



TECHNICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

**A TECHNICAL REVIEW REPORT
PREPARED FOR**

**THE MUNICIPALITY
OF**

LORNE

**V.C. HOG LTD.
NW 1/4 9-5-10 WPM**

TRC 12 -039

April 11, 2018

A. INTRODUCTION – THE TEAM

The Technical Review Committee (TRC) is supported by the following department personnel:

- Agriculture (Ag); Livestock Environment, Nutrient Management and Business Development Specialists, Agricultural Engineer, and Veterinarians
- Municipal Relations (MR); Community Planners
- Infrastructure (MI); Development Review Technologists, Engineering and Operations Division; Development Review Officers, Water Management and Structures Division
- Sustainable Development (SD); Technical Review Officer, Nutrient Management Regulation Supervisor, Groundwater Specialist
and
- Any other specialist or department that may have an interest, which may be consulted during the process.

The Technical Review Coordinator, (Senior Planner, MR) chairs the committee.

THE REPORT (TRC Process Box 17)

Prime Purpose of TRC Reports

To provide objective, highly credible, technically-based assessments that:

- a) Enable municipal councils to make informed Conditional Use Permit decisions;
- b) Create a common stakeholder understanding of a livestock proposal, potential impacts and related regulatory requirements and safeguards;
- c) Provide a vehicle/forum that enables the sharing of public concerns and proponent responses;
- d) Offer recommendations to both municipal councils and proponents; and
- e) Represents the fulfillment of the TRC's role as per 116(1)(b)(i) of The Planning Act – to determine, based on available information, that the proposed operation will not create a risk to health, safety or the environment, or that any risk can be minimized through the use of appropriate practices, measures and safeguards

Should the Municipal Council provide conditional approval of the proposal, the project proponent may be required to obtain various permits and licenses from the Province to address in greater detail environmental aspects of the proposal.

THE PROCESS

- TRC Process Chart with actual pertinent dates and brief overview

The Technical Review Process: TRC-12-039 –V.C. Hog Ltd.



B. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED LIVESTOCK OPERATION

To view a detailed description, go to

www.gov.mb.ca/ia/programs/livestock/public_registries.html

Applicant: V.C. Hog Ltd.

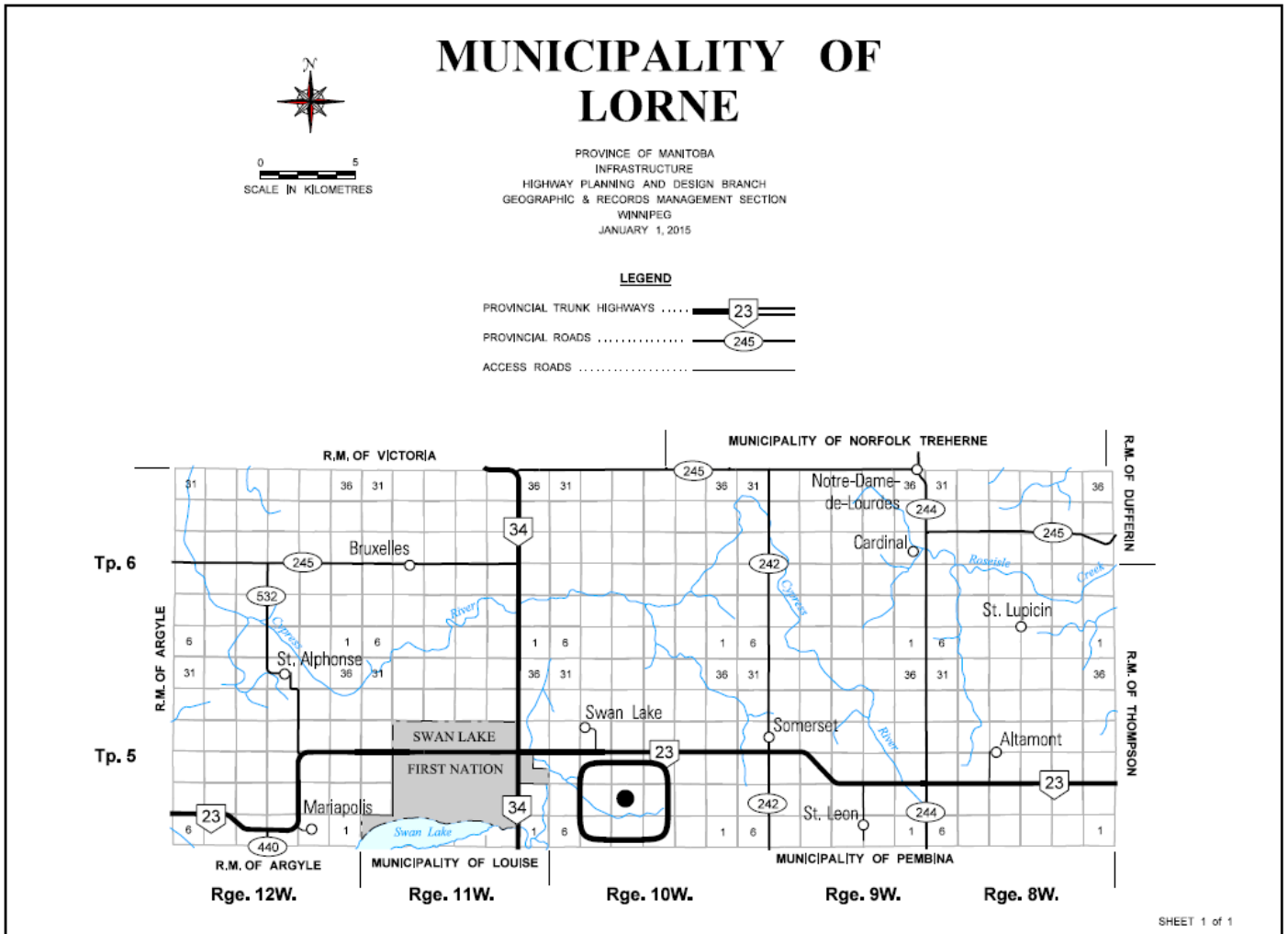
Site Location: Approximately 2.5 miles (4 km) south of the Community of Swan Lake (NW ¼ 9-5-10 WPM); Refer to maps below

Proposal: To establish a new 6000 head grower finisher hog operation with 858 Animal Units (AU) in an Animal Confinement Facility, for a total of 883 AU, which includes 20 Beef cows plus associated livestock (25 AU) currently on the family farm.

