

BASIC ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Africanos Country Estate Expansion

Proposed Expansion of Africanos Country Estate on Portion 228 to a Portion of Portion 74 of Farm Commando Kraal Estate No 113, Addo, Sundays River Valley Municipality



Public Process Consultants
Environmental Impact Assessment and
Public Participation Management

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT: August 2019

INTRODUCTION

The proponent, JN Venter Beleggings Trust, proposes to expand the existing Africanos Country Estate, Addo Sundays River Valley Municipality. The existing resort, consisting of, amongst others, the Africanos Inn, restaurant, chalets, function rooms, staff housing and associated infrastructure is located on Portion 228 of Commando Kraal Estate No. 113, and measures 1.16 hectares in extent. The JN Venter Beleggings Trust proposes to expand the existing resort onto a portion of the adjacent property, namely, Portion A of Remainder Portion 74 of the farm Commando Kraal Estate No. 113, measuring 5 hectares in extent. The majority of the proposed expansion is to take place on this adjacent portion of land and, where possible, will tie into existing infrastructure, subject to the outcome of the various specialist assessments. The property is in the process of being transferred to the JN Venter Beleggings Trust and will in future be allocated a new property number.

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 3 (GN R324):

“17. The expansion of a resort, lodge, hotel, tourism or hospitality facilities where the development footprint will be expanded and the expanded facility can accommodate an additional 15 people or more.

a. Eastern Cape

i. Outside urban areas:

(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;”

PROJECT LOCALITY

The area under assessment consists of the existing Africanos Country Estate which is located on Portion 228 of Farm Commando Kraal Estate No 113 and the adjacent Portion A of Remainder Portion 74 of the farm Commando Kraal Estate No. 113. The area under assessment is located approximately 3.5 kilometres west of the town of Addo. The nearest boundary of the Addo Elephant National Park is located approximately 3 kilometres east of the proposed expansion area. The area under assessment can be accessed off the R336, approximately 3.2 kilometers from the intersection of the R336 and the R335. A locality map has been attached to this BID.

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), Sarah Bartaan Region, with their decision-making.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The proposed expansion includes the addition of 12 chalets accommodating 24 additional guests, staff housing to accommodate 20 additional employees, 12 new caravan camping sites (with a new separate access point) which can accommodate 24 campers, and a double storey hotel with 36 rooms, accommodating 72 guests. In addition, the expansion will also include a new laundry, tool shed, convenience store, new multifunction hall, additional parking and kids outdoor play area. The proposed expansion will also necessitate the demolition of existing buildings to accommodate for proposed new development components.

In addition, the following associated services infrastructure will also be required

- Extension of existing domestic water supply from irrigation canal (water pipeline)
- Establishment of new effluent management system
- Establishment of a stormwater management system
- Establishment of rainwater harvesting system where possible (underground tank)

The total development footprint is anticipated to be approximately 5 ha and is proposed to extend across Portion 228 of Farm Commando Kraal Estate No 113 and Portion A of Remainder Portion 74 of the farm Commando Kraal Estate No. 113.

The above proposed project description is subject to specialist assessment. A detailed project description and proposed layout will be provided in the Draft Consultation Basic Assessment Report.

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
- Land Use Alternatives - Agriculture
- Alternatives as identified by I&APs

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 the need for 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:

GN R327 – Listing Notice 1 requiring Basic Assessment	
Activity	Project Component
<p>24. <i>The development of a road—</i></p> <p><i>(ii) with a reserve wider than 13,5 meters, or where no reserve exists where the road is wider than 8 metres;</i></p> <p><i>but excluding a road—</i></p> <p><i>(c) which is 1 kilometre or shorter.</i></p>	<p>The proposed expansion is likely to require the construction of new roads within the development footprint. The length and width of these roads may exceed 1 kilometre and 8 metres respectively and will be determined through the assessment process.</p> <p>The listed activity may require Environmental Authorisation.</p>
<p>27. <i>The clearance of an area of 1 hectares or more, but less than 20 hectares of indigenous vegetation,...</i></p>	<p>The proposed expansion footprint measures approximately 5 hectares. While the majority of the site is currently utilised for agriculture and resort purposes, some of the vegetation within the proposed expansion area may be indigenous. The vegetation type and extent will be determined by a vegetation specialist through the assessment process.</p> <p>The listed activity may require Environmental Authorisation.</p>
<p>28. <i>Residential, mixed, retail, commercial, industrial or institutional developments where such land was used for agriculture, game farming, equestrian purposes or</i></p>	<p>The proposed expansion includes components which could be considered residential (staff housing), commercial (chalets, restaurant, hotel) and retail</p>

