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BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND CONSTRUCTION OF A TOURISM AND HUNTING LODGE ON FARM WALDBURG NO. 82, KHOMAS REGION, NAMIBIA.

PREPARED FOR

GMUNDNER HOTELS (PTY) LTD

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ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE CONSULTANCY CC/2013/11404
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1 PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

The purpose of this Background Information Document (BID) is to provide Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) background to the proposed project and to invite I&APs to register as part of the Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) process.

The proponent, Gmundner Hotels (Pty) Ltd proposes to develop farm Waldburg No. 82 within the Khomas Region, Namibia into a tourism and hunting lodge. This will include necessary renovations to existing infrastructure and the construction of new buildings and associated infrastructure.

Through registering for the project, all I&APs will be kept informed throughout the ESIA process, and a platform for participation will be provided to submit comments/ recommendations pertaining to the project.

This BID includes the following information:

- The proposed project and location;
- The necessity of the project, potential benefits or adverse impacts anticipated;
- The alternatives to the project that have been considered and assessed;
- How the ESIA process works;
- The public participation process and how to become involved; and
- The way forward.

2 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED PROJECT

2.1 BRIEF INTRODUCTION

Environmental Compliance Consultancy (ECC) has been engaged by the proponent to undertake an ESIA and develop an Environmental Management Plan (EMP) in terms of the Environmental Management Act, 2007 and its regulations. An environmental clearance application will be submitted to the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) for the project, which is the relevant authority to make a Record of Decision (RoD) with regards to the proposed project.

2.2 LOCATION

Farm Waldburg No. 82 is located to the Southeast of Windhoek next to the C23 road. It can be accessed from Windhoek by driving along the B6 road (en route to the Hosea Kutako International Airport) and turning onto the C23 road, the farm is situated to the left of the road approximately 30 km before Dordabis. The location is shown in Figure 1.

2.3 WHAT IS PROPOSED

The proponent proposes to develop a tourism and hunting lodge approximately 30 km from Dordabis on Farm Waldburg No. 82 in the Khomas Region, Namibia. The development involves the construction of 12 accommodation units (with a core area), a staff village, stables, airfield, solar plant, activities area, greenhouses, renovations to the current hunter's house and the construction of a new game fence around the farm.

All work will fall within the boundaries of farm Waldburg No. 82. Most of the construction and renovations will be at Site A, which is the proposed site for the lodge and Site B where the old hunters' house is situated.

2.4 WHY IS THE PROJECT NEEDED

Namibia is a tourism destination for people around the world due to various unique and popular features, attractions and sites across the country. The tourism and hunting industries are both big contributors to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Namibia and plays an important part with regards to socio-economics and conservation within the country.

With the current COVID-19 pandemic these two sectors suffered greatly due to border closures around the globe. Since early 2021 more and more countries gradually started to reopen their borders for international travel which helped to reduce a bit of pressure on these sectors in Namibia.

Thus, new tourism and hunting projects will be beneficial in the sense that it attracts tourists and hunters to the country and will also result in the creation of employment opportunities (this project will create approximately 186 jobs during the construction phase of the project and approximately 54 jobs during the operational phase of the project).

2.5 CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATIONAL PHASES

The following are envisioned during the proposed project:

- Construction at Site A will include:
  - 12 accommodation units with a core area (consisting of the following: restaurant, SPA, gym, pool, sauna, lounge, dining area, shop, public bathrooms, staff bathrooms, offices, laundry and storerooms);
  - Tennis court;
  - A solar system with a battery room (for peak demand of 512kWh); and
  - A lodge water reservoir;

- Construction at Site B will include:
  - Renovations of the hunters' house;
  - Two staff villages;
  - Two storage sheds;
  - Butchery; and
  - Borehole reservoir.

