

**PHASE 1 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT ON PORTION  
463/8 OF THE FARM UITKOMS 463, NEAR KATHU, KGALAGADI  
DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY, NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE.**

**Peter B Beaumont**

c/o Archaeology Department  
McGregor Museum  
PO Box 316  
8300 Kimberley  
Tel 053 - 842 0986 or 053 - 839 2700  
Fax 053 - 842 1433  
e-mail [se@museumsnc.co.za](mailto:se@museumsnc.co.za)

**CONSULTANT**

**Marquerite Geldenhuys**

**MEG Environmental Impact Studies**

Tweedelaan 13  
Oosterville  
8801 Upington  
Tel 054 - 332 2781  
Fax 054 – 332 2781  
e-mail [megois@intekom.co.za](mailto:megois@intekom.co.za)

7 February 2008

*received: 17.03.2008*

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The purpose of this study was to establish if any heritage sites were present on the 20 ha extent of Portion 463/8 of the farm Uitkoms 463, situated some 4 km north – east of central Kathu in the Kgalagadi District Municipality of the Northern Cape Province. This property, on the western slopes of Kathu hill, was seen to be underlain by Precambrian banded ironstone / jasper and mantled by red Hutton Sands that support a fair cover of grass, bush, and a scatter of camel thorns. An afternoon spent walking over its full extent revealed a sparse scatter of jasper flakes, but, at the upslope boundary fence, there was a significant increase in stone artefacts, marking the western edge of the Uitkoms 1 site. These findings, plus the absence of fossil bones and graves, leads me to conclude that this terrain has no heritage potential, and that its possible subdivision for eco-estates will have no impact on the heritage resources of the Northern Cape.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Land owner Johan Engelbrecht, who worked at Sishen for over 20 years, has latterly taken early retirement, to now spend much of his time building a house at the northern upslope end of his property, while living in a closeby caravan with his wife and son. Finding water there is a current problem, but, if this can be overcome, he intends to subdivide the property into a modest number of eco – estates for sale to people, who, like himself, prefer to live in a natural environment not too far from modern conveniences.

This report is part of an EIA that is being prepared by Marquerite Geldenhuys of MEG Environmental Impact Studies at the request of Mr Engelbrecht.

## **REGIONAL ARCHAEOLOGY**

Fieldwork by the author in the region commenced in 1978 and was initially largely centred on a number of Iron Age – ESA localities around Kathu Pan, located ~5 km north – west of Kathu, on the road to Dibeng (Beaumont & Morris 1990).

Subsequent studies, between 1982 and 2006, shifted to the Kathu Townlands 1 site, on the eastern outskirts of Kathu (Fig. 1), where jaspilite quarrying resulted in ~700 million artefacts, mainly debitage, that date to Late Acheulean times ~0.7 myr ago (Beaumont & Vogel 2006). Then, in the early 90's, followed an exploration of the Kathu hill, resulting in the discovery of the Uitkoms 1 site, where a foot search and a test pit point to similar lithic densities, debitage frequencies and site extent to Kathu Townlands 1 (Fig.1). Finally, in 2007, came the discovery of the ~100 m wide upslope edge of the largely buried Uitkoms 4 (Fig. 1), where bifaces are very similar to those from the quarries, but with a formal tool incidence about a thousand times higher, and like that at a typical occupation site. These findings, as a whole, are taken to suggest that roughouts from the quarries were being brought, perhaps sequentially, to Uitkoms 4 for final reduction, and, given a billion or more items at the quarries, it seems likely that a vast number of handaxes are present at Uitkoms 4.

## PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

The 20 ha Portion 463/8 of the farm Uitkoms 463 is situated about 4 km north – east of central Kathu in the Kgalagadi District Municipality of the Northern Cape (Figs. 1 & 2). It lies on the western slopes of Kathu hill, with a top – end elevation of 1 269 m, that is mantled by red Hutton Sands, which support a covering of grass, bushes and a scattering of camel thorn trees (Figs. 3 & 4). This terrain was often traversed before and during the excavation of Uitkoms 1, but I nevertheless spent a further afternoon walking over its full extent on Tuesday 22 January 2008.

## SUPERFICIAL GEOLOGY

The property, and Kathu hill as a whole, is underlain by rarely exposed banded ironstones / jaspilites of Precambrian age, overlain by a covering, at least 0.6 m thick in places, of red aeolian Hutton Sands.

