

**PHASE 1 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT ON
PORTIONS OF THE FARM BLOUBOSPOORT 349 NEAR
NIEKERKSHOOP, KAROO DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY, NORTHERN
CAPE PROVINCE.**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to establish if any heritage sites were present on two portions of the farm Bloubospoort 349 near Niekerkshoop, Karoo District Municipality, Northern Cape. Within the ca. 30 ha area that was examined, Precambrian jaspilite with Tigers Eye lenses was noted to be thinly covered by reddish sands with occasional artefacts. No sites, fossil bones or graves were seen and it is consequently considered that envisaged further open cast digging there will have no impact on the heritage resources of the Northern Cape.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Tigers Eye is a highly silicified form of asbestos that is, in South Africa, largely confined to ~2.4 billion year – old Asbestos Hills Banded Ironstone Formation (Kent 1980) outcrops between Griquatown and Prieska. On the farm Bloubospoort 349 it occurs in the form of thin and discontinuous lenses in banded ironstone or jaspilite beds which occur on the crest of flat – topped hills covering its eastern half (Fig. 1). This study is part of an EMP that is being prepared by Adriaan du Toit for the farm owner, Mr Neelsie Combrink.

LOCAL ARCHAEOLOGY

The McGregor Museum has a small collection (MMK 1130) of Acheulean handaxes, based on jaspilite, from Griquatown (Goodwin & van Riet Lowe 1929). There is also a handaxe site overlying old river gravels flanking a meander of the Orange River some 10 km upstream of Prieska, according to Adriaan du Toit. However, to my knowledge, no Stone Age localities have as yet been found in the broad vicinity of Niekerkshoop.

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

The two areas, ca. 30 ha in all, that were examined are on the farm Bloubospoort 349 in the Karoo District Municipality about 12 km south – west of Niekerkshoop. They occur on crests of flat – topped hills in the southern Asbesberge, at about 29° 25' 09" S, 22° 45' 48" E and 29° 25' 15" S, 22° 47' 20" E as shown on the appended map 2922 BD Niekerkshoop (Fig 1). Over two hours was spent walking over these areas on Thursday 16 November 2006, together with Adriaan du Toit and Mr. Combrink (Fig 2).

SUPERFICIAL GEOLOGY

Seen in the inspected areas were small backfilled pits and hillside adits where thin discontinuous lenses of Tigers Eye in the jaspilite had been followed down or inwards

manually. Overlying jaspilite bedrock deposits was a generally thin (0 – 5 cm) covering of rubble and / or reddish sand which forms the modern surface.

HERITAGE FINDINGS

My search within the two areas produced just over a dozen lightly weathered largish jaspilite artefacts. This sample included a discoidal core and two course blades that are tentatively ascribed to late within the ESA (Figs 3 & 4). No actual archaeological occurrences, palaeontological bones or old graves were seen.

CONCLUSIONS

The inspected areas showed a low between – site lithic scatter on or in the thin surface sands, but no sign of a significant heritage occurrence. My conclusion is therefore that the further mining of Tigers Eye there will have no impact on the heritage resources of the Northern Cape. I note also that the mining of Tigers Eye is one of the few potential jobs for the many unemployed people in that region.

