

Our reference: WC/WC/1/14

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Attention: Anthony Mader

**PRE-APPLICATION DRAFT SCOPING REPORT: BONATHABA
PTN 2 & 3 FARM 1100; DIVISION MALMESBURY; SWARTLAND MUNICIPALITY:**

Your office's e-mail to specific officials prompting to respond on the application is understandable under the recent COVID19 risks and restrictions. This has however a subsequent impact on personnel management, officials' personal capacity in regard to filing and has a subsequent impact on response time of comments and a risk of being lost in the system. Rather deliver applications to the office of the District Manager LandCare: West Coast District in future when possible.

In principle; the Department of Agriculture supports agricultural development that is sustainable in the long term and is regulated in terms of the applicable legislation.

General:

The farming unit of **Bonathaba** is 109 hectares and consists of the following Farm Portion:

- Portion 2 FARM 1100: Malmesbury: 48.7469Ha
- Portion 3 FARM 1100: Malmesbury: 60.5484Ha

The farm is registered in the name of Black Orchid Farming (Pty) Ltd according to T70698/2015.

Background:

This application is for the construction of an in-stream irrigation dam with a gross storage capacity of one million cubic metres (1 000 000m³) and with a surface area of approximately

19.2 hectares. The dam wall will be 18 meters in height along with a spillway channel. The proposed dam will overlap both farming portions with the dam wall that will be located on the eastern boundaries of the two farm portions. The dam is proposed within a non-perennial stream and on a site that will impact on existing vineyards and orchards. It can be argued that the site for the proposed development will impact on High and Unique Potential Agricultural Land (HUAL).

It is stated that the proposed dam will provide insurance of water supply to the existing water use rights, for irrigation of the existing irrigation areas. A new pump station with a footprint of 150m² is proposed. A new outlet pipe will be constructed and a pipeline from the proposed dam will be connected to an existing pipe from the Berg River. A spillway channel will be constructed and located on the left flank of the proposed dam.

The site will be cleared of approximately 8.8 hectares of indigenous natural vegetation and approximately 10.4 hectares of existing crops, including table grapes and citrus.

Site inspection:

No site inspection was conducted yet.

Please provide postal address, email and contact number of the office. Also provide the name of a contact person for the land user, land owner or applicant.

Information required:

It is stated that, the application is for the storage of an existing water use that could never be potted before. Appendix 9 was not included. Does this "existing water use" refer to summer or winter water listed at the Irrigation Board?

The Botanical Study (Annexure 8.1) was not included in the e-mail.

The proposed development will impact on HUAL. It is stated that on the context of the entire farm the clearance of 10.4ha of agricultural crops will not significantly impact on the potential of the farm. This is an unsubstantiated statement. What is the actual impact on production and loss of jobs? How, when and where will the existing perennial crops be replaced? Is there enough HUAL on the farming unit to do the replacement? What is the potential of the land that will be lost?

Freshwater: The drainage lines (\pm 3.3km) is mostly dry, but runoff will accumulate during rains. Steep slopes may have a high erosion potential. Where the drainage line has been straightened, the channels have eroded. How will the erosion be managed, mitigated and prevented. How will silting up of the dam be prevented? What is the quality of the runoff water? Will contaminated saline water enter the dam and contaminate the potted water?

The two alternatives are located within the same footprint with one marginally larger than the other. What informed the size of the proposed dam and how does the smaller dam

alternative impact on the long term development, irrigation requirements and risk management of the farm?

Please note:

The Western Cape Department of Agriculture reserves the right to request further information and revise initial comments based on any additional information that might be received.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JAN SMIT', written over a circular stamp or mark.

JAN SMIT

DISTRICT MANAGER: LANDCARE WEST COAST

SUSTAINABLE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

2021-01-04