This will involve the following:

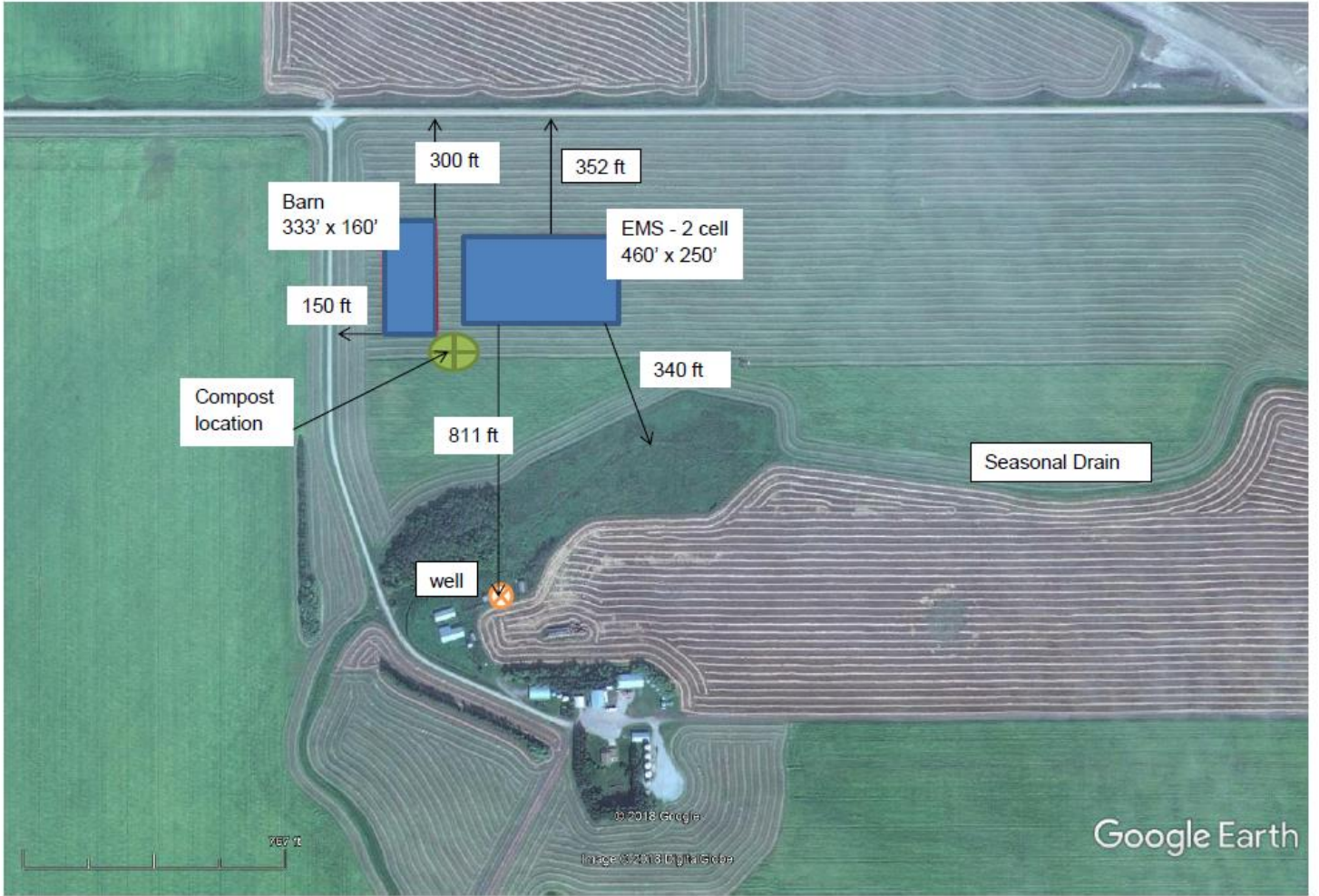
- Construction of a new 333 ft. x 160 ft. barn
- Consuming 18,300 imperial gallons of water per day (from a proposed well)
- Constructing an Earthen manure storage facility
- A two cell manure storage treatment is proposed to separate solids from liquids to aid in manure management
- Composting mortalities; permanent on-site composting site proposed
- Use of existing hoop structure on SW 9-510W with 1200 grower/finisher pig capacity to be discontinued
- Using the truck haul routes as shown in maps below

