

BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT

The Construction and Operation of a Gene Transfer Centre (GTC) on the Remaining Extent of Portion 24 of the Farm Kleinfontein 432 JS, Middelburg

Reference number assigned by AdiEnvironmental cc: BA2017/03

Purpose of this document

- Overview of the proposed project;
- Overview of the Environmental Impact Assessment Process (EIA) to ensure that Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) understand the process;
- Invitation to I&APs to participate in the EIA process by:
 - ⇒ Indicating their view points, issues and concerns regarding the activity;
 - ⇒ Suggesting alternatives or ways of mitigating negative impacts and enhancing positive impacts.

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Introduction and Legal Requirements

Alzu Pig Genetics (Pty) Ltd intends to relocate the existing Gene Transfer Centre (GTC) from the farm Rockdale, Middelburg, to the Remaining Extent of Portion 24 of the farm Kleinfontein 432 JS, Middelburg.

The site is located north of the N4 national road between Middelburg and Wonderfontein, ±2 km northwest of the Alzu Petroport.

The Minister of Environmental and Water Affairs listed in terms of Sections 24(2) and 24D of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998), a number of activities that require an environmental impact assessment (either a Basic Assessment or a full Environmental Impact Assessment) before undertaking these activities.

The proposed project would involve the following listed activities (Government Notice R327 and R324 of 7 April 2017) as identified in terms of Section 24(2), 24(5), 24D and 44, read with section 47A(1)(b) of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998:

- **GN R327—Listing Notice 1, Listed Activity 4:** *The development and related operation of facilities or infrastructure for the*

concentration of animals in densities that exceed (i) 20 square metres per large stock unit and more than 500 units per facility; (ii) 8 square metres per small stock unit and; a. more than 1 000 units per facility excluding pigs where (b) applies; or b. more than 250 pigs per facility excluding piglets that are not yet weaned; (iii) 30 square metres per crocodile and more than 20 crocodiles per facility (iv) 3 square metre per rabbit and more than 500 rabbits per facility; (v) 250 square metres per ostrich or emu and more than 50 ostriches or emus per facility.

- **GN R327 – Listing Notice 1, Listed Activity 28:** *Residential, mixed, retail, commercial, industrial or institutional developments where such land was used for agriculture, game farming, equestrian purposes or afforestation on or after 1 April 1998 and where such development: (i) will occur inside an urban area, where the total land to be developed is bigger than 5 hectares; or (ii) will occur outside an urban area, where the total land to be developed is bigger than 1 hectare.*

In order to obtain approval (authorization) for this project, a specific procedure must be followed as stipulated in the Environmental Impact

Assessment Regulations, 2014 (as amended), which requires specific documentation (Basic Assessment Report) to be submitted.

Once all the required documentation has been submitted and the environmental process completed, the responsible authority must make a decision on the application.

The environmental decision making authority for this application is the Mpumalanga Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs.

A water use licence application in terms of the National Water Act, 1998 (Act 36 of 1998) will be submitted with regards to the following water uses:

- 21(a) - The taking of water from a water resource (e.g. abstracting water from a borehole).
- 21 (c) and (i) - Impeding or diverting the flow of water in a watercourse or altering the bed, banks, course or characteristics of a watercourse (e.g. activity is located within 500 m of a wetland/watercourse).
- 21(e) - Engaging in a controlled activity: Irrigation of any land with waste or water containing waste (e.g. spreading of biodegradable manure on agricultural lands).
- 21 (g) - Disposing of waste in a manner which may detrimentally impact on a water resources (e.g. storage of biodegradable manure in a manure pit/dam).

In addition, an application in terms of the National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 will also be submitted.

Part of the above-mentioned process is to inform interested and affected parties (I&APs) of the proposed project and to obtain any issues of concern. You are hereby invited to register as an I&AP and provide input with regards to the proposed activity.

Environmental Consultant

AdiEnvironmental was appointed as independent environmental consultant to conduct the required environmental impact assessment and compile the necessary documentation.

