

Agency for Cultural Resource Management

Specialists in Archaeological Studies and Heritage Resource Management

No. 5 Stuart Road Rondebosch, 7700 Phone/Fax 021- 685 7589

E-mail: acrm@wcaccess.co.za Cellular: 082 321 0172

RECOMMENDED EXEMPTION FROM FURTHER ARCHAEOLOGICAL STUDIES:

THE PROPOSED NAMAQUA REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY SCHEME BETWEEN HENKRIES AND STEINKOPF, NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE

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1. OUTLINE OF THE DEVELOPMENT

The proposed project entails the replacement of the existing water supply pipeline from Henkries to Steinkopf (Nama Khoi Municipality) in the Namaqualand region of the Northern Cape Province (Figures 1 & 2). Henkries is located about 3 kms south of the Orange River, while Steinkopf is located 25 kms north of Springbok, which is about 550 kms north of Cape Town, alongside the N7.

A separate application for a new water supply pipeline between Bulletrap and Okiep and between Rooiwinkel and Nababeep has already been subjected to an archaeological impact and scoping assessment (Kaplan 2011a, b). Historically, both Okiep and Nababeep are important towns in the history of copper mining in Namaqualand (Smallberger 1995).

The larger project ultimately entails replacing the entire \pm 200 km network of water supply pipelines in the region, which extends all the way to Kleinzee on the Richtersveld coast.

The existing 200 km long water supply pipeline between Henkries and Kleinzee was installed in 1973 and its condition has deteriorated rapidly since 1992. The pipeline is the main potable water supply pipeline from the Orange River that supplies numerous small towns in the region, including Henkries, Steinkopf, Bulletrap, Nababeep, Okiep, Carolousberg, Concordia, Springbok and Kleinzee. The steel and asbestos pipes have an average age of about 38 years, and most of the distribution pipes are currently in need of urgent repair and replacement as a result of frequent breakages and leakages.

This component of the proposed project thus entails the replacement of the aging pipeline between Henkries and Steinkopf, a distance of about 60 kms. The road between Henkries and Steinkopf is flat and featureless and comprises a combination of soft red sands and gravel. The existing servitude is 3 m wide, and the new pipeline will be excavated to a depth of about 1.6 m.

The project is currently undergoing a Basic Assessment Process that is being conducted by EnviroAfrica

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Archaeological research in Namaqualand has largely concentrated on the Richtersveld and further south in the Kamiesberg area (Webley 1992). The Archaeology Contracts Office at the University of Cape Town has also been involved in archaeological mitigation work in the diamond fields of the Namaqualand coast since 1991. They have conducted extensive surveys of the land owned by De Beers resulting in a database of nearly 1500 coastal sites (Kaplan 1993; Dewar 2007).

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE

Closer to the study area, Kaplan (2010a) has documented a few dispersed Later and Middle Stone Age (LSA & MSA) implements around Okiep and Nababeep during a study for a proposed wind energy farm. Historical remains such as stone ruins and graves were also recorded. Some very faded rock art was also documented (Kaplan 2010b).

Low density scatters of LSA quartz flakes, chunks, a few cores and utilized pieces, were documented by Kaplan (2008) on hill slopes alongside DR2595 from the N7 to Bulletrap, during an assessment of three proposed borrow pits.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is the archaeologist's professional opinion that the removal and replacement of the existing water supply pipeline with a new pipeline, between Henkries and Steinkopf will not impact on any significant archaeological heritage.

While some surface Later Stone Age material may be encountered along the proposed route, these are likely to be mostly dispersed and isolated occurrences.

The construction of the proposed new pipeline is not considered to pose a serious threat to the local archaeological heritage because:

- The project entails replacing an aging water pipeline with a new supply pipeline.
- The same servitude will be used.
- The servitude is only about 3 m wide.

It is therefore recommended that exemption from further specialist archaeological studies and mitigation be granted for the proposed development.

Should any unmarked human remains, or any bones, be exposed or uncovered during replacement of the old water pipeline, the archaeologist (Jonathan Kaplan 082 321 0172), or the South African Heritage Resources Agency (Katie Smuts 021 462 4502) must be immediately informed.

