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Poultry Farm Erf 255 Walkers Fruit Farms

(COMMENTS - 16 February 2013)

Basic Assessment Report Gaut:0021213E164

Overview

This will be a highly intensive production facility classed as a factory in close proximity to neighbouring small holdings and is therefore undesirable. A full EIA needs to be done for this type of development. The residents in Walkers Fruit Farms have moved to this area because it is a Conservancy and no factories or large businesses are operating in the area. The cumulative effect of the developments on the greater landscape will change the area for ever

The issue of compliance and accountability through measurement, management and monitoring is another critical issue. Too often the Environmental Authorisations are issued and nothing further continues afterwards. It is of vital importance that compliance and accountability is adhered to. This also needs to be undertaken with the broader stakeholder grouping through environmental committees in communities associated with developments and should be an obligatory key component of an EIA/EMP. This should be taken through to the Environmental Authorisations and be a mandatory component. In this regard, Environmental Monitoring Committees need to be sufficiently representative of the community and not left up to the local authorities

Local knowledge needs to be sourced during the public participation process and during the execution of specialist studies. This is of particular relevance when the project has bearing on a conservation area with a long history of public involvement.

Where a desired state has been established for a defined area (e.g. conservancy or similar organisation), the development proposals need to be appraised in the EIA against their compatibility with the area's predetermined vision. Where conflict exists, alternatives need to be identified. Serious consideration must be given to 2 or 3 alternatives during the process. Not just used as a smoke screen

Attached information - Conservancies in the Midvaal. **(Appendix 5)**



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Our Comments

1. Location in landscape, as per report, is described as a plain. As mentioned further in this report ridgeline and side slope of hills/ridge is stated. Was the Gauteng Ridge Policy taken into account when this decision was made?
2. There is a non-perennial water course, Varkensfontein, approximately 800 meters from the site. All these water courses eventually flow into the Vaal system, the main water supply for Gauteng. There is also Storm water gulley's on Meyerton Road below the site which diverts storm water towards the Varkensfontein
3. 25000 liters per day water usage from bore hole is excessive.
4. No alternative site has been identified.
5. No specialist was consulted regarding rare and endangered Flora.
6. Regarding the positive impact on production of poultry and poultry products in South Africa, the following is speculation: SA import poultry into SA from Brazil, small scale farmers cannot compete, abandoned broiler houses are found all over South Africa.
7. There is no permitted landfill site in the Midvaal.
8. Has the contractor been identified regarding the removal and making of compost off site? Will this composting site be in Walkers Fruit Farms?
9. It is not acceptable that carcasses are buried on site. Who will monitor the burial pits for correct procedures?
10. Has the crocodile and lion park undertaken to receive the carcasses?
11. The activity will produce large quantities of effluent and it is stated that it will be treated on site. This is not acceptable.
12. It is stated that the activity will produce domestic effluent that will be disposed of in a municipal sewage system.
There is no sewage service in Walkers Fruit Farms.
13. The ESKOM power supply is currently not able to maintain its supply in the area. Power failures are being experienced on a daily basis.
14. How can it be possible to state no visual impact as no site drawings have been attached as an appendix?
15. Traffic impact on the area. The fenced area referred to is not for public game viewing and as such no increase in traffic can be associated with that facility.
16. Septic tanks for such a large operation are not acceptable as ground water could be affected.
17. We have been advised that any chicken facility will definitely have odours. Flies and rats are also a problem at these facilities, and therefore this facility is unacceptable because of the close proximity to neighbours.
18. Regarding loss of habitat and Biodiversity, the facility will be using 7 hectares of the 10 hectare plot. It is stated that the whole site remains natural veld. Only 3 hectares or less can possibly remain natural veld.
19. Impact that may result from decommissioning and closure. Once 7 hectares are cleared and concrete foundations are laid it will have an impact on the environment. Refer Braam Van Wyk. **(Appendix 1)**



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20. The proposed development will not fit into the existing small scale farming of the area. The quantity of 360,000 poultry cannot be considered small scale farming. 7 hectares of chicken coops, housing 360,000 chickens is a **factory**.
21. The Local Council did a survey in Walkers Fruit Farms and the residents indicated that they did not want factories and large business in the area. Refer Councilor Rob Jones.
22. The Walkers Fruit Farms area does not have a high unemployment rate and therefore people brought in from other areas will have an impact on crime.
23. There is an illegal pig farm operating on plot 257 which is North West of the proposed development. Refer minutes of Meeting. **(Appendix 2)**
24. Pig carcasses are regularly dumped in the Walkers Fruit Farms area. **(Appendix 3)**
25. Huge amounts of chicken carcasses are regularly dumped in Walkers Fruit farms. **(Appendix 4)**
26. An existing small poultry farm in the area has a huge impact on odours. (Complaints are regularly received from neighbours. Complainants - contact E Kleinhans 0768502585 and L Findlay 0836321070)
27. Councilor Rob Jones notes of public meeting. Reply from Louise Bosman Thorntree Conservancy. **(Appendix 6)**
28. Comments on proposed development of Broiler farm In Walkers Fruit Farms JP Hayes Professor Emeritus Poultry Science University of Stellenbosch . **(Appendix7)**
29. Objection to Chicken Farm 255 WFF Mr. Shawn Pauw. **(Appendix 8)**
30. Interested and Affected Parties Comments. **(Appendix 9)**

Thanking you

Ivan Parkes
Chairman Gauteng Conservancy and Stewardship Association
Chairman Thorntree Conservancy
Executive National Association of Conservancies/ Stewardship South Africa (IUCN Liaison)
Executive Fire Protection Association Midvaal Local Municipality



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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVANCIES/STEWARDSHIP OF SOUTH AFRICA