

Your reference:

Our reference: 9520 Thyspunt

Date: 17 May 2011

Dear Stakeholder

## **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT: PROPOSED THYSPUNT TRANSMISSION LINES INTEGRATION PROJECT (TTLIP)**

### **• FEEDBACK: EIA TEAM-PREFERRED ALIGNMENT**

A series of Feedback Meetings (FMs) was held during October 2010 with representatives / chairpersons from various associations, Local and District Authorities to refresh everyone on the EIA process to date. At that stage SiVEST's environmental specialists started their detailed assessments within the proposed Northern and Southern Corridors (~2km wide) and the newly proposed Port Elizabeth Substation site. These studies are now close to completion.

A specialist workshop was held where each environmental specialist was asked to indicate areas along both corridors, and the proposed new Port Elizabeth substation site, that they have identified as highly sensitive and importantly, fatally flawed. Each specialist was also asked to indicate an optimal alignment for the proposed power lines in both corridors from their specialist perspective. By assimilating these specialist alignments, and by taking the various inputs and numerous comments and concerns raised by landowners and stakeholders into consideration, the environmental team was able to put an 'EIA Team-preferred alignment' on the map. This EIA Team-preferred alignment has been created to indicate the most optimal alignment from an environmental perspective. It also needs to be mentioned that throughout the consultation process, landowners requested that an *alignment* be presented which will enable the landowners and stakeholders to comment meaningfully. It is very important to note that the EIA Team-preferred alignment is not cast in stone and that authorisation will be sought for the corridors. The corridors have changed in certain areas in accordance with the EIA Team-preferred alignment.

A series of Landowner Open Houses was held during February 2011 where the environmentally preferred alignment was presented to directly affected owners to obtain their inputs. The Landowner Open Houses provided the team with another opportunity to interact with the landowners and to confirm and/or be informed of constraints that influenced the EIA Team-preferred alignment. The inputs received necessitated the realignment of the environmentally preferred alignment at various sections within the proposed Northern and Southern Corridors.

#### **Who is a Potentially Directly Affected Landowner?**

These are landowners whose property(ties) are **directly** affected by the EIA Team-preferred alignment within the Northern and Southern Corridors and Substation sites.

#### **Who is a Potentially Indirectly Affected Landowner?**

These are landowners whose property(ties) falls within the proposed Northern and Southern Corridors but are **currently** not affected by the proposed EIA Team-preferred alignment.

## Maps of the Environmental Preferred Alignment

SiVEST would like to inform you that large scale maps are now available on SiVEST's website (<http://www.sivest.co.za/Downloads>, scroll down to *9520 Eskom Thyspunt Lines*). The maps include the following information:

- The latest revised 2km – 5km EIA Corridors.
- EIA Team-preferred alignment depicting the proposed power line alignment within the Northern and Southern Corridors.
- Cadastral (property boundaries) with property details (Farm and Portion Numbers).

We would appreciate any written comments you may have regarding the EIA Team-preferred alignment.

## Northern and Southern Corridors for Environmental Authorisation

Just as a reminder, the Applications submitted for Environmental Authorisation are as follows:

- Southern Corridor: DEA Reference Number 12/12/20/1211
- Northern Corridor: DEA Reference Number 12/12/20/1212
- Proposed Port Elizabeth Substation: DEA Reference Number: 12/12/20/1213

In terms of the proposed Northern and Southern Corridors, the Applications submitted are for a corridor within which Eskom Transmission will have the flexibility of negotiating a final alignment with each *affected* landowner, i.e. Eskom are seeking approval for the placement of a number of 55m-wide servitudes within a wider area. At this stage, it is not envisaged that Eskom will undertake any negotiations with landowners on servitude acquisition prior to the Authorisation Process being completed.

## Way Forward – Availability of Draft EIR

Following the completion of the specialist studies, the draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) will be made available for a period of public comment. Hard copies of the report will be made available at a number of locations through the study area, as well as on SiVEST's and Eskom's website. During this public comment period a series of open houses will be held across the study area. You will receive correspondence regarding the dates of the comment periods and meetings as soon as these are finalised.

We look forward to a constructive consultation process and reiterate that your input in this process is highly valued and appreciated.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nicolene", written in a cursive style.

Nicolene Venter  
Senior Public Participation Practitioner  
**SiVEST Environmental Division**