

M.A.Pentopoulos
BEST VEST 166 CC
P.O.Box 11637
Dorpspruit
3206

9th November 2018

Dear Ms Straeuli,

Ref: (Potion 603 of the Farm Vaalkop & Dadelfontein.)
(Lion Park Interchange)

Thank you for inviting us to participate with respect to the impact of the new highway and particularly in our case, the new off ramp at Lynnfield Park / Lion Park.

Although we have not been formally advised of its desire to expropriate part of our land holding we have been supplied with drawings showing that Sanral plan to put a road through our property which will directly affect between two and three hectares and indirectly a further six to eight hectares.

Our CC Bestvest 166 has spent the better part of nine years obtaining an EIA to commercially develop eight hectares of the property for amongst other uses a hotel and a commercial / retail centre. As part of the approval process we agreed to keep nineteen hectares of the property as a conservancy.

If approval for the new off ramp and the provision of an access road through the prime part of the piece of the property for which the EIA was given the following impacts should be considered:

Economic: The idea was for the development of a commercial and hotel centre to cater for the industrial park which is being developed across the N3 together with, at that time, a planned residential complex adjacent to the site. One can envisage this eventually developing into the type of centre on the Durban side of Harrismith which would provide an economic boost for the immediate area as well as providing many reasonably well paying jobs.

Should the offramp together with the proposed access road be approved it is anticipated that the EIA would no longer be valid and an extensive and exhaustive new application would need to be filed the outcome of which is uncertain.

We have discussed with the consulting engineers the alternatives where access to the adjoining properties be provided via an already existing underpass on the N3 and have been advised that Sanral have vetoed this without providing an adequate explanation. We have similarly been advised that a loop under the underpass would not be entertained because of cost considerations.

Environmental: Should the road project be approved as is currently envisaged we will need to redesign our proposed complex to adjust for the loss of the frontal piece of our property. While we have expedited the final zoning because of the uncertainty or Sanral's plans regarding our property we envisage that we will need to make application to compensate by encroaching on the land originally designated as a conservancy with all the attendant impacts on water runoff and retention, habitat destruction and access.

From what we have been advised, the plan is to build a gravel access road to the adjoining properties with the attendant noise and dust pollution whereas a perfectly good tarred road, which serves the same purpose, currently exists, and is in use under the N3.

Our plans have been known since we started our application in 2007 and we fail to understand why Sanral did not make an objection prior to us embarking on this long and expensive process the knowledge of which was in the public domain.

Immediate Economic Loss to Bestvest 166: Should Sanral receive approval for its stated plans there would be immediate and irrevocable loss to the CC and its members.

The approval of the EIA to commercially develop eight hectares of the site as outlined above considerably increased the economic value of the land. In the event that approval is given for the project to proceed, the current EIA would lapse and the value of the remaining portion would in effect revert to that of the other nineteen hectares which has been set aside as a conservancy.

Whatever way there would be considerable economic damage to the members of the cc who purchased the property in good faith and since the time of purchase have expended considerable sums of money and hundreds of man hours conducting the various required studies and setting up and attending the public forums required by the process all of which Sanral, as an interested party, should have been aware of and made their plans and/or objections known.

I, and, my fellow member, Mr David Rigby are available for further discussion should you feel the necessity but we ask that this letter be part of the public record.

Kind regards,

Michael Pentepoulos