AdiEnvironmental cc

P.O. Box 647

Witbank (eMalahleni Central)

1035

Tel/fax: (013) 697-5021

E-mail: riana@adienvironmental.co.za

Contact person: R. van Rensburg



Public Participation

Aim of Public Participation

- To inform Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) and Stakeholders of the proposed project.
- To allow for the registration of I&APs and thereby present I&APs with the opportunity to comment on the project, contribute ideas, raise concerns and review reports.

*In order to ensure that you are identified as an interested and/or affected party; please submit your name, contact information and interest in the matter to the contact person within 30 days of receipt of this document (i.e. no later than **12 September 2017**).*

If you know of any other interested and affected party who should be registered as an I&AP, it would be appreciated if you could forward the relevant contact details to AdiEnvironmental.

Public meeting

At this stage, it is not anticipated that a public meeting will be held. Should this change, the public meeting will be announced and all I&APs will be invited to attend the meeting.

Who are interested and affected parties?

An interested and affected party (I&AP) can be defined as any person, group of persons or organisation interested in or affected by a proposed activity or any organ of state that may have jurisdiction over any aspect of the activity.

The public participation process allows I&APs the opportunity to:

- Obtain clear and accurate information about the proposed activity;
- Indicate their viewpoints, issues and concerns regarding the activity;
- Suggest alternatives or ways of mitigating negative impacts and enhancing positive impacts.

What are the responsibilities of an interested and affected party?

In order to participate effectively, I&APs should:

- Become involved in the process as early as possible;
- Register as I&APs;
- Advise the consultant of other I&APs who should be consulted;
- Contribute towards the design of the public participation process to ensure that it is acceptable to all I&APs;
- Follow the process once it has been accepted;
- Read the material provided and actively seek to understand the issues involved;
- Give timely responses to correspondence;
- Be respectful and courteous towards other I&APs and the environmental consultant;
- Refrain from making subjective, unfounded or ill-informed statements;
- Recognize that the process is confined to issues that are directly relevant to the application.

Availability of Reports

The following reports will be made available to interested and affected parties for evaluation purposes-

- Background Information Document (BID);
- Basic Assessment Report;
- Environmental Authorisation and Reasons for Decision.

A copy of the above-mentioned documents will also be provided on our website: www.adienvironmental.co.za

How to comment

Comments, questions, issues of concern or objections can be made in writing (by fax, e-mail or post). For your convenience, a comment sheet is attached to this document. Should you not be able to provide us with written comment, please give us a call.

If you do not wish to submit comments, please still provide us with your contact details and indicate whether you would like to remain on the mailing list.

Project Description

Alzu Pig Genetics (Pty) Ltd (t/a PIC South Africa) intends to relocate the existing Gene Transfer Centre (GTC) from the farm Rockdale, Middelburg, to the Remaining Extent of Portion 24 of the farm Kleinfontein 432 JS, Middelburg. The reason for the relocation is that the landowner intends to develop the Rockdale property for residential purposes.

The site is located north of the N4 national road between Middelburg and Wonderfontein, ±2 km northwest of the Alzu Petroport (Figure 1). The entire property is 234 ha in extent, of which ±4 ha will be utilized for the GTC facility. The centre co-ordinates of the site are: 25°49'07.02"S and 29°46'40.25"E. As indicated in Figure 2, most of the site is cultivated.

The intention is to initially house 200 boars at the new facility, with eventual expansion to house 400 boars. The existing Rockdale GTC facility can currently house 150 boars. The proposed layout plan is provided in Figure 2.

The new GTC facility will comprise of boar pens, a laboratory, offices, guardroom, laundry, canteen, effluent catch pit/manure dam, workshop, shavings shed, feed silos and parking area. The entire site will be fenced for bio-security reasons.

Water for the facility will be obtained from boreholes. Biodegradable manure will be stored temporarily in a manure dam/pit and spread onto cultivated lands.

