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Attention: Technical Review Committee

Re: Ridgeland Holding Co. Ltd. (TRC 12-116) – Public Comment Responses

In consultation with the proponent, we have prepared the following responses to the comments received through the public review process.

Response to Mavis Druzyk:

Water usage for all development at Ridgeland Colony is licensed through the Water Licensing Branch of Manitoba Environment and Climate Change based on the daily usage exceeding 25000L/day. As part of this licensing process the volume of use is taken into consideration and used to assess the impact on the aquifer and adjacent water uses. In situations where it is determined that the use will be a detriment to the aquifer or adjacent neighbours, limitations will be placed on the applicant, or they will be directed to consider alternative water sources such as surface water collection and/or increased efforts on water conservation. The presence of artesian wells in the area is typically an indicator of ample water supply within the region. Since the colony's establishment in 1967, no water supply issues related to depleted groundwater resources has ever been identified.

With regards to the animal units, the animal unit calculator spreadsheet identifies the animal units contributed by all livestock species raised on the colony both currently and proposed. It is proposed to increase the broiler chicken inventory from 2400 birds to 20000 birds which represents an increase in animal units from 12 AU to 100 AU. The layer chicken inventory is proposed to be increased from 9700 birds to 20000 birds which represents an increase in animal units from 81 AU to 166AU. If we combine the AU's from both species, the proposal will increase the AU from 93 to 266, an increase of 173 AU. This 173 AU increase represent the same increase when totalling AU from all species (924 AU to 1097).

Inevitably with livestock operations and earthen manure storages, there are times throughout the year when odours will be present depending on wind direction. Odour production from the barn facilities, particularly with poultry, is considered to be minimal due to the frequent removal of the

manure from the facility and in the case of broilers the high concentration of bedding to manure that keeps the bedding/manure mix dry and typically not offensive. The proposed expansion of the earthen manure storage will be within the confines of the existing shelter belt so it is not anticipated that odour intensity would increase from current levels.

Liquid from the earthen manure storage is typically pumped from the manure storage to the receiving parcels of land via industrial lay flat hoses that are rolled out and then reeled back up once application is complete. Routing of these hoses is typically along rights-of-way and municipal ditches in order to cross under roadways and highways. Where this occurs, approvals have been obtained and it is a requirement of the proponent to inspect these hoses at frequent intervals when in use. Intermittent inspection by Manitoba Environment and Climate Change staff also occur to ensure the hoses and associated application equipment are well maintained and low risk to the environment.

The proposed poultry additions will house all of the birds within the buildings with no access to the outdoors. No increase in wildlife activity would be expected as a result of the proposed additions.

Response to C. Hugh Arklie:

The increase in the broiler flock is in anticipation of the future expectation that the broiler capacity will most likely be increased, to increase the efficiency and profitability of that enterprise. The statement with respect to the evaluation of the broiler flock expansion requirements refers to the building sizing and configuration as this is impacted by best animal practices and changing processor demands. The intent is to determine the building size and configuration at the time that the decision is made by the proponent to proceed to the construction phase and implement the design criteria in effect at that time. From the perspective of the Technical Review it was decided to include this increase in the current application to ensure that the long term goals of the colony are achievable and sustainable based on the current regulations and the maximum animal units expected for the long term.

The laying hens will be housed in groups in what is termed “enriched cages” which afford the 5 freedoms. The 5 freedoms include, freedom:

1) From Hunger and thirst
2) From Discomfort
3) From Pain, Injury and disease
4) To express normal behaviour
5) From fear and distress

The proposed cage system conforms to the Animal Welfare Act and is consistent with industry standards within Canada. This would not be considered a “free run” system.

The question with respect whether the project is within a flood prone zone refers to manure application fields. There are instances where portions of fields may be flooded during spring runoff and heavy rainfall events. These areas are well known to the proponent, and it has been demonstrated that the available land base far exceeds the requirements for long term sustainability thus allowing for manure application to be avoided in these areas. The calculation of the available acres for manure application also has discounted for these areas where there is a high probability of moisture damage causing crop damage.

It is a natural occurrence that the population of a colony will increase over time, eventually leading to a situation where the colony splits and a new sister colony is started. This last occurred at Ridgeland in 1998 and since that time the colony's population has gradually rebounded with a healthy young demographic reaching adulthood in the next several years. These youth are anticipated to marry and have their own families, increasing the financial demand for subsistence and quality of life. Unlike in the past where land prices were affordable and land was readily available, increasing land base to increase revenue from crop production is not as lucrative. In the case of Ridgeland, increasing livestock production to be more efficient and cost competitive has been determined to be the most viable option.

The TRC process is a means of establishing the long-term sustainability and regulatory compliance of a livestock operation. Through this process it provides an opportunity to inform the surrounding community of the intentions of the proponent and allows this same community to express any concerns or ask any questions that may be relevant to their situation. Before the TRC process was established, the availability of information with regards to such a proposal was very limited and significantly much harder to access. The process in place today provides all stack holders whether near or far, the opportunity to voice their concerns and ask relevant questions, and at the same time enables the proponent to respond to these same items. The process also provides valuable information and insight as to the technical information and the concerns of adjacent landowners to the municipality, which inevitably will aid in the decision-making process.

Respectfully Submitted;

South-Man Design Group Ltd.

Per,

Peter Grieger, P.Eng.