Burials should not be disturbed or removed until inspected by the archaeologist.

5. REFERENCES

Dewar, G. 2007. The archaeology of the coastal desert of Namaqualand: a regional synthesis. Unpublished D.Phil thesis: University of Cape Town.

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Smallberger, J.M. 1995. A history of copper mining in Namaqualand. Scholtz Trust.

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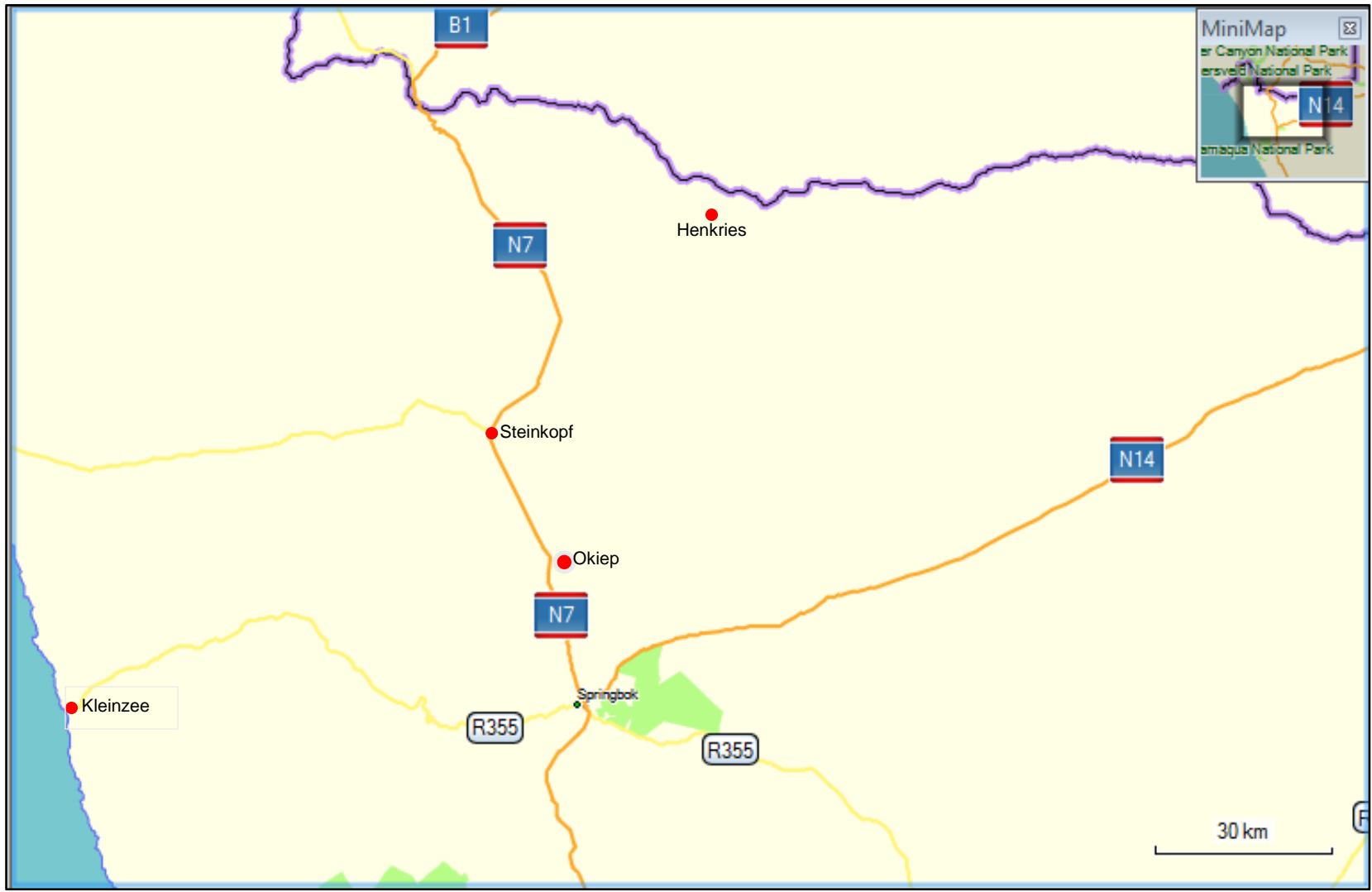


