

Eskom Roosenekal Mpumalanga

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A HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT (HIA) STUDY FOR A
PROPOSED NEW 11KV POWER LINE ON THE FARMS
MAPOCHSGRONDE 837JS AND HOUTENBEK 97JT NEAR
ROOSSENEKAL IN THE MPUMALANGA PROVINCE OF
SOUTH AFRICA

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Eskom intends to establish an 11kV power line from an existing line and pole (ROR412) near a residential house to homesteads for black families on the farms Mapochsgronde 837JS and Houtenbek 97JT near Roossenekal in the Mpumalanga Province of South Africa. The study area where the proposed new power line is to be established was subjected to a survey on foot.

The remains of a recently abandoned homestead occupied by a black family occur near the proposed new power line corridor. These remains are not associated with any graves. Neither are these remains older than sixty years to qualify as heritage resources. Eskom's proposed new power line will therefore not impact on any heritage resources of outstanding significance.

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1 INTRODUCTION

This document contains the report on the results of a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) study done for Eskom's proposed new 11kV power line on the farms Mapochsgronde 837JS and Houtenbek 97JT near Roossenekal in the Mpumalanga Province of South Africa.

2 AIM OF THIS REPORT

Eskom intends to establish an 11kV power line from an existing line and pole (ROR412) near a residential house to homesteads for black families on the farms Mapochsgronde 837JS and Houtenbek 97JT near Roossenekal in the Mpumalanga Province of South Africa (Figure 1).

In order to comply with legislation, Eskom requires knowledge of the presence, relevance and the significance of any heritage resources that may occur near or in the proposed new power line corridor. Eskom needs this information in order to take pro-active measures with regard to any heritage remains that may be affected, damaged or destroyed when the proposed new power line is built. Eskom therefore commissioned me to undertake a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) of the study area to be affected by the proposed new power line corridor. The aim of the HIA study is:

- to establish whether any heritage resources do occur near or in the proposed new power line corridor and, if so, what the nature, the extent and the significance of these remains are (see Box 1);
- to determine whether such remains will be affected by the proposed development project; and
- to evaluate what appropriate actions could be taken to reduce the impact of the development activities on such remains.

**BOX 1: TYPES AND RANGES OF HERITAGE RESOURCES AS OUTLINED IN
THE NATIONAL HERITAGE RESOURCES ACT (ACT NO 25 OF 1999)**

The National Heritage Resources Act (Act No 25 of 1999, Art 3) outlines the following types and ranges of heritage resources that qualify as part of the national estate, namely:

- (a) places, buildings structures and equipment of cultural significance;
 - (b) places to which oral traditions are attached or which are associated with living heritage;
 - (c) historical settlements and townscapes;
 - (d) landscapes and natural features of cultural significance;
 - (e) geological sites of scientific or cultural importance;
 - (f) archaeological and paleontological sites;
 - (g) graves and burial grounds including:
 - (i) ancestral graves;
 - (ii) royal graves and graves of traditional leaders
 - (iii) graves of victims of conflict
 - (iv) graves of individuals designated by the Minister by notice in the Gazette;
 - (v) historical graves and cemeteries; and
 - (vi) other human remains which are not covered by in terms of the Human Tissue Act, 1983 (Act No 65 of 1983)
 - (h) sites of significance relating to the history of slavery in South Africa:
 - (i) moveable objects, including -
 - (i) objects recovered from the soil or waters of South Africa, including archaeological and paleontological objects and material, meteorites and rare geological specimens;
 - (ii) objects to which oral traditions are attached or which are associated with living heritage;
 - (iii) ethnographic art and objects;
 - (iv) military objects;
 - (v) objects of decorative or fine art;
 - (vi) objects of scientific or technological interest; and
 - (vii) books, records, documents, photographs, positives and negatives, graphic, film or video material or sound recordings, excluding those that are public records as defined in section 1(xiv) of the National Archives of South Africa Act, 1996 (Act No 43 of 1996).
- The National Heritage Resources Act (Act No 25 of 1999, Art 3) also distinguishes nine criteria for places and objects to qualify as 'part of the national estate if they have cultural significance or other special value ...'. These criteria are the following:
- (a) its importance in the community, or pattern of South Africa's history;
 - (b) its possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage;
 - (c) its potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage;
 - (d) its importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class of South Africa's natural or cultural places or objects;
 - (e) its importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by a community or cultural group;
 - (f) its importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period;
 - (g) its strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons;
 - (h) its strong or special association with the life or work of a person, group or organisation of importance in the history of South Africa;
 - (i) sites of significance relating to the history of slavery in South Africa

3 METHODOLOGY

The study area where the proposed new power line is to be established was subjected to a survey on foot.