V.C. Hogs Ltd - Site Location Map

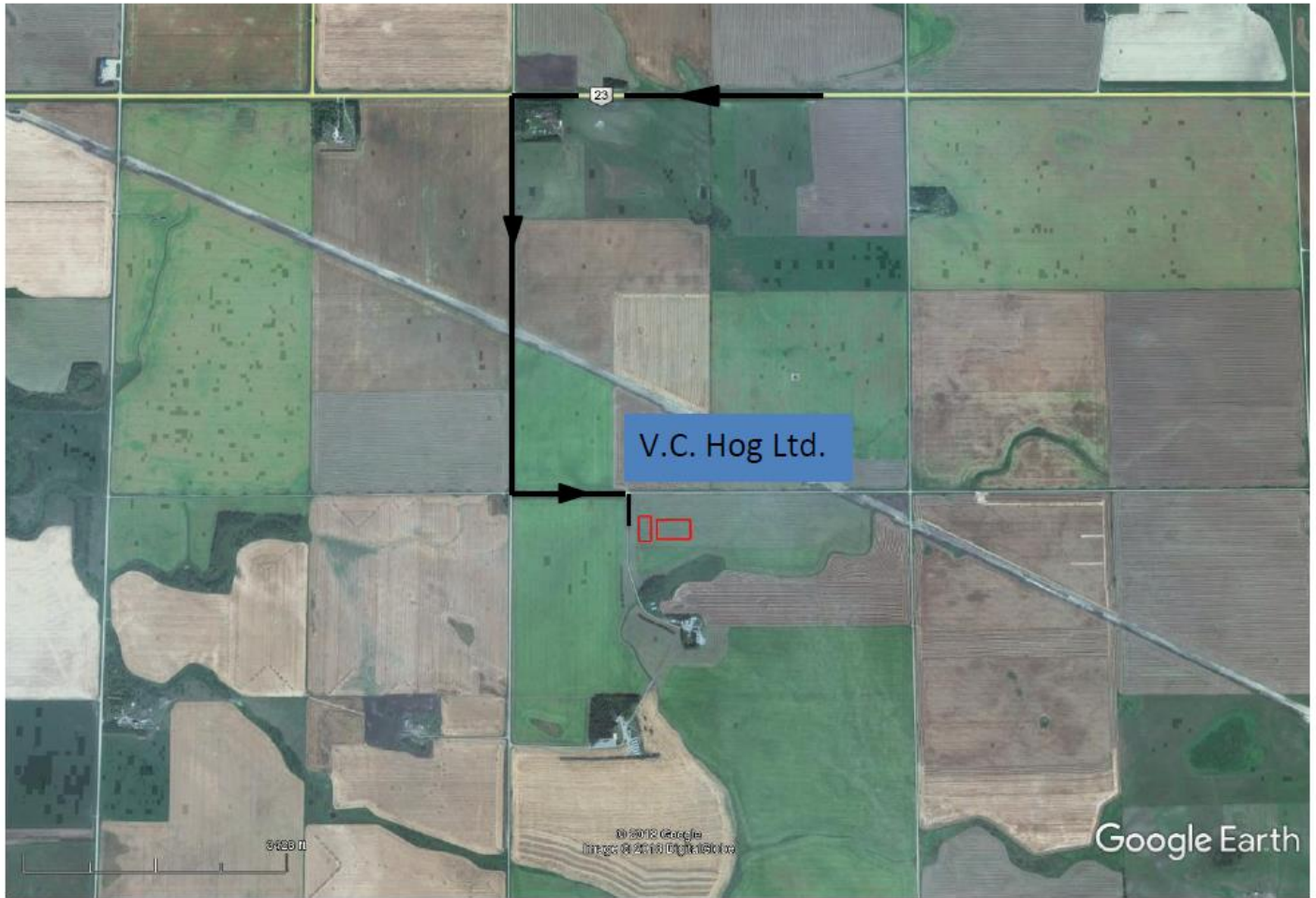




V.C. Hog Ltd. – Site Location

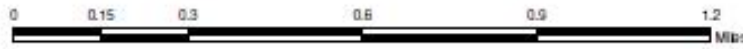
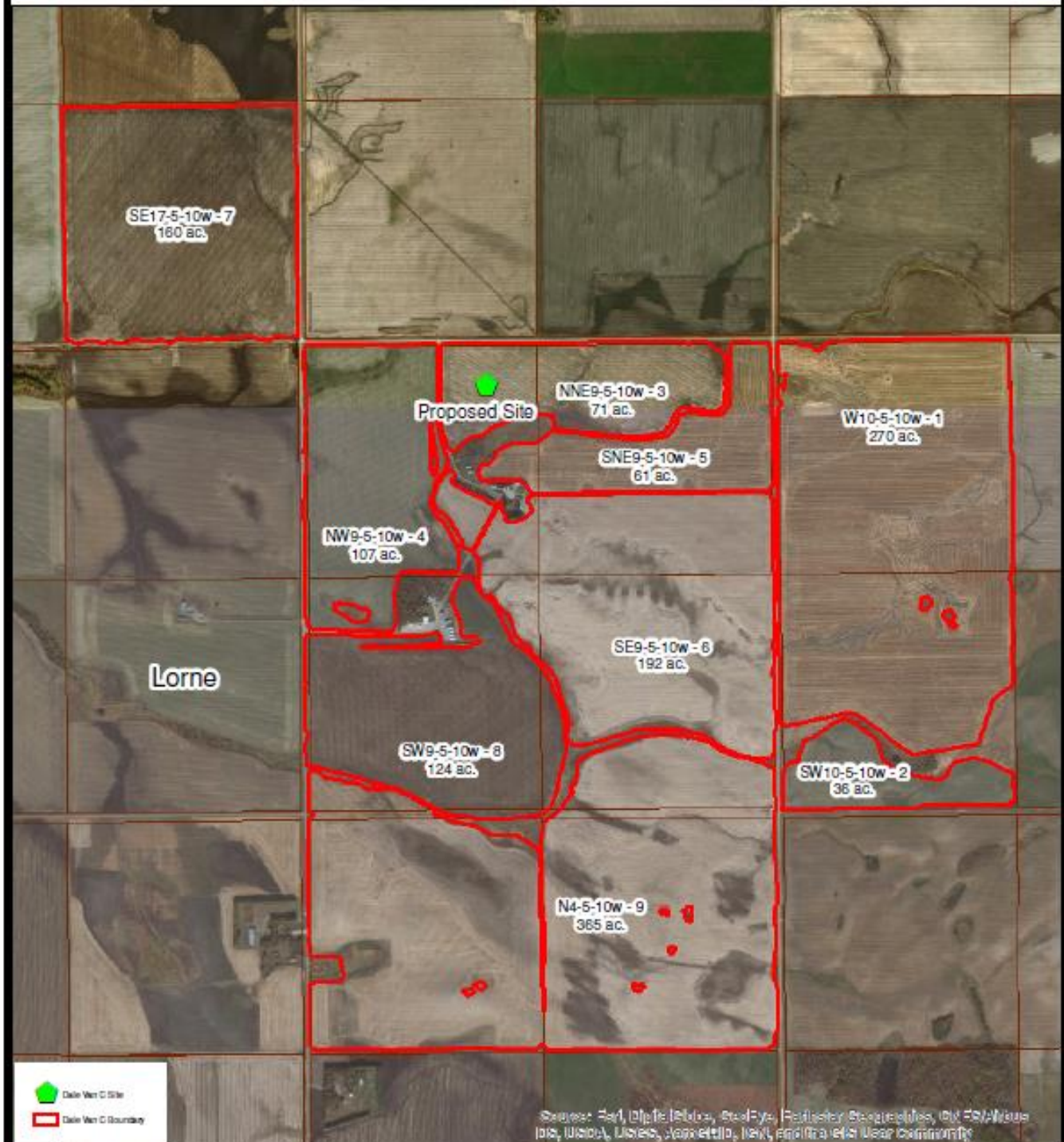


V.C. Hog Ltd.- NW 9-5-10W



Truck Haul Route - V.C. Hog Ltd.