Figure 1. Locality map

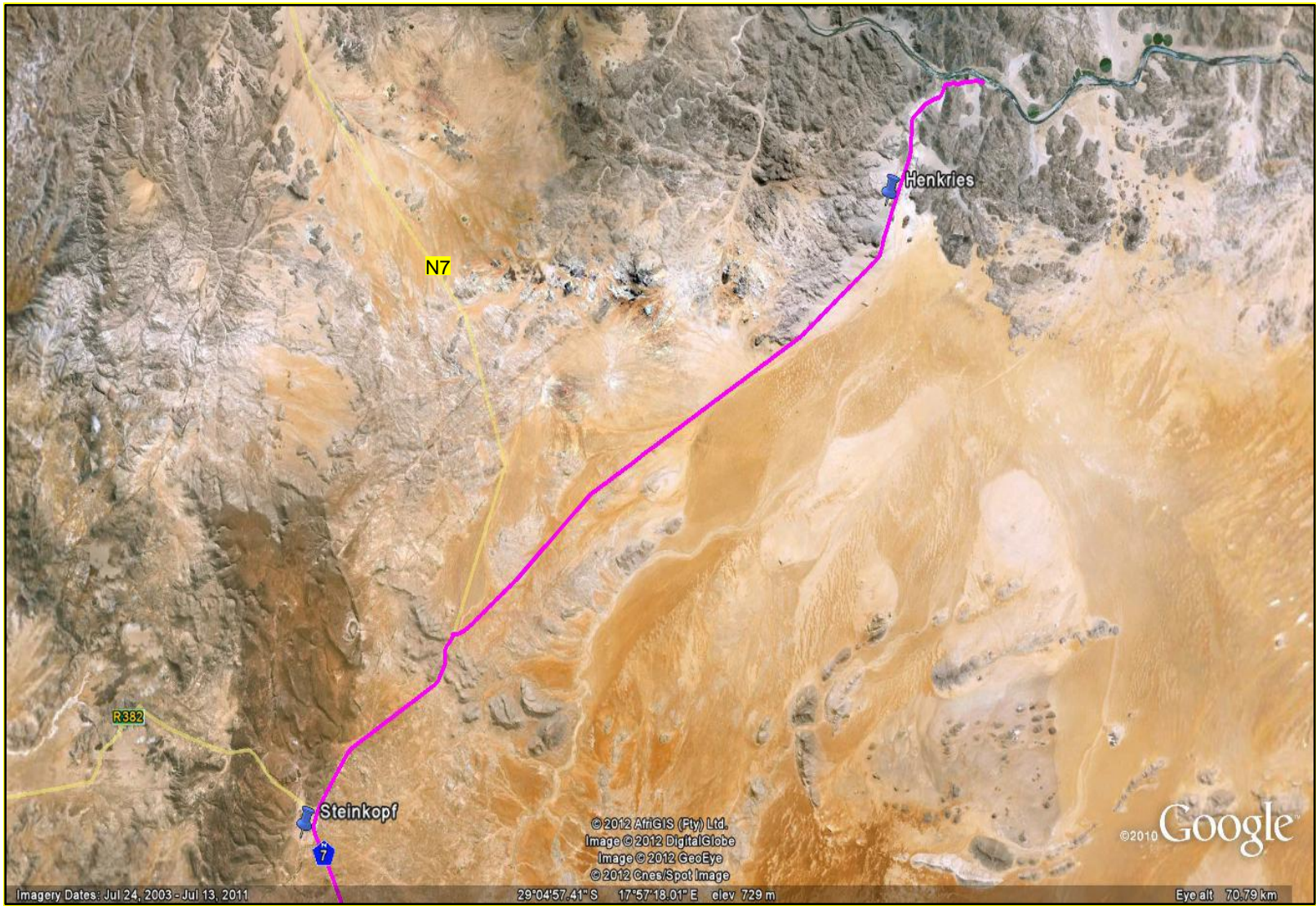


Figure 2. Namanqua Water Project: Supply pipeline between Henkries/Orange River to Steinkopf

