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BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

Environmental Scoping Assessment and Environmental Management Plan for the Refurbishment and Operations of the Midgard Country Estate

1. Introduction

Geo Pollution Technologies (Pty) Ltd (GPT), was appointed by O&L Leisure (Pty) Ltd to undertake an environmental assessment for the proposed refurbishment and continued operations of Midgard Country Estate, on farm Midgard (FMJ/00191), in the Otjozondjupa Region. Midgard Country Estate was established in 1993 and has since then operated in the Namibian hospitality industry. O&L Leisure intends to refurbish the facility by constructing more guest accommodation and refurbishing various components of the estate. This will ensure that Midgard Country Estate remains competitive in the hospitality industry by providing high quality services to tourists and guests. The environmental assessment will include all activities associated with the refurbishment and continued operations of the facility.

An environmental clearance certificate (ECC) for the proposed refurbishment and operational activities is required as per the Environmental Management Act No. 7 of 2007 (EMA). A scoping environmental assessment report (SR) and an environmental management plan (EMP) will be submitted to the Ministry of Environment and Tourism's Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) in support of an application for an ECC.

2. The purpose of this document

With this background information document (BID), GPT aims to provide interested and affected parties (IAPs) with information about the project and interact with them regarding it. IAPs are therefore invited to register with GPT in order to:

- ♦ Provide GPT with additional information which should be taken into account in the assessment of impacts;
- ♦ Share any comments, issues or concerns related to the project; and
- ♦ Review and comment on the reports (SR and an EMP).

3. Project Description

Activities associated with the project have been divided into the following phases: Planning,

construction, operational and the decommissioning phase. A brief outline of expected activities for each phase is detailed below.

3.1 Planning Phase

While planning for construction, operations, and decommissioning of the proposed facility, it is the responsibility of the proponent to ensure they are, and remain, compliant with all legal requirements. The proponent must also ensure that all required management measures are in place prior to and during all phases, to ensure potential impacts and risks are minimised. Typical planning activities include:

- ♦ Obtain all applicable permits and approvals from local and national authorities.
- ♦ Ensure correct location zoning, subdivision and provision for proposed operations on the site if applicable.
- ♦ Make provisions to have a Health, Safety and Environmental Coordinator to implement the EMP.
- ♦ Ensure adequate provisions for a fund to cater for rectification of any environmental incidents and pollution as well as ecological restoration, if ever required
- ♦ Ensure all appointed contractors and employees are entered into an agreement which includes the EMP.
- ♦ Establish and / or maintain a reporting system to report on aspects of construction, operations and decommissioning, as outlined in the EMP, and required by the DEA.

3.2 Construction Phase

Construction activities include the decommissioning of selected infrastructure, the construction of new buildings, and the refurbishment of existing buildings and facilities. Some of the existing buildings, like the car museum, will be relocated to make way for additional guest rooms. Others, like the restaurant, will be refurbished and continued to be used for their current purposes. Once the complete refurbishment of Midgard Country Estate is complete, regular maintenance will be performed that may include minor construction activities and repairs to infrastructure.

