

**SITE SENSITIVITY VERIFICATION  
REPORT  
FOR  
THE PROPOSED EXPANSION OF A  
CHICKEN LAYER FACILITY AND  
ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE ON  
PORTION 65 OF THE FARM GROOTVLEI  
272 JR, ROOIWAL IN PRETORIA WITHIN  
THE JURISDICTION OF CITY OF  
TSHWANE METROPOLITAN  
MUNICIPALITY, GAUTENG PROVINCE.**

**Author: Sinnah Mhlongo**

**Date Issued: August 2025**

**Client: Viomec Farm (Pty) Ltd**

**Physical Address: 546 16<sup>th</sup> Road, Block 2, Constantia Park, Randjespark, 1682**

**Email: [shonie@scprojects.co.za](mailto:shonie@scprojects.co.za) / [admin@scprojects.co.za](mailto:admin@scprojects.co.za)**

**Tel: 011 026 2560**

**Cell: 079 614 8298 /079 569 5277**

**Fax: 086 552 0171**




<b>DOCUMENT STATUS</b>	
<b>Client</b>	Viomec Farm
<b>Project Name</b>	Proposed Expansion of a Chicken Layer Facility and associated infrastructure on Portion 65 of the farm Grootvlei 272 JR, Rooiwal in Pretoria within the Jurisdiction of the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality, Gauteng Province
<b>Document Name</b>	Site Sensitivity Verification Report
<b>Project Number (Internally)</b>	01_0125A_ Viomec Farm
<b>Version</b>	Revision 1
<b>Issued Date</b>	August 2025


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*This document has been approved for publishing by:*

<b>Action</b>	<b>Name / Designation</b>	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Prepared by</b>	<b>Sinnah Mhlongo</b>  <i>Can.Sci.Nat</i> <i>Registered CHSO</i>		August 2025
<b>Reviewed by</b>	<b>Shonisani Selahle</b>  <i>Pr.Sci.Nat</i> <i>Registered EAP</i> <i>Registered CHSM</i>		August 2025
<b>Approved by (internally)</b>	<b>Shonisani Selahle</b>  <i>Pr.Sci.Nat</i> <i>Registered EAP</i>		August 2025

	<i>Registered CHSM</i>		
<b>Accepted by (Viomec Farm)</b>	<b>Tshifiwa Tsatsawane</b>		August 2025

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

A Site Sensitivity Verification (SSV) Report describes the outcomes of a site sensitivity verification done through desktop analysis and a field investigation conducted for the proposed site to confirm the actual state of the site compared with what is identified by the National Web-based Environmental Screening Tool.

The SSV is intended to confirm or refute the environmental sensitivity themes relevant to the site and the need to employ specialists as identified in the Screening Report. The Site Sensitivity Verification is undertaken before the commencement of an EIA process. The report is submitted as a supporting document with the application for environmental authorisation to the competent authority.

This report forms part of the Basic Assessment for Proposed Expansion of a Chicken Layer Facility and associated Infrastructure on Portion 65 of the Farm Grootvlei 272 JR, Rooiwal in Pretoria within the Jurisdiction of the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality, Gauteng Province. It addresses the findings of the Screening Report, generated from the National Web-Based Environmental Screening Tool, and motivates the various specialist studies identified to be conducted. It also discusses whether the specialist studies forming part of this project are required to comply with the protocols or not.

The Protocols for the Assessment and Minimum Criteria for Reporting on Identified Environmental Themes (the protocol) were promulgated in Government Notice No. 320, published in Government Gazette No. 43110 on the 20th of March 2020 and which came into effect on the 9th of May 2020. The Protocols are allowed for in terms of Sections 25(5)(a) and (h) and 44 of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (as amended) (Act No. 107 of 1998) (NEMA). These protocols must be complied with for every new application submitted after the effective date of the protocols. The screening report was generated on the 11th of November 2024 and the site sensitivity verification was conducted on the 06<sup>th</sup> of February 2025 through the on-site inspection.

## 2 AIM OF THE SITE SENSITIVITY VERIFICATION REPORT

- To verify the land use and theme sensitivity as identified by the DFFE Screening tool.
- To agree or dispute on the theme sensitivity ratings.
- To motivate as to why the need for the identified specialist studies is challenged.

