

Background information document

INTRODUCTION

Century Property Developments (Pty) Ltd has submitted an application for the amendment of an Environmental Authorisation (EA). The EA was issued in 2009 for the development of a mixed use township catering for a range of uses including residential (including retirement units and low to high density units), retail, commercial, industrial, offices, educational, open spaces and parks development. The intention is to cater for uses commensurate with the new focus of the project- an industrial and commercial precinct accommodating the SMME incubator programme and related uses.

SITE AND PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The application site is approximately 200 hectares in extent. It is located along the R511 about 4km south of the R28/R511 interchange. The areas to the South West and North of the property are being developed for housing. The surrounding properties are mainly used for residential purposes or are vacant.

Large portions of the site had historically been used for both chicken and cattle farming. The terrain features two ridges both running in an east-west direction. In the northern part of the site the one hill drops towards two tributaries, one being the Diepsloot, a tributary of the Jukskei River. The second hill runs along the southern boundary of the farm with a small area draining in a southerly direction.

In terms of the City of Johannesburg Spatial Development Framework, the site currently falls within the Medium Priority area identified as the Expansion Area. Specifically, it forms part of the Residential and nodal components to the east of the R511 (William Nicol) that integrate Diepsloot into the urban system and provide a range of residential and supporting land uses for Diepsloot and surrounds.



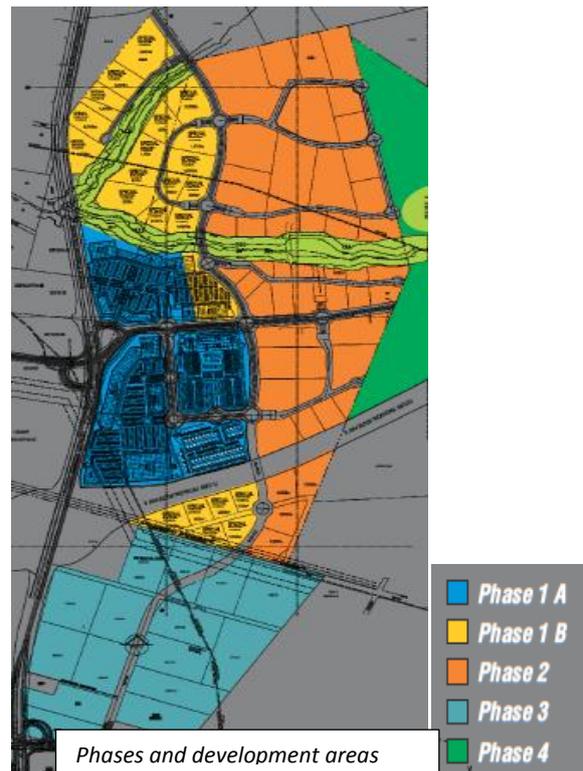
It is the intention of the applicant with its partners to create a light industrial, commercial and educational training incubation hub to service not only the Diepsloot area but the region. The Precinct is to be developed in collaboration with DBSA, ABSA, DTI the SETAs and the Gauteng Provincial Government. This (Diepsloot Industrial and commercial Development Precinct) will be the first fully integrated industrial development that caters for all sizes of industries providing vital support and job creation to a marginalised residential node. The project will, among other aspects, incorporate a SMME incubation program that will on completion create sustainable SMME's that will be incubated into large scale industry. It is estimated that the precinct will create in excess of 15 500 permanent jobs and over 14000 construction jobs in an area that is severely marginalised.

ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORISATION AND AMENDMENTS PROPOSED

The Environmental Authorisation was issued in 2009 for the development of a mixed uses township encompassing residential development ("Res 1-4"), industrial, retail, office, open spaces and educational uses. Due to the changed focus of the project, the EA is being amended to accommodate the different phases of the Diepsloot Industrial & Commercial Development Precinct. The 1st phase was approved and will result in the extension of the industrial area to form a corridor along the western portion of the site (adjacent to the R511), relocation of the training school to this area as well as a north-south link road.

