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19 June 2010

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Department of Environmental Affairs

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Attention: Department of Environmental Affairs: Appeals Department

To: Mr. T. Zwane (Fax 012 320 7561)
Cc: Mrs. A. Lötter, J. Hex (Zitholele Consulting) (Fax 086 674 6121)

MEETING 18th JUNE 2010 AND WAY FORWARD

Reference No: 12/12/20/1488

The site meeting of 18th June 2010 at Onverwacht 532 JR refers.

The following have to be addressed in order to waive the appeal:

1. Access of cattle, land use and land capability. As the railway is crossing the contours, perpendicular and not parallel as is normally the case, an appropriate design is required. Consider the long term operation of the Kusile Power Station. In addition, the railway is crossing productive land and not passing on a boundary. The design has to allow for numerous cattle crossings and vehicle access (veldt fires), at least one (1) every twenty-five (25) meters. Figure 1 can be an example. A few cattle crossings will induce soil erosion due to the formation of cattle pathways. Note that no excavations are allowed in cattle crossings due to the accumulation of water (Figure 2) that can result in (a) foot rot, (b) mosquito born diseases like rift fever valley, 3-day stiffness, etc. Adequate and properly designed crossings will have a less impact on land use and land capability, especially if the land use changes with time.
2. Groundwater intersection in the proposed cutting. A couple of shallow boreholes (not deeper than 20 m) will be drilled in the proposed servitude to establish the water table and

groundwater presence. The results of the drilling will dictate the way forward as it has implications on the design of the railway and land use/carrying capacity of the property.

3. A concrete fence is required for safety and security purposes, see Figures 3 & 4. A concrete fence is durable and the risk of pedestrians and cattle being killed on the railway becomes less. Note that fence cutting in the area is a concern and this is also practiced by ESKOM. Furthermore, such a fence demands less maintenance as at present no response from ESKOM is received on other related issues.

4. A cost comparison has to be conducted on the different design options regarding the railway. A normal filling with the required crossings or (partially) pylon design that allows free access. This has to be conducted with the concrete fencing option in mind, as a pylon design won't necessarily require this. The cost comparison shall also investigate the impact on the land price (resell value and social acceptability). Note again that this railway line is a siding that will be in place for more than fifty (50) years and is not the same as a siding to a mine/industry. The design is still influenced by the outcome of item 2.

5. The included figures illustrate current practices in place and illustrate a ZERO HARM policy, a policy which is also underwritten by ESKOM management.

6. An updated Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) to be issued to all relevant parties that indicate these points and the previous mentioned items, like the MSD sheet for the lime (chemical breakdown of rocks) and reference to section in the FEIR and interested and affected party comment sheet.

Dr Paul Meulenbeld (Pr Sci Nat: Environmental Science)

Figure 1. A pylon structure that allows free and easy access with less erosion impacts.

Figure 2. Water logging concern with normal culverts.

Figure 3. Concrete fencing existing along a siding.

Figure 4. Concrete fencing existing along a siding.