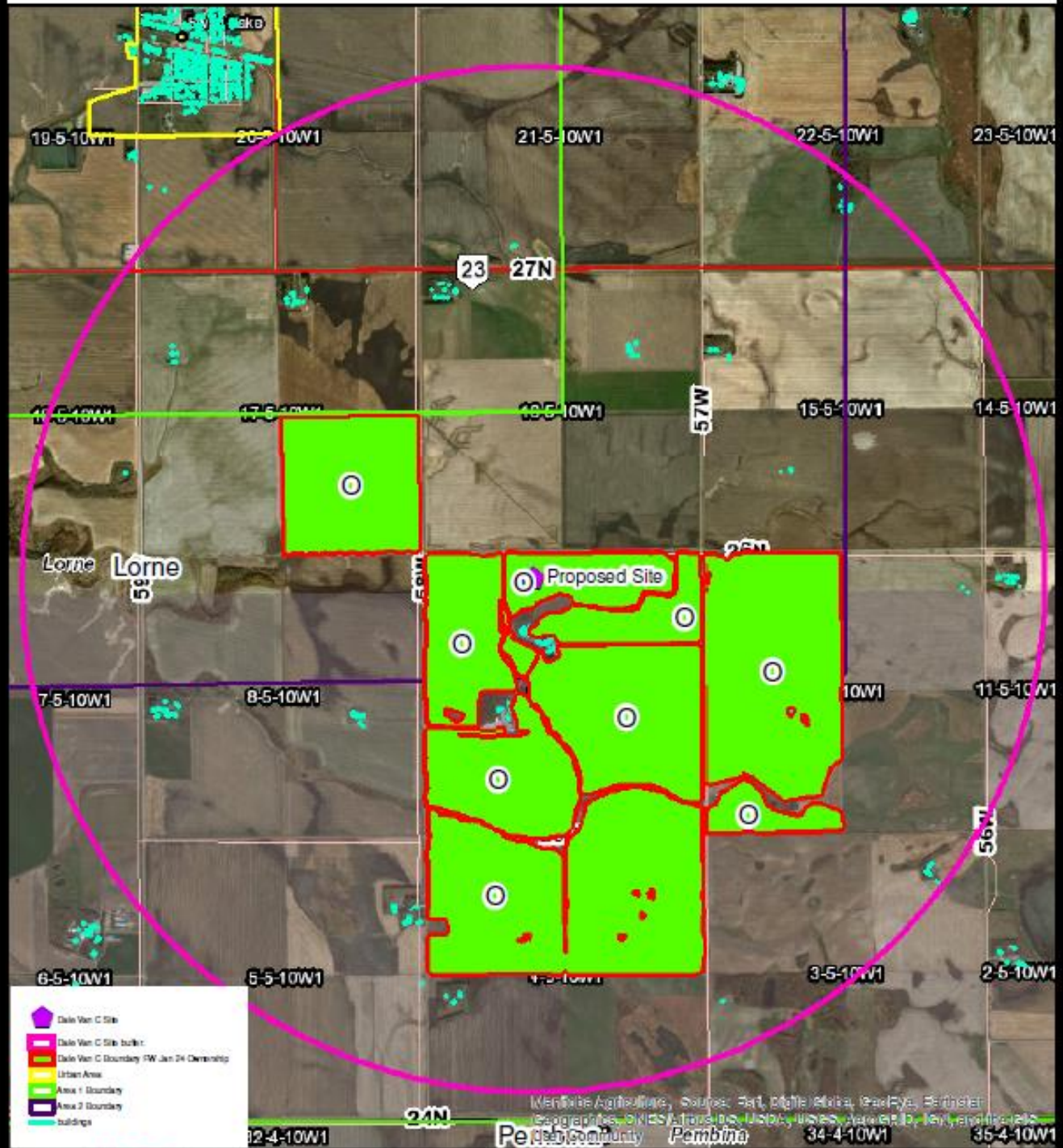
Dale Van C. - Spread Fields Map



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 14N
Central Meridian: 99°00'W



Dale Van C. - Land Use Map



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 14N
Central Meridian: 99°00'W



C. SITE ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

Assessment Overview Table

Provincial Technical Overview of TRC 12-039 –V.C. Hog Ltd.			
Items Provided by Project Proponent	Con- firmed	Related Existing Provincial Safeguards	Dept
1. Submitted complete Site Assessment	X	The proposal is consistent with the Provincial requirements for a Livestock Operation.	MR
2. Clearly defined the project as an Animal Confinement Facility	X	Any barn is in excess of 6,458 sq. ft. each will require a building permit from the Office of the Fire Commissioner.	MR
3. Proposed Project Site Physical Suitability	X	Detailed soil survey indicates that the proposed pig operation is located on prime agricultural land (agriculture capability Class 1 to 3). The proposed pig operation includes a new two-celled, earthen manure storage structure. The construction, modification or expansion of any manure storage facility requires a permit from Manitoba Sustainable Development. The permit must be obtained before construction begins.	Ag
4. Proposed Project Site Flood Risk Potential	X	Water Management, Planning and Standards is not aware of any major overland flood hazard at this location.	MI
5. Identified 18,300 imperial gallons/day required for proposed operation	X	Operations with >5,499 imperial gallons require a Water Rights License. More information, including the SD contact information is provided in Section 7.4 of the site assessment	SD
6. Proposed measures to meet storage and application regulations for manure	X	Any applicable permit or annual submissions under the Livestock Manure and Mortalities Management Regulation would be processed by Environmental Approvals Branch of Sustainable Development. The proposed operation would be required to register annual manure management plans. Manure management plans are	SD

Provincial Technical Overview of TRC 12-039 –V.C. Hog Ltd.