The second phase (this application) seeks to provide for commercial and business uses on the eastern portion of the site to facilitate the implementation of the phase two (2) of the industrial precinct forming part of the SMMEs incubator programme. All these changes will take place within the development footprint authorised in the 2009 Environmental Authorisation.

Further, this amendment seeks to remove an ambiguity created in the current Environmental Authorisation. The EA provides three conditions- 1.12, 1.13 & 1.14 relating to the protection of the wetland and related vegetation. Conditions 1.13 and 1.14 prohibit development within the 1:100year floodline as well as within a 30 metre buffer. It is provided that this condition must also apply to the riverine area and, in combination within 1.13 is adequate to protect the water resources on site as this is standard practice in situations as this one.



ENVIRONMENTAL ATTRIBUTES

During the impact assessment conducted for the initial ROD, no Red Data faunal species were found within the development site. The desktop study and field assessment revealed that the proposed development area did historically offer suitable habitat for various Red Data faunal species. However, the present veld retrogression due to the historical land use deemed the proposed development sites largely insignificant to faunal species conservation within the region. No important cultural Riversand heritage resources older than 60 years were found on the farm. The farm workers cemetery is important and should be dealt with according to present legislation relating to graves.

An ecologically significant area runs through the centre of the site and provides much needed green space within the node. The incubation hub zones on the western side of the development also linked to the open space.

No additional footprint or greenfield areas will be affected by the proposed development. The road network has also been redesigned to limit the river crossings (the second river crossing previously approved has been eliminated).

POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

NEGATIVE

1. **Transformation of vacant land/(residential development)** into business and commercial development. Although this will happen, cognisance must be taken that the site is already approved for mixed use development (which also incorporates high and medium density residential uses).
2. **Increased use of heavy trucks/vehicles** during construction and operational phase leading to negative impacts on the road infrastructure and possible increase in noise levels. However, the development is along a major route and forms part on area identified as priority for development by the City. However, the road network/infrastructure will be constructed to appropriate standards.
3. **Increased commuting to the area-** due to industrial and commercial uses, therefore employment opportunities. The main advantage, however, is that the location of the precinct is close to a residential node but economically depressed area. This will result in integration of residential and industrial/commercial development hence reduced travelling distances for the Diepsloot community.
5. **Possible increase in light pollution-** the development will result in the installation of lights on roads and within the precinct. Care will be taken that lighting is focussed on roads and internally so as not to cause light pollution in the surrounding areas.
6. **Possible dust pollution and emissions-** due to movement of trucks and construction on site, there will be dust generated. Dust suppression measures will, however be implemented. Further, compliance to emission standards is emphasised.
7. **Visual impact-** the development is likely to have large viewing distances. However, the design and finishes of the educational component and well as the other buildings will be contemporary and will generate a sense of progress and growth, improving the general character of the area in a similar manner that the Steyn City has been doing.

POSITIVE

The proposed amendment offers a number positive environmental, economic and social impact. These relate, in general, to the reduced impacts on the riverine area, increased employment and training opportunities in the area.

According to environmental assessments conducted on site previously, no red data species were found. Also there were no important cultural heritage resources found except for the farm workers cemetery. However, with the development an ECO will be appointed to ensure that any important species on site are identified and protected in terms of the EMP. The graves on site will be dealt with in accordance with the applicable legislation.

The development offers an opportunity to integrate the environmental issues as well as other potential impacts with the development. The development will:

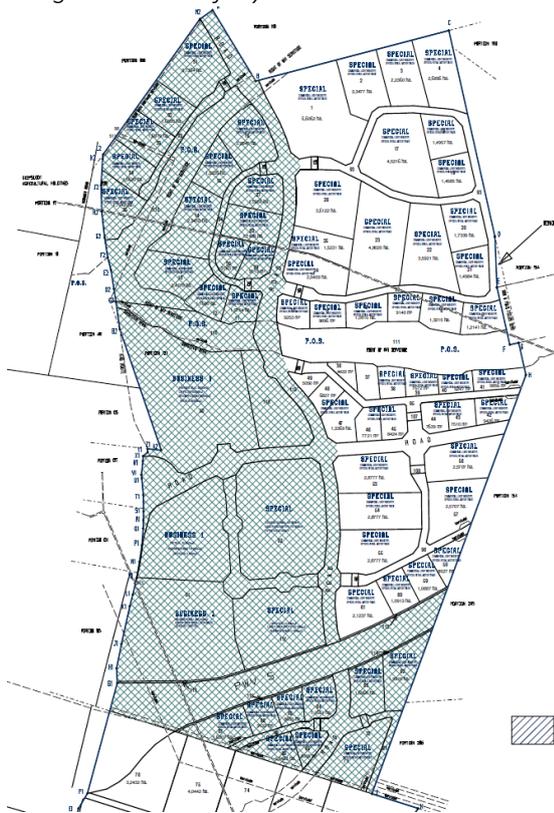
- ensure that no illegal dumping or squatting takes place on site.
- Ensure that the wetland system is protected as per the guidelines and EMP provisions. No additional crossings except those approved in the ROD will be provided.
- prevent the occurrence and spread of runaway fires.
- Curtail the spread of invasive alien vegetation.
- A portion of land linked to the riparian zone will be managed as an open space and conservation area. The open space runs across the whole Development area ensuring contiguous land corridors of non-developed land that will benefit the regional biodiversity by providing connection between the various ecological systems and will prevent fragmentation of the system.

From a socio-economic perspective a number of benefits are likely to accrue. These include:

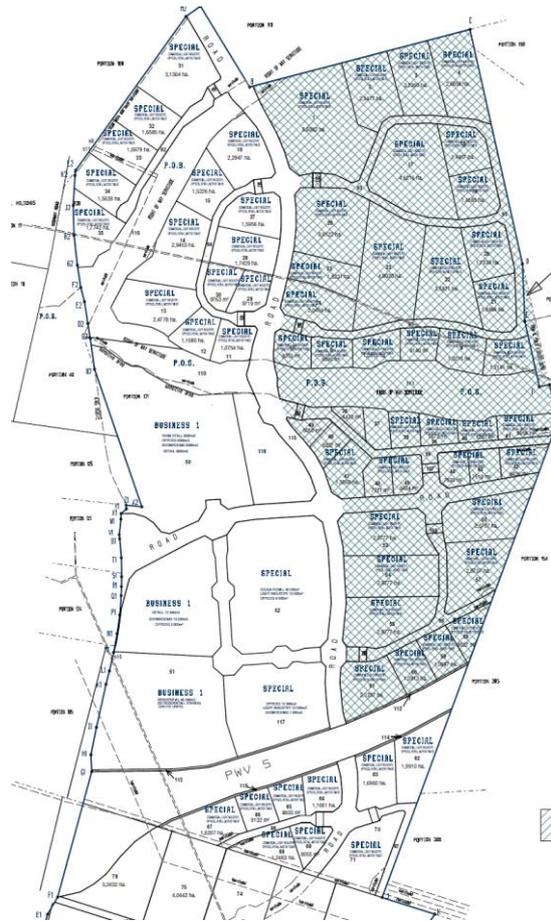
- much needed permanent and temporary employment for some of the residents of Diepsloot. It is anticipated that approximately 4000 job opportunities will be available during construction and approximately 1500 during occupation of the precinct.

- Roads upgrades and interchange developments will alleviate traffic problems and improve circulation in this and surrounding areas.
- Further, infrastructure upgrades/provisions will improve services in the area.
- Rehabilitate degraded flood line areas where dumping and erosion has occurred.

The proposed Diepsloot Industrial & Commercial Development Precinct has no fatal flaws in terms of the biophysical, physical or socio-economic environment. The negative impacts can be mitigated successfully.

