

BASIC ASSESSMENT PROCESS

REBELSVLEI DAM

***Proposed Decommissioning and Construction of a New Farm Dam (Reservoir)
on Portion 387 of Farm Strathsomers Estate No. 42, Nqweba, Sundays River
Valley Municipality***



BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT, MAY 2026

INTRODUCTION

The project proponent, Habata Boerdery (Pty) Ltd, proposes the decommissioning of an existing farm dam and pumphouse (0.42 ha) on a portion of Portion 387 of Farm Strathsomers Estate No. 42, Nqweba (Kirkwood), Sundays River Valley Municipality (SRVM) as well as the construction of a new farm dam (~1.38 ha) including associated infrastructure (pumphouse, take-off and spill way). A logistical services area (~1.46 ha) is proposed for construction on and around the location of the decommissioned dam. The total development footprint is anticipated to measure ~2.84 ha in extent. The farm portion measures approximately 16.21 ha, is zoned Agriculture, and forms part of an existing working farm known as Rebelsvlei.

Water was previously supplied to the existing dam from the Lower Sundays River Water Users Association (LSRWUA) canal system located North of the farm portion, using existing water use entitlements. Water for the new dam will be provided by tying into the same system.

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 (BA). The proponent has appointed Sandra Wren of Public Process Consultants as the registered Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) to manage the assessment, including the Public Participation for this project.

PROJECT LOCALITY

The farm portion is located ~1.8 km West of the town of Nqweba, SRVM. The farm portion can be located by traveling West along the R336 from Nqweba and accessed via a gated entrance located to the right directly off the R336. The nearest boundary of the Addo Elephant National Park is ~1.9 km northeast of the area under assessment. The locality map attached provides an overview of the location of Portion 387 of Farm Strathsomers Estate No. 42.

THIS DOCUMENT PROVIDES YOU WITH THE FOLLOWING

- Background information on the scope of the Basic Assessment.
- An overview of the BA and Public Participation Process.
- How to register your interest on the database for this assessment and access information on the project website (www.publicprocess.co.za).
- Where to submit comments of concern to be addressed during the BA process.

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 BA process from the outset. Public Participation, together with scientific input received through specialist assessments, assists the Competent Authority, the Eastern Cape Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEDEAT), Sarah Baartman Region, with their decision-making.

HOW CAN I PARTICIPATE IN THE BASIC ASSESSMENT PROCESS?

The Public Participation Process (PPP) is being undertaken in line with the requirements of Regulations 41 to 44 of the NEMA EIA Regulations 2014 (as amended). The process will commence with the placement of an advert in a local newspaper and a site notice board for Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) to register their interest on the database for this project as well as submit any comments. I&APs **MUST** register their interest on the database for this project to receive further information regarding the assessment process and opportunities to comment.

Information on the project will be made available on the website www.publicprocess.co.za. To register as an I&AP, complete the comment and registration form included with this correspondence or submit your contact details to the registered EAP indicated at the end of this document, providing your full name, address and contact details (email and contact number). **Should your contact details change at any stage of the assessment process you must notify the EAP, to ensure you continue to receive information on the Basic Assessment process.**

I&APs are entitled to comment on all reports and plans submitted as part of the PPP as well as raise any issues which may be of significance to the consideration of the application. I&APs are required to disclose any direct business, financial, personal or other interests which they may have in the approval or refusal of the application. Should you no longer want to receive information on the project, this must be indicated in writing.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Rebelsvlei is an existing working farm recently purchased by the project proponent. The existing farm dam has insufficient capacity to store sufficient water for irrigation purposes. In addition, there are constraints in the landscape (electrical substation, Eskom infrastructure, canal and road), which make the expansion of the existing dam unfeasible. Thus, the existing dam needs to be decommissioned and the construction of a new farm dam and pump house is proposed, West of the existing dam. The proposed new farm dam will have a storage capacity of 22 000 m³, maximum dam wall height of 3.80 m and a footprint of 1.38 ha.

A logistical services area is proposed for construction on and around the location of the decommissioned dam, which will consist of *inter alia* an access road, loading area, storage sheds and an office measuring ~1.46 ha.

Water for irrigation purposes is proposed to be supplied to the new farm dam from the LSRWUA Canal system located North of the farm portion, using existing water use entitlements. Existing Eskom infrastructure located on this portion of the farm will be used to provide electricity to the proposed new pump house and logistical services area.

