact Assessment Phase (EIA Phase)**
 - Draft Environmental Impact Assessment Report Review (30 days)
 - Submit Final Environmental Impact Assessment Report to DEDEAT
- **Decision Making and Appeal Period**
 - Notice to I&APs of decision and appeal period

In order to meet the timeframes as prescribed in the EIA Regulations, 2014, specialist studies to be included as part of this assessment process will commence in parallel to the Scoping Process. The following specialist studies are proposed to be undertaken for this assessment:

- Vegetation and Aquatic Assessment
- Soil Suitability Assessment
- Phase 1 Archaeological and Palaeontological Assessment
- Traffic Impact Assessment

Phase 1: Pre-Application Scoping Phase (Current Stage)

- **Project Announcement and registration of 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 Scoping and EIA 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 on the project database and raise any issues for inclusion in the Draft Consultation Scoping Report.

- **Draft Consultation Scoping Report Review**

A Draft Consultation Scoping Report (DCSR) will be compiled which will include an Issues and Responses Trail – indicating the issues and concerns raised by I&APs during the **30 day** project announcement period. This report will include the Plan of Study for EIA, which will outline the specialist studies proposed to be undertaken for this assessment process as well as the methodology for the identification, and rating of impacts. In terms of the NEMA EIA Regulation, 2014, the Scoping process is to, amongst others, through a consultative process:

- *identify policies and legislation relevant to the activity;*
- *motivate the need and desirability of the proposed activity and its location*
- *identify and confirm the preferred activity, technology alternative and/ or site alternative; or if no alternatives, including location alternatives were investigated, the motivation for such;*
- *identify the key issues to be addressed in the assessment phase;*
- *agree on the level of assessment, methodology and expertise required as well as the extent of further consultation to be undertaken to determine the impacts and risks the activity will impose on the preferred site to inform the location of the development footprint within the preferred site; and*
- *identify suitable measures to avoid, manage or mitigate identified impacts and to determine the extent of the residual risks that need to be managed and monitored.*

The **Draft Consultation Scoping Report** will be released for a **30 day** comment period. All registered I&APs on the project database 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 Scoping Report I&APs will be provided with an executive summary of the Draft Consultation Scoping Report as well as a Comment Form. Copies of the report will also be made available on the website www.publicprocess.co.za.

Phase 2: Application and Scoping Phase

- **Application Form Submission**

An application form for Scoping and EIA will be compiled based on the relevant project information provided by the proponent, Habata Boerdery, and will be submitted to the Provincial Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEDEAT).

- **Consultation Scoping Report Review**

In parallel to the compilation and submission of the application form, the Consultation Scoping Report (CSR) will be compiled which will include an Issues 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 Consultation Scoping Report (Phase 1: Pre-application phase).

Subsequent to the submission of the Application Form to the competent authority, the Consultation Scoping Report will be released for a minimum, legislated 30-day comment period. All registered I&APs on the project database 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 Scoping Report, I&APs will be provided with an executive summary of the Consultation Scoping Report as well as a Comment Form. Copies of the report will also be made available on the website www.publicprocess.co.za.

- **Final Scoping Report Submission**

The Final Scoping Report, together with the Plan of Study for EIA, will be prepared for submission to the Provincial DEDEAT for their decision-making, within 44 days of submission of the Application Form. The comments received from I&APs, the competent authority and other organs of state, during the review process are included in the Final Scoping Report before it is submitted to DEDEAT for their consideration. All I&APs on the project database will be notified in writing of the submission of the Final Scoping Report to the competent authority. The Final Scoping Report will include the Plan of Study for EIA (PSEIA) and Terms of Reference for specialist studies to be undertaken as part of the EIA process. The Final Scoping Report and the PSEIA is subject to consideration by the competent authority.

Phase 3: Environmental Impact Assessment Phase

Once DEDEAT accepts the Final Scoping Report, with or without conditions, and upon receipt of the approval thereof, the Environmental Impact Assessment Phase may proceed or continue with the tasks contemplated in the Plan of Study for EIA. The purpose of this stage of the EIA is to undertake specialist investigations to address the issues identified through the Scoping Process which may be of significance to the consideration of the application. The specialists will build on the information that was gathered for stage 1, but will focus their studies on the area under assessment. The specialist studies will include the assessment of alternatives, identification of impacts and the determination of the significance of impacts. Specialists will, where appropriate, formulate mitigatory measures to maximise positive benefits or avoid/ minimise potential negative impacts.