## 3 METHODOLOGY

According to the protocols, the EAP must verify the site's environmental sensitivity in accordance with theme sensitivity and required specialists' studies as identified by the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and Environment (DFFE) screening tool. This site verification report was compiled based on the sensitivity map and wetland map in combination with a site visit which was aimed to investigate, identify and evaluate potential impacts associated with the proposed development of the receiving environment.

## 4 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Viomec Farm (Pty) Ltd (applicant) proposes to expand their Chicken Layer Facility and associated Infrastructure in Rooiwal town, located in Pretoria.

The proposed development will be carried out under the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations 2014, as amended under the National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998) as amended. The proposed expansion is intended to accommodate approximately ±100 000 chickens on a site measuring approximately 8.5 hectares in extent. The proposed development footprint is approximately 1.5 Hectares. The proposal will include adding the following infrastructure:

- 5 x chicken layer houses
- 1 x Borehole

The current operations of the chicken layer facility have existing infrastructure that accommodates approximately 4300 chickens to date. The existing infrastructures are as follows:

- 2x accommodation Houses
- 2x Chicken Rearing House
- 2x Chicken Houses
- 1x Staff Changing Rooms
- 2x Toilets
- 1x Eggs Packing Facility
- 1x Borehole
- 1x Septic Tank
- 1x Rainwater Storage
- 1x Storage
- 1x Pig House
- 1x Duck house
- 1x Goat House
- 5x Gates
- 1x Drying Bed
- 1x Kraal

#### **4.1 Project location**

The study area is located 12 km North of Hammanskraal on Portion 65 of the Farm Grootvlei 272 JR, Rooiwal in Pretoria within the Jurisdiction of the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality. The study area will cover an extent of approximately 8.5 Hectares and the proposed study area can be accessed through Kremetart Street and unnamed gravel road in Rooiwal Town. The coordinates for the site are **25°30'37.39"S 28°16'59.28"E** (refer to Figure 1 for the site locality).

Selahle Consultancy and Projects (Pty) Ltd (SCP) was appointed by Viomec Farm (Pty) Ltd to undertake the Basic Assessment for the Proposed Expansion of a Chicken Layer Facility and associated Infrastructure on Portion 65 of the Farm Grootvlei 272 JR, Rooiwal in Pretoria within the Jurisdiction of the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality, Gauteng Province.

