

**PHASE 1 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT ON A
CA. 4 HA AREA ON THE FARM KIPPOOORT 370, HAY
DISTRICT, NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the study was to establish if any occurrences of archaeological or other heritage significance were present on a small (ca. 4 ha) part of the farm Klippoort 370, Hay district, Northern Cape. No Iron Age or Stone Age sites were seen, and, indeed, an hours walking over the area produced only two stone artefacts from the thin surface sands. The continued extraction of Tigers Eye from pits there will thus not have any significant impact on the cultural heritage resources of the Northern Cape.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Golden brown Tigers Eye is a highly silicified form of asbestos that is, in South Africa, largely confined to ~24 byr – old Asbestos Hills Banded Ironstone Formation (Kent 1980) outcrops between Griquatown and Niekerkshoop. On the farm Klippoort 370 (Fig. 1) it is exposed in the form of thin and discontinuous lenses in westward – dipping banded ironstone beds that are exposed on the flat top of a southern Asbesberg hill. Recovering is by way of mechanically – dug pits in promising spots and further recovery by searching through the resultant rubble, bagging on site and transport of these to the abutting roadside farm Kameeldam.

This study is a heritage impact assessment that the provincial Department of Mineral and Energy requested subsequent to their recent processing of a Mining Permit application from farm owner Gideon Duvenhage.

LOCAL ARCHAEOLOGY

The McGregor Museum has a small collection (MMK 1130) of Acheulean handaxes of jaspilite from Griquatown (Goodwin & van Riet Lowe 1929). However, to my knowledge, no Stone Age sites have, as yet, been found in the broad vicinity of Niekerkshoop.

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

The ca. 4 ha area that was examined is on the farm Klippoort 370 in the Hay district and about 9 km north-east of Niekerkshoop. It is on the flat crest of a hill in the southern Asbesberge, centred on 29° 17' 29.7" S, 22° 53' 35.3" E, as shown on the appended 1:50 000 map 2922BD Niekerkshoop (Fig. 1). An hour was spent walking over this area on Wednesday 10 May 2006, by myself and later in the company of Pieter Duvenhage.

SUPERFICIAL GEOLOGY

The area was pocked by small (~10 – 30 m²) pits, where thin discontinuous exposures of Tigers Eye in the banded ironstone had been followed downward by mechanical means. Elsewhere there, the banded ironstone bedrock had a thin (~0 – 5cm) covering of banded ironstone rubble and red Hutton Sands.

HERITAGE FINDINGS

An hours search produced only two artefacts (Fig 2), both of which were based on banded ironstone with slightly smooth and shiny surfaces, as did surface rubble fragments there. One was a core from which a few flakes had been removed by alternate flaking along an edge, while the other was a flake with a plain platform and a dorsal partly covered by cortex (Fig. 2). No certain industrial ascription can be offered, but a best guess would be some phase of the ESA. No palaeontological bones were seen, nor were there any graves older than 60 years.

CONCLUSIONS

The inspected area showed a near – total lack of archaeological material on or in the thin surface sediments. My conclusion is therefore that further mining there for Tigers Eye will have no impact on the archaeological resources of the Northern Cape. I note also that the recovery of Tigers Eye is one of the few jobs available for the many unemployed people of Niekerkshoop.

REFERENCES

- Goodwin A.J.H. and van Riet Lowe C. (1929). The Stone Age cultures of South Africa. *Ann. S. Afr. Mus.* **27**:1 - 289.
- Kent, L.E. (ed.). 1980. Stratigraphy of South Africa. Part 1. *Geol. Survey of S. Afr. Handbook 8*: 1 - 690.

NOTES

- A copy of the locality map must accompany this report to SAHRA.
- Applications to SAHRA will not be processed unless accompanied by payment of R150 per application.
SAHRA banking details are: ABSA, Branch Code : 312109; Current Account no.: 360 680 606.

FIG. 1.

11° 45'

55°



1:50 000

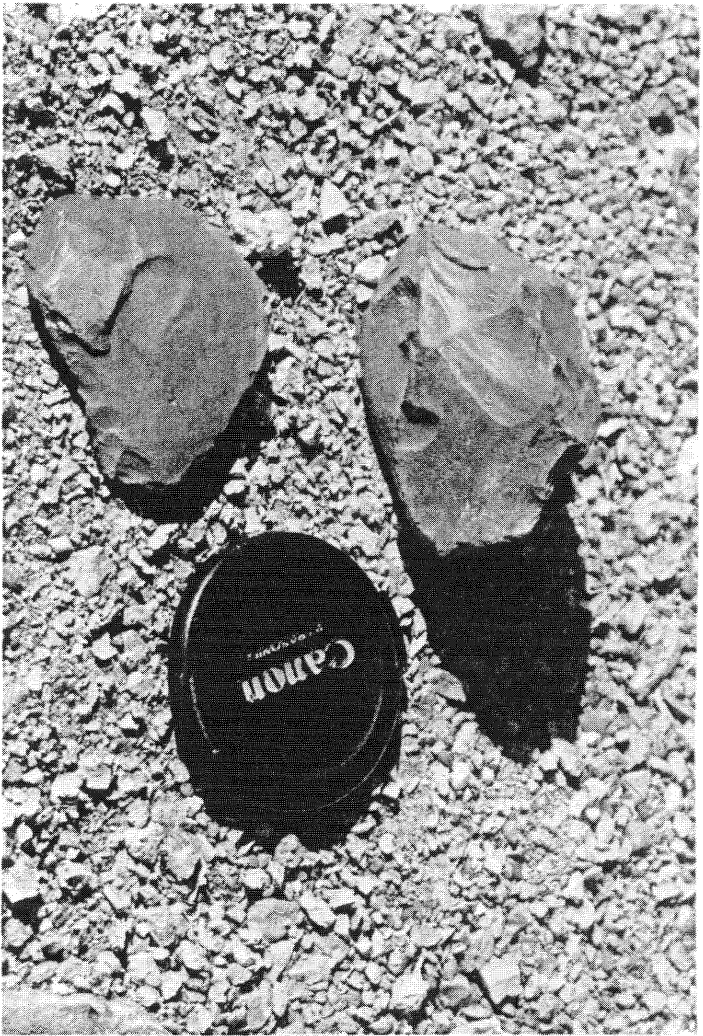


Figure 2.