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MEDIA RELEASE

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City of Windhoek Clarifies Role in Managing Groot Aub

The City of Windhoek wishes to address concerns raised in a New Era newspaper article published on 28 October 2024, titled *“Dordabis: Forced to Pay N\$600 to Bury Relatives.”* Which highlighted issues raised by local farmers in Groot Aub. In response, the City would like to clarify its role and responsibilities in the management of Groot Aub.

In 2011, the then Minister of Regional and Local Government, Housing, and Rural Development extended the Windhoek Municipal Boundary (via Government Gazette No. 4801, Notice No. 184). This extension expanded the City’s jurisdiction from 64,586 hectares to approximately 514,217 hectares a 7.9-fold increase. The boundary adjustment was done in line with section 4(1)(b) of the Local Authorities Act, 1992 (Act 23 of 1992) (as amended) which empowers the Minister to alter the boundary of a local authority. The expansion transferred Groot Aub from the Khomas Regional Council to the City of Windhoek, thereby elevating its status from a settlement to a suburb of Windhoek.

A socio-economic survey conducted by the Khomas Regional Council in 2009, and a follow-up survey by the City in 2018, revealed rapid population growth in Groot Aub from 2,716 residents in 2009 to 8,977 in 2018, reflecting an annual growth rate of 6.7%. This rapid increase highlights the need for systematic urban management based on sound governance.

The City of Windhoek acknowledges that managing a fast-growing area like Groot Aub requires a comprehensive regulatory framework addressing land tenure, zoning, and infrastructure all aimed at enhancing residents’ quality of life. In response, the Windhoek Municipal Council adopted an Action Plan under Resolution 80/03/2020 that addresses a range of critical areas including office space, urban planning, property valuation, security of tenure, building plans, housing, municipal services, drilling of boreholes, aquifer protection, public awareness, and by-law enforcement. Initial cost estimate for infrastructural development in Groot Aub was estimated at N\$47.3 million in 2018, covering essential services such as the establishment of the municipal offices, emergency services, public transport, solid waste management, water, sewer, roads, and electricity. In collaboration with the Khomas Regional Council and the Ministry of Urban and Rural Development, the City remains dedicated to ensuring Groot Aub’s sustainable development.

Therefore, claims that the City’s involvement in Groot Aub is counterproductive misrepresent the facts and overlooks the significant steps taken to promote organized and sustainable growth in the area. Similar concerns have also been raised regarding farmers at Commonage Farm 3 (informally referred to as Satanslosch), which is part of Windhoek Townlands. Commonage Farm 3, located within the old municipal boundary, is managed by a Senior Municipal official serving as Caretaker. Thus, any

enquiries about the farm should be directed to the Department of Housing, Property Management, and Human Settlement, Division of Property Management (Leasehold Section) for clarity or guidance.

The City of Windhoek remains committed to working collaboratively with the agricultural community to explore solutions that balance agricultural practices with urban development needs, while taking into account the constraints urbanization places on agriculture.

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ISSUED BY:
City of Windhoek
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