## HERITAGE FINDINGS

My 2008 search confirmed that fresh lithics, brought to the surface by bioturbation, are rare on the lower and middle reaches of the property <sup>(Fig 5)</sup> and then increase at its uppermost edge, where the surface sands thin and are replaced by a thin artefact – rich rubble representing the western edge of the Uitkoms 1 site. With the exception of this thin strip, already damaged by a road over it, I saw no sites, fossil bones, or graves of any age on this L – shaped property.

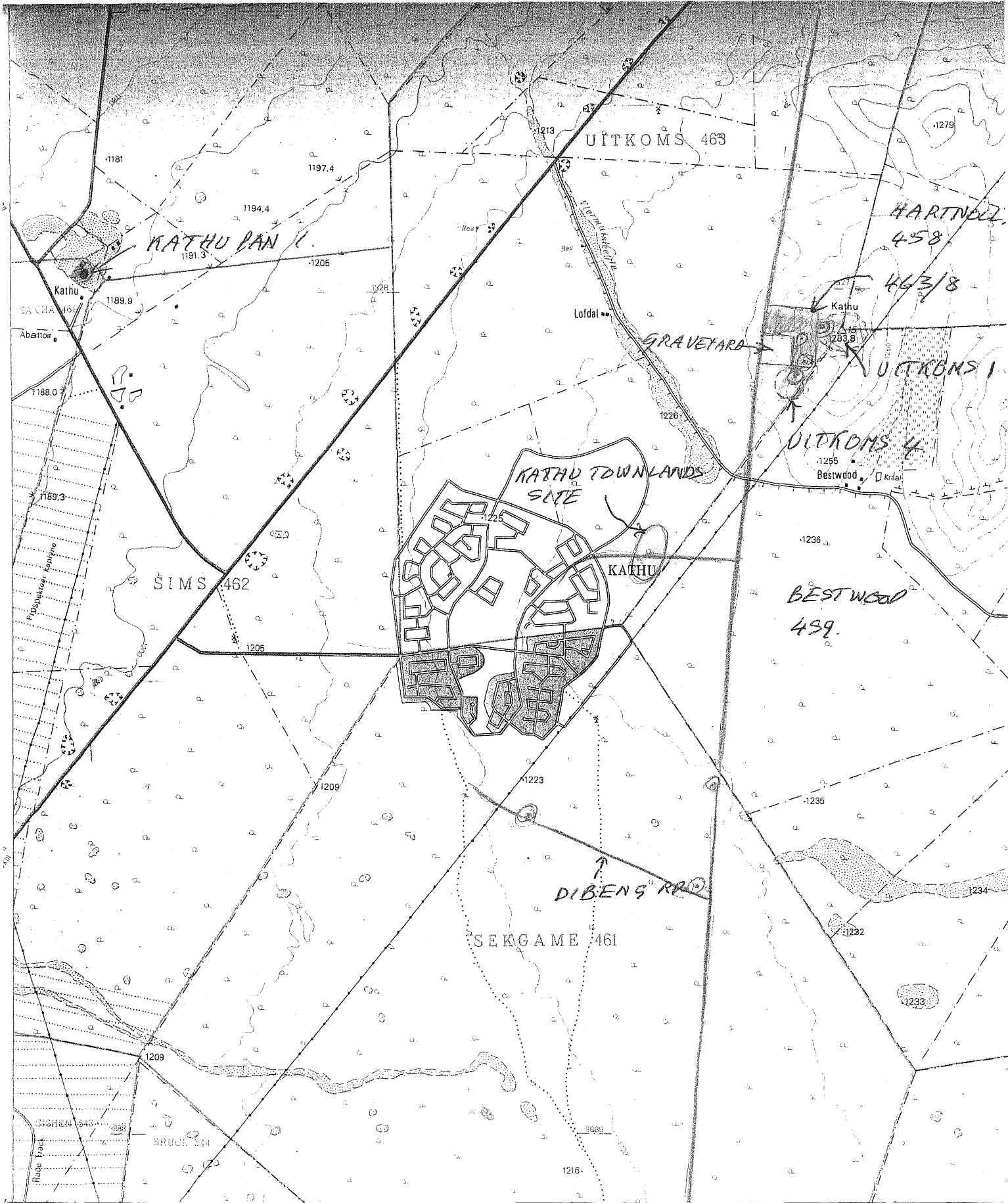
## CONCLUSIONS

It is concluded that the potential subdivision of Portion 463/8 of the farm Uitkoms for low - density eco – estates will have no significant impact on the heritage resources of the Northern Cape Province. However, every effort should be made to preserve those areas of Uitkoms 463, Hartnolls 458 and Bestwood 459 that are covered by Uitkoms 1, and those portions of Uitkoms 463 and perhaps Bestwood 459 which may be underlain by Uitkoms 4 (Fig. 1).