- Other construction will include:
  - Airfield with a helicopter hanger;
  - Activities area (will include the following activities: bow shooting, clay pigeon shooting, target shooting, hiking, horse riding, e-cross biking, e-cycling);
  - Five pipelines are proposed (one from supply borehole 1 and 2 to the borehole reservoir, one from borehole 3 to the lodge reservoir, one from borehole 3 to the tanks at the activities area and the other from the borehole reservoir to the site A reservoir).
  - A game fence around the farm;
  - Wastewater collection and treatment system;
  - Full sewage treatment system;
  - Stables; and
  - Greenhouses (with drip feed system).

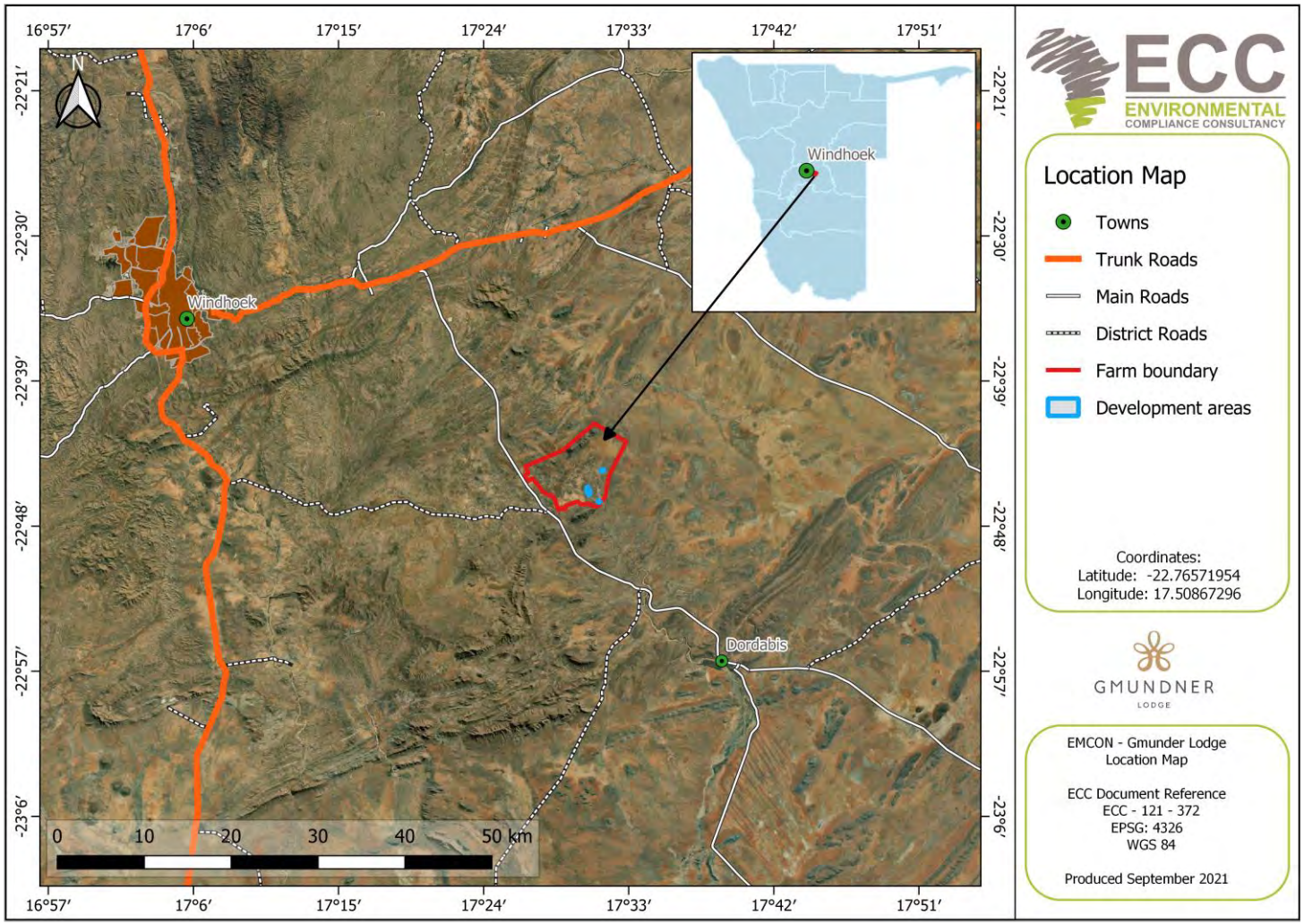

FIGURE 1 – LOCATION MAP OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

2.6 Potential Impacts of the Project

2.6.1 Socio-economic

The potential social impacts are anticipated to be of low significance, and those that may transpire shall be confined within the farm boundaries and neighbouring farms, these potential impacts may include the following:

- Potential to unearth, damage or destroy undiscovered heritage remains;
- Health and Safety on the farm with regards to firearms being used;
- Noise generation by hunting rifles;
- Minor disruption to the residents of neighbouring farms, including some potential increase in noise levels as a result of the use of aircraft (Helicopter and small planes) on the property;
- Jobs will be created as a result of the project; and
- There will be anticipated economic benefits on a regional and national scale.

2.6.2 Environmental

Some of the potential environmental impacts are anticipated to be of minor significance, and those that may occur shall be contained within the farm boundaries, these potential minor impacts may include the following:

- Minor risk of spillage of hydrocarbons from diesel tank may, that may potentially lead to localised ground contamination; this aspect will be controlled at all times.
- Potentially localised lowering of groundwater levels; and
- Potential erosion within cleared areas;

There may also be impacts of a more significant nature that may require further investigation during the ESIA process. The impacts proposed at this stage include, but are not limited to:

- Vegetation clearing with regards to all proposed construction on the farm;
- Groundwater usage for the lodge area, hunting activities and greenhouses, with the potential lowering of groundwater levels over a wider area;
- Potential mismanagement of game numbers and genetic make-up of game on the property;
- Lead poisoning (i.e. scavengers/predators could be impacted by lead used in ammunition);
- Impacts to biodiversity with regards to aircrafts landing and vehicles driving in the field; and
- Tourism and hunting activities may have impacts on birds during breeding/nesting periods.

3 CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVES

Best practice environmental assessment methodology calls for consideration and assessment of alternatives to a proposed project.

The proponent is the owner of farm Waldburg No. 82 Renovations to existing structures (Hunters house) and the lodge construction have already started. Thus, no locality alternatives have been considered for the proposed project.

During the ESIA assessment, alternatives will take the form of consideration of optimisation and using eco-friendly solutions to reduce potential impacts e.g., lead-free ammunition, natural trails for horseback riding, renewable energy, water recycling etc.

4 THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS

This ESIA, conducted by ECC, is undertaken in terms of the Environmental Management Act, 2007 and its regulations. The process followed in this ESIA is set out in the flowchart in Figure 2.