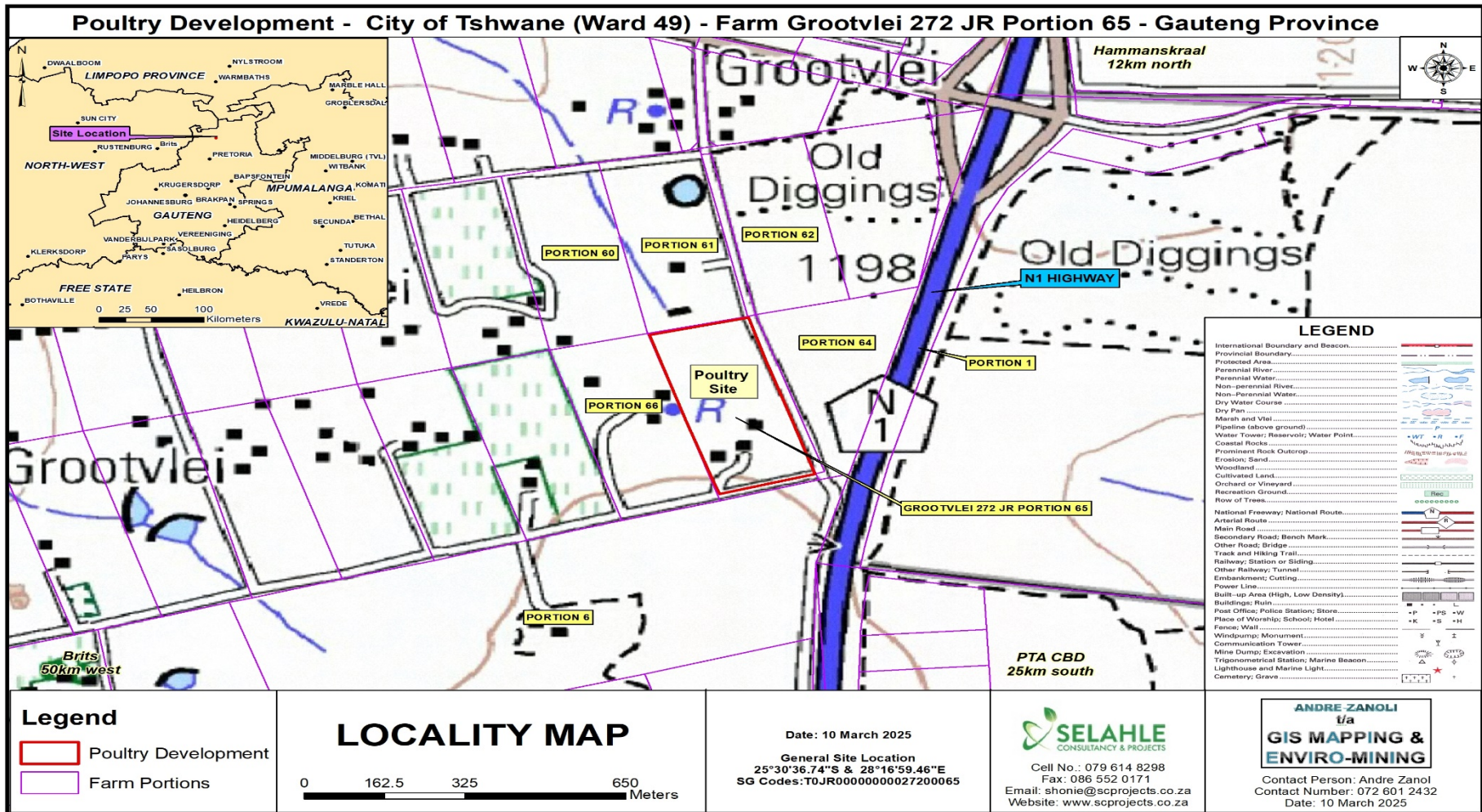


Figure 1: Locality Map of the proposed expansion

## 5 THEMES AND ENVIRONMENTAL SENSITIVITY IDENTIFIED BY THE SCREENING TOOL

The table below indicates the level of sensitivity of each of the themes identified in the DFFE Screening tool report for the proposed development.

Table 1: DFFE Screening Tool Findings

Theme	Very High Sensitivity	High Sensitivity	Medium Sensitivity	Low Sensitivity
Agriculture Theme			X	
Animal Species Theme			X	
Aquatic Biodiversity Theme				X
Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Theme				X
Civil Aviation Theme		X		
Defence Theme	X			
Plant Species Theme				X
Terrestrial Biodiversity Theme				X

Table 2: DFFE Sensitivity Themes and Motivation from EAP


No	Theme	DFFE Sensitivity	Agree/ Disagree	Proposed Sensitivity	Motivation
1	Agriculture Theme	Medium sensitivity	Agree	Medium sensitivity	The site is currently used for agricultural purposes, which entails poultry farming, grazing and crop farming. The finding of the Screening Tool Report is thus aligned.
2	Animal Species Theme	Medium sensitivity	Disagree	Low sensitivity	The site is currently being used for agriculture, reducing the likelihood of sensitive or protected animal species being present. Consequently, the sensitivity is deemed Low, and no specialist assessment is deemed necessary.
3	Aquatic Biodiversity Theme	Low Sensitivity	Disagree	Medium Sensitivity	<p>Although the site is not situated near any significant water bodies, wetlands, or watercourses, the nature of activities might trigger impacts on the groundwater features. These includes but not limited to the underground septic tanks, manure drying beds and boreholes. These features can significantly impact of the groundwater ecosystems. A Geohydrological Study will be undertaken to assess the impacts on the groundwater and also to evaluate other nearby water uses.</p> <p>Despite the screening tool rated this low, there need to assess the impacts on groundwater is medium.</p>
4	Archaeological and Cultural Heritage Theme	Low sensitivity	Disagree	High sensitivity	Despite the screening tool indicating a low sensitivity, Section 38(1)(c)(i) of the National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA), Act 25 of 1999, mandates a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for developments exceeding 5,000 square meters. Given that the proposed development covers approximately 85 000 square meters. Therefore, based on the Heritage Study that was conducted by Vhubvo A water-related structure over 60 years old was identified