The decommissioning and construction will entail the following:

Decommissioning of an Existing Farm Dam and Construction of a Logistical Services Area

It is proposed the existing farm dam, with a storage capacity of 3 200 m³, a dam wall height of 2.2 m and a footprint of 0.42 ha is decommissioned as follows:

- Demolishing of the existing dam walls as well as the existing pumphouse and associated infrastructure
- Removal of demolition spoil material
- Surveying and levelling of the area and surrounds
- Construction of a logistical services area (access road, loading area, storage sheds and an office)

Construction of a New Farm Dam and Associated Infrastructure

It is proposed a new farm dam is constructed on a northwestern portion of the farm portion, in an area previously cultivated for citrus, which have subsequently been removed. The new dam is proposed to have a storage capacity of 22 000 m³, a dam wall height of 3.80 m and a footprint of 1.38 ha, and is constructed as follows:

- Preparation of the dam basin by removing any remaining vegetation and excavation of soil for the dam basin
- Delivery of soil for the dam wall
- Construction of the dam walls, spillway discharge channel, inlet and outlet
- Installation of a compacted clay liner to maintain impermeability
- Connection to the LSRWUA Canal system
- Construction of the pumphouse and connection to existing electrical infrastructure

ALTERNATIVES AND SITE SELECTION

A key component of the Basic 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
- Design alternatives
- Location alternatives
- Alternatives as identified by I&APs

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

OVERVIEW OF NEMA EIA REGULATIONS

In terms of the NEMA EIA Regulations 2014 (as amended), the project requires a Basic Assessment and Environmental Authorisation 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.

Table 1: Listed activities requiring Environmental Authorisation in terms of the NEMA EIA Regulations 2014 (as amended)

GN R327 (Listing Notice 1)	
Listed Activity/ies	Project Component
<p>31. <i>The closure of existing facilities, structures, or infrastructure for –</i></p> <p><i>(i) any development and related operation activity or activities listed in this Notice, Listing Notice 2 of 2014 or Listing Notice 3 of 2014</i></p>	<p>It is proposed the existing onsite farm dam (reservoir) and associated infrastructure will be decommissioned.</p> <p>This listed activity will require environmental authorisation</p>
GN R324 (Listing Notice 3)	
<p>2. <i>The development of reservoirs, excluding dams, with a capacity of more than 250 cubic metres.</i></p> <p>a. Eastern Cape</p> <p><i>ii. Outside urban areas, in:</i></p> <p><i>(ff) Areas within 10 kilometres from national parks or world heritage sites or 5 kilometres from any protected area identified in terms of NEMPAA or from the core area of a biosphere reserve;</i></p>	<p>The proposed new reservoir (farm dam) will have a storage capacity of more than 250 cubic metres.</p> <p>The farm under assessment is located in the Eastern Cape, outside of an urban area. The nearest boundary of the Addo Elephant National Park (AENP) is ~1.9 km North of the farm under assessment.</p> <p>This listed activity will require environmental authorisation</p>
<p>4. <i>The development of a road wider than 4 metres with a reserve less than 13,5 metres.</i></p> <p>a. Eastern Cape</p> <p><i>i. Outside urban areas:</i></p> <p><i>(gg) Areas within 10 kilometres from national parks or world heritage sites or 5 kilometres from any protected area identified in terms of NEMPAA or from the core area of a biosphere reserve...;</i></p>	<p>Access to the site and internal roads required will be determined through the assessment process.</p> <p>The applicability of this listed activity will be determined through the assessment process.</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 need for a Water Use License will be confirmed through the assessment process.

Stakeholders who have an interest in the impact of the development on heritage resources are hereby specifically invited to provide comments on the **Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA)** which forms part of this NEMA process.

OVERVIEW OF THE BA PROCESS AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

- Determine policies and legislation relevant to the activity.
- Identify and assess alternatives considered.
- Describe the need and desirability of the proposed alternatives and preferred alternative.
- 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 matrix identify the preferred alternative, identify measures to avoid, manage or mitigate impacts and the management as well as monitoring of residual risks.

