

To whom it may concern

Re: Objection to proposed lime mining in Southwell

Listed below are brief mentions of some of the impacts that the proposed lime mining to take place in Southwell may have on the relevant stakeholders:

Social Impacts

- Noise created by mining plant, excavators, trucks etc.
- Dust created by mining operation.
- Health risks associated with the mining operation (dust, natural gasses, water contamination).
- Aesthetic value of the land reduced due to the 'ugliness' of the mining activity.
- Risk of ancestral graves in the proposed mining area being dug-up.
- Historical area with many heritage sites dating back to early 1800's (2 churches, 2 schools, cemeteries, 2 forts). Mining in the area could reduce the historical value of the land.
- The disadvantaged local African population have their ancestral roots in this area with the landscape holding key aesthetic and religious values to the people.
- Increased poverty due to loss of jobs.
- Augmented traffic on the roads increases safety risks for the local inhabitants who commute mostly on foot. This includes school children walking to and from school on a daily basis.

Economic Impacts

- Loss of jobs for locals as farming practices may be negatively impacted upon.
- Jobs created by the mining operation will not benefit the local rural community as the jobs will be carried out by people from the Nolutshanyo Township of Bathurst as stated by S.A Lime in their Scoping Report.
- Road deterioration due to carting of limestone may lead to increased costs accruing due to damage to vehicles and other assets as well as maintenance of roads by the local farmers at their own cost.
- Mining in the area may reduce the value of property in the area as well as the saleability of property.
- Beauty of the area may be reduced due to the mining, resulting in the loss of possible business opportunities (eg. Hiking trails, B&B's, historical tours).

Environmental Impacts

- The Oribi, a threatened mammal is found upon the land on which the mining application has been taken out.

- There are possibly significant archaeological resources found on the applicable land. This was illustrated recently when human bones were discovered beneath a gravel national road passing by a nearby fort in the area.
- Topsoil is not simply removed – stored – replaced, as stated in the Scoping report. This process will destroy the soil composition and it will take years for the soil to be returned back to its former composition.
- There is a serious threat that after the rehabilitation phase of the mining operation, the soil found in the rehabilitated area will still not be restored to its natural pre-mining condition. The current fertility of the soil has slowly been built up over many years and one cannot see how it may be possible to restore the soil to this condition in a short time span which the rehabilitation process possesses.
- The Kikuyu pastures which occupy the majority of the applicable area have taken years to become established due to the slow ranking nature of the grass as well as unpredictable seasons. This suggests that the rehabilitation progress cannot be a short term process and unless it is carried out thoroughly over long time scales, the reference condition of the land will never be achieved.
- Provisioning, Regulating, Cultural and supporting ecosystem services will be reduced through the degradation of the landscape. This will worsen the livelihoods of the local population and especially the livelihoods of poorer families in the area who are extremely dependent on ecosystems services in order to sustain a healthy livelihood.

I am the 6<sup>th</sup> generation living on this farm, my father being the land owner Colin Stirk.

If this application had to go ahead, I would have to endure for the rest of my economic life the degradation caused by this mining. For this and all the above mentioned reasons, I am **TOTALLY OPPOSED** to this mining application.

JAMES STIRK