Items Provided by Project Proponent	Con- firmed	Related Existing Provincial Safeguards	Dept
		reviewed by Branch staff for regulatory compliance at the time of submission. As soil nutrients change over time, SD staff have not dedicated resources to review the spreadfield information and soil tests in this site assessment. However, soil analysis reports are included in the manure management plans. Additional details on the required information for manure management plans, including mandatory sampling depth, soil analysis and completing the form are provided at: http://www.gov.mb.ca/sd/envprograms/livestock .	
7. Proposed Project Site with suitable mortalities disposal methods (rendering)	X	Information on disposal is provided in section 9 of the site assessment, which requires the proponent to select from 4 acceptable methods of disposal. More specific information is included in the Livestock Manure and Mortalities Management Regulation and at http://www.gov.mb.ca/sd/envprograms/livestock .	SD
8. Proposed Project Site with acceptable odour control measures	X	<p>The proponent has indicated that shelterbelts will be planted and manure will be applied and immediately incorporated using a coulter or will be incorporated within 48 hours of application.</p> <p>Should odour become a problem for neighbouring residents, there is a complaints process under <i>The Farm Practices Protection Act</i>. A person who is disturbed by any odour, noise, dust, smoke or other disturbance resulting from an agricultural operation may make a complaint, in writing, to the Manitoba Farm Industry Board. The Act is intended to provide for a quicker, less expensive and more effective way than lawsuits to resolve nuisance complaints about farm practices. It may create an understanding of the nature and circumstances of an agricultural operation, as well as bring about changes to the mutual benefit of all concerned, without the confrontation and the expense of the courts.</p>	Ag
9. Proposed Project Site that meets development plan and zoning by-law requirements	X	<p>The proposed project is located within Livestock Policy Area (LPA) 4 as identified in the South Central Planning District Development Plan By-law 3-2003. LPA 4 requires all livestock operations over 300 animal units to obtain a conditional use order.</p> <p>The operation exceeds the 80-acre area requirement as set out in in RM of Lorne Zoning By-law No.1682. Setbacks from livestock operations to communities are controlled in the zoning by-law by identifying Community Management Areas</p>	MR

Provincial Technical Overview of TRC 12-039 –V.C. Hog Ltd.

Items Provided by Project Proponent	Con- firmed	Related Existing Provincial Safeguards	Dept
		<p>around communities. The operation is located in an Area 2 Community Management Area. In Area 2 confined livestock operations are a conditional use. setback of 1,967 ft. from neighbouring residences.</p> <p>The zoning by-law, Table 4.1 performance standard (i) identifies that expansion of existing livestock operations is prohibited on Group 4 soils. This operation is located on Group 1 soils. Performance standard (i4) cites that council may require a cover for earthen storage facilities within Community Management Areas.</p> <p>Performance standard (j) identifies the good neighbor standard (the setback between manure storage or confined livestock and any un-related dwelling) as being 1,967 ft. for an operation this size. The setbacks from the proposed new confined livestock and manure storage facilities exceed the required</p>	
10. Proposed Project Site that is a sufficient distance from native prairie, Wildlife Managements Areas and Crown Land.	X	Distances to these features is provided in section 10.5 of the site assessment. Where the distances exceed 1 mile, the department generally has no objection.	SD
11. Proposed Spreadfields that are sufficient, and suitable for manure spreading	X	<p>VC Hog Ltd has met the land requirement for 6000 grower-finisher pigs and 20 beef cows plus associated livestock, as follows:</p> <p>In areas of lower livestock intensity such as the RM of Lorne, it is currently the Province of Manitoba’s policy to require sufficient suitable land for all of the nitrogen and half of the phosphorus generated by the livestock. This policy assumes that more land is available and could be brought into the VC Hog Ltd manure management plan to balance phosphorus with crop removal, should it be necessary in the future.</p> <p>In order to determine the land requirements for VC Hog Ltd, nitrogen and phosphorus excretion by all of the pigs and beef cows (including associated livestock) is compared to nitrogen utilization and phosphorus removal by the proposed crops to be grown. The calculation takes into consideration typical, modern feeding practices for pig and beef production and realistic, long-term crop yields from the Manitoba Agricultural</p>	Ag

Provincial Technical Overview of TRC 12-039 –V.C. Hog Ltd.

Items Provided by Project Proponent	Con- firmed	Related Existing Provincial Safeguards	Dept
		<p>Services Corporation (MASC) for the RM of Lorne.</p> <p>Land suitability is determined using soil testing for phosphorus and soil survey to establish the agriculture capability. All of the lands with soil tests were below 60 ppm Olsen P, as required to be considered suitable. Detailed soil survey is available to determine the agriculture capability of the land. The agriculture capability of the land included in the proposal ranges from Class 1 to 5. The limitations include slope (T), salinity (N), erosion (E) and wetness (W). Class 1 to 5 soils are considered suitable for manure application.</p> <p>VC Hog Ltd is required to demonstrate that they have access to at least 1260 acres of suitable land for manure application. They have presented 1356 suitable acres for manure application.</p>	
12. Proposed Spreadfields with sufficient minimum setbacks on Spreadfields from natural features (water sources etc.)	X	The proponent is required to demonstrate minimum setback distances listed in section 10.6 of the site assessment.	SD
13. Proposed Spreadfields with sufficient minimum setbacks on spread fields from natural features (water sources etc)	X	Section 8.7 requires the proponent to indicate if all setbacks have been observed from and excluded from land base calculations.	SD
14. Proposed Spreadfields that have been secured by spread agreements	X	The proposal indicates that all of the land available for manure application is owned by the proponent	Ag
15. Proposed Spreadfields that meet development plan and zoning by-	X	There are no specific requirements for spreadfields within the applicable development plan and zoning by-laws	MR

Provincial Technical Overview of TRC 12-039 –V.C. Hog Ltd.