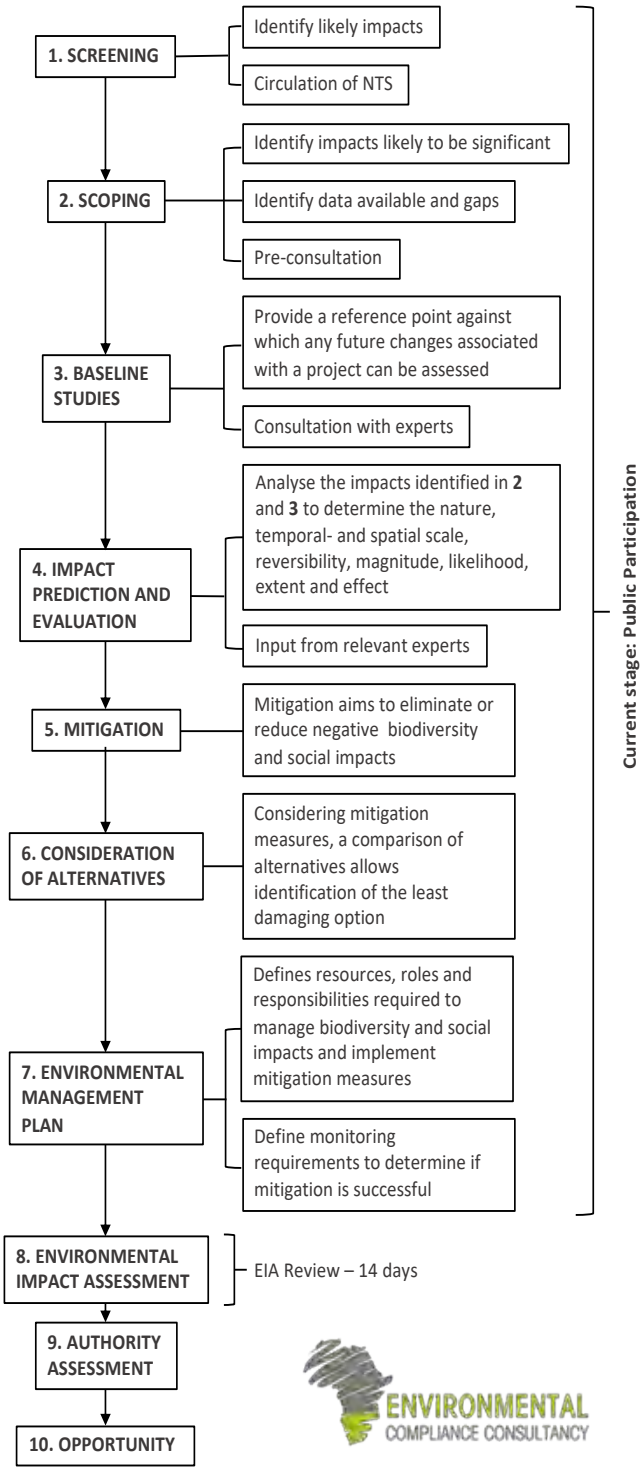

FIGURE 2 - FLOWCHART OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS

4.1 SCREENING

A review of the proposed project's screening findings against the listed activities was conducted; the findings of which are summarised below.

ENERGY GENERATION, TRANSMISSION AND STORAGE ACTIVITIES

(1.a) The construction of facilities for the generation of electricity;

(1.b) The construction of facilities for the transmission and supply of electricity;

- A Solar plant and battery room will be constructed for the Lodge site (site A) and will cater for a peak demand of 512kWh.
- The manager's house (site B) will be supplied with Nampower's Single Wire Earth Return (SWER) line already extending onto the site. The line is to be upgraded from 32 KVA to 64 KVA by the client as approved by Nampower.

WASTE MANAGEMENT, TREATMENT, HANDLING AND DISPOSAL ACTIVITIES

(2.1) The construction of facilities for waste sites, treatment of waste and disposal of waste.

(2.3) The import, processing, use and recycling, temporary storage, transit or export of waste.

- Septic tanks are installed for the construction workers on-site and will be emptied and removed after construction.
- A full sewage treatment system will be installed on-site for the operational phase.
- Plastic waste will be removed by rent-a-drum via the Molok system.
- Waste generated on-site, including construction waste will be removed from the site and disposed of at the Kupferberg landfill site.

FORESTRY ACTIVITIES

(4.) The clearance of forest areas, deforestation, aforestation, timber harvesting or any other related activity that requires authorisation in term of the Forest Act, 2001 (Act No. 12 of 2001) or any other law.

- Construction of the lodge and renovations of existing buildings have already commenced at site A. Thus, vegetation has been cleared for these areas.
- Vegetation will be cleared for the construction of the airfield, lodge infrastructure, solar plant, stables and activities areas.

LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

(5.3) Construction of veterinary protected area or game proof and international boundary fences.

- A game fence will be constructed around the entire farm, Waldburg No 82.

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

(6.) The construction of resorts, lodges, hotels or other tourism and hospitality facilities.

- The construction of 12 accommodation units, with a core area, will consist of both hard construction and canvas structures.
- Construction of staff villages.

- The activities area and stables will be constructed.
- A Tennis court will be constructed at site A.

WATER RESOURCE DEVELOPMENTS

(8.1) The abstraction of ground or surface water for industrial or commercial purposes.