No	Theme	DFFE Sensitivity	Agree/ Disagree	Proposed Sensitivity	Motivation
					on the proposed development site, making it automatically protected under the National Heritage Resources Act. Although it holds heritage value and is classified as a General Protected Structure of medium to low local significance, it is not considered significant enough to halt the development. The structure will not be directly impacted by the proposed footprint, but it is strongly recommended that it be preserved in place and not altered, moved, or demolished .
5	Civil Aviation Theme	High sensitivity	Disagree	Low Sensitivity	The civil aviation sensitivity is disputed due to the absence of any nearby civil aviation infrastructure (the nearest one is 8 km away from the site). However, the site is not located within proximity to any registered airstrips, airports, or low-flying zones, and the proposed infrastructure does not involve tall structures that could pose a hazard to aviation. As such, the risk to civil aviation is minimal, and the theme should be considered Low.
6	Defence Theme	Very High sensitivity	Disagree	Low Sensitivity	The project is a low-impact agricultural expansion, and there is no indication that it would interfere with any national defence infrastructure or interests. Therefore, the Defence sensitivity should be downgraded to Low. However, the Department of Defence will be notified about the project so they can comment as an Organ of State.
8	Plant Species	Low sensitivity	Agree	Low sensitivity	The existing agricultural activities and infrastructure have already modified the natural vegetation. The proposed expansion is unlikely to impact any significant plant species or communities. Therefore, the sensitivity is considered Low.
9	Terrestrial	Low sensitivity	Agree	Low sensitivity	The site's terrestrial environment has been altered due to ongoing

No	Theme	DFFE Sensitivity	Agree/ Disagree	Proposed Sensitivity	Motivation
	Biodiversity Theme				agricultural use. There are no known sensitive terrestrial ecosystems or species that would be affected by the proposed development. As such, the sensitivity remains Low.

Table 3: Specialist assessments identified as per the DFFE Screening Tool

NO	PROPOSED SPECIALIST ASSESSMENT	VERIFICATION OF SITE SENSITIVITY AND MOTIVATION ON THE NEED FOR SPECIALIST INVESTIGATION	WILL THE SPECIALIST STUDY BE CONDUCTED?
<b>DFFE SCREENING TOOL PROTOCOLS (RECOMMENDED SPECIALIST ASSESSMENTS AS PER THE SCREENING TOOL)</b>			
1	Landscape/Visual Impact Assessment	The area consists of agricultural plots with low population density. Neighbouring properties are spaced approximately 500 m apart. There are no sensitive visual receptors or scenic routes nearby that would be negatively affected by the addition of poultry houses.	The Study won't Be Conducted
2	Palaeontology Impact Assessment	As per the SAHRIS Paleontological Online Map Tool, the proposed development is situated within an area of low paleontological significance. Therefore, the proposed development is unlikely to impact any palaeontological features.	The Study won't Be Conducted

			
3	Hydrology Assessment	<p>Although the site is not situated near any significant water bodies, wetlands, or watercourses, the nature of activities might trigger impacts on the groundwater features. These includes but not limited to the underground septic tanks, manure drying beds and boreholes. These features can significantly impact of the groundwater ecosystems. A Geohydrological Study will be undertaken to assess the impacts on the groundwater and also to evaluate other nearby water uses.</p>	The Study will be Conducted
4	Traffic Impact Assessment	<p>The proposed development will not significantly increase traffic volumes. Access is via an existing gravel road and Kremetart Street. Current vehicle use is minimal, and the road network is sufficient to support farm operations.</p>	The Study won't Be Conducted
5	Socio-Economic Assessment	<p>The proposed development does not involve significant land-use change or displacement of communities. On the contrary, the expansion may support local employment and food production. Given the low-impact nature of the activity, no meaningful negative socio-economic impacts are expected</p>	The Study won't Be Conducted

6	Ambient Quality Assessment	Air  The proposed infrastructure will not include any air pollution-emitting processes. The existing facility operates without notable odour or emissions issues, and the expansion is not expected to contribute to significant new air quality concerns. However, a Waste Management Plan has been compiled, and it will also indicate ways on how to handle the chicken manure in terms of Odour.	The Study won't Be Conducted
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## SITE PHOTOGRAPH FOR THE PROPOSED SITE

