

Background Information Document

Basic Assessment for the Proposed Development of Packhouse facilities on Portion 70 of the Farm Commando Kraal Estate, No. 113, Addo, Sundays River Valley Municipality, Eastern Cape

29 March 2021

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Purpose of the Background Information Document

The purpose of this Background Information Document (BID) is to provide stakeholders with the opportunity to register as interested and affected parties in the environmental assessment process and to obtain their initial comments on the proposed development of Packhouse facilities on Portions 70 of the Farm Commando Kraal Estate, No. 113, Addo, Sundays River Valley Municipality.

The purpose of the environmental assessment is to identify potential impacts associated with the proposed project and to recommend measures to avoid or reduce adverse impacts and enhance beneficial or positive impacts.

The environmental decision making authority is the Provincial Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEDEAT) in accordance with the Regulations published in Terms of Chapter 5 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998.

If you would like to participate in the process please register yourself and or your organization as an interested and affected party. Submit issues that you feel need to be addressed in the assessment by completing the response form or in a letter or by email to:

**Dr Mike Cohen / Irma van der Merwe
CEN IEM Unit
36 River Road
Walmer
Port Elizabeth
6070**

steenbok@aerosat.co.za / irma@environmentcen.co.za

All comments must be submitted within 30 days of the date of this notice. Comments must be received by 3 May 2021.

Date of Notice – 29 March 2021

1. Proposed Project

1.1 Proposed Project Description

CEN Integrated Environmental Management Unit has been appointed by the Sundays River Citrus Company (Pty) Ltd (SRCC) to undertake the necessary environmental assessments for the proposed development of Packhouse facilities on Portion 70 of the Farm Commando Kraal Estate, No. 113, Addo, Sundays River Valley Municipality.

The Sundays River Citrus Company (Pty) Ltd (SRCC) is a citrus packing and marketing company established in 1924.

The SRCC proposes to expand the Hermitage facilities. New packhouse facilities will be developed on Portion 70 of Farm No. 113 immediately adjacent to the existing Hermitage operations.

The proposed activity entails:

- Construction of two new fruit packhouses and infrastructure on Portion 70;
- Construction of internal roads and associated loading areas;

The SRCC (Pty) Ltd. will be applying for an Environmental Authorisation for the proposed phased development of the Packhouse facilities on Portion 70 of the Farm Commando Kraal Estate, No. 113, in terms of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014, published in Government Notice R.982 of 4 December 2014. This application will be done in terms of activities listed in Government Notice Regulation (GNR) 324 and 327, published in terms of Section 24(5) of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No 107 of 1998) as amended. The proposed activities require that a Basic Assessment Report (BAR) be submitted to the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEDEAT).

1.2 Locality

The proposed site is situated east of the R336, approximately 3.5 km north-west of the town of Addo, Eastern Cape. The site falls outside an urban area, and within the jurisdiction of the Sundays River Valley Municipality.

The property on which the proposed development will take place is Portion 70, of the Farm Commando Kraal Estate, No. 113.



Figure 1: Locality of the Hermitage Packhouse Facility

1. Environmental Assessment Process

2.1 Identified Listed Activities in Terms of the EIA Regulations

The Minister of Environmental Affairs has in terms of sections 24 and 24D of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998, NEMA), listed the activities that require an environmental assessment.

In terms of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014, made under section 24(5) and 44 of the National Environmental Act and published in Government Notice No. R. 38282 of 2014 the following activities require to be subjected to an assessment.

Listed activity	Description
<p>Listing Notice 3: GNR 324 Activity 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>(ee) in 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 of 5km from any other protected area identified,</p>	<p>The development entails the construction of internal roads, wider than 4 metres.</p> <p>The site area is situated outside an urban area within an Ecological Support Area as identified by the Eastern Cape Biodiversity Conservation Plan (ECBCP) and within 5km of the National Addo Elephant Park.</p>

