



**MKHONDO MUNICIPALITY**



## **MKHONDO LOCAL MUNICIPALITY**

# **COMMENTS AND RESPONSES REPORT**



### **16018\_PRO\_HIS**

**PROPOSED MIX USE HUMAN SETTLEMENT  
(TOWNSHIP) DEVELOPMENT AT DIRKIESDORP,  
MPUMALANGA PROVINCE**

**18 July 2016**

**SUBMITTED BY:**

Lidwala Consulting Engineers (SA) (PTY) Ltd  
PO Box 32497  
Waverley  
0135  
Tel: 0861 543 9252



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|  | <b>Title:</b> Comments and Responses Report | <b>Number:</b><br>16018 | <b>Revision:</b><br>000 | <b>Date:</b><br>18 July '16 |
|---|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|

## ABREVIATIONS

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| CBA    | Critical Biodiversity Area   |
| EIA    | Environmental Impact Assessment  |
| ESA    | Ecological Support Area  |
| FSR    | Final Scoping Report   |
| I&AP   | Interested and Affected Party  |
| MBSP   | Mpumalanga Biodiversity Sector Plan                                      |
| MLM    | Mkhondo Local Municipality   |
| NEM:BA | National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (Act No. 10 of 2004) |
| MTPA   | Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency                                      |
| PES    | Present Ecological State   |
| PM     | Public Meeting   |
| POD    | Public Open Day  |
| PPP    | Public Participation Process   |

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|---|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
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|---|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|

| Issue/Comment   | Raised by   | Response  |
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| <b>1. Biodiversity Related Comments / Issues</b>  |   |   |
| <p>Are there animals on site that are harmful to children?</p> <p>How far will the proposed settlement be from the wetland?</p> | <p>Ms Christina Nomvula Mhlanga<br/>BEC Co-ordinator at MLMK</p> <p>Correspondence: Public Open Day (POD) / Public Meeting (PM) at Injabulo Combined School, Dirkiesdorp<br/>29 June 2016</p> | <p>Lidwala informed Ms Mhlanga that a biodiversity impact assessment has been conducted and indicated that although certain reptiles and mammals are found in the area, these animals are known to migrate to other locations once construction resumes in the area. Lidwala also informed Ms Mhlanga that a 32 meter buffer zone has been created where the proposed development will only start after the 32 meter wetland buffer zone. <b>Lidwala SA</b></p> |
| <b>2. Geology Related Comments/ Issues</b>  |   |   |
| <p>Is the soil type in the proposed development area suitable for housing?</p>  | <p>Ms Christina Nomvula Mhlanga<br/>BEC Co-ordinator at MLMK</p> <p>Correspondence: POD / PM at Injabulo Combined School, Dirkiesdorp<br/>29 June 2016</p>                                    | <p>Lidwala informed Ms Mhlanga that environmental specialist studies were carried out during the scoping phase of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and have indicated that the soil type in the proposed development area was suitable for a housing development. <b>Lidwala SA</b></p>  |
| <b>3. Safety Related Comments / Issues</b>  |   |   |
| <p>Will a second bridge be constructed to link the current residential area with the new proposed township development?</p>     | <p>Ms Christina Nomvula Mhlanga<br/>BEC Co-ordinator at MLMK</p> <p>Correspondence: POD / PM at Injabulo Combined School, Dirkiesdorp<br/>29 June 2016</p>                                    | <p>Lidwala informed Ms Mhlanga that the Mkhondo Municipality (MLM) is responsible for the development of infrastructure regarding the proposed development of the human settlement and Lidwala could not confirm if a second bridge would be built or not. <b>Lidwala SA</b></p>  |

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|---|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
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|---|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|

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|  |  | <p>The proposal is to upgrade the existing bridge, but in terms of funding for it, I am unsure when it will be able to happen. But that is the long term plan.</p> <p><b>Mkhondo Local Municipality</b></p> |
| <b>4. Vegetation Comments/ Issues</b>  |  |   |
| <p>There is no chapter or page from which to reference in as far as the comments regarding the National Forests Act 84, 1998 is concerned. The land area in question regarding the proposed development does not affect the national forests act hence the vegetation type in this area is dominantly grassland and planted forests which many of them are individual and privately owned. In the case of Komatiland Forests areas, a consent must be received from the company before any activities affecting section 23 of the National forests act can be carried out.</p> | <p>Mr Zinzile Mtotywa<br/>Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries<br/>Correspondence: E-mail - 20 July 2016</p>              | <p>Comments Noted. Thank you. <b>Lidwala SA</b></p>   |
| <b>5. Biodiversity Comments/ Issues</b>  |  |   |
| <p>MTPA has an objection to the site of the proposed residential development.</p> <p>The MBSP terrestrial assessment figure 1 indicates that this proposed development lie in a Critical Biodiversity Area irreplaceable. This area is 80% to 100% irreplaceable for meeting biodiversity conservation targets, or critical linkages. There is therefore no flexibility in land uses and it is</p>   | <p>Mr JJ Eksteen<br/>Manager Scientific Services<br/>Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency<br/>Correspondence: E-mail - 22 July 2016</p> | <p>Comments Noted. Thank you. <b>Lidwala SA</b></p>   |

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|---|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
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|---|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|