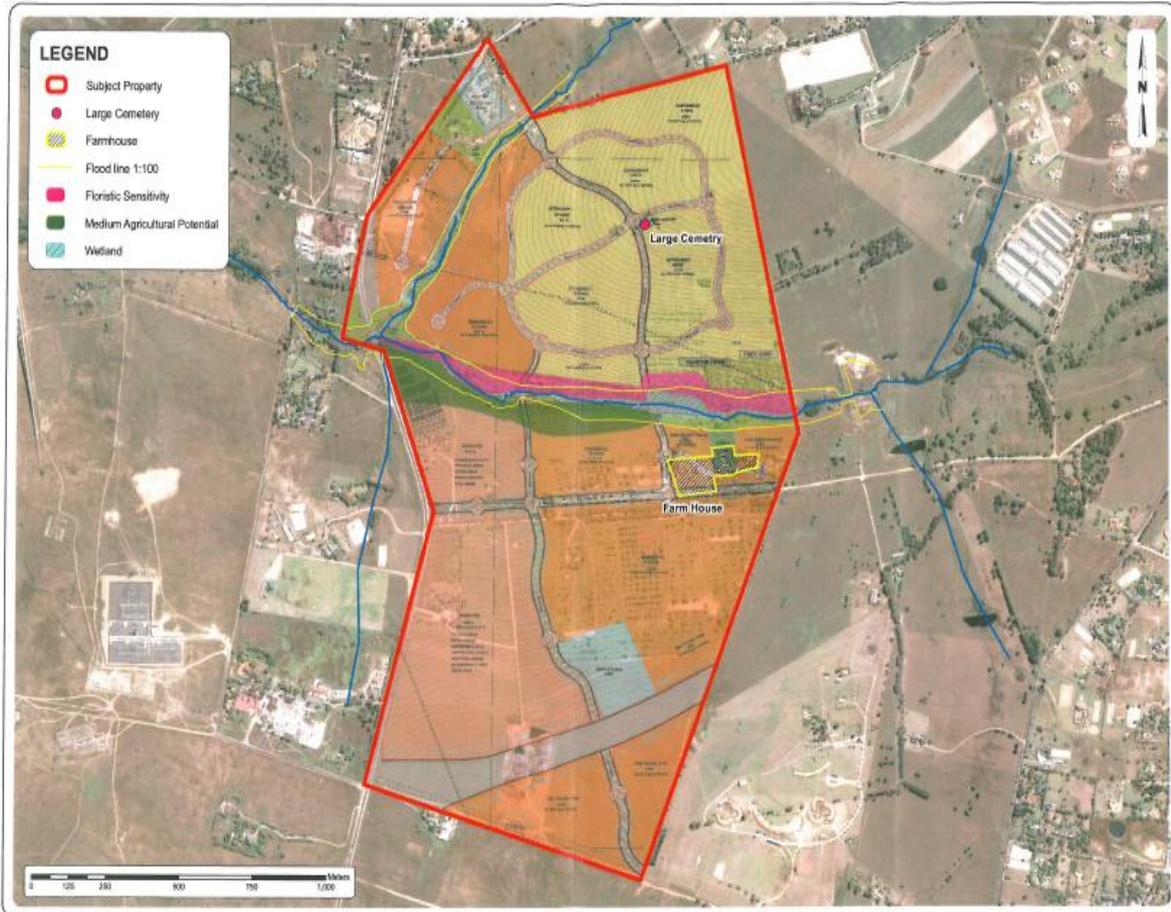


Layout showing approved Phase 1 Amendment



Layout showing area for the proposed Phase 2 Amendment

APPROVED LAYOUTS



RIVERSANDS
SCALE 1:10,000

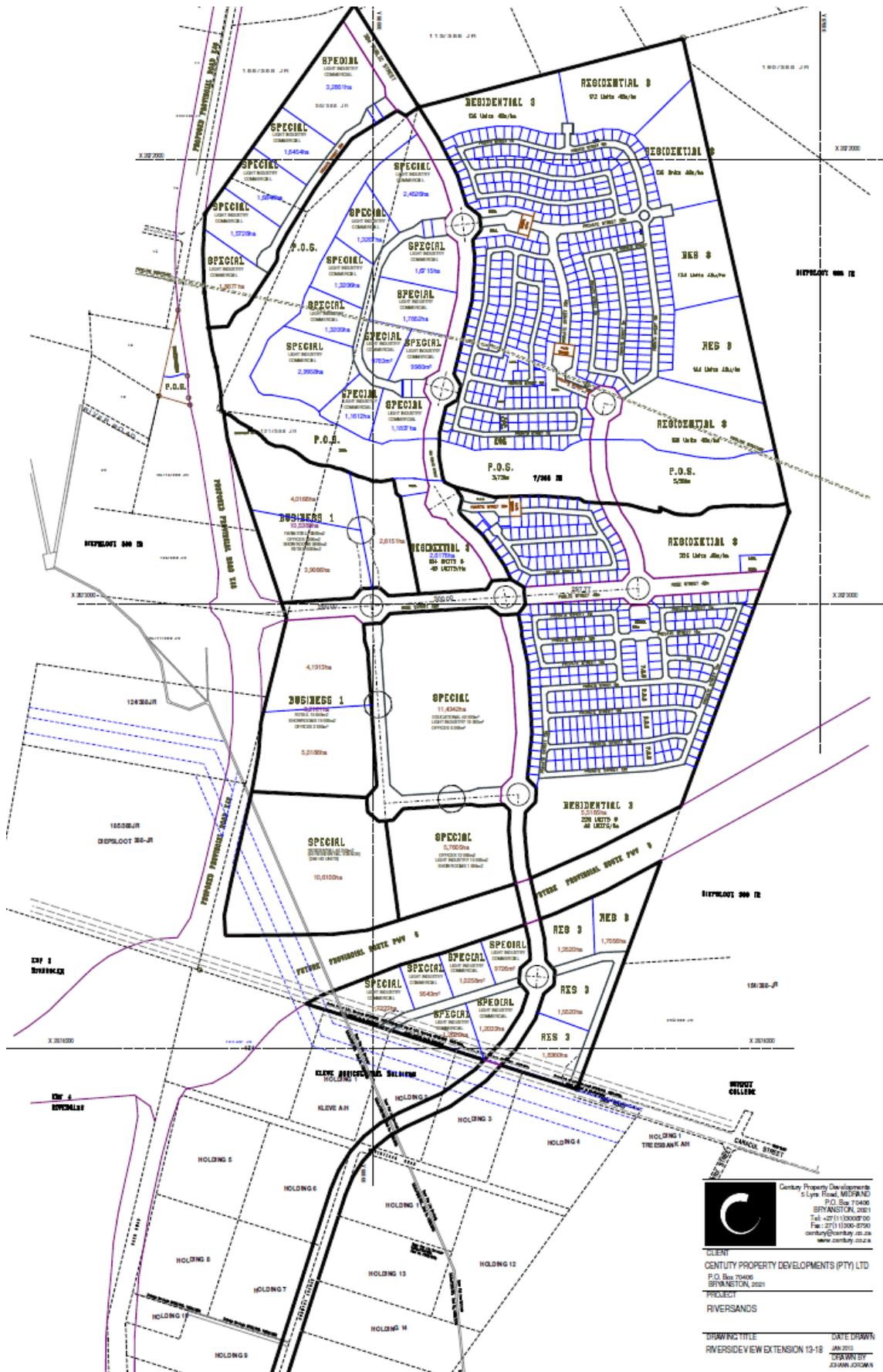
FIGURE 011
PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE OVER SENSITIVITY



Friday, March 26, 2009 13:20
H:\A1404 - Riversands\Design\GIS\2006_03_20_Layout over Sensitivity.mxd

Source: DACE Profiles - 1:50 000 Topocartesian Map WGS2028DC
Aerial Photo 100_875

Layout approved in 2009 ROD



Approved Amendment (Phase 1) Layout


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PROJECT
 RIVERSANDS

DRAWING TITLE
 RIVERSIDE VIEW EXTENSION 12-18

DATE DRAWN
 JAN 2013
 DRAWN BY
 JOHANN JOHANN