- Water will be sourced from 3 existing boreholes with a demand of 5 m^3 for site A and 9 m^3 for site B per day.

(8.5) Construction of dams, reservoirs, levees and weirs.

- Two reservoirs are proposed, one at site A and the other near the two supply boreholes.

(8.6) Construction of industrial and domestic wastewater treatment plants and related pipeline systems.

- Two 5000 litre tanks are also proposed to be installed near the activities area.
- The waste treatment system will be constructed to treat water to an acceptable (useable) greywater standard.

HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE TREATMENT, HANDLING AND STORAGE

(9.1) The manufacturing, storage, handling or processing of a hazardous substance defined in the Hazardous Substances Ordinance, 1974.

(9.2) Any process or activity which requires a permit, licence or other forms of authorisation, or the modification of or changes to existing facilities for any process or activity which requires an amendment of an existing permit, licence or authorisation or which requires a new permit, licence or authorisation in terms of a law governing the generation or release of emissions, pollution, effluent or waste.

- An 8000-litre diesel tank is installed on-site, already certified by the previous owner.

INFRASTRUCTURE

(10.1) (a) Oil, water, gas and petrochemical and other bulk supply pipelines;

- Five water supply pipelines are proposed which will run from the boreholes to the proposed reservoirs and water tanks.

(10.1) (d) Airports and airfields;

- An airfield will be constructed on farm Waldburg and will be approximately 1.5 km in length and 18 meters wide.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

(11.2) Construction of cemeteries, camping, leisure and recreation sites.

- An activities centre is proposed to be constructed on the farm and will include activities such as bow shooting, clay pigeon shooting, target shooting, hiking, horse riding, e-cross biking and e-cycling.

4.2 SCOPING

Due to the nature of the proposed project, and the implementation of industry best practice mitigation measures during the development, construction and operational phases, the effects on the environment and

society are expected to be low to moderate and will be limited within the farm boundaries, with an exception to the potential impacts from aircrafts and groundwater levels.

4.3 Baseline Studies

For the proposed project, baseline information was obtained through a desk-based study by focusing on the environmental receptors that could be affected by the proposed project. ECC will also engage with stakeholders, I&APs and the proponents to seek input into the assessment, and should it be required specialist studies will be initiated.

4.4 Impact Assessment

Impacts will be assessed using the ECC ESIA methodology. The ESIA will be conducted in terms of the Environmental Management Act, 2007 and its regulations. ECC's methodology for impact assessments was developed using IFC standards in particular Performance Standard 1 'Assessment and management of environmental and social risks and impacts' (IFC 2012, 2017) and Namibian Draft Procedures and Guidance for ESIA and EMP (GRN, 2008) including international and national best practice with over 25 years of combined ESIA experience.

4.5 Environmental Management Plan

An EMP shall be developed for the proposed project setting out auditable management actions for Gmundner Hotels (Pty) Ltd to ensure careful and sustainable management measures are implemented for their activities in respect of the surrounding environment and community.

4.6 Public Participation and Advertising

Public participation is an important part of the ESIA process; it allows the public and other stakeholders to raise concerns or provide valuable local environmental knowledge that can benefit the assessment, in addition, it can aid the design process. This project is currently at the scoping phase and public participation phase.

At this phase ECC will perform the following:

- Identify key stakeholders, authorities, municipalities, environmental groups and interested or affected members of the public, hereafter referred to as I&APs
- Distribute the BID for the proposed project (this document)
- Advertise the environmental application in two national newspapers
- Place notices on-site at or near the boundary
- If required host a public meeting to encourage stakeholder participation and engagement, and provide details of issues identified by the environmental practitioner, stakeholders and I&APs
- Record all comments of I&APs and present such comments, as well as responses provided by ECC, in the comments and responses report, which will be included in the scoping report that shall be submitted with the application, and
- Circulate I&AP comments to the project team for consideration of project design.

Comments must be submitted in writing and can be emailed using the details in the "contact us" section below.

CONTACT US

We welcome any enquiries regarding this document and its content. Please contact:

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