- **Draft EIA Report and Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) Review**

The Draft EIA Report and Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) will be prepared and released for a 30 day review period and will include, amongst others, the following:

- Address issues that have been raised through the Scoping Process
- Assess alternatives in relation to the proposed activity, including different means of meeting the general purpose and requirements of the activity (including No Go Option)
- Assess potential impacts
- Recommend management actions to enhance positive benefits or avoid/minimise negative impacts.

All registered I&APs will be notified of the 30 day comment period in writing. All comments received from I&APs and authorities via meetings held or written correspondence during this period are compiled into an Issues and Responses Trail for inclusion in the Final EIA Report. The Issues and Responses Trail will indicate the nature of the comment, when and who raised the comment as well as indicate how the comment received has been considered in the Final EIA Report, in the project design or the EMPr for the project.

- **Final EIA Report and EMPr Submission**

The Final EIA Report, including the Issues and Responses Trail and EMPr will be compiled for submission to the competent authority for their consideration (DEDEAT). The applicant must within 106 days of acceptance of the Scoping Report submit to the competent authority an environmental impact report, inclusive of specialist studies and an EMPr which has been subjected to a 30 day public participation process. All I&APs on the project database will be notified in writing of the submission of the Final EIA Report.

Phase 4: Decision Making and Appeal Period

All I&APs on the project database will be notified once the competent authority has reached a decision on the application. 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 draw their attention to the fact that an appeal may be lodged against the decision in terms of the National Appeals Regulations.

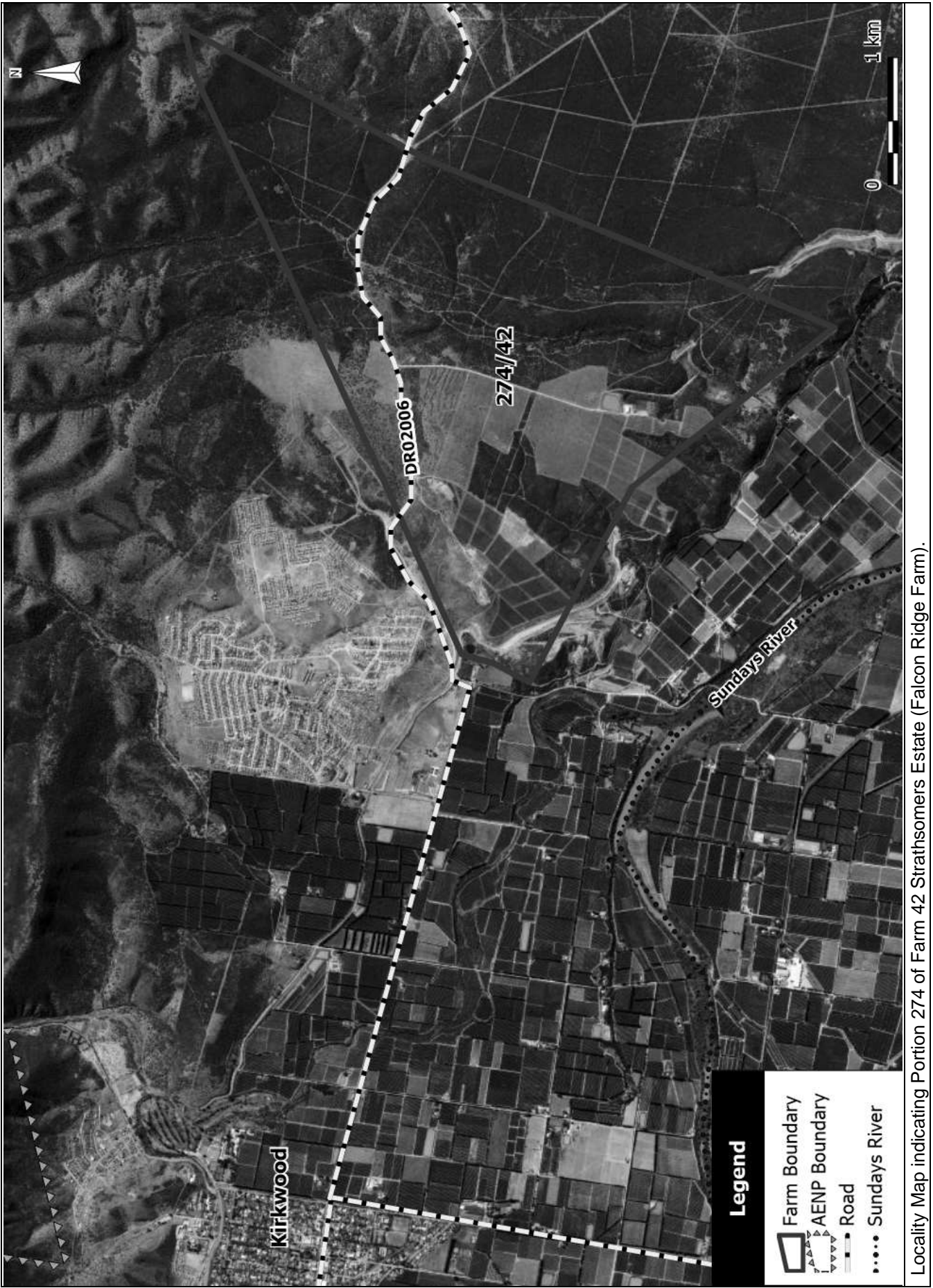
WHAT IS YOUR ROLE AS AN I&AP?

