Report on an archaeological assessment of the proposed Juno - van Rhynsdorp line 66kv line Summary The route for the Juno-Vanrhynsdorp 66kV line as proposed will have a minimum impact on archaeological resources. There are low density stone artefact occurrences along the route but potentially significant concentrations of artefacts around pans and along drainage courses are avoided. Archaeological considerations merit no changes in the proposed route. introduction As stone artefact occurrences had been noted in gypsum prospecting pits between Vanrhynsdorp and Vredendal it was recommended that the route of the 66kV line be inspected. The archaeological assessment was carried out on 8 November 1991 in the company of Mr Brian Kruger and Mr Tom Bezeidenhout of Escom. inspection of the route The proposed route is some 25 km long and it was possible to walk 9 km of this total distance and visit other points by vehicle. An attempt was made traverse the potentially sensitive areas near water courses on foot and to examine all the different terrain types. The kinds of archaeological occurrences that would be rated sensitive in this situation are clusters of stone artefacts that preserve something of the original contextual information. This requires that the artefacts have been little disturbed since they were discarded. Such clusters or groups of artefacts, described as archaeological sites, can mark the position of former activity areas or encampments of Stone Age people. Sites can be of high antiquity and in the course of this investigation the majority of the artefacts noted belonged to older rather than younger stages of the Stone Age. Its a rule of thumb that the older the sites the more chance there is of their having been disturbed and this seems to hold here. More recent sites can include occurrences of pottery and stone or other artefacts and mark the location of stock posts or settlements of herders. Khoi/Nama herders have inhabited the area for almost 2 000 years and the possibility that significant traces of such people could be encountered was a consideration in planning the survey. The most sensitive area was presumed to be close to Vanrhynsdorp where the line crosses the Dro% River. From the Vanrhynsdorp substation on the boundary of the town, past the river crossing to the fence line near the Troe-Troe farm house, sheet erosion is pronounced. Much of the top soil has been stripped and the subsurface quartz rubble overlying the bedrock is exposed. There is a very low density of stone artefacts in this general area. No in situ artefacts were observed but they appear to be eroding out of the top soil. In lag concentrates of stony material it is very easy to recognize artefacts of exotic materials like silcrete and quartzite. Some quartz has been worked but given the quantities of quartz rubble on surfaces worked quartz is less obvious. The original context of thses artefacts has been lost through colluviation and sheet erosion and for this reason these artefact occurrences are not rated as significant. Along the route as a whole there is a similar occurrences. The position where the line crosses the Dro% River was given special attention. There was a concern that early herder settlements could be encountered here for reason that the farm has a Khoi name, Troe-Troe. It is probable that there are traces of old herder stock posts both upstream and downstream of the crossing point. The site of the proposed crossing, in a section with steep banks to the river, is an unlikely location for any settlement, however, and no evidence of any was recorded. Beyond the Dro% River the route crosses a series terrace-like landforms. There

is a thick sand cover and visibility of any subsurface features is restricted to animal burrows and the like. There are scattered artefacts exposed in rare gullies but none that can be assessed as significant. A special effort was made to locate the only distinctive pan feature shown on the map near the line. It

is several hundred metres north of the line about km from Vanrhynsdorp. The artefact density is very much higher around the pan than encountered elsewhere. This occurrence will not be endangered directly by construction but can be noted as potentially significant, a locality to avoid. Approaching Vedendal, on the north east side, the route is along a terrace where low drainage gradients and sand movement have resulted in the formation of a large number of incipient pan-like features often only a few metres in across. These are not associated with any artefact concentrations and have no archaeological significance. As they seem to be developed in dorbank, a prominent soil type in this landscape, they are of some pedological interest. The route skirts the northern side of the town en route to Juno. In exposures along the rail track, the depth of the sand cover is impressive. No artefact occurrences were noted. The last part of the route close to Juno is across more eroded ground where the context of any materials is likely to be very disturbed. Conclusions In the time available it was possible examine sufficient part of the route to conclude there will be no significant impact on archaeological resources. In particular the crossing over the Dro% River is well chosen in this respect. It was of considerable benefit being able to undertake the inspection in the company of Mr Kruger and Mr Bezeidenhout, together we were able work much more efficiently and effectively than I could have done alone. I was able to concentrate on the archaeology rather than search for marker flags, for which I

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