

**Archaeological and Historical
Data Base survey along the
Beta-Delphi Transmission Line**

For PD Naidoo and Associates

By

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Institute for Cultural Resource management was approached PD Naidoo and Associates to undertake a desktop analysed of the proposed Beta-Delphi corridor. This corridor begins near Bloemfontein (Free State) and ends near Queenstown (Eastern Cape).

Several archaeological and/or historical sites were located along this proposed transmission line. These sites include Stone Age, Iron Age, historical buildings, Missions, and Battlefields. This brief report highlights these known sites, and suggests a preliminary management plan for each site and the future of this transmission line. Parts of the transmission line will need to be rerouted.

A more in depth archaeological and historical survey will be required once the route of the transmission line has been finalised.

INTRODUCTION

Eskom proposes to build a transmission line from Dealesville to Queenstown. The Natal Museum, Institute for Cultural Resource Management was approached to undertake a brief scoping desktop study of this route in terms of the archaeological historical aspects.

The Terms of Reference for this Scoping Report are:

1. Undertake a desktop study of known archaeological and historical sites along the proposed corridor route
2. Assess these known sites in terms of their significance
3. Propose a management plan for these sites, and the rest of the corridor.

Several archaeological and historical sites were located and I discuss these below. The region to the west of Bloemfontein lies outside the known area for Late Iron Age archaeological sites. This is, however, a very important zone for the history of the interaction between European colonists SeTswana-speakers and the Korana. In addition to these sites, several major Anglo-Boer War battlefields exist along this route. Various people have noted individual rock engravings dating from the Late Stone Age to the more recent past.

This report omits sites from the Eastern Cape as comments on the corridor were not made available by the deadline for this project. Once these have been submitted to the ICRM, further comment shall be given.

METHODOLOGY

A desktop survey was undertaken to identify any archaeological and historical sites that could become obstacles in the way of the proposed transmission line. Both the databases from each province were initially consulted, as well as individuals from the local South African Heritage Resources Agency. These databases give the location and brief description of each site.

The database is, however, not a complete record of what occurs in a given area, since few systematic archaeological surveys have been undertaken along this

corridor in terms of Heritage Management. The desktop survey only highlights certain known areas, and cannot comment on unsurveyed areas.

DEFINING ARCHAEOLOGICAL SENSITIVITY

Archaeological sites vary according to significance and several different criteria relate to each type of site. However, several criteria allow for a general significance evaluation of archaeological sites.

These criteria are:

1. State of preservation of:

1.1. Organic remains:

1.1.1. Faunal

1.1.2. Botanical

1.2. Presence of a cultural deposit

1.3. Features:

1.3.1. Ash Features

1.3.2. Graves

1.3.3. Middens

1.3.4. Cattle pens

2. Spatial arrangements:

2.1. Internal housing arrangements

2.2. Intra-site settlement patterns

2.3. Inter-site settlement patterns

3. Features of the site:

3.1. Are there any unusual, unique or rare artefacts at the site?

3.2. Is it a type-site?

3.3. Does the site have a very good example of a specific time, feature, or artefact?

4. Research:

4.1. Providing information on current research projects

4.2. Salvaging information for potential future research projects

5. Inter- and intra-site variability

5.1. Can this particular site yield information regarding intra-site variability, i.e. spatial relationships between various features and/or artefacts?

5.2. Can this particular site yield information about a community's social relationships within itself, or between other communities?

6. Archaeological Experience:

6.1. The personal experience and expertise of the CRM practitioner should not be ignored. Experience can indicate sites that have potentially significant aspects, but need to be tested prior to any conclusions.

7. Educational:

7.1. The educational value of a site can only be fully determined after initial test-pit excavations and/or full excavations.

