

REFERENCE: 15/3/2/12/BL2

Director: Engineering Services
Langeberg Municipality
Private Bag X2
ASHTON
6715

**REQUEST FOR PROVINCIAL PLANNING COMMENT: PROPOSED REZONING AND CONSENT
USES (SERVICE STATION, TOURIST FACILITY & RENEWABLE ENERGY STRUCTURE) ON PORTION
4 OF FARM JOUBERTSDAL NO. 189, SWELLENDAM DIVISION**

1. Your request for comment, dated 8 May 2021, has reference.
2. The application under consideration is for the following:
 - o A rezoning of a 52m² portion of the property from Agricultural Zone I to Business Zone II;
 - o A consent use for a Service Station under the proposed Business Zone II zoning;
 - o A consent use to permit a Renewable energy Structure (solar panels measuring 8 500 m²) on the property; and
 - o A consent use to permit a Tourist Facility (farm shop, restaurant and ablutions measuring ±348m²) on the property.
3. The subject property is located along Divisional Road 1333, off the R60, approximately 16km northwest of Swellendam. A cluster of buildings comprising two dwelling houses, pack stores, sheds and stables, have been erected on the property to support the farming operations on both the subject and adjacent properties.
4. The provision of renewable energy is aligned with the Western Cape government's drive to increase energy resilience not only to mitigate the effects of loadshedding and the resulting economic damage, but also because of the immense potential this sector has to attract investment, grow our regional economy and create jobs.
5. A topic closely related to renewable energy generation, is the establishment of Electric Vehicle Recharging Stations along our Province's main roads, with the intention to provide a station every 150 km. Inevitably some of these facilities will be located in rural locations. A holistic approach to the consideration these

applications, in consultation with abutting municipalities, will be required in order to reduce negative visual impacts on the rural landscape and the loss of productive agricultural land.

6. With the current technology, the recharging cycle of an electrical vehicle is in excess of 45 minutes. This implies that the occupants of these vehicle need to occupy themselves for the duration of the recharging cycle. The development proposals that this Directorate has had sight of all include auxiliary land uses, such as a shop, restaurant, farmstall, etc, which could lead to the establishment of undesirable rural nodes along transport routes.
7. Ideally charging stations should be placed in urban areas and when located in a rural environment should be clustered around existing infrastructure, such as farm stalls/rest stops/ conventional service stations, etc.
8. In terms of the Western Cape Land Use Planning Guidelines – Rural Areas, 2019, only essential infrastructure installations should be accommodated within the Agricultural SPC. In such instances, installations should be on land with a low agricultural value and should not interfere with, or impact negatively, on existing or planned production areas or agricultural infrastructure.
9. Whilst the tourist facility (shop, restaurant and ablutions) and four charging bays are accommodated within the existing main dwelling and outbuildings in the farm werf, the solar panel energy generating area, measuring 8 500m² in extent, is located on planted pastures, which is discouraged. In terms of the Western Cape Land Use Planning Guidelines – Rural Areas, 2019, only essential installations should be accommodated within the Agricultural SPC. In such instances, installations should be on land with a low agricultural value and should not interfere with, or impact negatively, on existing or planned production areas or agricultural infrastructure.
10. The extent of the energy generating area is further cause for concern, as the proposed site and extent has not been adequately motivated in the planning report. The charging stations in the area, i.e., Graham Beck Estate (Robertson), The Lab at Rosendal Farm (Robertson) and the Montagu Country Hotel (Montagu) all operate with rooftop solar panels, measuring ±2 000m² in extent. In fact, ZeroCC who list the subject property as a future EV charging destination on their network map, market their sites as offering bathrooms, a food and retail offering, four vehicle chargers and around 1 500 m² in solar panels.
11. It is, therefore, this Directorate's opinion that the extent and placement of the solar panels for the purpose of an Electric Vehicle Recharging Station warrants further consideration.

12. The above-mentioned comment is based on the information received. This Directorate reserves the right to submit contradictory and/or amended comment should any additional or new information be submitted.

Kobus Munro Digitally signed by Kobus Munro
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DIRECTOR: DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT (REGION 2)