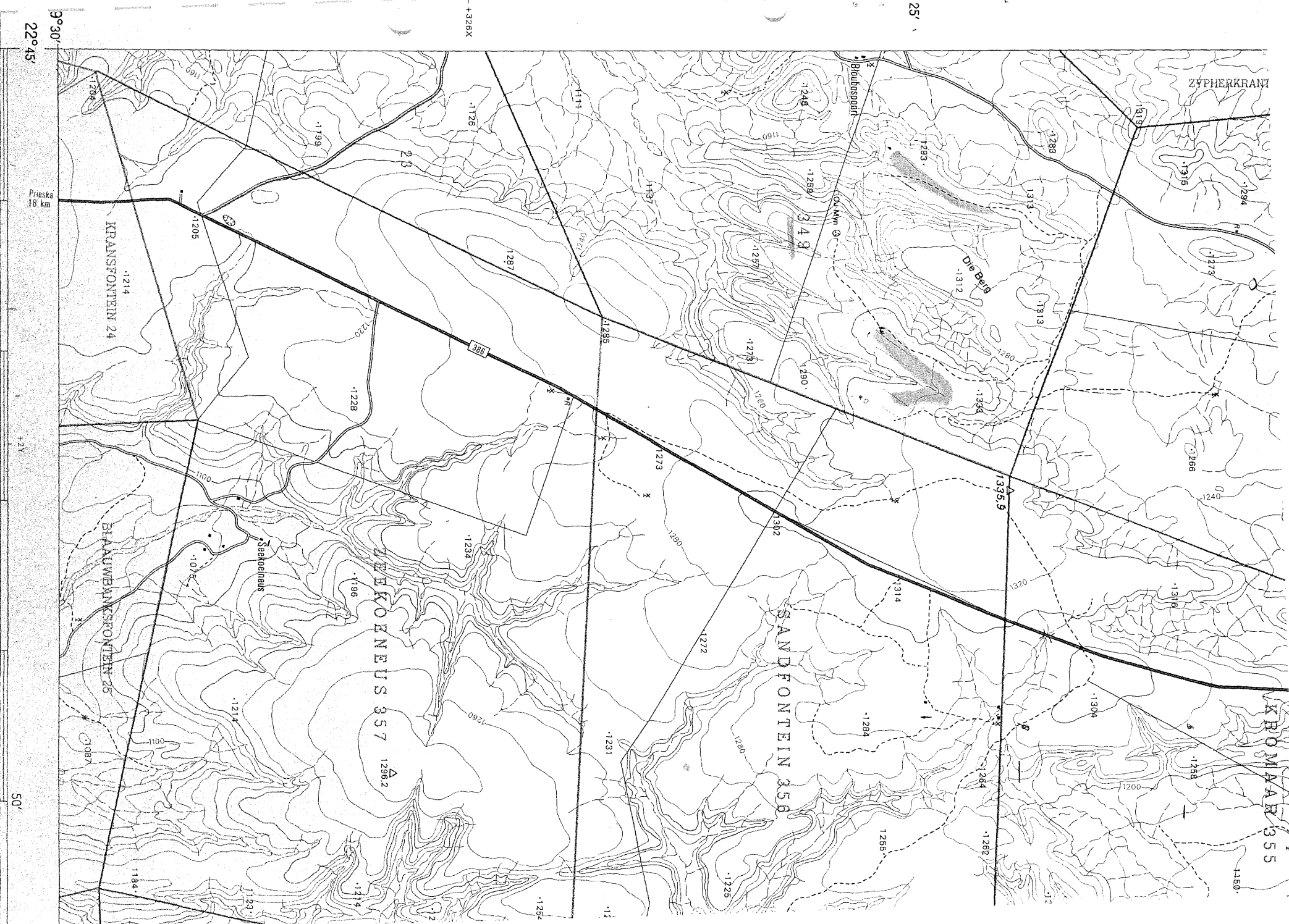
REFERENCES

Goodwin, A.J.H. and van Riet Lowe, C. 1929. The Stone Age cultures of South Africa. *Ann. S. Afr. Mus.* **27**, 1 – 289.

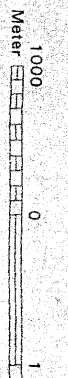
Kent, L.E. (ed) 1980. Stratigraphy of South Africa. Part 1. *Geol. Survey of S. Afr. Handbook 8*, 1 – 690.

NOTES

- A copy of the locality map and all appended Figures 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.



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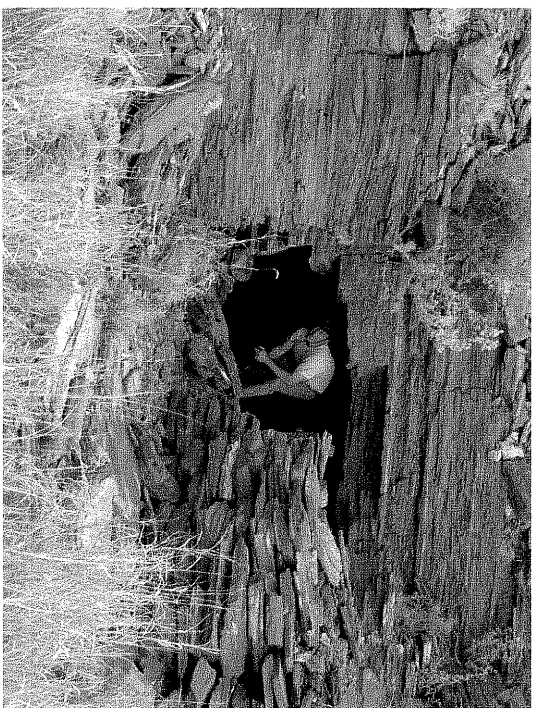


FIG 2
APRIAN IN OLD
HILLSIDE WORKING



FIG 3



FIG 4