<p>afforestation on or after 01 April 1998 and where such development:</p> <p>(ii) will occur outside an urban area, where the total land to be developed is bigger than 1 hectare;</p> <p>excluding where such land has already been developed for residential, mixed, retail, commercial, industrial or institutional purposes.</p>	<p>(convenience store). The area under assessment is currently zoned Agriculture 1 and has been utilised for commercial agriculture since 1 April 1998.</p> <p>The proposed expansion will be located outside an urban area and is anticipated to be approximately 5 hectares.</p> <p>The listed activity will require Environmental Authorisation.</p>
<p>GN R324 – Listing Notice 3 requiring Basic Assessment</p>	
<p>Activity</p>	<p>Project Component</p>
<p>4. The development of a road wider than 4 metres with a reserve less than 13,5 metres.</p> <p>a. Eastern Cape</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, excluding disturbed areas;</p>	<p>The proposed expansion is likely to require the construction of new roads within the development footprint. The width of these roads may exceed 4 metres and will be determined through the assessment process.</p> <p>The proposed expansion area falls within the Eastern Cape, outside an urban area and is located approximately 3 kilometres from the nearest boundary of the Addo Elephant National Park. The majority of the site is currently cultivated fields and resort.</p> <p>The listed activity may require Environmental Authorisation.</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. 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 expansion is anticipated to be approximately 5 hectares. While the majority of the site is currently utilised for agriculture and resort purposes, some of the vegetation within the proposed expansion area may be indigenous. In terms of VegMap SA mapping resources, the vegetation on the site has been identified as Albany Alluvial Vegetation which is listed as an endangered ecosystem in terms of section 52 of the NEMBA.</p> <p>The vegetation type and extent will be determined by a vegetation specialist through the assessment process.</p> <p>The listed activity may require Environmental Authorisation.</p>
<p>16. The expansion of reservoirs, excluding dams, where the capacity will be increased by more than 250 cubic metres.</p> <p>a. Eastern Cape</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>The proposed expansion will require the construction of an additional 2 water reservoirs with a capacity to store 283 cubic metres each. Thus, the existing water storage capacity on site will be increased by 566 cubic metres.</p> <p>The proposed expansion area falls within the Eastern Cape, outside an urban area and is located approximately 3 kilometres from the nearest boundary of the Addo Elephant National Park.</p> <p>The listed activity will require Environmental Authorisation.</p>
<p>17. The expansion of a resort, lodge, hotel, tourism or hospitality facilities where the Development footprint will be expanded and the expanded facility can accommodate an additional 15 people or more.</p> <p>a. Eastern Cape</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</p>	<p>The proposed facility will be expanded to accommodate an additional 120 people within new chalets, a new caravan camping site and a new hotel. In addition, staff housing will also be provided for an additional 20 employees.</p> <p>The proposed expansion area falls within the Eastern Cape, outside an urban area and is located approximately 3 kilometres from the nearest boundary of the Addo Elephant National Park.</p>

protected area identified in terms of NEMPAA or from the core area of a biosphere reserve;...

The listed activity will require Environmental Authorisation.

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, JN Venter Beleggings Trust, 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 (**We Are Here**)
- Project announcement, registration of I&APs and comment period (30 days) (**We Are Here**)
- Preliminary specialist input
- Draft Consultation Basic Assessment Report review period (30 days)

- **Application and Basic Assessment Phase**

- Application Form prepared and submitted to DEDEAT
- Consultation Basic Assessment Report review period (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:

- Bulk Services Assessment (roads, stormwater, effluent and water reticulation)
- Traffic Impact Assessment
- Aquatic Assessment
- Vegetation Assessment
- Phase 1 Archaeological Assessment
- Desktop Palaeontological Assessment (Letter of Exemption)

Phase 1: Pre-Application Phase (Current Stage)

- **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.

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

• 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.

• 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. In terms of the NEMA EIA Regulations 2014 (as amended) 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

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.