Items Provided by Project Proponent	Con- firmed	Related Existing Provincial Safeguards	Dept
law requirements			
16. Proposed trucking routes and access points that may impact Provincial Roads or Provincial Trunk Highways	X	<p>The proposed truck route will utilize existing municipal/Government Road Allowances with an existing Government Road Allowance access connection onto PTH 23. We don't anticipate a substantial increase in usage for this existing access connection.</p> <p>Manure spreading: please note that any structures placed within the controlled area of PTH 23 (125 feet from the edge of the right-of-way) requires a permit from the Highway Traffic Board. Please phone (204) 945-8912 for information regarding any such permits. The placement of temporary draglines or any other temporary machinery/equipment for manure application within the right-of-way of PTH 23 requires permission from our regional office in Portage. Please contact the Regional Planning Technologist (Denise Stairs) at (204) 871-2239. In addition, please notify the Regional Planning Technologist for the placement of temporary draglines or other temporary equipment for manure application within the controlled area of PTH 23 (125 feet from the edge of the right-of-way).</p>	MI
17. Proposed trucking routes – local roads	X	The Municipality may impose, through a development agreement conditions regarding the maintenance and/or construction of local roads, as provided for in The Planning Act and the R.M. of Lorne Zoning By-law No.1682.	MR
18. Declared Provincial Waterways	X	The proposal does not have impact upon any Provincial Waterways.	MI

Provincial Departments

- Ag – Agriculture
- MR –Municipal Relations
- MI – Infrastructure
- SD – Sustainable Development

D. PUBLIC COMMENTS & DISPOSITIONS

Public Comment Summary	Proponent Response/Disposition
<p>1. Lois Taylor Winnipeg</p>	<p>Concerned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -about ramifications for citizens of the town and surrounding area -all of the negative impacts of hog farming are related to animal wastes -farm animals are sentient beings with intricate social relations and sophisticated psychological patterns, they know pain fear and loneliness, they too can suffer; they live and die on the production line
<p>2. Wes McNeill & Mary Wood McNeill Swan Lake</p>	<p>Concerned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -our home is on the south outskirts of Swan Lake, we moved here to retire and enjoy the quiet rural setting -we would like to continue to enjoy our space that we pay taxes on. -we fear a hog operation so close to the south of our town would almost surely affect us in a negative way -concerned with the quality of the air; how good is the air when it is polluted with dangerous gases and odors emitted from a 6000 head grower hog facility? -what about the value of our property when we go to sell it? -what are the effects on the environment? -many studies have shown only negativity for environment, health and economics for hog operations in close proximity to a town -please do not allow this to happen
<p>3. Kenneth Theule & Dianne Hindle NW 9-6-8 WPM Lorne Municipality</p>	<p>Objects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -it is our informed opinion that the soil in much of Lorne Municipality is saturated with hog manure already and it would be reckless to add more to the ground and to the subsequent runoff into our precious aquifers and waterways -sometimes in autumn the stench when driving around the municipality is overwhelming and one cannot sleep with windows open -we've heard promises before about responsible manure management -consider the environment and those of us who live in Lorne and do not approve this application

<p>4. Lindsey Reid Manitoba</p>	<p>Concerned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -about ramifications for citizens of the town and surrounding area -large scale hog farming may seem to be a benefit to the agricultural economy, it does not come without impacts to residents of nearby communities -all of the negative impacts of hog farming are related to animal wastes -farm animals are sentient beings with intricate social relations and sophisticated psychological patterns, they know pain fear and loneliness, they too can suffer; they live and die on the production line -fueled by the meat consumer's ever growing demand for cheap pork the question we need to ask is "what's the true cost of that bacon?" -we should be looking at a more sustainable plant based diet to feed our families -our current practices are a disservice to the generations that follow
<p>5. Doug Krause</p>	<p>Objects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -deny the proposal -pigs suffer needlessly and this is horrible for the environment
<p>6. Jackie Adam</p>	<p>Objects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -deny the proposal -pigs suffer needlessly and this is horrible for the environment
<p>7. Debbie Wall</p>	<p>Objects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -deny proposal -does not want even more unfortunate beings to be victims of factory farming with the inherent degradation to the environment -animal agriculture is a most inefficient way to produce food and the future is in plant based proteins as well as lab grown "clean meat" -stop investing in the past
<p>8. Carolina Valenzuela</p>	<p>Objects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -poor choice in our environment -have family that lives close by that would be affected -pollution going into the waterways -no reason to open any more hog barns
<p>9. Denise Trafford</p>	<p>Concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Province cannot handle any more hog barns -can't this government come up with some better ideas to spur the economy than to hand off this beautiful province to this unsustainable hog industry?

	<p>-these hog guys have no respect for their neighbours.</p> <p>-we have to put up with the stench of hog barns and lagoons because the regulations don't require them to deal with it, so they don't</p> <p>-the lack of proper fire regulations in these barns is shameful and should be against the law</p>
<p>10. Cheryl Sobie</p>	<p>Opposed:</p> <p>-for numerous reasons including the estimated amount of waste a new barn would generate</p> <p>-ecosystem is still suffering the consequences of unabated pig industry expansion and</p> <p>-phosphorous load on Lake Winnipeg</p> <p>-supports pigs right to live</p> <p>-concerned that communities located close to intensive animal agricultural operations face negative environmental impacts such as poor air and water quality which can impact quality of life</p>

The public comments in full may be viewed on the Public Registry at:

<http://www.gov.mb.ca/mr/livestock/trc-12-039.html>

The proponent's response may be found on the Public Registry and in Appendix 2 of this report.

E. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall Conclusion

The information contained in the Site Assessment submitted by the proponent generally meets Provincial requirements. In addition, based on available information it has been determined that the proposed operation will not create a risk to health, safety or the environment, or that any risk can be minimized through the use of appropriate practices, measures and safeguards.

Recommended Actions to Council

- As per Section 114(1) of The Planning Act, Council must set a date for a Conditional Use hearing which must be at least 30 days after it receives this report
- As per Section 114(2) of The Planning Act, at least 14 days before the date of the hearing, Council must:
 - a) send notice of the hearing to
 - (1) the applicant,
 - (2) the minister, (c/o the Portage La Prairie Community & Regional Planning Office)
 - (3) all adjacent planning districts and municipalities, and
 - (4) every owner of property located within three kilometres of the site of the proposed livestock operation, even if the property is located outside the boundaries of the planning district or municipality;
 - b) publish the notice of hearing in one issue of a newspaper with a general circulation in the planning district or municipality; and
 - c) post a copy of the notice of hearing on the affected property in accordance with Section 170 of The Planning Act.
- Council should specify the type(s) of operation, legal land location, number of animals in each livestock category and total animal units in its Conditional Use Order.
- As per Section 117 of The Planning Act, Council must send a copy of its (Conditional Use Order) to
 - a) the applicant;
 - b) the minister (c/o the Portage La Prairie Community & Regional Planning Office); and
 - c) every person who made representation at the hearing.