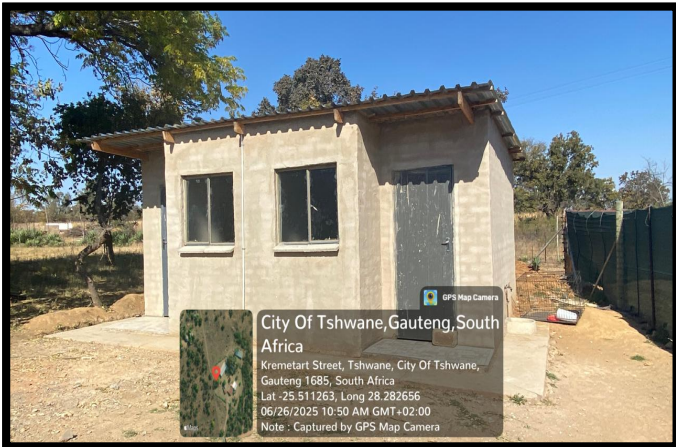


Figure 1: Ablution facilities for workers

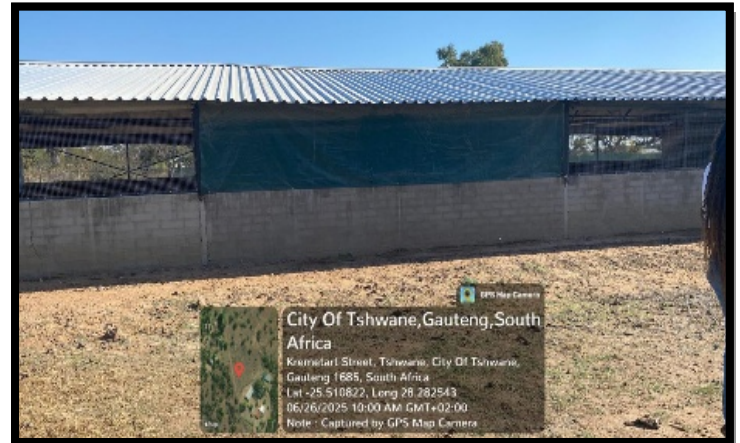


Figure 2: Existing Chicken House



Figure 3: Existing Gate

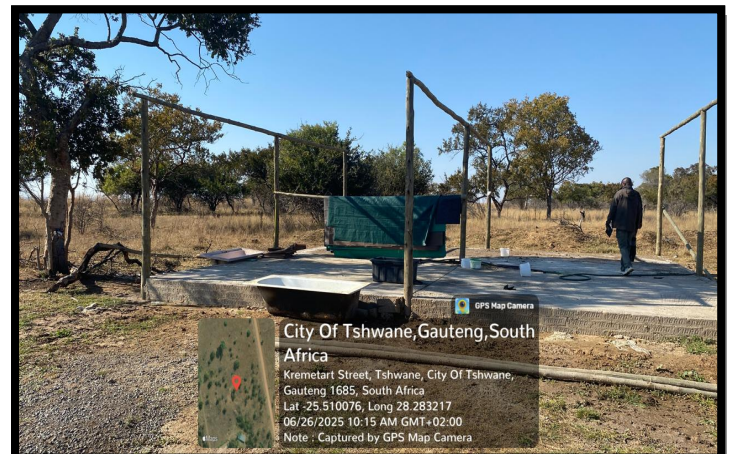


Figure 4: Drying Bed for Manure

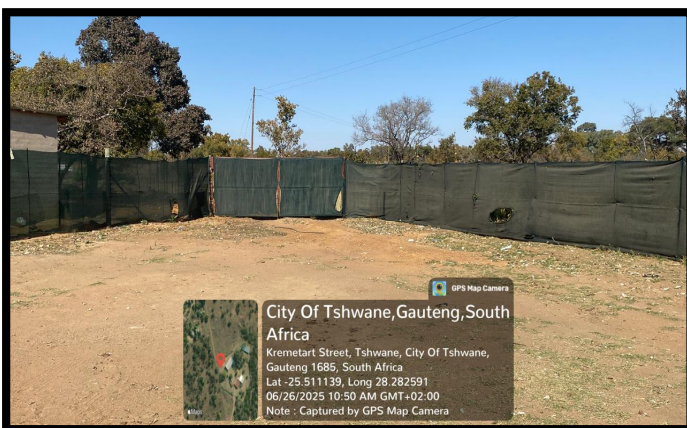


Figure 5: Existing Gate

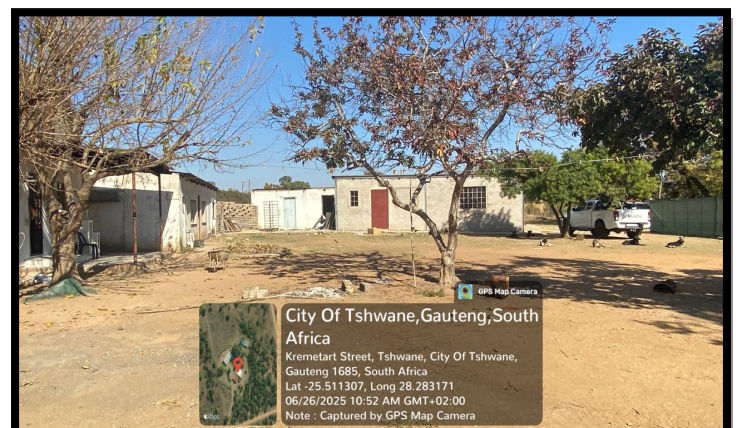


Figure 6: House for Workers



Figure 7: Packed dried manure



Figure 8: Existing Borehole Position



Figure 9: Office



Figure 10: Old Borehole Structure



Figure 11: Pig house



Figure 12: Goats and Cattles House



Figure 13: Vegetable garden



Figure 14: Rainwater Storage



Figure 15: Male and Female Changing Rooms



Figure 16: Duck house



Figure 17: Existing Houses



Figure 18: Ablution Facilities



Figure 19: Existing Chicken House

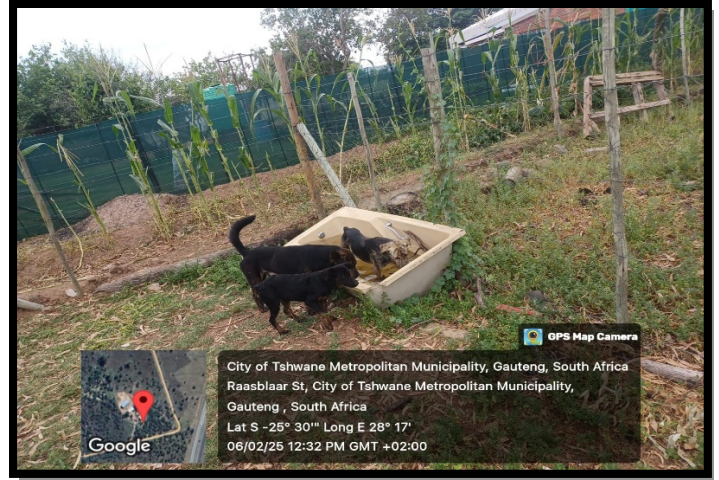


Figure 20: Dogs were observed on site



Figure 21: Kraal



Figure 22: Pig House



Figure 23: Existing Gate



Figure 24: Existing Chicken House



Figure 25: Existing House



Figure 26: Rearing House



Figure 27: Rearing House

## **6 ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PRACTITIONER STATEMENT**

A site sensitivity walkthrough was undertaken for the proposed development area. Based on field observations and professional judgment, the Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) agrees with some of the environmental themes identified in the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) Screening Report. However, certain themes were disputed due to the existing site conditions and the nature of the proposed expansion. The EAP confirms that the following environmental themes correspond accurately with the sensitivity ratings provided in the DFFE Screening Tool:

- Plant Species Theme
- Aquatic Biodiversity Theme
- Terrestrial Biodiversity Theme

