

## Mokala National Park - Access for the Mobility Impaired

Mokala National Park is the newest National Park in the SANParks stable (proclaimed in 2007 to replace the deproclaimed Vaalbos National Park). Mokala is located some 70km southwest of Kimberley, just off the N12, and is an excellent stop over destination for a couple of days for people driving between Gauteng or the country's interior and the coastal regions of the Eastern and Western Cape. *Mokala* means Camel Thorn tree in Setswana and the park is at the interface between Karoo and Savannah Biomes. The park and the nearby SANParks Breeding Centre at Graspan also serves as a breeding nodes for many rare large herbivores and visitors to the park should encounter many of the following species: Black Rhino, White Rhino, Disease-free Buffalo, Tsessebe, Roan Antelope, Mountain Reedbuck, Giraffe, Gemsbok, Eland, Zebra, Red Hartebeest, Blue Wildebeest, Black Wildebeest, Kudu, Ostrich, Steenbok, Duiker and Springbok.



Mokala has 4 camps [Mosu Lodge (15 units), Mofele Lodge (9 units), Lilydale Lodge (12 units) and Haak-en-Steek (1 unit and 5 rustic campsites)], but currently there is only one unit at the Main Camp (Mosu Lodge) that is equipped for guests with mobility challenges.



At the park's entrance gate there is an intercom link to the reception to get an electric gate to open and allow access into the park. One then makes the journey of about 5km to the reception at Mosu Lodge. The reception is ramped and the parking is open – with no allocated bays, but plenty of excess space for wheelchairs to disembark.



There is a porter trolley and porters are on hand to transport luggage to the rooms. There is a series of wide bricked pathways that lead to the rooms and these are great for wheelchair passage.



**The accessible room** suitable for wheelchair guests is not currently loaded as such on the SANParks reservation system and currently guests requiring this facility need to book the unit directly with the park on telephone: (053) 2040 158/164/168 to reserve the unit. The reason for this is that the unit is linked to an adjoining room and the park management like to keep the option of selling the unit as a 4 bed family unit, as all other rooms are single or twin and both properties of the room cannot be loaded on the reservation system.

<p>The <b>accessible room</b> has a gentle slope from the pathway up to the sliding door entrance. Inside the bedroom is fairly spacious</p>			<p>Inside the room is fairly spacious with attractive antique furniture, but the low double bed is not ideal for transferring from a wheelchair</p>
<p>The room's en-suite ablutions are fairly well equipped and comfortable for guests in wheelchairs and able-bodied guests alike. However although the toilet has grab-rails in the correct position above the ground, the rail on the adjacent wall is a little too far from the toilet to allow a person to lift themselves to transfer or relieve pressure. Also the basin is out of reach from the toilet. Otherwise the basin has good clearance and push lever taps. The mirror above the basin is too high for a person in a wheelchair and a lower one should be provided. The roll-in shower is suitable.</p>			
			
<p>The door to the en suite bathroom is equipped with a grab handle to allow wheelchair users to close it comfortably.</p>			
	<p>The adjoining room adjacent the accessible one can only be accessed via the accessible room (hence why the park keeps it off the reservation system). In this room there are 2 single beds and these are of a much more comfortable height for a person in a wheelchair.</p>		
<p>The unit is not self catering and only has a kettle. Guests can get their meals in the nearby restaurant which has 2 mobile wooden ramps that are positioned on request. If food needs to be refrigerated provision can be made to store it in the restaurant's kitchen.</p>			