

WEBBER WENTZEL

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The Honourable Minister Gwede Mantashe
Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy
c/o Ms Vuyelwa Siyeka
Personal Assistant to the Minister
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Your reference

Our reference
O Geldenhuys
3044509

Date
17 November 2020

Dear Honourable Minister Mantashe and Adv. Mokoena

APPLICATION IN TERMS OF SECTION 96(2) OF THE MPRDA FOR THE SUSPENSION OF THE DECISION TAKEN IN TERMS OF SECTION 102(1) OF THE MPRDA TO GRANT A MINE EXTENSION AT TORMIN MINE

1. We refer to the letter dated 13 November 2020 addressed to you by Shepstone & Wylie Attorneys on behalf of the Rights Holders in respect of the above suspension application. We do not intend to deal with each and every allegation in the letter under reply and our failure to do so should not be construed as an admission of any of the contents thereof.

WW Letter To Minister And DG Re S 96(2) MPRDA Application 171120(15858915.1)

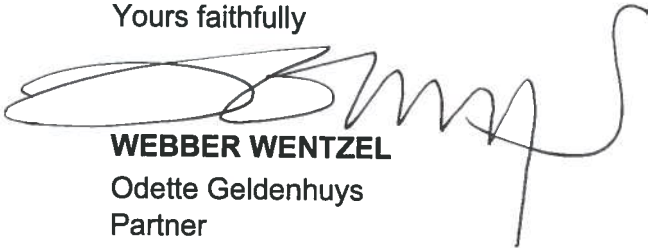
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2. As our client pointed out in paragraph 17 of its response to the Rights Holders' Reply in the suspension application ("the Response"), Regulation 74 of the Amendment MPRDA Regulations governs appeals, not applications in terms of section 96(2) of the MPRDA for the suspension of a decision, pending the outcome of an internal appeal in terms of the MPRDA. There are no regulations governing such suspension applications.
3. In the Response, our client motivated the basis upon which it was submitting the Response to the document which the Rights Holders submitted, and which they referred to as a "Reply". The Rights Holders' "Reply" contains the Rights Holders' grounds of opposition to the suspension application and is akin to an answering affidavit in court proceedings. It also contains new material. Prior to delivering the Response, our client motivated in its letter of 16 October 2020 addressed to the Honourable Minister why it was entitled to respond to the Reply. Our client addressed a further letter to the Honourable Minister on 30 October 2020, amongst other aspects, stating that it would be delivering its response to the Right Holders' Reply by 6 November 2020. The Right Holders did not object. Furthermore, the suspension application was lodged as a matter of urgency when our client became aware of the section 102(1) decision which is the subject of the internal appeal. Neither the DMRE, nor the Rights Holders' had advised our client that the section 102 decision had been taken.
4. In light of the issues raised in the Reply, and in order to place relevant information before the Honourable Minister, our client appointed independent experts to assess aspects of the environmental impacts in respect of the section 102(1) mining extension and the risks to the environment if the section 102 decision is not suspended. Their evidence is placed before the Honourable Minister in the Response, which includes their accompanying affidavits.
5. In the circumstances of all of the above, our client submits that it was entitled to deliver the Response. The Honourable Minister has a wide discretion as to the documents and information placed before the Honourable Minister for purposes of a suspension application and the procedures to be adopted in determining the suspension application.
6. In this particular suspension application, it is highly important that evidence be placed before the Honourable Minister in respect of the risks of environmental harm if the suspension application is not granted. Our client therefore denies (as alleged by the Rights Holders) that the Response is not properly before you and falls to be ignored, alternatively that the portions referred to in paragraph 4 of the letter under reply fall to be struck out as an improper attempt to make out a new case in reply.
7. However, our client acknowledges that the Response contains new matter and that it would be procedurally fair to allow the Rights Holders an adequate opportunity of 10 working days to respond to the new matter.
8. Our client therefore requests that the Honourable Minister notifies the Rights Holders' attorney that:
 - 8.1 Our client was entitled to deliver the Response, together with the supporting expert evidence;
 - 8.2 the entire Response, together with the supporting expert evidence, will form part of the information to be considered by the Honourable Minister when taking the decision in respect of whether or not to suspend the section 102(1) decision, pending the outcome of the internal appeal; and

- 8.3 the Rights Holders are afforded an opportunity of 10 working days to reply to the new matter in the Response and the supporting expert evidence, namely
- 8.3.1 Paras 63 – 69 of the Response together with the entire affidavit of Susan Brownlie;
- 8.3.2 Paras 70 – 77 of the Response together with the entire affidavit of Nick Helme;
- 8.3.3 Para 78 – 53.8 (sic) (the second one – on p.29) together with the entire affidavit of Peter Carrick;
- 8.3.4 the entire affidavit of Merle Sowman.

Yours faithfully



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