excluding disturbed areas.	
<p>Listing Notice 3: GNR 324 Activity 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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Eastern Cape ii. Within critical biodiversity areas identified in bioregional plans. 	<p>The development entails vegetation clearance of more than 300 square metres.</p> <p>The site area is situated outside an urban area within an Ecological Support Area as identified by the Eastern Cape Biodiversity Conservation Plan (ECBCP), as well as a critically threatened ecosystem.</p>
<p>Listing Notice 3: GNR 324 Activity 15: The transformation of land bigger than 1000 square metres in size, to residential, retail, commercial, industrial or institutional use, where, such land was zoned open space, conservation or had an equivalent zoning, on or after 02 August 2010.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Eastern Cape i. Outside urban areas 	<p>The property is larger than 1 000 square metres in extent.</p>
<p>Listing Notice 1: GNR 327 Activity 8: The development and related operation of hatcheries or agri-industrial facilities outside industrial complexes where the development footprint covers an area of 2 000 square metres or more.</p>	<p>The development footprint of the proposed development exceeds 2 000 square metres.</p>
<p>Listing Notice 1: GNR 327 Activity 27: The clearance of an area of 1 hectares or more, but less than 20 hectares of indigenous vegetation, except where such clearance of indigenous vegetation is required for-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) The undertaking of a linear activity; or (ii) Maintenance purposes undertaken in accordance with a maintenance management plan. 	<p>The proposed development entails vegetation clearance of more than 1 hectares.</p> <p>The site area is situated outside an urban area within an Ecological Support Area as identified by the Eastern Cape Biodiversity Conservation Plan (ECBCP, 2019).</p>

2. Basic Assessment Process

The Basic Assessment Process identifies and assesses potential impacts, then provides mitigation measures to reduce the anticipated negative impacts. Appropriate public participation process is undertaken as part of this process. The Basic Assessment ends with recommendations for authorisation and under what conditions.

3.1 Some Identified Potential Issues/Impacts

Potential beneficial and adverse impacts will be identified as the environmental investigation progresses. All identified issues will be subjected to an assessment in order to determine its significance and whether additional investigation will be required. The following issues have been identified during a preliminary investigation.

- Soil erosion
- Biodiversity Impacts
- Socio-economic impacts
- Loss of agricultural lands

3.2 Description of Tasks in Basic Assessment Process

- Notification of the intended application for Environmental Authorisation is sent to identified stakeholders, landowners and adjacent landowners prior to submission of the application for Environmental Authorisation to the competent authority, namely the DEDEAT for this project.
- An application for Environmental Authorisation is submitted to the competent authority.
- Public participation starts announcing the proposed project. Newspaper advertisements are placed and site notices are placed. Registration of IAPs begins.
- Background information documents are also sent to identified stakeholders and registered IAPs
- A Basic Assessment Report is compiled that considers inputs from stakeholders, IAPs and specialists, in terms of:
 - Potential impacts of the activity on the environment;
 - Whether the impacts can be mitigated, and if so to what extent; and,
 - Whether there are any other significant issues/impacts to be investigated.
- Once the Basic Assessment Report is compiled, it is then submitted for a 30 day review period to registered IAPs and stakeholders. This enables you to comment on the Basic Assessment Report and accompanying Environmental Management Programme.
- Your comments are incorporated and the reports are then finalised.
- These final reports are submitted to the DEDEAT for consideration.
- The DEDEAT reviews the documents and decides whether the project can proceed or not, their decision is known as an Environmental Authorisation.
- A copy of the EA is made available to you to consider, along with the reasons for the decision made. If you disagree with the decision, you are provided with information on how to lodge an appeal.

3.3 How do You Participate

Every proposed project and/or development has the potential to significantly affect the natural and social environments, both at, as well as surrounding the proposed

development site. While some of the impacts will have an adverse impact on the environment others will have a beneficial impact.

For this reason it is imperative that you as an interested and/or affected party (I&AP) comment on the proposed development and raise issues or concerns that you feel need to be considered during the proposed planning and implementation process.

This can be done by completing the attached registration form and submitting it to the contact details below. All of your comments will be addressed and included in the Basic Assessment Report.

Upon submission of the registration form to CEN IEM Unit, you will be registered as an I&AP, and be included on an I&APs database which will ensure that you receive future project information.

Please provide comments on the BID within 30 days of its distribution. Comments must be received by 3rd May 2021

Registered IAPs will also be given 30 days to review the Basic Assessment Report and provide comments.