7.2. Educational value is in terms of display at an Heritage institution

The more a site can fulfill the above criteria, the more significant it becomes. Test-pit excavations are used to test the full potential of an archaeological deposit. These test-pit excavations may require further excavations if the site is of high significance. Sites may also be mapped and/or have artefacts sampled as a form of mitigation. Sampling normally occurs when the artefacts may be good examples of their type, but are not in a primary archaeological context. Mapping records the spatial relationship between features and artefacts.

KNOWN ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL SITES

The survey produced a variety of sites, which shall require rerouting of parts of the transmission line. The detailed information is exclusively from the Free State, as the Eastern Cape did not comment on these sites in time. A general comment for the Eastern Cape is given below.

Several sites/areas were located and these include:

1. Mission stations
2. An abandoned historical town
3. Anglo-Boer War battlefield sites
4. Fords across the Orange River near Aliwal North

1. Mission Stations

Bethany, a mission station of the Berlin Missionary Society, was established in 1834 to serve the Korana of Adam Kok (Schoeman 1983). The church house was completed in 1845. Extensions, designed by the acclaimed Free State architect,

Richard Wocke, were added in 1869. Presently the building is one of the oldest structures of its kind in the Free State. The buildings were recently restored by SAHRA and were returned to the community. An old cemetery is also found next to the church. A group of Batswana, who were settled at the station by 1867, was removed to Thaba Nchu in 1965. A claim to get their land back was made, and their property was returned in November 1998 (Die Volksblad 13.10.2000).

Significance: Bethany is of high significance in terms of land occupation and ownership. It is historically and architecturally important and any damage to the mission station buildings and surrounds, would alter the spirit of the place. The potential of a negative visual impact should also be taken into account.

Mitigation Required: The Bethany Mission station should be avoided.

Carmel is the location a former mission station of the Paris Missionary Society, which is on private land. A burial vault, containing the grave of the Rev. Lemue, is apparently still well preserved. There is an old water mill nearby that is currently in working order. The remains of the stone-built rectangular and circular living places of the early local inhabitants of the Mission Station are found on top of the ridge near the mission station.

Significance: Carmel is of high significance in terms of its local history, graves, historical buildings and archaeological and architectural structures

Mitigation Required: The Carmel Mission station should be avoided.

2. Odendaalstroom

The abandoned town of Odendaalstroom is situated on the southern bank of the Orange River, directly opposite the Goedemoed Prison. Although the town developed on the Cape Colony side of the River, it was administered as part of the Orange River Colony. The town was established during the late 1870's and declined after the development of the *nedersetting* (low economic white settlement) at Goedemoed across the River. Many of the buildings were set alight and destroyed by British forces during the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902). Today the remains of the Odendaalstroom Hotel and some other features are present. The original weir across

the River was used to channel irrigation water, and is currently in use (Die Volksblad 14.2.2000).

Significance: Odendaalstroom is of high significance in terms of its history and architectural structures.

Mitigation required: Odendaalstroom should be avoided. A visual impact should be avoided as well.

3. Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) Battlefields

Known Anglo-Boer War battlefield sites occur on the farms Abrahamskraal, Driefontein and Mostertshoek and Couville (an alleged British fort). These battlefields are significant sites dating from the British advance along the West Front.

Significance: All battlefields are protected by the National Heritage Act, and seldom will this legislation allow these fields to be affected. Battlefields have become increasingly important and form part of a growing tourist economy. The visual impact of a transmission line on a battlefield may be viewed as negative impact.

Mitigation required: All battlefields should be avoided, and no impact should occur.

4. Fords across the Orange River

Akermanskraal 11, Badfontein 25 and Saamwerk/Schiethoek 19 are only a few of the places where fords existed during the early days of ox-wagon transport. Others fords that are linked to important events may occur with further investigations.

Significance: A wealth of heritage lies in the history of the fords and drifts of the Orange River and they should be treated with caution. Fords may vary between low to high significance.

Mitigation Required: Fords should be avoided or minimum impact should occur during the construction of the route.