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
Fax 041-373 2002
Email sandy@publicprocess.co.za

Information on the project can be downloaded from the following website: www.publicprocess.co.za



Locality Map indicating Portion 274 of Farm 42 Strathsomers Estate (Falcon Ridge Farm).

SCOPING AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Pre-Application Comment and Registration Form

Proponent: Habata Boerdery
Project: Agricultural Expansion on Portion 274 of Farm 42 Strathsomers Estate, Falcon Ridge Farm, SRVM.
Primary Listed Activity: GN R 984 (Listing Notice 2) Activity No 15.

Return Completed Reply Form to:

Public Process Consultants, PO Box 27688, Greenacres 6057
Phone: 041 – 374 8426 or Fax 041-373 2002 or Email sandy@publicprocess.co.za

Complete all Relevant Sections Below and Return by: 30 January 2017

Please provide your full contact details:

FIRST NAME:	SURNAME:
ORGANISATION:	TITLE/ POSITION:
POSTAL ADDRESS:	
CODE:	
PHONE:	FAX:
CELL:	EMAIL:

Would you like to register as an interested and affected party? (please tick the appropriate box)

NOTE: You are required to register as an I&AP in order to receive further correspondence regarding the EIA process.

YES

NO

Please clearly state any interest you may have in the project and/or list your issues and comments or questions you may have (use additional pages if required)

Notice of Comment Period on Draft Consultation Scoping Report

PO Box 27688 Greenacres 6057
120 Diaz Road Adcockvale, PE 6001
Phone 041-3748426 Fax 041-3732002
Email sandy@publicprocess.co.za
Ck 97/32984/23 VAT 44601 68273



Public Process Consultants
Environmental Impact Assessment and
Public Participation Management

29 June 2017

Attention: Mr Andries Struwig

Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism
Private Bag X 5001
Greenacres
6057

Dear Sir,

**RE: NOTICE OF COMMENT PERIOD: DRAFT CONSULTATION SCOPING REPORT:
AGRICULTURAL EXPANSION ON PORTION 274 OF FARM 42 STRATHSOMERS ESTATE,
FALCON RIDGE FARM, SUNDAYS RIVER VALLEY MUNICIPALITY.**

With reference to our previous correspondence submitted to your offices dated 5 December 2016, please find included herewith, a copy of the Draft Consultation Scoping Report (CSR) for the proposed agricultural development on Portion 274 of Farm 42 Strathsomers Estate, Falcon Ridge Farm, SRVM.

The Scoping and EIA process for the proposed agricultural expansion was originally initiated in terms of the NEMA EIA Regulations, 2014 published in Government Notice R982, 983, 984 and 985 on the 4 December 2014 in Government Gazette 38282. However, these regulations have subsequently been amended by the publication of GN R326, 327, 325 and 324 in Government Gazette 40772 on the 7 April 2017. Therefore, the Draft CSR has been prepared in terms of the NEMA EIA Regulations, 2014 (as amended on 7 April 2017).

You are hereby notified of the release of the Draft CSR for a non-legislated **30-day comment period** extending from the **30 June 2017 to 31 July 2017**. In terms of Regulation 7 (5) of the NEMA EIA Regulations 2014 (as amended), we hereby respectfully request comment from the competent authority on the abovementioned report in order to ensure that the report complies with the DEDEAT's requirements for Scoping. In order to assist you in making comments on the report, please find included herewith a copy of the following:

- A hard copy of the Draft CSR, including Appendices
- An electronic version of the Draft CSR on CD
- A comment form and an Executive Summary

We trust that you will find the above in order. Please do not hesitate to contact Sandy, Marisa or Zandri at the contact details above should you have any comments or queries with regards to this submission.