Council is welcome to contact Manitoba Sustainable Development's Technical Review Officer with Environmental Approvals Branch as well as regional Environmental Compliance and Enforcement staff to discuss environmental compliance issues, if applicable, with respect to the Livestock Manure and Mortalities Management Regulation (M.R. 42/98).

Recommended Actions to Proponent

That any additional measures identified through subsequent Provincial and Federal licensing or permitting in order to minimize any identified risks to health, safety and the environment be undertaken.

F. TECHNICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Name	Department	Title	Telephone
Don Malinowski Chair	Municipal Relations	Senior Planner Community & Regional Planning Branch	945-8353
Petra Loro	Agriculture	Livestock Environment Specialist Agri-Resource Branch	945-3869
Andrea Bergman	Sustainable Development	Environmental Approvals Branch	945-4384
Jeff DiNella	Infrastructure	Senior Development Review Technologist Highway Planning and Design Branch	945-2664

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Water Science and Watershed Management Branch – Sustainable Development:

Staff in the Water Science and Watershed Management Branch have reviewed the site assessment for VC Hog Ltd. and have the following comments:


- Proper nutrient management applications that avoid excess loss of nutrients to surface waters are needed on lands receiving manure in southern Manitoba because long-term trend analysis of total phosphorus and total nitrogen has shown significant increases in these nutrients in the Assiniboine and Red rivers (Jones and Armstrong 2002).
- The proponent plans to inject liquid manure. Injection of manure at appropriate rates poses lower environmental risk than other manure application methods. In order to reduce the risk of runoff losses, application should not occur to saturated, frozen or snow covered soils or when heavy rainfall is expected within 24 hours.
- Manure tends to have an excess of phosphorus (P) compared to nitrogen (N) and as a result, for most crops, application at N-based rates causes a buildup of soil P. Practices which minimize N losses improve the N:P ratio in the manure and help reduce P buildup when manure is applied at N-based rates.
- The proponent plans to construct a two cell lagoon for manure storage which when properly managed will allow for better utilization of manure nutrients and can reduce the risk of nitrogen and phosphorus loss to surface and groundwater.
- The proponent has acknowledged the setback areas for all water features have been observed and excluded from landbase calculations. Setbacks should be clearly communicated and observed by those involved in manure application to minimize the risk of nutrients entering surface waters.
- Manitoba has included phosphorus as a nutrient by which fertilizer application through manure, synthetic fertilizer, and municipal waste sludge to agricultural lands may be limited. To remain environmentally sustainable over a long-term planning horizon of 25 years or more, the proponent must be able to balance phosphorus inputs from applied manure and other nutrient sources such as commercial fertilizers with crop removal rates to avoid further build-up in soils. Consequently, sufficient land base must be available such that manure can be applied at no more than 1 times crop removal rates. For long-term planning purposes, the proponent needs to have sufficient land available to ensure that manure can be applied at 1 times crop removal. The proponent acknowledges that 2077 acres may be required for the long term environmental sustainability of the operation. The proponent has identified sufficient land (1367 acres) to apply at 2

times crop removal (1039 acres required) which meets regulatory requirements. It is important to rotate manure application across all spread fields so as to prevent excessive P buildup.



- All unused water wells on the site and spread fields shall be properly sealed. A sealed well report must be filed with the Groundwater Management Section of Sustainable Development for each well sealed. Information on well sealing and the sealed well report are available from Sustainable Development (204-945-6959) or: http://www.gov.mb.ca/sd/waterstewardship/water_quality/wells_groundwater/index.html. All but the most basic wells should be sealed by a well drilling professional. A list of currently licensed well drilling professionals can also be accessed from the above web page. In addition:
 1. all new wells must be constructed in accordance with the Well Standards Regulation including the minimum setback distances (Section 14).
 2. all groundwater features, including water wells, should be given as a minimum, the amount of buffer during manure application as outlined in the regulations.

Appendix 2

Proponent's Response to Public Comments

 V.C.Hog Ltd Response

□ +WPG139 - TRC (MR)
■ Malinowski, Don (MR)

 Dale VanCauwenberghe 0315 V.pdf 60 KB
 ATT00001.htm 441 bytes

After reading the feedback our barn proposal has caused I'm not really sure what to say. Most of what I'm hearing locally is positive stuff. Most people are very pleased to see any form of business in the area to help revitalize the strong agriculture backbone that once started these small towns. This barn is not a large company barn as some people call it. It's proposed and will be owned by a small family farm that has the roots of many generations planted deep in the soil. As I wrote in the article that I paid to submit to the Morden Winkler Voice, and will attach, this barn will be a positive bonus to the surrounding area. The largest concern that local people out here have is that their small town will soon be a ghost town full of dead businesses and no one seems to know how to revitalize it. Then when a new business tries to be born or grow there are always a few who want to stop it. I could use the Swan Lake Autobody as an example. It ended up in Treherne. I do acknowledge the main concern that locals always have. Smell. Luckily new practices in manure application have had a positive effect on that. Injecting the manure below the surface is the new norm and doing it at the right time of year helps too. As for property value, I'm quite certain a few extra million getting spent locally in the near future and many years after in the form of taxes and employee presence will help keep local services alive. Those services such as schools, hospitals, stores of all sorts, etc. will only have a positive impact on local property value. The other concern is that the pigs are born raised and killed solely for human consumption. That is true. I can't change that. One sad fact about humans is that we have no problem making lunch out of our fellow species on this planet. Sorry. But I'm not the only one to blame. Good luck convincing the whole planet to change their ways. This animals will be raised somewhere if not here, and then our government will spend the money to get it here. I'd rather just keep the money in our area. As for other concerns such as environment please read my article. Thank you.

