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## **ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION OF THE PROPOSED ALTERATIONS TO THE TELKOM LATTICE MAST AT GAMSBURG (GHAAMSBERG) NEAR AGGENEYS, NORTHERN CAPE**

### **INVESTIGATION**

The site for the proposed upgrading and stabilising of the existing Telkom lattice mast at Gamsberg near Aggeneys, Northern Cape, was visited and inspected on 7 July 2005. Boom Prinsloo of Machogo Development Associates (MDA), Bloemfontein, accompanied me to the site.

The area was examined for possible archaeological and historical material and to establish the potential impact on any cultural material that might be found. The Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) is done in terms of the National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA), (25 of 1999) and under the Environmental Conservation Act, (73 of 1989).

### **LOCALITY**

The site for the proposed development is located on top of the Gamsberg (Figs.1&2), located about 10km east of Aggeneys along the N14 road between Pofadder and Springbok in the Northern Cape (Map 1). Access to the mountain is gained from the N14 main road via the Loop 10 secondary road (2918 AB).

According to Raper (2004:112), the actual name of the mountain is Ghaamsberg or Gam se Berg, allegedly derived from Khoikhoi /*Gaams*, meaning "grassy spring".

The following GPS coordinates (Cape) were taken:

Lattice mast                      29°14'32"S. 018°56'18"E    Altitude 1109m (Fig.4).

Gamsberg Mine Bench Mark 29°14'30"S. 018°56'21"E    Altitude 1113m (Fig.7).

The area in the immediate vicinity of the mast is very stony and consists of an abundance of quartzite boulders (Figs.3-5). Vegetation on the mountain is sparse, mainly consisting of shrubs and succulents including *Ghaap* (Fig.5&6). On certain slopes of the mountain vegetation cover is more dense and provides grazing for small game such as Klipspringer (Fig.9).

## **FINDS**

A single Middle Stone Age (MSA) flake was found on the surface near the mast (Fig.8). There is no proof that this solitary flake was actually manufactured on the site. The possibility that it could have been part of the introduced crushed rock cannot be denied.

No indication of any other archaeological or historical material or any engravings was found in the inspected area.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

No obvious reasons could be found to delay the commencement of further planning and development of the site.

After examination by the archaeologist, it is recommended that the proposed developments may proceed.

However, every archaeological and historical site is unique and should be treated as a non-renewable commodity. All efforts should be made to avoid any unnecessary disturbance or destruction of the area. It is stressed that in case of the discovery of any stone tools, pottery and archaeological or historical material of significance during the course of the work, all activities should temporarily be stopped in the specific area for inspection by an archaeologist or other specialists from the McGregor Museum, Kimberley.

## **MITIGATION**

Concerning the area for the proposed development, no mitigation measures are needed.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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**LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS:**

Map 1. Locality of Aggeneys between Pofadder and Springbok, Northern Cape.



Fig.1 Gamsberg or Ghaamsberg as seen from the N14 main road about 10km east of Aggeneys.



Fig.2 The mast is located to the right on top of the mountain.



Fig.3 View of the lattice mast and its surroundings on the mountain.



Fig.4 Full view of the Gamsberg lattice mast.



Fig.5 The soil surface on the hill is very stony with sparsely scattered shrubs.



Fig.6 Rare Ghaap () succulents are found on the mountain.



Fig.7 The Gamsberg Mine Bench Mark.



Fig.8 A single MSA stone flake was found on the surface.



Fig.9 Certain slopes contain more dense vegetation which provide grazing for Klipspringer.