

Schalk and Marike van der Merwe
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16 June 2020

Re: Nema Public Participation Process – Proposed Township development on PLOT 2642 and portion 14 of farm BOEGOEBERG n0 48, Opwag, !Kheis Local Municipality

Dear Clinton

We have received a publication regarding the proposed project for extending the current housing in this location with a further 730 low income erven.

We live in the Opwag area and are daily in the Township as our permanent and temporary workers live there. We also have participated in outreaches and have a close relationship with some of the people currently living there.

Our concerns are:

Water

During winter the canal that provides water for this section also have 4 dry periods of 14 days each. The dry periods are in sections of mostly 2 weeks and sometimes there is an interval of three weeks. Almost every time after the first weekend of the 2 week interval, the people that works with us ask if they can borrow our water tanks (which are on wheels), fill up the water tank from our borehole, because there in no water. We provide that, but the situation is that the management of water in the township currently is a big concern. The Municipal supply of water via their water truck is not consistent and it cost them allot of money.

Medical

The clinic is in Groblershoop which is around 8km from the township. Most of the residents of the Township do not have vehicles and there are also not regular trips to town via taxis. The people then must walk to the clinic. Medical service currently does not exist in the Township, and I cannot foresee that n clinic will be stationed in the township, within the near future. (Areas outside Groblershoop, like Wegdraai and Boegoeberg, do not have sufficient medical care, and they have so-called clinics)

School

At the moment the nearest school is around 3km far. Most of the children walk to school and is a big concern for the vehicle drivers, as they use the same road to walk to and from school which the vehicles use. The school is already full and if more children attend the school then new classrooms needs to be build.

Theft

We live and farm about 3km from the township. When the crops are almost ready for harvest, people stealing the crops are a real concern. Crops include grapes, pecan nuts, maize, Lucerne etc. Sheep farming is extremely high risk as people take the sheep out of a secure location and slaughter the animal for his own purpose. Sometimes even the people that are working with us, they get death threats if they try to stop the stealing of the crops. Most of the people that do work, work on the farms as general workers. If people steal the crops, then eventually there will not be any work for the people that want to work which just creates an more negative cycle. Stealing of poles inside the vineyard is also a big concern. The people come and steal the poles which are used for the vineyard. They use the poles to build their houses. All vacant houses on the Opwag road have been demolished, for building parts in the township.

Here is already not enough work for the people staying in this township, with even more houses and occupancy the problem of theft will only escalate.

Safety

As previously mentioned, stealing of the crops and poles, but also the safety of general workers living and working on the farm premises are a concern. Homeowners are also making sure that their security around their premises is right.

!Kheis Municipality

This township will resort under this municipality. We as farm is busy for the last 8 years to try and buy erven in town for our workers for the day they retire. The municipality have appointment more than one consultancy to help them to do the sub-division of this land. This process has not been finished. We also do not get any regular bills as a farm community from the municipality. I can send proof of both these statements. My concern is, how the municipality that is already under constrain and cannot deliver basic services in there current surrounding, how they want to supply services to a new town-area that is 8 km away.

Last month we had to lend them a tipper so they can remove the house-rubbish. Up to this stage, we do not even have a fenced rubbish-hole in town, because the costs are too high. For this development so far from town, they will need to set up a second rubbish-hole. So how will a development of this extend be funded?

My parents stay in town, and sometimes they need to wait for weeks for sewerage-removal, again, how will this municipality be able to service and development of this extend so far from town.

My question, then, how did they appoint a new consultancy to start this development, if they do not have money to cover basic services, and current town-expansions.

The people currently staying in this township, are extremely excited about this development, because they have been promised that they will get free of charge new brick homes, with this new expansion. Some of our workers, staying in this township has stopped building their current houses, because they will get a brick house from the developers.

We also want to register as an interested and affected party to this development.

Would you please be so kind to reply on this letter, so that we know that you have received the letter and that we are registered to receive further communication?

Regards

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