On the contrary, the EAP disputes the sensitivity ratings assigned to the following environmental themes and associated protocols, considering them to be of lower sensitivity than indicated by the DFFE Screening Tool:

- Agriculture Theme
- Defence Theme
- Palaeontology Theme
- Civil Aviation Theme
- Animal Theme
- Archaeological & Cultural Heritage Theme
- Visual Impact Assessment
- Traffic Impact Assessment
- Ambient Air Quality Assessment
- Socio-Economic Assessment
- Hydrology Assessment

## **7 CONCLUSION**

The objective of this Site Sensitivity Verification was to evaluate the accuracy of the environmental sensitivity ratings provided by the DFFE Screening Tool in relation to the actual site conditions. This verification process enables the identification of relevant specialist studies that may be required for the proposed project and ensures that the environmental management process remains context-specific and responsible.

The Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) is required due to the size of the proposed development area, which exceeds 5,000 m<sup>2</sup>. This is in accordance with Section 38(1)(c)(i) of the National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999). The Heritage impact Assessment that was conducted by Vhubvo states that a water-related structure (Borehole) over 60 years old was identified on the proposed development site, making it automatically protected under the National Heritage

Resources Act. Although it holds heritage value and is classified as a General Protected Structure of medium to low local significance, it is not considered significant enough to stop the proposed development. The structure will not be directly impacted by the proposed footprint, but it is strongly recommended that it be preserved in place and not altered, moved, or demolished.