

PROGRESS REPORT 09: June 4, 2012

Towers 205, 167 & 141

PROPOSED 400KV TABOR-WITKOP TRANSMISSION LINE, LIMPOPO PROVINCE

For: Stefanutti Stocks Power

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Tower 205

In the previous progress reports it was recommended that the archaeologist be present when work (whether it is excavation, foundation casting, assembly, construction or stringing) is conducted at or in the vicinity of sensitive areas of archaeological importance. In every report the applicable excerpts from the National Heritage Resources Act (Nr 25 of 1999) was quoted.

During an inspection of Tower 205, where a burial ground is located, it was noted that filling in of the excavation had been completed and assembly of the tower had started on site. The archaeologist was not notified of the date on which work was to proceed; the solution forwarded by Mr P de O'liveira to protect the graves from construction activities by covering them with wooden boxes had not been executed; the parking area has not been permanently demarcated. This resulted in the cairn of the one grave (which was properly protected and demarcated during the excavation) to be demolished. Although the burial itself is supposedly still intact, damage has occurred. This is a serious transgression according to the stipulations of the NHRA.

To prevent any future such occurrences, Mr P Reitz, the EO, then agreed to supply the archaeologist with a weekly work schedule in order to be present during work at the specified vulnerable sites.

Recommendations: The archaeologist should be on site when Tower 205 is erected and during stringing of the conductor.

Tower 167

According to the work schedule Tower 167 was due to be excavated on Wednesday, May 30, 2012. The position of the tower is located on an archaeologically important site (multi-component: Late Iron Age and historical period) and the archaeologist recommended that it should be either relocated or a Phase 2 (excavation) should be conducted after obtaining a destruction permit from SAHRA.

Apparently the position of the tower had been relocated by Mr L de Jager (Escom) and the surveyor of SSP. This was done without consulting the archaeologist. When I thus went to the site on the 30th May to inspect the relocation, it was to find that the relocated position was right in the centre of a cattle byre or midden. The EO, Mr P Reitz was under the impression that it was actually the markers from the previous location which were still in place and that he would take me to the new location. We went to another location which I photographed and reconnoitred for archaeological evidence, only to find that this was actually Tower 166. Mr Reitz was on inspection of the line, and not being certain whether the 166 marker was used at the relocated site of 167, I went to Tower 165, which was correctly marked. It was quite apparent that either I have missed the relocation of Tower 167 or that it had not been relocated. Once Mr Reitz again joined me, it became clear that the tower had only been relocated from one side of the site to the centre of it.

A meeting was arranged for the next morning with the site manager. I went to the offices of LIHRA (Limpopo Heritage Resources Agency) to invite them to the site

meeting, hoping for assistance in obtaining a destruction permit. None of the managers were available, but an official agreed to attend the meeting. I nevertheless immediately submitted a permit application for destruction of the site in the footprint of the tower to the SAHRA head office (Cape Town).

On Friday, June 1, the SSP manager, site manager, EO and a representative from Eskom, together with two LIHRA officials attended the site meeting at Tower 167. It is clear that the tower cannot be relocated and that the addition of another tower (one on each side of the hill) will not solve the problem due to the extent of the multi-component site: the power line will not reach the specified height. The only option is to obtain a destruction permit from SAHRA and conduct a Phase 2 archaeological excavation in the footprint of the tower. The LIHRA officials present were in accord with this decision and would advise head office accordingly.

Recommendations: Work at Tower 167 cannot progress until the destruction permit is obtained.

Tower 141

Mr Reitz alerted the archaeologist that the excavation for this tower would be done on Monday, June 4, 2012. The archaeologist was in attendance on site for the duration of the excavation. No heritage structures had been damaged or removed and no cultural material is reported. No archaeological stratigraphy is visible in the images below.



Leg A



Leg B



Leg C



Leg D

Handwritten signature of Hester Roodt in black ink.

Hester Roodt

BA Hons Archaeology - UP; BA Hons Anatomy – UP