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| <p>recommended that an alternative site is found. Residential developments will compromise the biodiversity objectives and are not permissible.</p> <p>The attached Mpumalanga Biodiversity Sector Plan maps, figure 1, 2 and 3 indicates the terrestrial biodiversity and freshwater biodiversity assessments as well as the transformed land cover on this farm. The high biodiversity grasslands forms part of the kaNgwane Montane Grassland veldtype that has a vulnerable status and is protected by the NEM:BA. The freshwater assessment of the same site indicates that it lie in an Ecological Support Area (ESA) for important sub catchments, in close proximity to a CBA River that must be delineated with a 1km buffer and CBA wetland with a required 100m buffer. Figure 3 indicates the areas of this farm that has been transformed by agricultural activities where an alternative development site can be found.</p> <p>The MTPA recommends that a thorough groundtruthing and biophysical study of the proposed CBA irreplaceable site on portion 3 and alternatives is done, which apart from a PES also includes a geological and soil study to determine if the sites are technical suitable for this kind of development. Attached is a MTPA minimum requirements document that can be used for the studies.</p> <p><b><i>Please see Appendix F.1 for the full comments.</i></b></p> |  |  |
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|---|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|

| 6. General Comments/ Issues   |  |  |
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| <p>We had a meeting with the mayor and in that meeting we were given a different number of stands. We request a meeting with all parties present in order to clarify such issues.</p> | <p>Mr Thulani<br/>Community Member<br/>Correspondence: POD / PM at Injabulo Combined School, Dirkiesdorp<br/>29 June 2016</p>  | <p>Lidwala informed Mr Thulani that MLM was responsible for the final site layout plan which confirmed the number of stands. Lidwala also informed Thulani that environmental factors such as wetland buffer zones and floodline determinations may have an impact on the total number of stands in the proposed township development. <b>Lidwala SA</b></p>   |
| <p>Why is a development proposed in a new area instead of upgrading the current Dirkiesdorp village?</p>  | <p>Mr Dumisane<br/>Community Member<br/>Correspondence: POD / PM at Injabulo Combined School, Dirkiesdorp<br/>29 June 2016</p> | <p>Community members requested that the new development be built at the new site. The community at the current village had requested that they be built houses inside their yards. <b>Mr V.J Kubheka (Injabulo Combined School Care Taker)</b></p> <p>The village has grown and there is a high demand for sites. There are people who have to live in their family homes with families of their own and naturally want to have their own space. The community has put together a list of over 800 people that need their own sites. Some people are also living in wetland areas therefore need to be relocated from there. <b>Mkhondo Local Municipality</b></p> |
| <p>Mr Kubheka asked for clarity regarding the church stands. Will the church stands be sold? Are they</p>   |  | <p>Lidwala informed Mr Kubheka that the Mkhondo Municipality was responsible for the allocation of</p>   |

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|---|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|

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| <p>free? Or is the church stand included in the site layout plan?</p>  |  | <p>stands and the final site layout plan including the church stands. <b>Lidwala SA</b></p> <p>The church stands as far as I know from previous practice are advertised and sold by the municipality. There is a high demand for land for places of worship. <b>Mkhondo Local Municipality</b></p>   |
| <p>According to the current layout, it doesn't seem like there is enough space to accommodate all the planned buildings e.g two schools. Is there any possibility for Lidwala to dispute this layout with the municipality</p> | <p>Mr Sibusiso Vilakazi<br/>Community Member<br/>Correspondence: POD / PM at Injabulo Combined School, Dirkiesdorp<br/>29 June 2016</p>  | <p>Lidwala informed Mr Vilakazi that Lidwala only has influence on environmental findings associated with the proposed project. The overall layout of the establishment will be determined by studies conducted by the council Town planners and local municipality. <b>Lidwala SA</b></p>   |
| <p>Will Lidwala come back for another meeting before the submission of the FSR</p>   |  | <p>Lidwala informed Mr Vilakazi that Lidwala would return during the EIA phase of the project for a second phase Public meeting (PM), as part of the Public Participation Process (PPP), where interested and affected parties (I&amp;AP) will again be given the opportunity to express their concerns regarding the project. <b>Lidwala SA</b></p> |
| <p>The new development is proposed to be a township, how will this affect the community in terms of rates and taxes?</p>   | <p>Ms Christina Nomvula Mhlanga<br/>BEC Co-ordinator at MLMK<br/>Correspondence: Public Open Day (POD) / Public Meeting (PM) at Injabulo Combined School, Dirkiesdorp<br/>29 June 2016</p> | <p>Lidwala informed Ms Mhlanga that the MLM may impose rates and tax levies for services such as electricity and sanitation. However the rand value of these levies will be determined by the municipality. <b>Lidwala SA</b></p>  |

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|   |   | <p>Rates and tax collection is a challenge in general throughout Mkhondo Municipality, but there is a need for communities to understand that the municipality needs revenue in order to provide the services they need. <b>Mkhondo Local Municipality</b></p>   |
| <p>Will there be stands up for sale or will they be free?</p>   |   | <p>Lidwala informed Ms Mhlanga that the MLM was responsible for the allocation of stands, and would be in a better position to confirm whether the stands are free or will be sold. <b>Lidwala SA</b></p> <p>In the past, people were given forms to fill out and a screening process was conducted to ensure that people who can afford to buy sites pay for them and those who are categorized as indigents are donated sites. <b>Mkhondo Local Municipality</b></p> |
| <p>This housing process has been going on for a very long time, there have been people coming and going, studies being done with no conclusion, how is Lidwala from the past consultants.</p> |   | <p>Lidwala informed the community members that they were only involved in the EIA aspect of the project and can only take responsibility for their current role in the project. <b>Lidwala SA</b></p>  |
| <p>Mr Khambule requested that the community be patient and have positive attitudes regarding the project as it will benefit the community in the long run.</p>                                | <p>Mr Dumisani Khambule<br/>Community Member<br/>Correspondence: POD / PM at Injabulo Combined School, Dirkiesdorp<br/>29 June 2016</p> | <p>Comment noted. <b>Lidwala SA</b></p>  |

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