Regards,



Sandy Wren
Environmental Assessment Project Leader

DRAFT CONSULTATION SCOPING REPORT COMMENT FORM

Scoping and Environmental Impact Assessment

Proponent: Habata Boerdery
Project: Agricultural Expansion on Portion 274 of Farm 42 Strathsomers Estate, Falcon Ridge Farm, SRVM.
Primary Listed Activity: GN R 325 Activity No 15.

Return Completed Reply Form to:

Public Process Consultants, PO Box 27068, Greenacres 0057
Phone: 041 – 374 8426 or Fax 041-373 2002 or Email sandy@publicprocess.co.za

Complete all Relevant Sections Below and Return By: 31 July 2017

Please provide your full contact details:

FIRST NAME:	SURNAME:
ORGANISATION:	TITLE:
POSTAL ADDRESS:	
CODE:	
PHONE:	FAX:
CELL:	EMAIL:

Would you like to register as an Interested and affected party? (please tick the appropriate box)

NOTE: You are required to register as an I&AP in order to receive further correspondence regarding the EIA process.

YES

NO

Please clearly state any interest you may have in the project and outline any issues or comments you may have in response to the Draft Consultation Scoping Report (use additional pages if required)

Registration and comment form for Issues and Concerns

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The project proponent, Habata Boerdery, proposes to expand their existing agricultural activities for the cultivation of a variety of fruit (citrus cultivars, melons) and vegetables (cabbages, mealies). The agricultural expansion is proposed to take place on Portion 274 Strathsomers Estate No. 42 (~691ha in extent), referred to as Falcon Ridge Farm, in the Sundays River Valley Municipality (SRVM). The nearest town to Falcon Ridge Farm is Kirkwood, located 4km west of the Farm and the nearest boundary of the Addo Elephant National Park is ~4km north and west of the Farm.

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 full Scoping and Environmental Impact Assessment (S&EIR), prior to the commencement of any activities on the site due to amongst others, activities listed in GN R325, namely:

"15. The clearance of an area of 20 hectares or more of indigenous vegetation, excluding where such clearance of indigenous vegetation is required for -..."

Chapter Four of this report provides details of the listed activities which require Environmental Authorisation. The competent authority, who must consider and decide upon this application is the Provincial Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEDEAT), Cacadu Region. NOTE: The Scoping and EIA process was initially advertised in terms of the NEMA EIA Regulations, 2014, prior to the regulations being amended. This Scoping Report has been updated to ensure that it is in line with the amended EIA Regulations 2014 and the relevant listing notices.

Subject to the outcome of the assessment process, specialist studies, technical input and consultation process, the proponent, Habata Boerdery, intends to expand their existing agricultural activities on Falcon Ridge Farm, for the cultivation of a variety of fruit (citrus cultivars and melons) and vegetables (cabbages, butternuts and mealies). It is proposed that ~120.8ha be cleared to plant ~110.2ha of fruit and vegetables, as well as internal roads and windbreaks.

Water for the proposed development will be sourced from the LSRWUA canals via an existing balancing dam. The existing dam (~28 000m³) is proposed to be expanded (by ~42 000m³) to accommodate the agricultural expansion (total capacity ~70 000m³). Drip irrigation will be utilised for the irrigation of fruit and vegetables. Irrigation pipelines of varying capacities will be installed to provide irrigation water to the cultivated portions. Irrigation pipelines may be required to be installed under the DR02006, which would require the registration of a wayleave servitude. It is further anticipated that irrigation pipelines may be required across the Southkloof drainage area. An existing transformer will be upgraded to provide for the additional pumping capacity to the proposed cultivated portions. No additional electrical services are required.

Existing facilities are proposed to be utilised for the expanded agricultural development on Falcon Ridge Farm. An existing logistical services area, administrative area, as well as ablution facilities are located on the Farm, as well as on an adjacent farm Portion 20 of Farm 84 Landdrost Veeplaats (east of Falcon Ridge), owned by the project applicant and therefore, no additional services infrastructure will be required.

The proposed expansion of agricultural activities on Falcon Ridge Farm can be divided into the following phases, which are outlined in more detail in the sections below:

- Preconstruction
- Construction
- Operational

Preconstruction Phase

Prior to the commencement of construction activities on Falcon Ridge Farm a preconstruction phase (planning) is required. For the planting of fruits and vegetables, seed must be booked in advance and is then imported to a certified nursery for a crop-dependent grow-out period. During this period, seeds are germinated and grown to either seedling or sapling stage, depending on the crop. Thereafter, seedlings and saplings are planted with respect to the harvesting season that applies to each crop. Thus, site preparation needs to be complete prior to the planting times relevant to the crops.