LARGE SCALE HOG BARN WILL HAVE POSITIVE IMPACT ON COMMUNITY

I was dismayed to read a recent article written by someone who lives 100 miles away judging the practices of the modern farmer. This someone pretends to be knowledgeable because a relative lived on a farm years back. Well a lot has changed. I live on a farm 1/4 mile from where I grew up. My fathers house is on the same section, and my son lives in it now. My first cousin works the land across the road that he acquired from my uncle who lives 1 1/2 miles away in the house that my grandfather built. I farm with two sons right now, and we work closely with a young neighbour who is trying his best to make a living on his father's land. Land around here rents out for \$150 or so per acre and commonly sells for around \$1,000,000 a quarter. The last one I bought was just shy of that. I know it doesn't pencil out, but its the first thing I see out my window each morning. I had to try. A lot of things on the farm today don't pencil out. In fact most of us would be far smarter to cash it all in and move to the city, but we don't because its in our blood. It's where we grew up and we can't imagine anything else so for someone to imply that I'm not being considerate to my water, my soil, my local wildlife, my environment or my neighbours is truly an insult born of ignorance. Maybe I can help educate her a bit.

Let's start with the process we are going through to acquire government approval to build a barn. It's called a technical review. It's a long process developed by the government to ensure that new barns are built in a very responsible manner in regards to the surrounding area. The first part is called a site assessment. I worked on this alone for about 2 months, but it asked for so much information about my farm and surrounding area that after much frustration and slow progress I decided to get the help of a consultant. Two in fact, and they don't work for free. Together we finally got it done. They really know what they're doing. We submitted it about 3 1/2 months after I first started. I believe its just over 80 pages and includes much information off the internet that I would have never found, many charts and calculators that help figure out the manure management, and many satellite photos with information about topography and soil types and drainage. It describes every hill, ditch, creek, waterway, pothole, animal habitat, and well just about anything else there is to know about my farm and many miles around. I needed to provide soil samples and my crop history so we can now determine how much Nitrogen, phosphorus, sulphur, and boron (these are types of fertilizer for those of you that might not know) is in my soil, how much my crops have required over the years, and how

much they will require in the future. The government is very strict about the barn size and how many acres of crop, and which varieties of crop will be required to consume the fertilizer that the barn will produce. For the record I have 111 acres more than is required and its all within 1 1/2 miles of the barn so you wont see any large manure trucks from here destroying the roads. The manure will be pumped from the lagoon directly to the applicator and tested constantly for fertilizer content. This information goes directly to the applicator and based on my soil samples the application rate is automatically adjusted to ensure that just the right amount is applied for my yield target. I'm required to soil sample all my fields each year and submit the results to ensure over applying does not take place. If for some reason I would ever have more than enough of this product, I would have many neighbours more than happy to take it. Every farmer knows that manure produces higher yields than other forms of fertilizer. And its NATURAL! NATURAL! Don't we all love that word?

I'm told that the process used to produce commercial fertilizers is hard on the atmosphere, and the trucks that haul them around are a hazard to our environment. Because of this barn I will be purchasing far less commercial phosphorus and nitrogen, something like 65,000 lbs. less phosphorus and 30,000 gallons less nitrogen. This translates to about 8 semi loads that won't be coming to my farm. That's better for everyone and better for these already destroyed highways. Anyone worried about the safety of my lagoon should consider all those big shiny tanks all over the country that hold commercial fertilizer, and yes those tanks are necessary to grow the food that feeds the world. Without fertilizer the globe would already be starving. And did I mention the manure is NATURAL! Furthermore I'm required to keep a test well near the lagoon just for the purpose of monitoring the ground water in the unlikely case that the lagoon should leak.

The lagoon itself is not just a hole in the ground. The topsoil is put aside and the soil below that is used to build a berm around, all the while being compacted and tested for such to meet strict standards to ensure the absence of air pockets. When complete, the inside of the lagoon must be of a certain soil at a certain thickness and compacted to a strict standard. In some cases a synthetic liner is required (to the tune of 120,000 and up) to ensure a good seal. Also, did I mention the product will be applied by injection several inches below the surface. This greatly reduces odour and conserves the fertilizer value.

As for the building it will be located

where it exceeds all strict government requirements in terms of distance from roads, waterways, buildings, neighbours etc. The estimated cost of the project will be between 2.5 and 3 million, the majority of which will be spent within 30 miles at local businesses and for local tradesmen. This barn and the crop it will help grow will feed at least 20,000 people each year. I wonder if that lady from Winnipeg feeds anyone. I wonder if she eats porks. Oh, and did I mention that Maple Leaf offers a bonus to all producers who don't use antibiotics. That's the route we will be taking. The barn will have full slatted floors so the hogs will never have to lay in their own waste and so much airflow that they will probably be more comfortable than me in the summer. They will never be in a space smaller than 100 square feet, and they will have all the feed and water they can consume. All the feed that this barn will consume will be made primarily out of wheat, corn, barley and soybeans. This should help encourage higher grain prices. And lets not forget the tax dollars. I'm not sure how much it will be but in an area that has suffered the loss of grain elevators, railways, schools, and destroyed roads, I'm sure a few extra tax dollars are a welcome thing for the RM. This barn will also employ many people directly and indirectly. The company that injects the manure will receive between 40,000 and 60,000 dollars each year and the feed company will receive at least 1 million. The workers in the barn will be my own children or local people who wish to stay in the country. This barn has already created an income for at least 10 people, and its not even off the drawing board yet.

As for the lady from Winnipeg who seems to think this barn will be an eyesore, perhaps she should look around next time she drives this way. She might see all the empty farmyards, or notice the ones that are no longer there at all. She might see the empty houses in town and the closed schools and the struggling hospitals. Those are the things that hurt my eyes. Maybe she should ask herself why she now lives in Winnipeg.

This barn will help my kids, and my grandkids, and maybe their kids, to survive on the farm and offset the rising land prices and input cost that are now choking all the small farms. Does anyone remember the last time they saw a barn being built? Now ask yourself how many barns in your area are empty or torn down. If you think those empty barns are good for your small town, think again.

V.C. Hog Ltd.
Dale VanCauwenberghe
Swan Lake Farmer

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