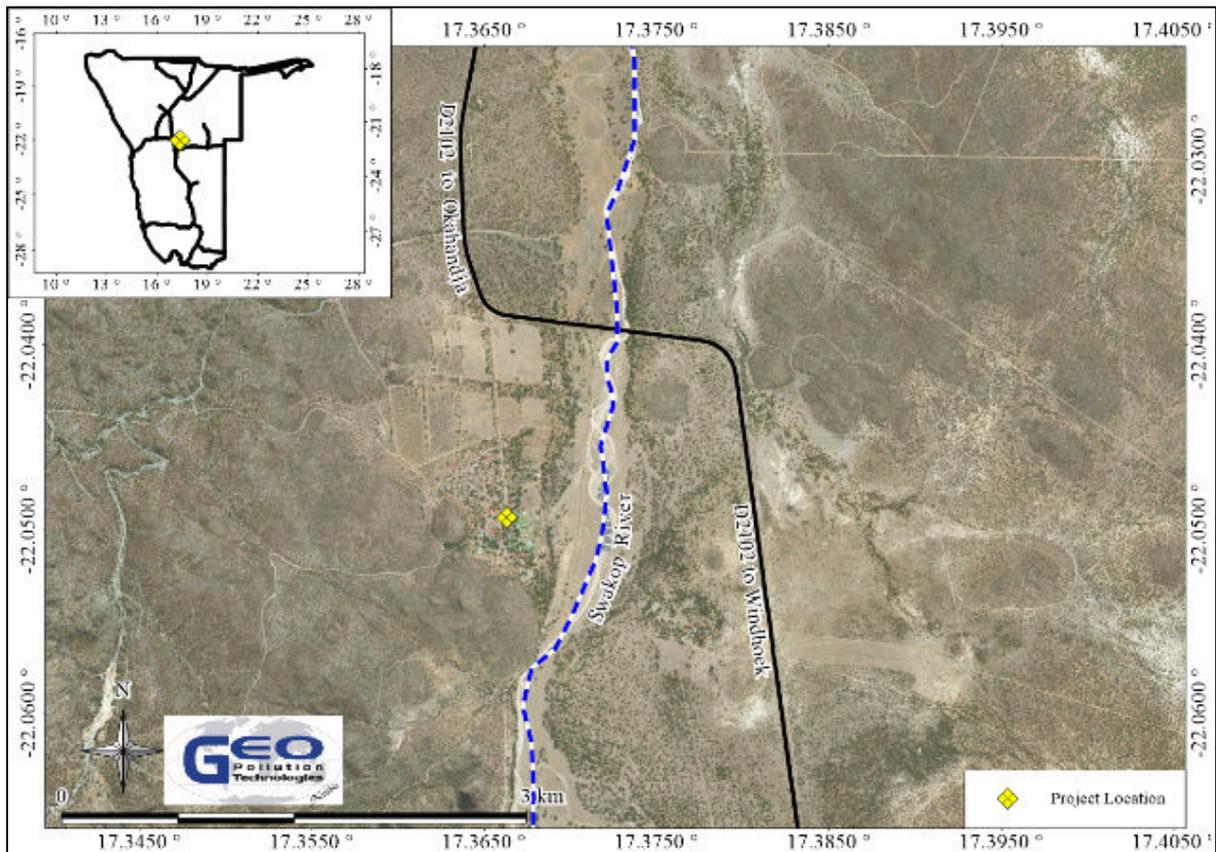


Figure 1: Proposed Location of Project

3.3 Operational Phase

Operational activities of Midgard Country Estate are typical of similar establishments in the hospitality industry. It involves, among others, tasks such as booking of guests, ordering food, beverages and cleaning materials, guest reception, preparation of food, cleaning and laundry services, garden and grounds maintenance, and various office related activities. Operational activities are performed by a staff complement that includes skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled labour. The majority of the employees are required to have some training or experience in the hospitality industry.

3.4 Decommissioning Phase

Decommissioning of the entire estate is not foreseen during the validity of the ECC. However, decommissioning of some components may occur and as such will be assessed. Decommissioning will entail possible removal of infrastructure including buildings and underground infrastructure. Should decommissioning occur at any stage, rehabilitation of the area may be required. Any pollution present on the site must then be remediated.

4. Preliminary Identified Impacts

During the environmental assessment, all components of the environment will be considered. However, only those components which will experience significant impacts, or are deemed to be sensitive, will be assessed. Impacts may include the following:

- ◆ Health and safety risks
- ◆ Fire risk
- ◆ Groundwater, surface water and soil contamination
- ◆ Dust generation
- ◆ Noise
- ◆ Waste generation
- ◆ Ecosystem and biodiversity impacts
- ◆ Impacts related to the local demographic profile and community health
- ◆ Socio-economic contributions

5. Getting Involved

Stakeholder and public engagement form an important part of the environmental assessment process. GPT invites all IAPs to provide in writing, any issues, concerns and input regarding the project. This correspondence must include:

- ◆ Name and surname
- ◆ Organization represented or private interest
- ◆ Position in the organization
- ◆ Contact details
- ◆ Any direct business, financial, personal or other interest which you may have in the approval or refusal of the application.

All contributions become public knowledge and will be circulated along with the reports as per the EMA requirements. It will also be submitted to the DEA, along with how any issues have been addressed in the SR.

The public participation process will remain ongoing during the environmental assessment. However, all comments and concerns should be provided to GPT to ensure incorporation into the final report. All correspondence must be submitted to GPT by 11 March 2020 to ensure it is included and considered in the assessment.

For more information, or to register as an IAP and provide input, the project team may be contacted on the contact details below.



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Your Rights as an IAP according to the Environmental Management Act, No7 of 2007, Government Notice No 30 (Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations)

Section 23.

(1) A registered interested or affected party is entitled to comment in writing, on all written submissions made to the Environmental Commissioner by the applicant responsible for the application, and to bring to the attention of the Environmental Commissioner any issues which that party, believes may be of significance to the consideration of the application, as long as -

(a) comments are submitted within 7 days of notification of an application or receiving access to a scoping report or an assessment report;

(b) the interested and affected party discloses any direct business, financial, personal or other interest which that party may have in the approval or refusal of the application.

(2) Before the applicant submits a report compiled in terms of these regulations to the Environmental Commissioner, the applicant must give registered interested and affected parties access to, and an opportunity to comment in writing on the report.

(3) Reports referred to in sub regulation (2) include -

(a) scoping reports;

(b) scoping reports amended and resubmitted;

(c) assessment reports; and

(d) assessment reports amended and resubmitted.

(4) Any written comments received by the applicant from a registered interested or affected party must accompany the report when the report is submitted to the Environmental Commissioner.

(5) A registered interested or affected party may comment on any final report that is submitted by a specialist reviewer for the purposes of these regulations where the report contains substantive information which has not previously been made available to a registered interested or affected party.

Section 24:

The applicant responsible for an application must ensure that the comments of interested and affected parties are recorded in reports submitted to the Environmental Commissioner in terms of these regulations, and comments by interested and affected parties on a report which is to be submitted to the Environmental Commissioner may be attached to the report without recording those comments in the report itself.