The author of this report has done several HIA studies in the Roossenekal area for granite mines and is therefore not totally unacquainted with the broader area in which the development is planned (see Part 7, 'Bibliography of literature pertaining to the broader study area').

The possible presence of heritage resources in the study area can therefore to a certain extent be predicted on the basis of the archaeologist's experience gained in this particularly area. However, heritage resources at times appear in the most unexpected places and surveys may not detect all heritage resources in any given study area. While certain remains may simply be missed during surveys (observations), others may occur below the surface of the earth and may only be exposed once development (such as the building of the power lines) commences.

4 THE STUDY AREA

4.1 Location

Eskom's proposed new 11kV power line is located on the farms Mapochsgronde 837JS and Houtenbek 97JT in the Mpumalanga Province of South Africa. The study area is situated in Tonteldoos which is located approximately 10km to the south of Roossenekal (2528 Pretoria: 1:250 000).

4.2 Brief historical context

The Eskom study area, situated between the towns of Roossenekal and Dullstroom, is historically tied-in with the cultural history of these two towns. Both towns were important beacons in the 19th century cultural history of the

Mpumalanga Province of South Africa. Whilst Roossenekal was known for its battles between the Ndzundza-Ndebele and the first Colonists (Voortrekkers), Dullstroom was founded as the centre of an irrigation settlement.

After the Swazi settled in Roossenekal, the Ndzundza-Ndebele also occupied the area (also known as KoNomijharhelo) for forty-four years (1839 to 1883) under the consecutive reigns of four chiefs. The first Colonist who moved into the area during the middle of the 19th century fought several battles with the Ndzundza-Ndebele who also fought the Swazi. Numerous settlements of the Ndzundza-Ndebele (and possibly of the Swazi) are scattered over the Steenkampsberge, perhaps extending as far south as Dullstroom. A large number of these sites and stone walled fortresses used by Boer commandoes during the Mapoch's War were recorded on the Mapochsgronde. Other remains include Colonial (Voortrekker) homesteads, remains of farm boundary walls, old roads, cemeteries and agricultural fields and terraces (see Bibliography, Part 8)

Dullstroom was founded in 1883 as the centre of an irrigation settlement directed by Wolterus Dull of Holland. The first irrigation settlement became a town in 1893, named after Dull and the 'stroom' (Crocodile River) flowing through the district. During the Anglo Boer War (1899-1902) the town was destroyed and most of the original Dutch settlers returned to Holland. Elm and beech trees planted by the Dutch pioneers remained.

Figure 1. The location of the proposed new 11kV power line on the farms Mapochsgronde 837JS and Houtenbek 97JT to the east of Roossenekal in the Mpumalanga Province of South Africa.

5 THE HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT (HIA)

The proposed new 11kV power line runs from an existing power line and pole (Nr ROR412) near a farmhouse on the farm Mapochsgronde 837JS (in the north) to two family homesteads on the farm Houtenbek 97JT (in the south-east). The proposed new power line is approximately 0,530km long and has two bends.

The HIA study along the proposed new Mapochsgronde/Houtenbek power line was conducted along the following stretches of the proposed new corridor:

Part AB

Part AB runs from the connecting pole near the farmhouse through a ninety-degree bend to a second bend, approximately 70m away from the connecting pole. Part AB runs across a garden that skirts the farmhouse and then, after turning ninety degrees to the east, runs across a piece of disturbed veldt that surrounds the farmhouse and a dirt track road that passes the farmhouse.

Part BC

Part BC runs from the second bend to a point between two homesteads occupied by black families working on local farms. Part BC is approximately 460m long.

Heritage resources observed

The remains of an abandoned homestead, occupied by black farm workers occur close to the proposed new power line corridor (Figure 2). It seems as if these remains are not yet sixty years old and as such may not be considered as heritage resources. Recently abandoned dwellings are sometimes associated with graves that qualify as sensitive (heritage) remains. However, no graves were observed near these ruins.

Figure 2. The remains of a recently abandoned homestead occur close to the proposed new power line corridor. These remains are not associated with any graves and will not be affected by Eskom's proposed new development (below).

Figure 3. The open veldt covered by the last stretch of the proposed new power line that will end between the two homesteads in the background (above).

6 CONCLUSION

The remains of a recently abandoned homestead occupied by a black family occur near the proposed new power line corridor. These remains are not associated with any graves. Neither are these remains older than sixty years to qualify as heritage resources. Eskom's proposed new power line will therefore not impact on any heritage resources of outstanding significance.

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