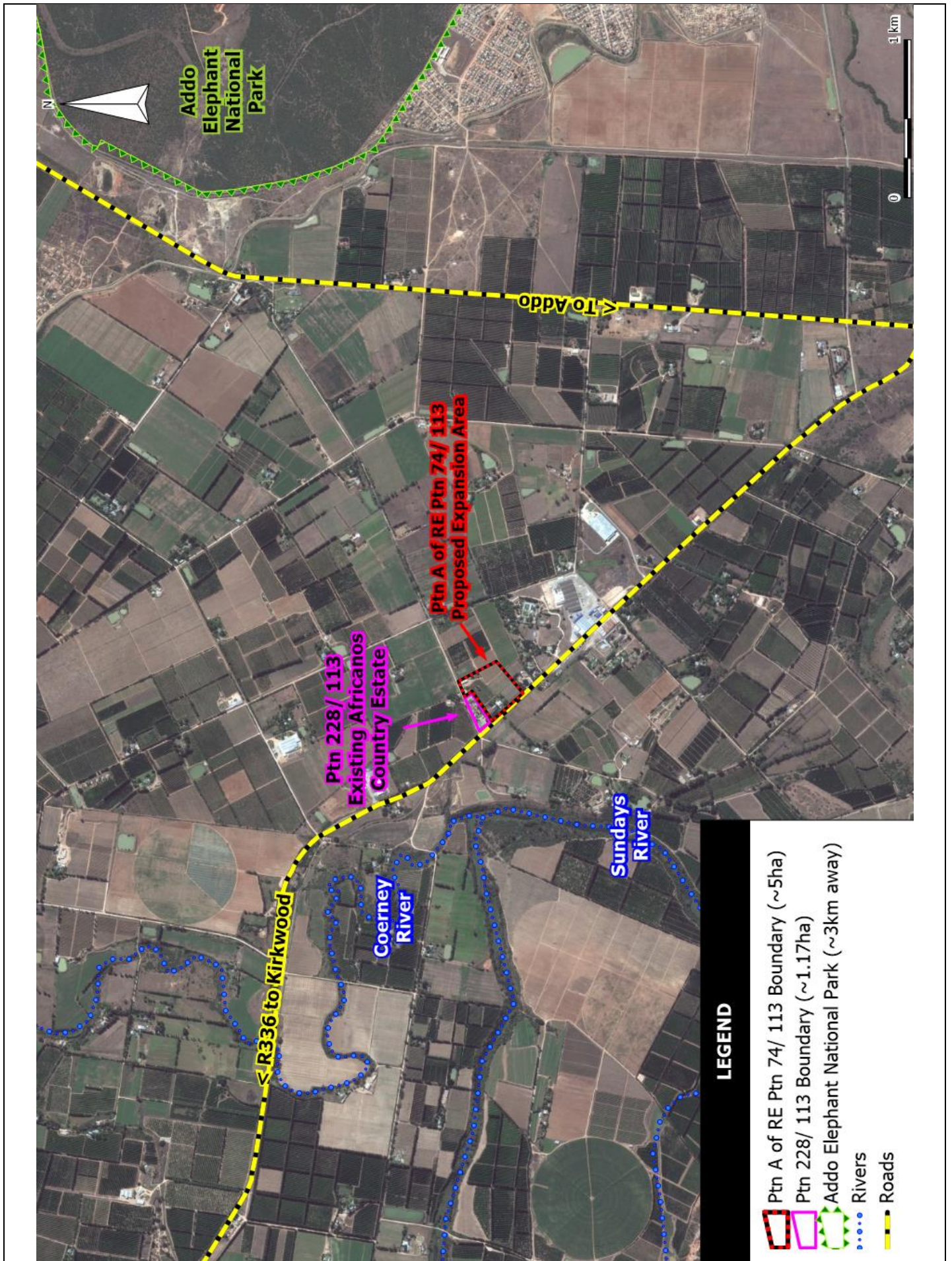
WHAT IS YOUR ROLE AS AN I&AP?

1. I&APs are required to respond to the letters of notification and/ or newspaper advertisements to register their interest on the project database and raise any issues or concerns.
 - 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

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



Locality Map: Proposed Expansion of Africanos Country Estate on Portions 228 and a portion of Portion A of Remainder Portion 74 of Farm Commando Kraal Estate No 113, Addo, Sundays River Valley Municipality.