Construction Phase

The agricultural expansion will entail the clearing of vegetation, levelling of the site, and the installation of the drip irrigation system, prior to the planting of the crops. Once the site is prepared, crops (variety of fruits and vegetables) will be planted. It is anticipated that vegetation clearing, landscaping, site preparation and planting will be done both by hand and with the aid of suitable earth moving equipment (excavators, bulldozers and TLBs etc.). No workers' accommodation will be provided on site during the construction phase. Site preparation will entail the following activities on Falcon Ridge Farm:

- clearing of indigenous vegetation
- landscaping and levelling the site for the planting of various fruits (citrus and melons) and vegetables (cabbages, butternuts and mealies)
- establishment of unpaved internal service roads and new access roads, where required
- expansion of irrigation balancing dam
- installation of an internal water reticulation and irrigation infrastructure (irrigation pipes of varying capacities)
- planting of windbreaks (if necessary)

Operational Phase

Once the site is suitably prepared, the area will be utilised for the cultivation of a variety of fruit (citrus cultivars and melons) and vegetables (butternut, cabbages and mealies), on a rotational, as well as seasonal basis, for both local and international markets. The following operational phase activities are associated with the project:

- Planting of a variety of crops (melons, butternut, cabbages and mealies) on a rotational, as well as seasonal basis
- The establishment of citrus orchards of varying cultivars
- Water for the development will be supplied from the LSRWUA canals which will be reticulated from the balancing dam located on Falcon Ridge Farm which is proposed for expansion
- Only drip irrigation is proposed for the irrigation of fruit and vegetables
- The proponent has sufficient water use entitlements to irrigate the proposed agricultural expansion.
- It is anticipated that several additional seasonal and permanent employment opportunities will be created by the project

For more detail regarding the project description see Chapter Two of the Report.

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

Falcon Ridge Farm is located approximately 4km east of Kirkwood, in the SRVM, Eastern Cape, South Africa. The nearest boundary of the Addo Elephant National Park is located approximately 4km north and west of the boundary of the site. Falcon Ridge Farm is zoned for Agriculture. Access to the Farm is gained off the gravel DR02006 road, which bisects the Farm and extends between Kirkwood and Enon/ Bersheba.

Falcon Ridge Farm is located in a predominantly agricultural area. Untransformed vegetation is largely restricted towards the northern and north-eastern properties adjoining the Farm. The majority of the properties located towards the southern and eastern boundaries of the Farm are already under cultivation, while the western boundary of the Farm is adjacent to the Bontrug settlement. Based on the surrounding land uses, the proposed agricultural development on Falcon Ridge Farm is not likely

to cause a significant change in character within the surrounding landscape, as the surrounding area is currently predominantly agricultural in nature.

The vegetation on Falcon Ridge was observed to be a combination of natural to near-natural Sundays Thicket and Albany Alluvial Vegetation. Towards the west, the plateau (flatter) areas have been modified/ transformed by quarrying, clearing and activities associated with previously cultivated areas. The sloped areas in this western portion of the Farm, adjacent (south) to the road extending between Kirkwood and Enon, are highly degraded due to livestock and game grazing and browsing, as well as encroachment by *Opuntia ficus indica*, *O. aurantiaca* and *Cynodon dactylon*. The vegetation on the sloped areas north of the Kirkwood/ Enon road, were in a good condition, with slight degradation noted due to grazing and browsing.

A preliminary site visit, conducted by an aquatic specialist, indicated five dams, one old dam site and two artificially created wetlands within the Farm boundaries. Four dams occur within 500m of the Farm boundaries. Additionally, a single, flat wetland, was identified using the NFEPA mapping resources. These onsite observations were supplemented by the review of relevant aerial imagery and planning frameworks for Falcon Ridge.

For further information regarding the affected environment see Chapter Three of the Report.

