

Attention: Assmang and Zutari
From: Rose Owen
Project: CRDC / Assmang – EIA for a combination of landuse options

Date: 27 September 2021
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Document Title: Assmang – Pre-Application Public Participation (PP) briefing with Inkosi Mlaba

Introduction

Based on the outcomes of the initial engagements with the relevant authorities and the pre-feasibility and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) process undertaken to date, the Cato Ridge Mixed-Use Land Development Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Application is currently being prepared by Zutari (previously known as Aurecon) on behalf of the Cato Ridge Development Company (CRDC) / Assmang for 3 proposed development areas within the Assmang owned properties in Cato Ridge.

An integral part of the EIA process includes Public Participation and Stakeholder Engagement, for which Phelamanga has been appointed as sub-consultant to Zutari.

During discussions with Zutari and CRDC / Assmang in the past weeks, key points were considered that would assist to ensure a robust Public Participation Process (PPP) is undertaken during the EIA process. Further to the discussions it was agreed that it was critical to engage with the Inkosi Mlaba of the AmaXimba tribe. Princess Thwala of Assmang assisted in the scheduling of a meeting with Inkosi Mlaba which was held on Monday 27 September 2021 at 12:00.

This Activity Note provides information on the discussions and agreements as undertaken in a meeting with Inkosi Mlaba, Zutari, Assmang and Phelamanga on 27 September 2021.

1. TEAM AND PROJECT INTRODUCTION

The meeting was attended by the Zutari Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) and Phelamanga which provided an opportunity to introduce the consultants to Inkosi Mlaba and Assmang team who had not met in person. The meeting attendees introduced themselves as:

Inkosi Sibangaya Mlaba (AmaXimba tribe)

Princess Thwala (Assmang)

Ashwin Sunilal (Assmang)

Werner Botha (Assmang)

Vusi (Assmang)

Jeanne-Louise Wiese (Zutari)

Londeka Mhlope (Phelamanga)

Philani Dlamini (Phelamanga)

Rose Owen (Phelamanga)

A short introduction of the project and EIA process was given to the attendees.

2. PRE-APPLICATION FOCUS GROUP MEETING

After inductions the purpose of the meeting was discussed. The purpose of the meeting was to obtain guidance and insights from the Inkosi with regards to appropriate steps in preparation for the PPP to be undertaken during the EIA process. The team are cognisant of the multiple pressure points in the area noting

that the Local Government elections are scheduled for 1 November 2021 and these may cause stressors on the process that could be managed through planning and engagement.

Rose Owen provided an overview of the proposed pre-application focus group meeting, that this would be a high level strategic engagement. This would provide an opportunity to get clarity on the issues relevant to the stakeholders and confirm the appropriate formats for ongoing PPP related to this project (e.g. open day, or public meeting, or Tribal council presentation, or community meeting etc).

After discussion with the Inkosi it was noted that the pre-application focus group meeting should be held after the Local Government elections. The suggested high level stakeholders to attend the focus group meeting were, for example, the Inkosi, business leaders in the area, leader of the taxi association, Indunas and any strategic community forum leaders.

It was noted that focus group meeting should ideally not be more than 20 people. The purpose of this meeting is to begin the information sharing process and provide opportunity for the strategic leadership in the area to give input into the most appropriate format for the wider community engagement during the Scoping and EIA phase PPP.

There was extensive discussion as to when the wider consultation would occur and it was suggested this should preferably occur towards January 2022 once the application for Environmental Authorisation (EA) has been submitted to the relevant Competent Authority. This would be confirmed after the CRDC meeting on 13 October 2021. It was further noted that the wider consultation would include access for stakeholders to documents and the opportunity for presentations at identified public engagements.

It was noted that Inkosi Mlaba would be able to invite the relevant stakeholders to the strategic focus group meeting and that the tribal council venue would be a good venue as it would accommodate the participants while meeting COVID-19 Protocols.

3. OUTCOMES

The meeting provided a useful opportunity for the project team to confirm the approach and timing for the pre-application strategic focus group meeting and the areas for follow up.

The following were identified:

- A meeting date for the week of 15 November was proposed and agreed.
- Inkosi Mlaba suggested the Tribal Council venue could be used for the strategic level pre-application focus group meeting
 - Inkosi Mlaba requested that the 17 November be used as Tribal council meets on a Wednesday.
 - While determining the outcomes Phelamanga would like to confirm that the purpose of the pre-application focus group meeting would be a strategic level engagement. Phelamanga would like to confirm whether meeting with the full tribal council would be appropriate, as it was envisaged that the pre-application focus group meeting would be no more than 20 people. Phelamanga would like to confirm whether the focus group meeting with strategic leadership from the area can be held prior to the council meeting, with a presentation of the outcomes performed at the council meeting on 17 November 2021?
- Inkosi Mlaba and Princess Thwala will liaise to confirm the attendees for the pre-application focus group meeting – Phelamanga and Zutari would appreciate some input on the invite list to ensure we meet the requirements for the process.
- Rose Owen would send an update to Princess Thwala for future communication to Inkosi Mlaba.

The project team found the engagement beneficial and thanked all the attendees for making the time to meet in person, discuss local experience and to identify items for consideration.