## REFERENCES

Beaumont, P. and Morris, D. 1990. *Guide to the archaeological sites in the Northern Cape*. Kimberley: McGregor Museum.

Beaumont, P.B. & Vogel, J.C. 2006. On a timescale for the past million years of human history in central South Africa. *S. Afr. J. Sci.* **102**, 217 – 228.



3°00'

05'

Air Photography 1972 (Job No. 700/72). Surveyed in 1974 and drawn in 1975 by the Director - General of Surveys  
 Lugfoto-graefie 1972 (Taak No. 700/72). Opgeneem in 1974 en geteken in 1975 deur die Direkteur - generaal van Opmetings.

CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 METRES  
 10 METRE SUB-CONTOURS

T.S.O. 200/6992

Metres 1 000

FIG 1. 2723 CA KATHU  
 REFERENCE VERKLARING

English Feet 5 000

International Boundaries ..... Internationale Grense  
 Provincial Boundaries ..... Provinsiale Grense  
 Stroom Storie

Statute Miles

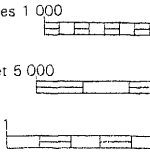


Fig 2.

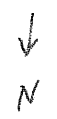
459/3

459

BESTWOOD

458

HARTNOLLS



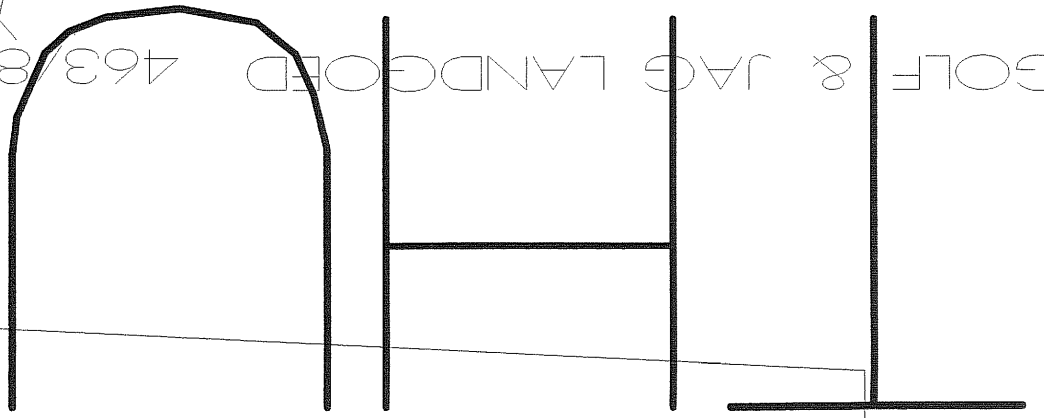
Access road

Witkoms C.

