



Ref: Aggeneys Solar 1 to Aggeneys MTS Substation power line

1 December, 2014

Attention: Ms Jenna Lavin

Dear Jenna

RE: Archaeological/ Heritage recommendations regarding the proposed power line between Aggeneys Solar 1 and Aggeneys MTS Substation

Background

PV Africa Development (Pty) Ltd proposes to construct an overhead power line from the Aggeneys Solar 1 project substation to the existing Eskom Aggeneis MTS Substation, situated approximately 4 km east of the authorised Aggeneys Solar 1 Energy Facility. A heritage assessment was previously undertaken by McGregor Museum (Morris 2014) for the larger Zuurwater PV Projects study area (Phases 1 - 4) and also included an assessment of the power line route adjacent to the existing Aggeneys - Nama 220kV power line for these projects (Phases 1 -4). The Aggeneys Solar 1 project (which was authorised prior to Phases 1 - 4) is also situated within the larger Zuurwater PV Projects area, however the heritage assessment of the power line required for this project was not included within the McGregor Museum study.

The proposed project requires a Basic Assessment (BA) in terms of the National Environmental Management (NEMA), No 107 of 1998 and the EIA regulations (Government Notice R.543 to 546, published in June 2010). As part of the BA process HCAC was asked to evaluate and identify potential impacts of the proposed power line on archaeological resources in terms of Section 38 (8) of the National Heritage Resources Act.

The study area

The proposed 4km power line (of less than 275 kV) from the Aggeneys Solar 1 project substation to the existing Eskom Aggeneys MTS Substation is situated approximately 4 km east of the authorised Aggeneys Solar 1 Energy Facility and to the south west of the town of Aggeneys in the Northern Cape. The proposed power line is located to the north of the N14 between Springbok and Aggeneys. The area is arid and red dunes of Aeolian sand with occasional deflation zones occur in the vicinity (Figure 1 & 2).

Previous work in the area

The area around Aggenys is characterised by mining activities and recently several solar projects have been proposed in the area. Therefore several CRM surveys, e.g. Morris (2010, 2011 a, b, c), Webley & Halkett (2011 & 2012) were conducted in the area and provides a good basis for understanding the local archaeology and the following sites/features can be expected in the larger study area:

- Archaeological sites are expected in the form of widespread stone artefact scatters from the Early Stone Age (ESA) and Middle Stone Age (MSA) and Later Stone Age (LSA);
- ESA and MSA quarry sites have been recorded in the greater study area (Morris 2010).

Closer to the study area Webley and Halkett identified a low density background scatter of stone artefacts associated with the MSA of low significance with no discreet sites (Webley & Halkett 2012). Some stone cairns are also recorded in the region and could be graves and similar occurrences can be expected in the study area (Webley and Halkett 2012).

The area around the proposed power line was surveyed by Morris (2013) similarly this Study recorded very sparse archaeological material in the development footprint areas of Phases 1-4 and associated with ancillary infrastructure including power line routes. The proposed Aggeneys Solar 1 to Aggeneys MTS Substation power line follows the same route as the authorised / assessed power lines and a low negative impact on heritage resources is anticipated.