The Basic Assessment Process needs to show the Competent Authority, DEDEAT (Sarah Baartman Region), and the project proponent, what the consequences of their choices will be in biophysical, social and economic terms. Public involvement forms an important component of this process, by assisting in the identification of issues and alternatives to be evaluated. The Basic Assessment process being implemented can be divided into the following phases namely:

- **Pre-Application Phase (Current Phase)**
 - Notice to DEDEAT of the intention to commence with the Basic Assessment Process.
 - Specialist Studies and Assessment of Impacts
 - Project Announcement, Registration and Comment Period (30-days) (WE ARE HERE)
- **Application Form and Draft Basic Assessment Report Phase**
 - Submission of the Application Form to DEDEAT
 - Draft Basic Assessment Report Review and Comment Period (30-days)
- **Final Basic Assessment Report Phase**
 - Submission of Final Basic Assessment Report to DEDEAT
- **Decision Making and Appeal Phase**
 - Notice to I&APs of decision 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 will commence in parallel to the Application Phase. The following specialist studies are proposed to be undertaken for this assessment:

- Terrestrial Biodiversity Compliance Statement
- Aquatic Biodiversity Compliance Statement
- Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment
- Palaeontological Impact Assessment
- Visual Specialist Compliance Statement
- Traffic Impact Assessment
- Civil Services Report

PHASE 1: PRE-APPLICATION PHASE (CURRENT PHASE)

Project Announcement, Registration and Comment Period (30-days)

The first stage in the process entails notification to DEDEAT, as well as I&APs, of the intention to proceed with the Basic Assessment Process. I&APs proactively identified prior to the commencement of the assessment process are provided with a Background Information Document (BID) on the project, a Locality Map and Comment Form. Project information for the various stages of the Assessment will be made available on the project website www.publicprocess.co.za. An advertisement will be placed in one local newspaper and a site notice board will be placed on the farm. I&APs are required to register their interest on the project database and submit comments of concern within the 30-day registration and comment period provided, which extends from **5 May 2026 to 3 June 2026**. Comments submitted during this period will be included and responded to the Draft Basic Assessment Report. Specialist studies will commence in line with this phase of the Basic Assessment process.

PHASE 2: APPLICATION FORM AND DRAFT BASIC ASSESSMENT REPORT PHASE

Application Form Submission

An Application Form for Environmental Authorisation will be compiled for submission to DEDEAT for their review and registration and prior to the commencement of the comment period for the Draft Basic Assessment Report.

Draft Basic Assessment Report (BAR) Review (30-days)

Upon registration of the Application Form by DEDEAT, the Draft BAR will be released for a minimum, legislated **30-day comment and review period**, which will include comments received from I&APs during the Pre-Application Phase. All registered I&APs on the project database will be notified via email, or in the manner best indicated for communication, of the opportunity to comment. In order to assist I&APs with their understanding of the project and to facilitate the receipt of comments for inclusion in the Final Basic Assessment Report (Final BAR), I&APs will be provided with an Executive Summary of the Draft BAR, as well as a Comment Form. Copies of the report will be made available on the project website: www.publicprocess.co.za.

PHASE 3: FINAL BASIC ASSESSMENT REPORT PHASE

The Final BAR, including comments received during the Draft BAR review period, will be compiled for submission to the Competent Authority, DEDEAT (Sarah Baartman Region) for their decision-making. 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 BA Report, inclusive of specialist studies, which have been subjected to a 30-day Public Participation Process. All I&APs on the project database will be notified via email of the submission of the Final BAR.

PHASE 4: DECISION MAKING AND APPEAL PHASE

The Competent Authority, DEDEAT, must, within 107 days of receipt of the Final BAR, 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 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?

Should you wish to register your interest on the project database or raise issues of concern, you are required to respond to this notification:

- By emailing a comment form to the consultant indicated below, indicating your interest in the project and/or concern.
- Raise issues of concern for consideration in the assessment process and within the timeframes provided for commenting.
- By registering your interest in the project, you will be kept informed of the process and will be notified of any opportunities to comment.
- By reviewing the project information and submitting any comments/issues within the specified comment period.

If at any stage your contact details change, it is essential you notify the EAP of such changes to continue receiving information regarding this assessment process.

