

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This environment impact assessment report (EIA) was prepared to start with the parcelling out of a plot of land of the extent of 47.7 Ha into 437 residential /commercial lots. The proposed project is an undertaking listed in Part B of the First Schedule (Section 15C) of the ***Environment Protection (Amendment of Schedule) Regulation 2006***, which requires an environment impact assessment. The plot of land is owned by the Promoter, La Compagnie de Beau Vallon Ltée (CBVL), and is located at Mahebourg in the District of Grand Port.

As per the Morcellement Act, the promoter will make, at its own costs, provisions for the infrastructure works for the supply of electricity, water and telephone to all lots. Access roads of 6.00 m wide with road and utility reserves ranging from 2.5 – 4.5 m. as well as footpaths of 1.5 m wide on both sides of the main access roads will also be provided. Open green spaces of the extent of 24 020 m², representing 5.06% of the total plot of land, will be made available.

The approval in principle of the Ministry of Agro Industry and Fisheries, which had issued the land conversion permit no. 2713 dated the 10th April 2004 to CBVL for the development of the residential and commercial properties on the plot of land, is the main justification of the proposed project.

If the project is not started, i.e. the “do-nothing” option, it will mean that the current land use, i.e sugar cane cultivation, is maintained. However, there is a pressing need for housing development. In the resolution of the conflict between the need to preserve agricultural land and to provide land for residential development, CBVL, which is traditionally involved in sugar manufacture, has made a careful selection of sites in its ownership which it can release for non-agricultural purposes without jeopardising its activities in sugar cane cultivation.

The methods of assessment of the direct and indirect environment as well as the socio-economic impacts of the project included walk-through surveys, visits and a detailed desk-study of the available documents. The “Best Professional Judgement” (BPJ) as well as past and similar experience also served as the fundamental basis for predicting environment impacts. A traffic impact assessment (TIA) to determine the impact the

project would have on the local traffic was performed. A geo-technical investigation of the site was carried out through 12 trial pits and percolation tests were performed in each trial pit. The peak storm runoff from the project site was estimated using the Rational Method.

The minimum distance between the site boundary and a stone crusher was found to be only 250 m. This is not in line with the provisions of the ***EIA Guidelines for Proposed Morcellement Projects*** prepared by the Department of Environment in 2004. However, thorough discussions and justifications were made in this report to relieve the project from this site constraint. Moreover, ambient total suspended particles (TSP) were monitored by means of Hi-Volume samplers in full compliance with the ***Environment Protection (standards for Air) Regulation 1998***. The results of ambient TSP at 2 locations within the project site were found to be well within the norms. Hence, it is anticipated that the stone crusher will not impact on the project.

It was found that the project will have environmental impact in terms of disruption due to construction, wastewater discharge, storm run-offs, solid waste disposal and noise.

For the disruption due to construction, it is proposed to include all mitigation measures in the contract documents that will force the contractors to minimize the effects of construction on the environment.

Domestic sewage from the households will be treated by either a septic tank-leaching field or septic tank-absorption pit system. This treatment means shall be provided by the potential owners in their individual plots.

Storm run-off will be adequately channeled and disposed of through a proper drainage network consisting of roadside drains, absorption pits and catch pits.

As far as solid waste disposal is concerned, the District Council of Grand Port/Savanne will ensure the collection of the domestic solid wastes that will be generated by the households. The plot-purchasers will need to comply with the ***District Council (Collection & Disposal of Refuse) Regulations 1990***.

The activities of the Plaisance Airport, located to the south west of the project site, will be a source of noise. However, it was certified by the Airport of Mauritius Ltd (AML) that the site is found outside the noise band created by plane take-off and landing. Hence, it is anticipated that no major noise nuisance will be felt by the future residents.

Adequate number of fire hydrants, as will be advised by the Government Fire Services, will be provided within the water supply network as means of fire-fighting system.

It can be concluded that, with the implementation of the appropriate mitigation measures, the project will not cause any adverse environmental impact. Furthermore, the proposed morcellement will neither significantly alter the present settlement pattern nor adversely affect the existing environment.

Finally, it is recommended to relieve the proposed project from the site constraint of 1 km buffer from a stone crusher and to start with the proposed project with only positive socio-economic impact.