OVERVIEW OF THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

This Scoping and EIA Process is being implemented in four phases, the details of which are outlined in Chapter Four of this report:

- Pre-Application Scoping Phase (we are here)
- Application and Scoping Phase
- Environmental Impact Assessment Phase
- Decision Making and Appeal Period

Notice of Intention to commence with Scoping and EIA, dated 5 December 2016, was submitted to the competent authority, DEDEAT. The notice was also sent to all identified Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) and Organs of State on 6 December 2016. Notification was provided in terms of the NEMA EIA Regulations, 2014 published in Government Notice R982, 983, 984 and 985 on the 4 December 2014 in Government Gazette 38282. These regulations have subsequently been amended by the publication of GN R326, 327, 325 and 324 in Government Gazette 40772 on the 7 April 2017. Therefore, the Scoping and EIA process will be undertaken in terms of the NEMA EIA Regulations, 2014 (as amended on 7 April 2017) from this point forward, and this report has been amended accordingly.

In order to commence the legislated portion of the Scoping and EIA process, an application form for Environmental Authorisation in terms of the NEMA EIA Regulations, 2014 (as amended) is being prepared and will be submitted to the competent authority prior to the release of the Consultation Scoping Report (CSR) for the legislated 30-day consultation period. All registered I&APs will be notified in writing of the release of the CSR for the legislated 30-day comment period.

The Final Scoping Report (FS Report), together with the Plan of Study (PoS) for EIA, will be prepared for submission to the Provincial DEDEAT for their decision-making, within 44 days of submission of the Application Form. The FS Report will include all the comments received from I&APs during the Pre-Application Phase, as well as the review of the Draft Consultation Scoping Report (Draft CSR and CSR. Should DEDEAT accept the Scoping Report and approve the PoS for EIA, the assessment process will enter into the EIA Phase.

Public Process Consultants has been appointed as the independent Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) to conduct the Scoping and EIA, including public participation for this application.

For further detail regarding the Scoping and EIA process including public participation see Chapter Four of the Report.

Identification of Issues

Issues and concerns identified for inclusion in the Scoping Report that require specialist assessment in the environmental assessment phase of the EIA have been identified using the following methods:

- Site Visit
- Preliminary input from specialists
- Desktop review of regional planning documentation and frameworks
- Scoping of issues and concerns with I&APs, including authorities and affected organs of state, through correspondence received (emails, comment forms) in response to the project announcement.

Based on issues identified thus far in the process, the table below indicates the specialist studies / input required for the EIA Phase of the Assessment Process:

Specialist Study	Broad Scope of Assessment	Proposed Specialist
Biophysical Assessment	To include an assessment of the potential impacts on vegetation and fauna (desk top) as well as the delineation of sensitive no-go areas, and determination of buffer zones. An aquatic assessment will be undertaken to assess the impacts on aquatic features identified on the site, including wetlands, watercourses and drainage areas. To determine the PES of the site and confirm the mapping of CBAs and ESAs, as included in various biodiversity planning frameworks, including the ECBCP and NFEPA mapping resources. To provide recommendations for management / mitigation of residual impacts.	Zandri Grobbelaar, Public Process Consultants Deborah Vromans, Vegetation and Aquatic Specialist
Phase 1 Archaeological Assessment	To determine archaeological features on site and assess the potential impacts on these features. To provide recommendations for management / mitigation of residual impacts.	Dr Johan Binneman, Eastern Cape Heritage Consultants
Phase 1 Palaeontological Assessment	To determine palaeontological resources on site and assess the potential impacts on these resources. To provide recommendations for management / mitigation of residual impacts.	Dr Rose Prevec, Albany Museum
Soil Suitability Reconnaissance Survey	Soil suitability assessment to determine the agricultural potential, future agricultural development, crop suitability.	Dr Freddie Ellis
Traffic Impact Statement	Determine the impact of the additional trip generation on the DR02006 road as well as the suitability and safety of the proposed access point.	Cary Hastie, Engineering Advice and Services
TECHNICAL TEAM		
Irrigation Infrastructure	Estimate the quantity of water required to irrigate the proposed development, to be stored on site in an existing dam which requires expansion. To confirm associated irrigation infrastructure layout including pipe diameters and length, as well as dam dimensions and design.	Jaco Kruger

The full specialist Terms of Reference (ToR) are contained in Chapter Six of the report. The results of the specialist studies and other relevant project information will be integrated into the Draft Environmental Impact Assessment Report (DEIA Report).

Current Stage in the Process

The project is currently at the stage where a Draft Consultation Scoping Report including the Plan of Study for EIA (Chapter Six) is being released for a 30-day authority and I&AP review period which will extend from **24 July 2017 to 25 August 2017**. This step in the process will be followed by the submission of the application form to the competent authority, the inclusion of the comments received from I&APs during this period into the CSR and the legislated 30-day comment period on the CSR.