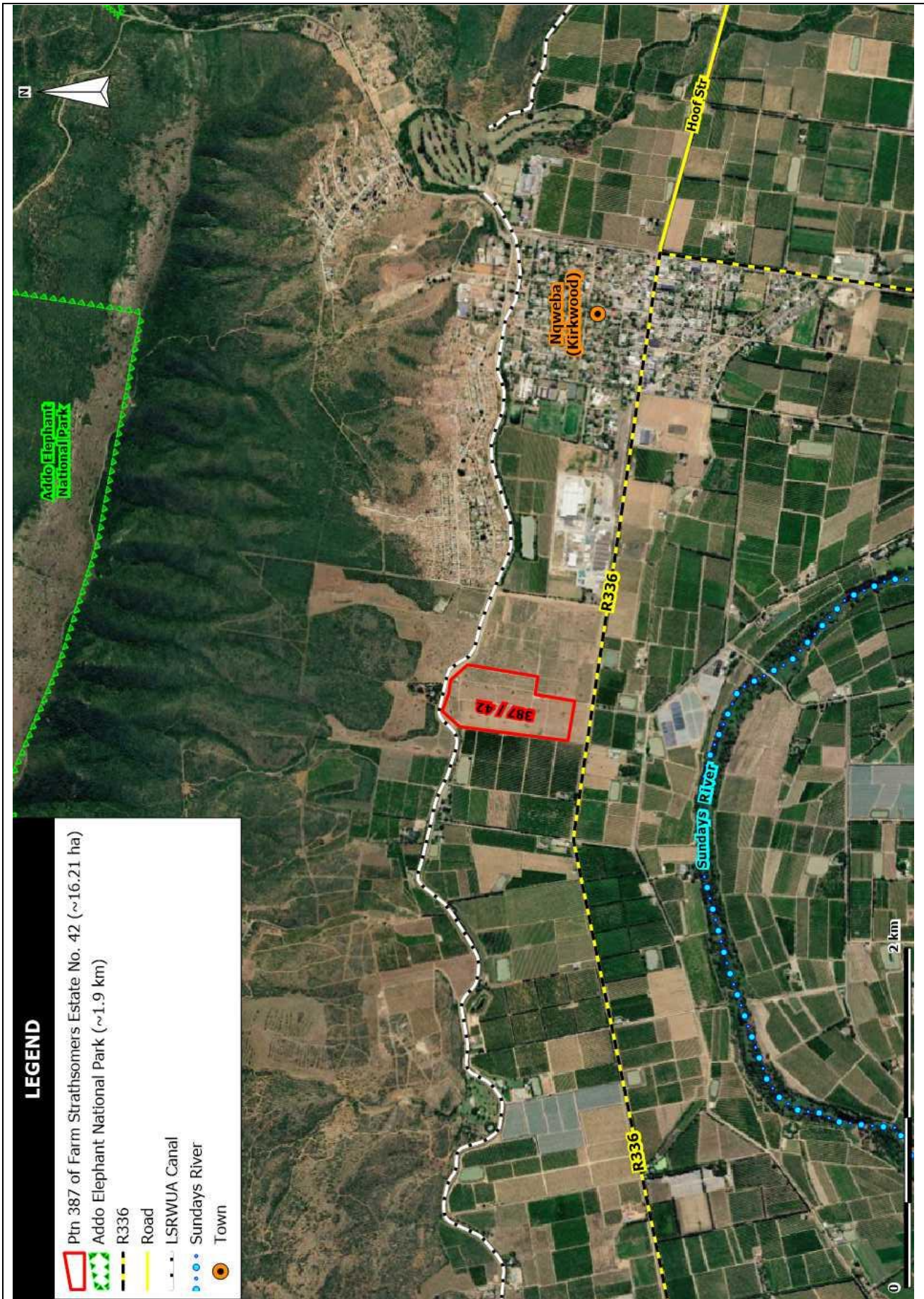
Compliance with the Protection of Personal Information Act 4 of 2013

As required by Regulation 42 of the NEMA EIA Regulations, 2014 (as amended), and the National Appeals Regulations, 2025, as a registered I&AP your contact information (e.g., name, phone number, email and postal address) will be placed on a database for the duration of the Basic Assessment Process, which must be submitted to the Competent Authority, DEDEAT (Sarah Baartman Region). Should you submit a comment during this assessment process, your full name, organisation and comment raised will be included in the reports released into the public domain. If you object to any of your contact information being released into the public domain, ***such objection must be highlighted in bold as part of the comment submitted***. Should you not remove your name from the database, this will be viewed as consent to provide your contact information.

WHO SHOULD YOU CONTACT TO REGISTER YOUR INTEREST OR SUBMIT A COMMENT?

Sandra Wren, Public Process Consultants, Phone: 041-374 8426 or Email: sandy@publicprocess.co.za

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



Locality Map of Portion 387 of Farm Strathsomers Estate No. 42 (Rebelsvlei), in relation to major roads, towns, and watercourses in the Sundays River Valley Municipality.