

25/6/2013

To whom it may concern

Re: OBJECTION TO THE SOUTHWELL LIMING APPLICATION

As an interested and affected party to the Mining Licence (Southwell Limestone) brought about by S.A. Lime Eastern Cape (Pty) Ltd, I **vehemently object** to this development taking place on the said properties.

My objections are as follows:

1. Interference with the natural eco-systems, plants and animals. This area is the breeding ground of the endangered oribi (a buck species) often seen as well as pairs of secretary birds and blue cranes.
2. The negative impact on the environment will be far greater than the positive and even after the rehabilitation of the mined area it will never be completely redeemed. The years of planting the pastures, fertilizing, slurry and the build up of humus will be lost and the fertility will be hugely affected.
3. The value of the mined farm ground will devalue as no one would ever want to purchase ground that has a mining licence over it.
4. Pollution – hazardous effects on the environment and will have an impact on the air, soil, land, vegetation and water. Dust levels will increase during the crushing phase and the strong winds experienced in this area will blow the lime particles into the residences, the dwellings of the local inhabitants and the stock grazing in and around will be affected. This will not be a healthy environment to live in.
5. Noise levels will increase as heavy vehicles and machinery will be on site and provide additional dust. The constant crushing/blasting of material would certainly affect the lifestyle of people and of the farming enterprise i.e. dairy cattle in close proximity to the area. The dairy parlour is in the middle of this area.
6. Deterioration of the gravel roads – repairs are at times done at the farmers' own expense and more heavy vehicles would certainly cause damage in transporting the material. The gravel roads are very narrow and could affect the safety of the local residents as many use this road to school daily.
7. Landscape will be changed and the pollution will be visible from the road as well as some of the proposed mining areas. The current cricket club/field which serves the community will be affected.
8. The Southwell area is an area of great historical interest with forts, schools, churches, cemeteries and ancestral burial sites strewn all over these said properties. Locals residences buried their dead here since Settler days and there is a vast amount of history to this area.
9. The proposed mining on the Diocesan owned land which lies in the heart of Colin Stirks dairy farm is visible from the churches and schools (all historical buildings) in the area. It is upon this magnificent piece of ground where Colin's dairy cattle calve down. These calves are hand reared from a day old and are particularly susceptible to lung infections, pneumonia, emphysema etc as they have very little immunity. The threat of persistent dust over this land will pose significant threats to the health of these young calves. This occurrence should be considered as inhumane and will certainly be of interest to various animal rights activists.

10. Not only will the dust created by the mining affect animal health but it shall also pose a threat to the livelihoods of the occupants of the farmhouse nearby as well as the workers who are employed on the farm. Common health implications such as TB, lung cancer, emphysema, etc may be exacerbated.
11. The water for dust suppression (10 kilolitres) a day is to supposedly come from the borehole on the farm close to the mine. The extraction of this water over a period of 30 years results in large sums of water being extracted from beneath the earth's surface. This could drastically alter natural groundwater flows and have serious implications for neighbouring farms. Water is a vital asset to almost all farmers, a single dairy cow is known to be able to drink up to 100 litres of water a day. The extraction of water for mining may leave farmers with serious future water shortages. Droughts have in the past devastated many farmers in the area leading to them having to seek water from local towns. Water shortage is therefore a familiar occurrence among the farmers in the area. Are you going to be taking our water away from us too?
12. Your past actions have raised concerns surrounding the ethics and integrity in which you conduct your business.
13. I have lived in this area all my life and to see this beautiful tourist destination destroyed by this mining venture, the effect it will have on the locals and the scars it will leave on the ground – no matter how good the rehabilitation is adhered to – the negatives far outweigh the positives!
14. I pray that this mining application not be passed and that this beautiful piece of land, with the ancestors buried under this ground, be left to rest in peace.
15. LEAVE OUR LAND ALONE!!!

Lyn Stirk (wife of land owner)

