



Navrae/Enquiries:

Verw./Ref.

Assistant Director EIA
Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs
Gert Sibande District
13 de Jager Street
ERMELO
2350

31 August 2018

ATTENTION: MS S. MBUYANE
PER EMAIL: mbuyanesb@mpg.gov.za

Dear Sir

RE: APPLICATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORISATION FOR THE PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT OF A MIX USE HUMAN SETTLEMENT DEVELOPMENT IN DIRKIESDORP WITHIN THE JURISDICTION OF MKHONDO LOCAL MUNICIPALITY: MPUMALANGA PROVINCE: DIRKIESDORP EIA OBJECTION MPUMALANGA TOURISM AND PARKS AGENCY

Ref: 1/3/1/16/1 G-40 NEAS No.: MPP/EIA/0000177/2016

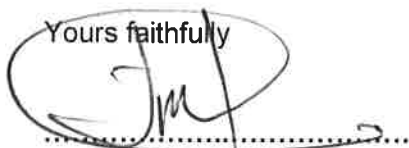
With reference to the EIA issued by our consultants, Lidwala Consulting Engineers, as well as your letter dated 14 September 2016, rejecting the environmental application (see attached), we as the client and end user of the project would like to make a plea to the Department to take the approval into reconsideration. This request is based on the following motivation:

1. Attached find the locality plan for the proposed new township. The area under consideration is the property of the municipality and is adjacent to the existing settlement of Dirkiesdorp. In due course, the community will take matters into their own hands and invade the open area in order to set out their own stands and start squatting on the proposed site. By developing the area, such invasion can be prevented.
2. Illegal invasion of this land will lead to the community settling below the flood line endangering property and lives. By establishing the township, such a situation will be eliminated.
3. The land in question was used for Agricultural purposes in the past and therefore have previously been disturbed and the biodiversity been affected.
4. By establishing a formal development, appropriate civil services including proper sanitation will be installed. This will assist the Municipality to upgrade the existing settlement in future as well.

5. Ground water contamination will be eliminated. Illegal invasion of the land will result in considerable contamination as pit latrines will be the norm. The settlement is within 5km from the Heyshope dam which might also be affected by such pollution.
6. We are offering to set off the rehabilitation of an area within the biodiversity area in lieu of developing this area. It is proposed that this be done as a deliverable under the new housing project if it is made a condition of the ROD.
7. Mkhondo Local Municipality is experiencing a growing demand for sites, in all wards. In terms of the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) 2018/19, the community of Dirkiesdorp (Ward 3) raised the need for a new Township Establishment in the area, during the IDP consultation process. This has been a standing item also on previous IDP consultation meetings. In the municipality's quest to ensure integrated sustainable human settlements, it is imperative that this matter be taken into consideration.
8. According to the Final Draft Mkhondo Spatial Development Framework (2017) Dirkiesdorp is earmarked as a rural node (with focus on tourism). In terms of its development potential it is classified as low-medium , due to its position on R543 (link between Mpumalanga and Swaziland);Tourism corridor to the west; conservation areas in surrounding areas; and proximity to agricultural activity in surrounding area. The Spatial Development Framework further promotes the upgrading and servicing of the existing informal type settlements in Dirkiesdorp. It is noteworthy that vacant land parcels such as the subject property in Dirkiesdorp and surrounding area, should be identified for greenfield developments and included in the municipality's future planning for residential development.

We trust that the department reconsider the EIA application favourably and be assured of our best intentions at all times.

Yours faithfully



MR T. MOTLOUNG
GENERAL MANAGER: PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT