

Planning Document: Department of Environmental Affairs & Tourism Project – upgrading of facilities and roads.

The following document contains preliminary information on the planned upgrade of facilities in the Richtersveld WHS during 2007-2008. Please confirm directly with the booking office as details may change. Upgrades are planned to be completed by December 2008.

1. Details of roads

North-South Road (80.6km): Running from Eksteenfontein, at the southern end of the conservancy (core area of the Richtersveld Cultural and Botanical Landscape WHS), to the Rosyntjieberge on the North Eastern boundary. The road includes the Fluorspar Circle route as well as roads leading to Stinkfontein and Matjieskloof camp sites.

The route includes both 2x2 and 4x4 sections. It provides 2x2 access to the proposed Basterfontein overnight hut as well as to Fluorspar Valley (via the southern branch of the Fluorspar circle route) The remainder of the route is accessible to bakkies / 4x4's only.

Rooiberg Circle Route (33.5km): This road connects Eksteenfontein via a section of the North-South Road to Rooiberg Guesthouse and to the Kanikaip Road which runs down to the Orange River. This road as well as an access road to the proposed Namastad is upgraded to allow for 2x2 access.

Kanikaip Road (21km): Runs from the Rooiberg circle route down to Kanikaip camping area on the Orange River. This road is upgraded to allow for better 4x4 and bakkie access to the river. Kanikaip of Xaminxaip as it is written in Nama - Xami means "water" nXaip means "loose sand"

Kuboes-Glybank Road (5km): The stretch of road running south-eastwards from Kuboes to Glybank camp site. This road is upgraded to allow 2x2 access to the camp site.

Farmershoek Road (20km): Runs northwards from the Eksteenfontein – Kuboes main road through the Stinkfontein mountains to Kookwater. This road is upgraded to allow for bakkie access.

Tierhoek Circle Route (37km): Running from the Main road between Lekkersing and Kuboes via Tierhoek camp site, Perdewater, and back down to the Eksteenfontein-Kuboes main road. The section of road running to Tierhoek campsite is upgraded to allow for easy 2x2 access to Tierhoek, while the remainder of the road is repaired to allow for access to bakkies.

2. Details of camping and picnic sites

Kanikaip camping & picnic spot:

Site Description

Located on the banks of the !Gariep (Orange) River, this site is used by informal campers and river rafters. The site itself consists of grassy terraces on the lower banks of the river and steep, sandy

upper banks covered with Rosyntjie trees. Access and parking is along a sandy track running along the upper bank.

Upgrade of the site

The site will be formalised and upgraded by demarcating a parking area and formalising the fire places that already exist. Two dry-pit toilets will be erected away from the river as well as a boardwalk to improve access and to reduce erosion of the sandy river banks caused by informal paths. The planned capacity of the camp is 3 sites with 3 to 4 people each.

Halfmens picnic spot:

Site Description

This site is located next to the road on route to Kanikaip camp site and the Orange River. It lies on an exposed neck between two mountains, is rocky and sparsely vegetated. It is an old camp site, but is currently predominantly used as a parking area for people wishing to walk to two Halfmens plants in the nearby vicinity. There is no access to water.

Upgrade of site

The site will be upgraded to provide shade, parking and braai facilities for people wishing to visit the Halfmens trees. A dry-pit toilet will also be installed. The site will be able to cater for 3 to 4 vehicles.

Sun Valley camping site:

Site Description

This site is situated at the bottom of Sun Valley on an exposed ridge of rocks. The site is rocky with sparse vegetation and is near to a sandy river bed. Access is from the Fluorspar Circle Route along a steep rocky pass and along a sandy river bed. It was previously used as a campsite with basic ablution and braai facilities which have since become dilapidated. There is no access to water.

Upgrade of site

The site will be upgraded by demarcating new camp sites formalising parking areas. The old dry-pit toilet and shower will be repaired and a new braai area constructed. The capacity of this site once upgraded will be for 3 vehicles with 3 to 4 people each.

Fluorspar Valley Picnic Area:

Site Description

The site is located amongst the ruins of an old abandoned mining settlement in the Fluorspar Valley. It is a sparsely vegetated site alongside a river bed and in the vicinity of an old house and disused dry-pit toilet. There is no access to water. The mineral, fluor-spar, was mined in the earlier years and transported on a regular basis to O'kiep Copper Mine. The mine was operated by Fred Daniels that held the mining rights for the area.

Upgrade of Site

A shade shelter with a table and benches will be erected and the dry-pit toilet repaired and upgraded to provide picnic facilities for people traveling along the Fluorspar circle route.

Matjieskloof Camp Site:

Site Description

This site is situated at the base of Matjieskloof on the north-eastern slopes of Stinkfontein Mountains. Plenty of “matjies” that is used by the Nama people to build a “matjieshut”, used to grow at this site. The site was previously used as a stock post and has been used informally as a camp site. The area is rocky with a reasonable amount of vegetation. There is an old reservoir which used to store water tapped from the natural spring higher up the kloof. The kloof itself is relatively lush and green. Access is by 4x4/bakkie off the road to Slootfontein, an extension of the North-South Road.

Upgrade of site

The site will be upgraded by formally designating the camp sites and parking areas and constructing a dry-pit toilet, out of sight of the camping area. No water from the spring will be utilised, it will be left as natural as possible as an attraction for people to walk to and experience. The capacity of this site will be for 3 vehicles with 3 to 4 people each.

Stinkfontein Camp Site

Site Description

This site lies high up on the south-eastern slopes of the Stinkfontein Mountains. It has magnificent views of the valley floor below and has previously been used as a stock post and by informal campers. The site itself is located on a relatively level section of the mountain just below a kloof. The site is rocky with a fair amount of scrubs, bushes and grasses present. Access is up a steep track (to be upgraded) off the North-South Road. There is no access to water.

Upgrade of Site

The site will be upgraded by demarcating and formalizing parking and camp sites. A dry-pit toilet will be erected by using the remains of an old shelter, away from the camping area. Capacity of the site will be for 3 vehicles with 3 to 4 people each.

Tierhoek Camp Site

Site Description

This site is situated on the floor of a kloof on the southern edge of Ploegberg Mountains, in the north-eastern part of the conservancy. Access is by 2x2 vehicle off the main road between Kuboes and Lekkering. The kloof is characterised by big round boulders and a sheer cliff on one side of the kloof. There is a shallow cave and many nooks and crannies have been formed between boulders that have settled at the bottom of the kloof. The kloof is well vegetated with trees, grasses and shrubs. The site is currently used as an informal camping and picnic site. Water is available from a borehole in the neighbouring kloof.

Upgrade of site

The site will be neatened up by removing the car wrecks, fences and other scrap. Formal camp sites and parking areas will be demarcated. Two dry-pit toilets and two shower areas will be built between some of the boulders. A solar pump to replace the old windmill will be installed to pump water from the borehole in the neighbouring kloof. The capacity of the camp site will be 5 to 6 vehicles with 3 to 4 people each.

Glybank Camp Site:

Site Description

This site is located at the foot of the northern reaches of the Ploegberg Mountains. Access is by 2x2 vehicle along a dirt road 5km south-east of the town Kuboes. The site is situated alongside a sandy river bed with scattered trees and shrubs. There is a natural pond nearby and the site is currently used by picnickers and informal campers.

Upgrade of Site

The site will be upgraded by demarcating official camping and parking areas and formalizing fore places. Two dry-pit toilets will be installed and litter and scrap will be removed from the area.

Basterfontein

Site Description

The site is located just off the North-South Road, halfway between the turnoffs to Fluorspar Valley and Sun Valley on a koppie that faces the eastern slopes of the Stinkfontein Mountains. It is accessible by 2x2 vehicles. Basterfontein was once a stock post with a good supply of water pumped from the nearby borehole. Baster means “tussenin” or in between? because the fountain didn't supply all through the year.

Infrastructure for Site

Tourist accommodation for 6 to 8 people in the form of a basic overnight hut will be provided. The hut will be built up against a rock ridge near the top of the Koppie. The hut will provide basic accommodation for people to overnight and explore the northern section of the conservancy. There will be basic ablutions available in the form of a shower and toilet.

Namastad

Site Description

The site is approximately 5 kilometres from Eksteenfontein, just inside the Richtersveld WHS, 1 kilometre off the North South Road. It is situated on a level section of ground at the foot of a circle of mountains forming an amphitheatre around the site. The site is gravelly and sandy underfoot with scattered vegetation and one large tree growing in the nearby riverbed. A relative large number of *Aloe pillansii* trees have been discovered on the slopes of the nearby mountains. The site will be easily accessible by 2x2 vehicle once the road has been upgraded.

The idea for a Namastad came from the Nama community who saw an opportunity for a small business offering overnight accommodation to tourists who would like to experience Nama culture and which could also offer Nama people the opportunity to make use of a traditional Nama facility for the holding of ceremonies, celebrations and social events. The Nama people are very aware of the risks of their culture and heritage being exploited, and to this end are determined to ensure that the Namastad and the activities surrounding it will not denigrate the Nama people of their culture, but rather allow them the opportunity to express themselves and their culture as they see fit.

The plan is to construct 5 medium sized huts to be used for accommodation, and one large hut which can be used for holding ceremonies and functions. One large skerms (shelters) will also be erected to provide additional space for people to eat and gather together. Two dry-pit toilets will be installed.