As is currently happening at the Rockdale GTC facility, semen from quality pig lines will be collected from boars, processed and packaged, and distributed to various customers across the country for artificial insemination of sows. Due to increased market demand, the applicant decided to expand the GTC facility as indicated.

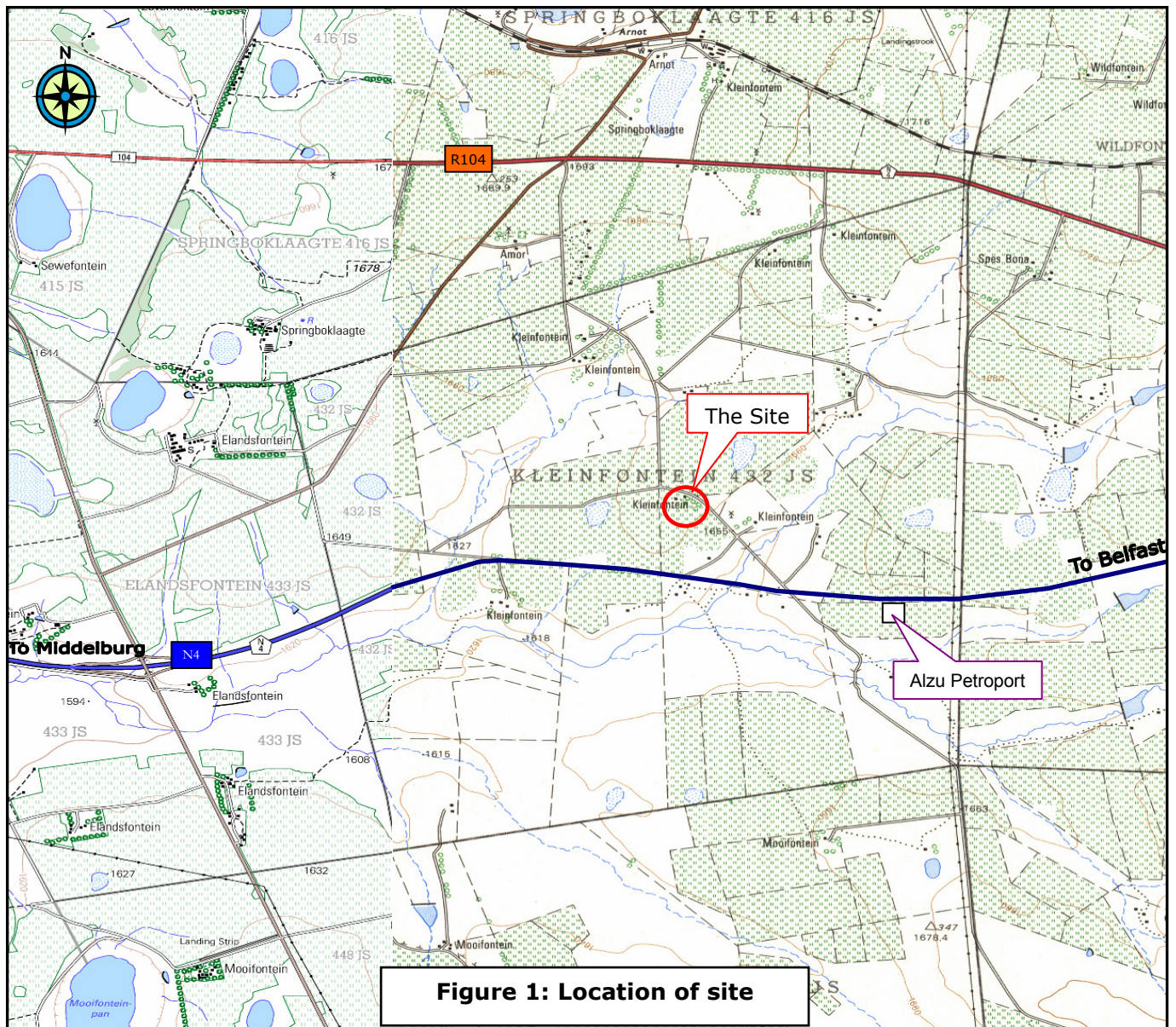
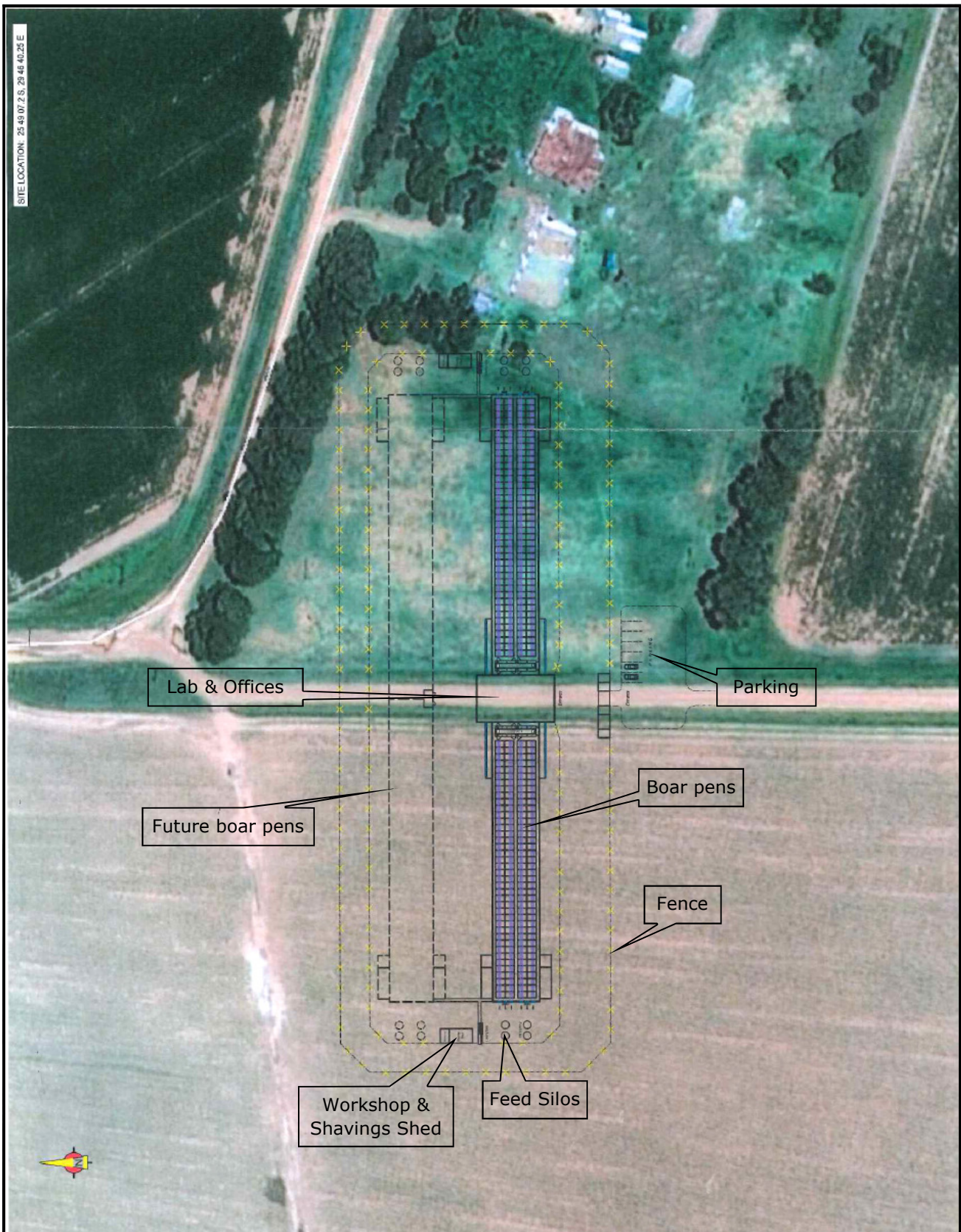


