



28 September 2017

THE SOUTH AFRICAN HERITAGE RESOURCES AGENCY (SAHRA)

To whom it may concern

LETTER FOR HIA EXEMPTION REQUEST: GENETICS TRANSFER CENTRE (PIGGERY) ON PORTION 9 AND THE REMAINDER OF PORTION 24 OF THE FARM KLEINFONTEIN 432 JS, MIDDELBURG, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

Background

The above mentioned project refers. The project is located on the Portion 9 and the Remaining Extent of Portion 24 of the farm Kleinfontein 432 JS. This is close to the town of Middelburg in the Mpumalanga Province (Figure 1-3).

The size of the development is approximately 4 ha. A central co-ordinate for the development is 25°49'20,2"S; 29° 46'27,1"E.

The application forms part of a Basic Assessment process. Alzu Pig Genetics (Pty) Ltd intends to relocate the existing Gene Transfer Centre (GTC) from the farm Rockdale, Middelburg, to the farm Kleinfontein 432 JS. The intention is to initially house 200 boars, with eventual expansion to house 400 boars. The 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. After the site visit a change was made to the site to be utilised (Figure 4-5). For the final site to be developed, the northern section is the same as in the original proposal with the southern section added, while the area towards the west are not included any more.

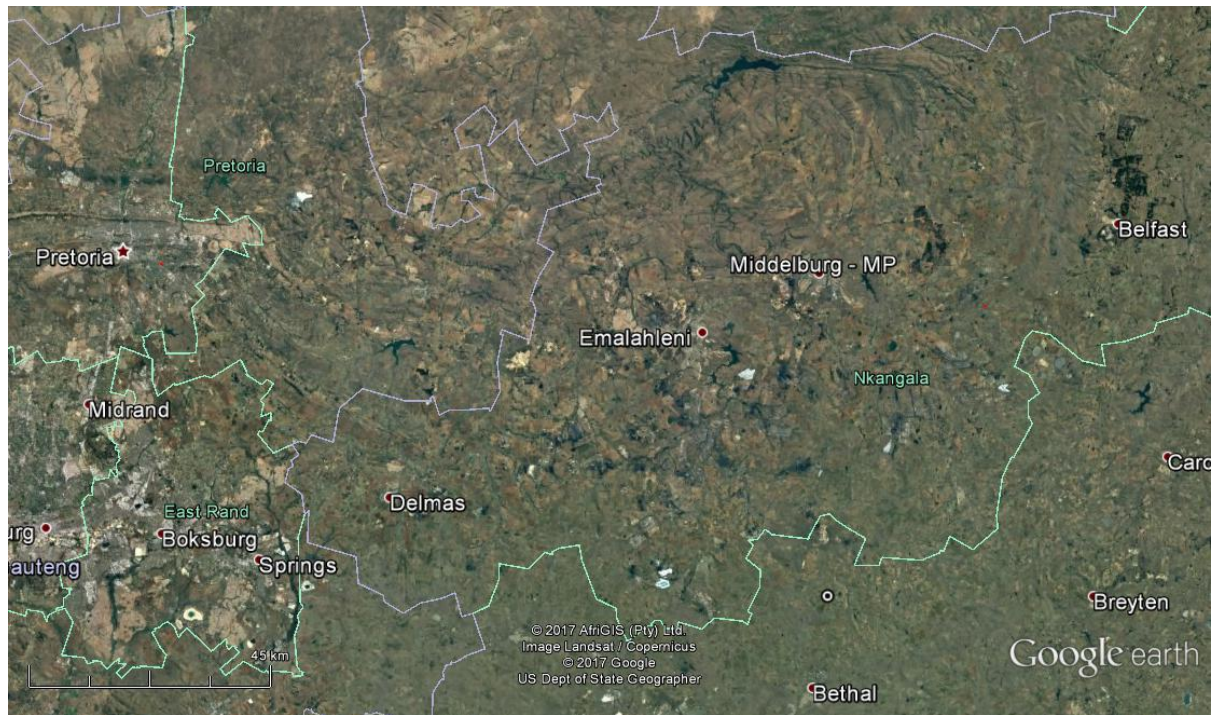


Figure 1: Location of Middelburg in the Mpumalanga Province.

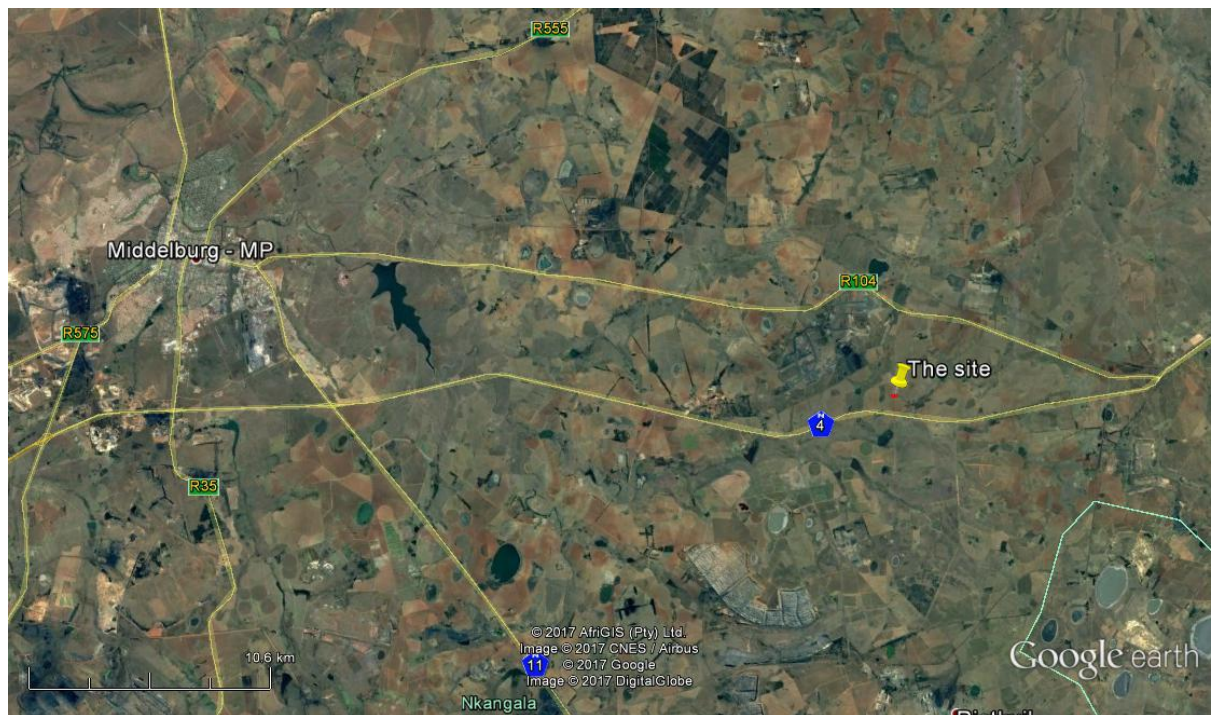


Figure 2: Location of the site in relation to Middelburg.



Figure 3: Map of surrounding farms, indicating the development area.



Figure 4: Detail of the site originally planned to be developed and therefore surveyeyd.



Figure 5: Final site to be developed. Note that the northern section is the same as in the original proposal with the southern section added, while the area towards the west are not included any more.

Site visit

The site was visited on 27 September 2017 (Figure 6). It was noted that the areas where the piggery will be built, have already been disturbed (Figure 7-9). The site consist of two sections. The first lies towards the west of a gravel road and consist of agricultural fields. These were bare during the site visit and as a result the entire area could be viewed in one glance. The second area, of a similar size lies towards the east of the gravel road. This used to be part of a farm yard and various structures are still visible. Currently it is used as a road workers camp.

The western section is now not included in the proposal any more. It is replaced by a section towards the south. This section however has exactly the same characteristics, consisting of barren agricultural fields.

The boundary of the development runs through the farm yard and most of the buildings are found outside of the development. In fact apart for the various broken down structures and infrastructure, which are younger than 60 years of age, only one building is present. This building is a house, also younger than 60 years and therefore also has no heritage significance (Figure 10).

Certain sections consist of open areas and others of weeds and grass, a clear indication of the disturbance. The chances therefore of finding any heritage related features are indeed extremely slim. Accordingly nothing of heritage significance was found inside of the development during the site visit.

The developer should however note that some of the buildings from the farm yard outside of the area to be developed, are older than 60 years and may be impacted on. Two buildings, the old farm house (Figure 11-12) and an outbuilding (Figure 13) should be prevented from further deterioration. In fact, if possible it could be re-used as part of the development. The house is still in a very good condition on the outside, but it had been stripped of interior features. These are however replaceable.

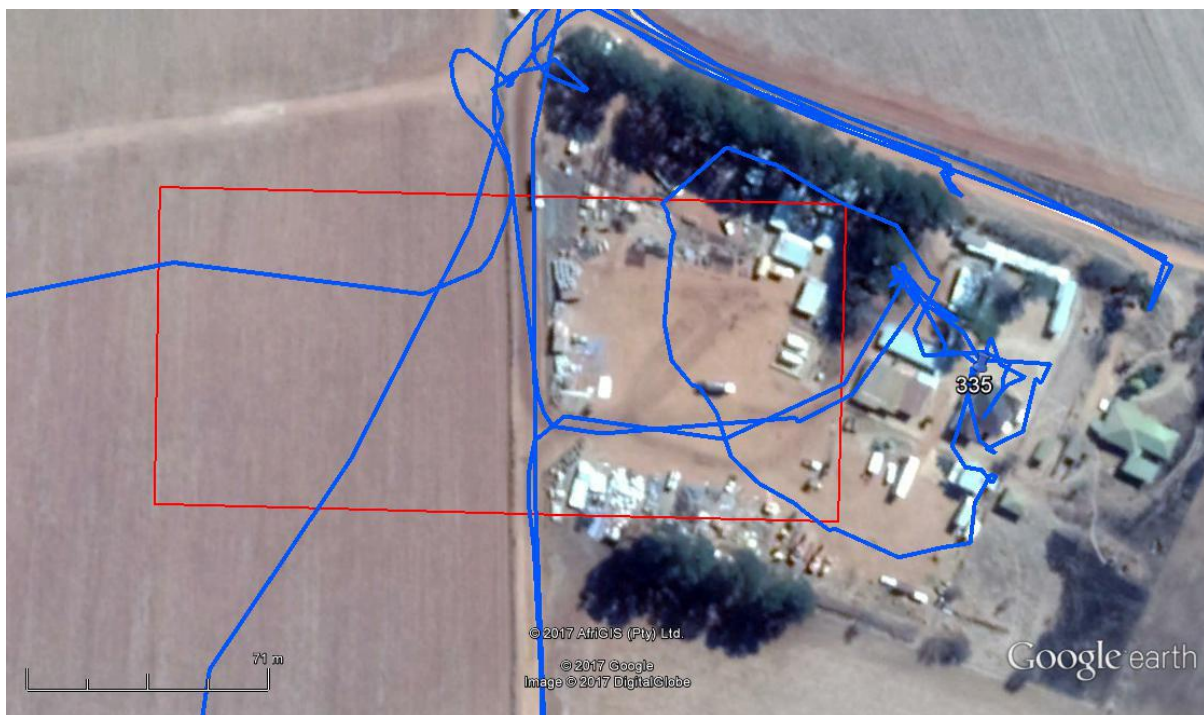


Figure 6: Track route of the survey done on the originally proposed land.



Figure 7: Western section of the area to be developed. Although this is not included any more, the section towards the south which is now included has similar characteristics.



Figure 8: View of the eastern section of the area to be developed. Note the vegetation clearly indicating disturbance as well as other infrastructure, such as a concrete floor.



Figure 9: Another view of the site's eastern section. Note the different structures and infrastructure.



Figure 10: Closer view of the building on site.



Figure 11: The farm house, just outside of the development area.



Figure 12: Interior view of the house.



Figure 13: Outbuilding at the farm yard, outside of the area to be developed, which is also older than 60 years.

Heritage desktop assessment

It needs to be indicated that SAHRA requested a heritage desktop assessment for this project. On the SAHRIS database, no information about this particular farm or portions was noted. There are much information about ‘Kleinfontein’, but in all cases these refer to farms in Mpumalanga or even other provinces, such as Gauteng and the Northern Cape. From a broader perspective, the following can be noted:

Stone Age:

The Stone Age is the period in human history when lithic material was mainly used to produce tools (Coertze & Coertze 1996: 293). In South Africa the Stone Age can be divided in three periods. It is, however, important to note that dates are relative and only provide a broad framework for interpretation.

The division for the Stone Age according to Korsman & Meyer (1999: 93-94) is as follows:

- Early Stone Age (ESA) 2 million – 150 000 years ago;
- Middle Stone Age (MSA) 150 000 – 30 000 years ago; and
- Late Stone Age (LSA) 40 000 years ago – 1850 - A.D.

The environment around Middelburg, Wonderfontein and Belfast is not one known for containing Stone Age sites. This may be a result of not much research having been done here.

However, no Stone Age sites are indicated on a map contained in a historical atlas of this area (Bergh 1999: 4). The closest known Stone Age occurrences are Late Stone Age sites at Carolina and Badplaas, and rock painting sites close to Machadodorp, Badplaas and Carolina (Bergh 1999: 4-5).

The environment of the surveyed area is such that it does not provide natural shelter. It therefore is possible that Stone Age people did not settle inside of the surveyed area, but perhaps in nearby caves or rock shelters. They would definitely have been lured to the area due to an abundance of wild life as the occurrence of water and natural vegetation would have provided ample grazing. One may therefore find open air sites or occasional stone tools in the broader environment.

Iron Age:

The Iron Age is the name given to the period of human history when metal was mainly used to produce metal artefacts (Coertze & Coertze 1996: 346). In South Africa it can be divided in two separate phases according to Van der Ryst & Meyer (1999: 96-98), namely:

- Early Iron Age (EIA) 200 – 1000 A.D.; and
- Late Iron Age (LIA) 1000 – 1850 A.D.

Huffman (2007: xiii) however, indicates that a Middle Iron Age should be included. His dates, which now seem to be widely accepted in archaeological circles, are:

- Early Iron Age (EIA) 250 – 900 A.D.;
- Middle Iron Age (MIA) 900 – 1300 A.D.; and
- Late Iron Age (LIA) 1300 – 1840 A.D.

In an area around Middelburg, Wonderfontein and Belfast, including Lydenburg, Nelspruit, Machadodorp and Badplaas a number of 1 792 Iron Age sites have been identified (Bergh 1999: 7). These all are dated to the Late Iron Age. Sites such as these are known for extensive stone building forming settlement complexes. No indication of metal smelting was identified at any of these sites (Bergh 1999: 8).

It is also known that the early trade routes did not run through this area (Bergh 1999: 9). However one should bear in mind that many of these areas may not have been surveyed before and therefore the possibility of finding new sites is always a reality. For instance, one Late Iron Age/ Historical site was found during a previous survey in the vicinity of Wonderfontein, which lies approximately 10 km towards the east of the surveyed area (Archaetnos database).

The type of environment is suitable for human habitation as ample building material, water, grazing and fuel are available. One would therefore expect that Iron Age people may have utilized the broader environment. This is the same reason why white settlers later on moved into this environment.

Historical Age:

The historical age started with the first recorded oral histories in the area. It includes the moving into the area of people that were able to read and write. This era is sometimes called the Colonial era or the recent past.

Due to factors such as population growth and a decrease in mortality rates, more people inhabited the country during the recent historical past. Therefore and because less time has passed, much more cultural heritage resources from this era have been left on the landscape. It is important to note that all cultural resources older than 60 years are potentially regarded as part of the heritage and that detailed studies are needed in order to determine whether these indeed have cultural significance. Factors to be considered include aesthetic, scientific, cultural and religious value of such resources.

At the beginning of the 19th century the Phuthing, a South Sotho group, stayed to the south of Wonderfontein. The Koni of Makopole stayed to the north-east and the Ndzundza Ndebele to the west. During the Difaquane they fled to the south, south-west and north-west as Mzilikazi's impi moved in from the southeast. During this time the Swazi also moved into this area (Bergh 1999: 10-11; 109).

The first white traveller to visit these surroundings was Robert Scoon in 1836 (Bergh 1999: 13). The area around Middelburg, Wonderfontein and Belfast, stretching as far as the Kruger Park and Ohrigstad, was first traded from the Swazi in 1846. White farmers therefore only settled here after this date (Bergh 1999: 16, 133).

During the Anglo-Boer War the broader environment saw much action. The last of the conventional military encounters between the British and Boer forces were that of the Battle of Bergendal, sometimes called the Battle of Dalmanutha. The battle took place between 21 and 27 August 1900. This site lies approximately 30 km to the east of the project area.

On 21-22 August skirmishes started on the farm Van Wyksvlei, to the south-east. This was followed by an attack on 23 August by the British on the Boer forces on the farm Geluk, also close to the town of Belfast. Later that day the Boers at Dalmanutha were also under attack. The final phase of the battle was at Bergendal on 27 August 1900 (Van der Westhuizen & Van der Westhuizen 2000: 218-220). The Boers retreated from the scene and the British could continue their advance to the Lowveld.

One may therefore expect to find farm buildings, structures and objects in the area. Many graveyards from this period in time have been identified in surrounding areas during past surveys (Archaetnos database).

Public consultation

Public consultation (Figure 14-15) is handled by the Environmental Impact Assessment Practitioner, namely Adienvironmental, who can be contacted via Adie Erasmus at e-mail: adie@adienvironmental.co.za. A detailed report can be requested from them. Site notices were

placed at the site and at entrance routes to the site on 14 August 2017 and a newspaper notice was placed in the Middelburg Observer on 11 August 2017.



Figure 14: Site notice.

NOTICE OF THE COMMENCEMENT OF A BASIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Notice is herewith given in terms of Section 24(2) and 24D of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998), as amended, and the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014 (as amended), of the intent to carry out a **basic environmental assessment process** for the following activity:

Description of the activity:

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 intention is to initially house 200 boars, with eventual expansion to house 400 boars. The 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.

The proposed project would involve Listed Activities 4 and 28 of Listing Notice 1 (GN R327 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.

Applications in terms of Sections 21 (a), 21(c), 21(e), 21(g) and 21(i) of the National Water Act, 1998 and the National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 will also be submitted.

Location of the activity:

The GTC facility will be located on 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.

Extent (area) of the development:

The entire property is 234 ha in extent, of which ±4 ha will be utilized for the GTC facility.

Name of proponent:

Alzu Pig Genetics (Pty) Ltd

Date of advertisement:

11 August 2017

In order to ensure that you are identified as an interested and/or affected party or to obtain a copy of the Background Information Document; please submit your name, contact information and interest in the matter to the contact person on/before **12 September 2017**. Reference number assigned by AdiEnvironmental cc: **BA2017/03**



Name of consultant:

AdiEnvironmental cc.
P.O. Box 647, Witbank, 1035
Tel/fax: 013-697 5021
E-mail: riana@adienvironmental.co.za
Contact person: Riana van Rensburg

Please note: No Jobs Available

Figure 15: Detail of notices.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the above evidence, it is my opinion that the project may be exempted from doing a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA). The area is completely disturbed and will probably not yield substantial heritage features. This include the southern section which was added later, as this consist of agricultural field, lying bare at present. The heritage desktop assessment also indicated, that although the broader environment may contain heritage features, none are known on the surveyed farm.

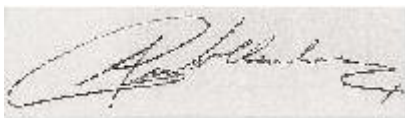
It is therefore believed that an additional Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) is not needed for this project. This letter serves as an exemption request to the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA).

The following is recommended:

- That the development be exempted by the SAHRA from doing an HIA.
- That the developer take note of the historical buildings just outside of the project area and ensure the protection/ utilisation thereof. Permission for such matters should be dealt with by the Provincial Heritage Resources Authority of Mpumalanga.
- Due to the nature of archaeological material, such sites, objects or features, as well as graves and burials may be uncovered during construction activities on site. In such a case work should cease immediately and an archaeologist should be contacted as a matter of urgency in order to assess such occurrences.

I trust that you will find this in order.

Yours faithfully



Prof AC van Vollenhoven: Director

References

Archaetnos database.

Bergh, J.S. (red.). 1999. **Geskiedenisatlas van Suid-Afrika. Die vier noordelike provinsies.** Pretoria: J.L. van Schaik.

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Huffman, T.N. 2007. **Handbook to the Iron Age: The Archaeology of Pre-Colonial Farming Societies in Southern Africa.** Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press.

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SAHRA's SAHRIS database.

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Van der Westhuizen, G. & Van der Westhuizen, E. 2000. **Gids tot die Anglo-Boereoorlog in die Oos-Transvaal.** (TRANSRO Pers, Roodepoort).