CONCLUSIONS & MANAGEMENT PLAN

The desktop survey of the Beta-Delphi transmission line corridor represents a desktop investigation only. Further survey and mitigation work will be required in the future. The results of this study were based on the database of each affected province, and personal knowledge of the affected areas. This study noted that there were several sensitive areas along the Beta-Delphi route, and that some areas should not, or could not, be affected by the transmission line. These highly sensitive areas included historical battlefields, Mission Stations and an historical village. These sites are protected by the National Heritage Resources Act and Eskom will need to liaise with the South African Heritage Resources Agency regarding these sites if they are to be affected. No comments were available from the Eastern Cape data base recording center, however, similar sites should occur.

This study should not be viewed as the finale of the heritage aspect of this project. This report only covers the historical and archaeological component and of the project. Other heritage resources, such as graves, sacred places on the landscape, oral histories of an area, meteorological sites and palaeontological sites, have not been considered as these are beyond the scope of expertise within this project. The report only covers known historical and archaeological sites, and thus does not cover a large area of land that has never been surveyed. Eskom should undertake an archaeological and historical survey of this transmission line route to determine the full scale of archaeological sites in these two provinces.

I propose the following management plan for this transmission line:

1. The route takes into account sites, from this report, that should not be affected and moves the line accordingly
2. The main archaeological and historical survey should be undertaken once the rerouted line has been finalised, in terms of heritage and natural sites.
3. The archaeological and historical aspect of this project should be undertaken in three phases:
 - 3.1. **Phase 1:** The archaeological and historical survey shall entail a foot survey of the sensitive areas along the route. This will require aerial photographs and locations of servitudes and transmission towers. The survey will identify archaeological and historical sites and assess these sites in terms of their significance. The affect of the impact of the transmission line on the site shall also be assessed. Each site will be given a management plan that is in accordance with

archaeological procedures and practices. Private security in turbulent areas should be considered.

3.2. **Phase 2:** If the assessment suggests mitigation then archaeological mapping, and/or test-pit excavations may take place at the site. Archaeological mapping involves the accurate mapping of a site noting the spatial location of features to each other. If test-pit excavations are undertaken then the archaeologist is required to obtain a permit for the archaeological salvage of this site. This permit is different to that required by the developer, since the archaeologist is only sampling a part of the site and is not destroying or damaging the site. If the test-pit excavations locate and recover material that is significant, and indicates that more such material may occur, then a Phase 3 option may be required.

3.3. **Phase 3:** Phase 3 options tend to be full excavations of a site in accordance with archaeological practice and methodologies. These tend to occur when valuable and significant information has been recovered from a site in the Phase 2, and more may be recovered by further mitigation. Alternatively, a Phase 3 may not occur, as the site is of such significance that no impact may occur, and the route would need to be realigned.

I recommend this three phased approach as it keeps the contractor and other IAP's continually informed as to the most current issues related to the route. Furthermore, potential areas of negative impact even after mitigation may be observed at early stages of the project, and be dealt with accordingly and timeously. I recommend that Eskom undertakes the archaeological and historical surveys as soon as possible, since these may locate previously unrecorded sites may delay the transmission line if .dealt with promptly.

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APPENDIX A

List of the location of archaeological and historical sites mentioned in the text. The location of these sites is not the public and shall remain unpublished to all except PD Naidoo and Associates and Eskom. This is due to the sensitive nature of these sites.

Site	Locality	
Bethany	29°36'S	25°59'E
Carmel	30°13,5'S	26°18'E
Odendaalstroom	30°34,5'S	26°27'E
Abrahamskraal 319	28°53'S	25°39'E
Driefontein	29°00,05S	25°37'E
Mostertshoek	29°40'S	26°16'E
Couville	Banks of the Orange River locality unknown.	
Akermanskraal 11	30°41'S	26°37'E
Badfontein 25	30°39'S	26°32,5'E
Saamwerk/Schiethoek 19	30°34'S	26°29'E