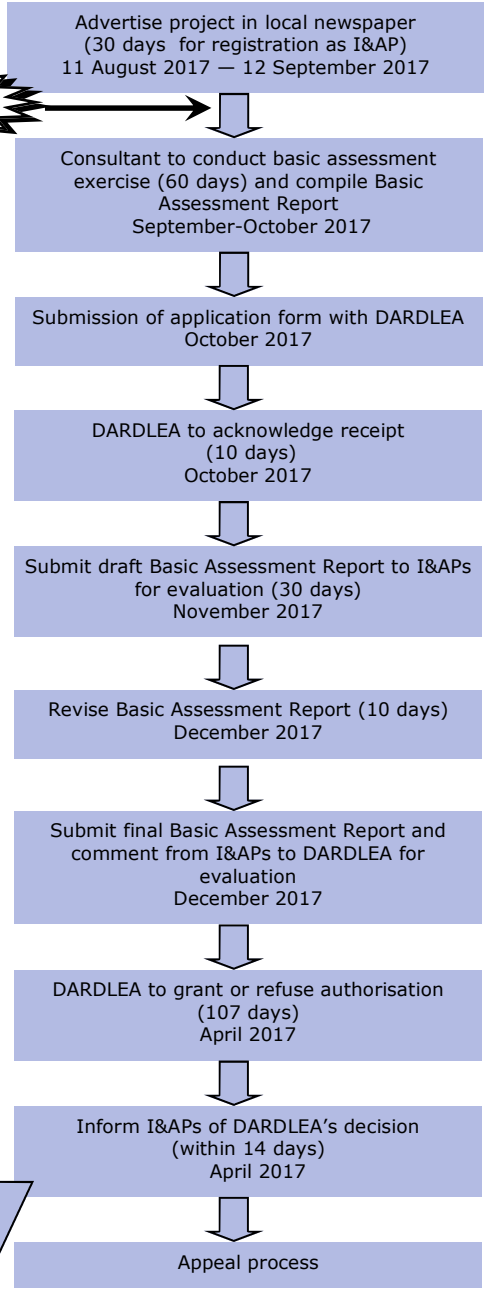
Figure 2: Aerial view and layout plan



Process to be followed

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Public Participation



In order to determine whether approval can be obtained for a proposed activity, a specific procedure must be followed. Government Notice R326 regulates the procedure for the submission, processing and consideration of applications. In short, the Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) must:

- complete an application form (Regulation 16);
- compile a Basic Assessment Report (Regulation 19 and Appendix 1 to the Regulations);
- follow a public participation process (Regulations 39–44).

The process that will be followed by the EAP as well as the anticipated timeframes are attached for perusal. The aim of the process is to ensure that the environmental impacts are considered, the relevant I&APs are consulted and the decision making authorities are provided with sufficient information to make an informed decision.

Information with regards to the following environmental features of the said site will be provided in the Basic Assessment Report:

- Topography
- Geology
- Soil
- Land use
- Natural vegetation/plant life
- Animal life
- Surface water
- Groundwater
- Air quality
- Noise
- Sites of archaeological or cultural interest
- Sensitive landscapes
- Visual aspects
- Traffic
- Sense of place
- Interested and affected parties

The Basic Assessment Report will thus provide information regarding the planned activity, the environmental features of the said site and the public participation process followed. It will also provide an indication of the potential impacts that could result during the construction and operational phases of this project as well as possible mitigation/management measures to be implemented.

PLEASE NOTE: TIME TABLE SUBJECT TO CHANGE THROUGH PROCESS FOLLOWED

*It would be appreciated if you could complete the attached comment sheet indicating your issues of concern and/or objections and could forward this comment sheet to AdiEnvironmental by **12 September 2017**.*