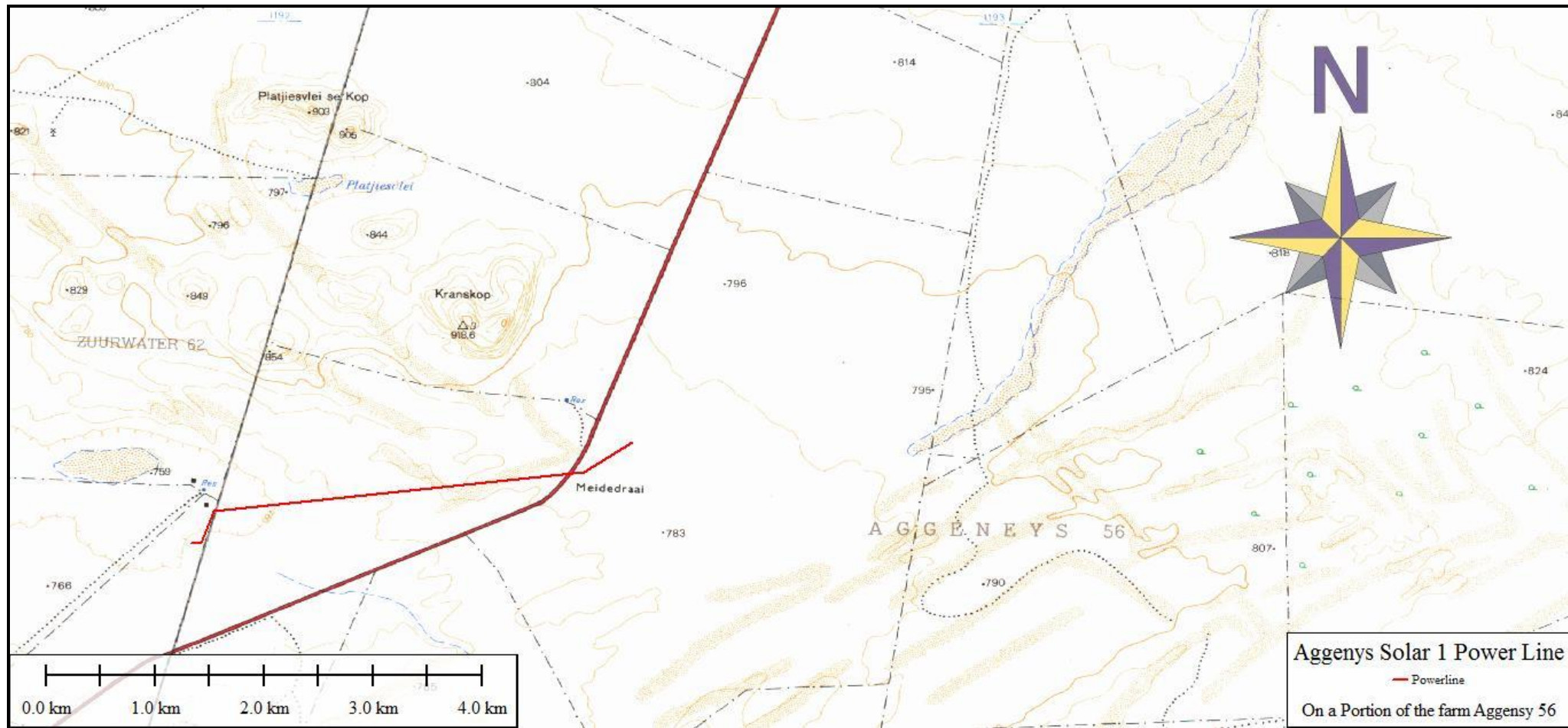


Figure 1: Location Map



Figure 2: Google Image of the area

Conclusion

The impacts to heritage resources by the proposed development are not considered to be highly significant as previous studies in the area (Morris 2013 and Webley and Halkett 2012) recorded very little archaeological material and the anticipated impact of the power line on widely dispersed material will be negligible. The impact on archaeological sites can also very easily be mitigated.

As such, we support the recommendation that the project be exempted from a Phase 1 Heritage Impact Assessment, but when the pylon positions are confirmed we recommend that a heritage walk down of the power line is conducted. In the unlikely event that any sites might occur within the proposed power line corridor sites can be preserved by micro adjustments to tower positions and the in situ preservation of the sites after the walk down.

If the above mentioned recommendations are adhered by we support the application for exemption from a Phase 1 Archaeological Impact Assessment.

Any further queries can be forwarded to Jaco van der Walt on Cell: +27 82 373 8491 or to jaco.heritage@gmail.com

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jaco van der Walt'.

Jaco van der Walt
Archaeologist
Heritage Contracts and Archaeological Consulting CC (HCAC)

References

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