house

463/6

463/8



775/1

2/6

KATHU

775

GOLF & JAG LANDGOED

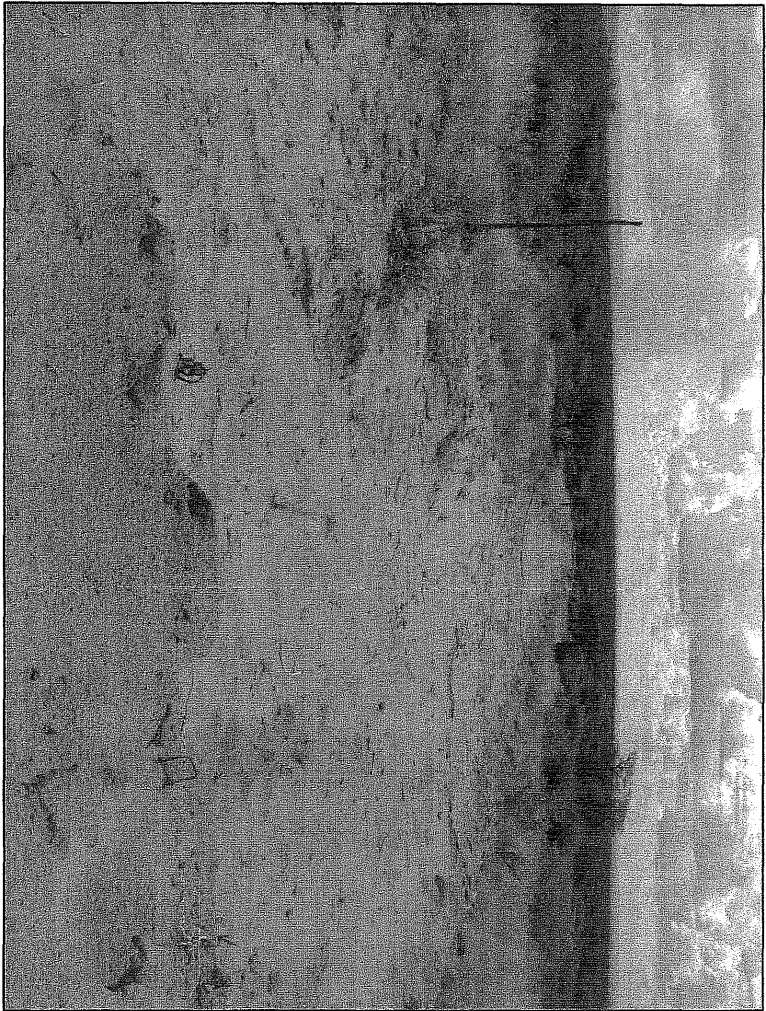


FIG 3. VIEW DOWN ALONG ABORTED ROAD TO HOUSE



FIG 4. VIEW TO SW FROM TOP END OF PROPERTY



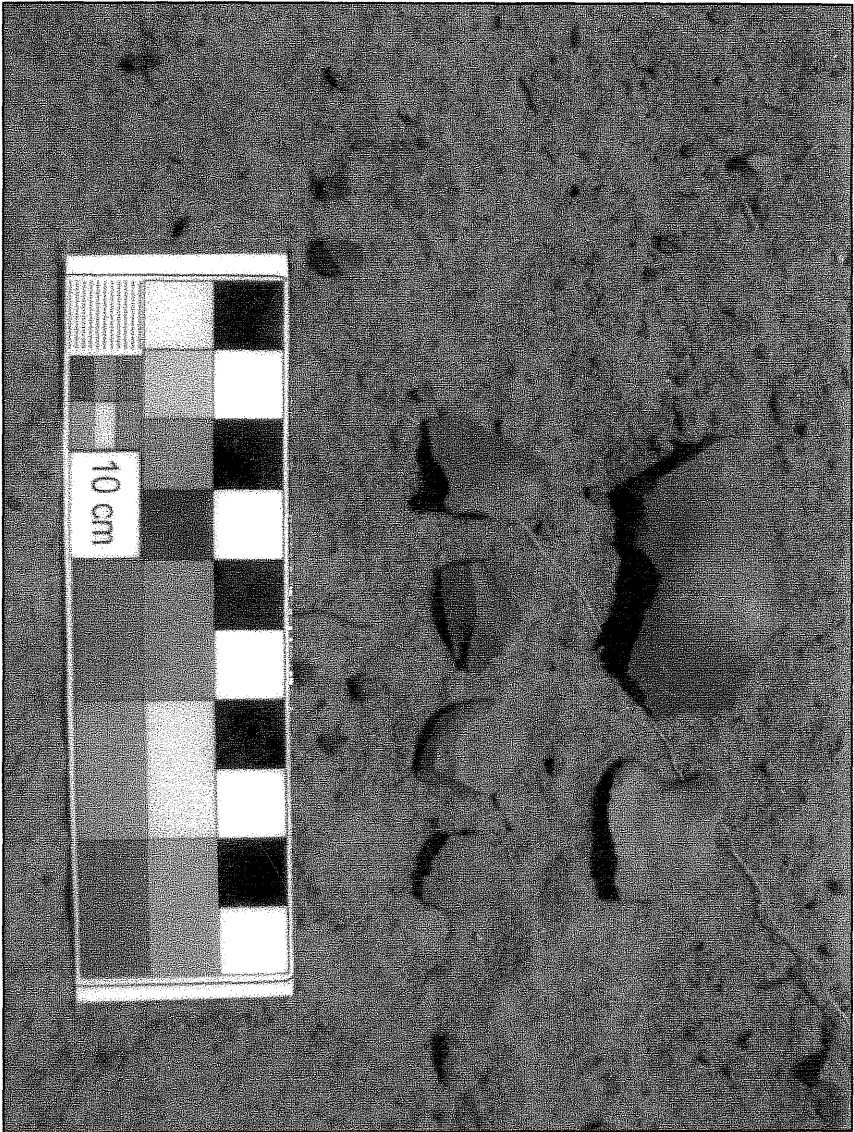


FIG 5. ARTEFACTS FROM FULL LENGTH OF ABORTED ROAD