

**PHASE 1 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT ON A
PORTION OF THE FARM KROMAAR 355 NEAR NIEKERKSHOOP,
KAROO 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

CONSULTANT

Adriaan du Toit

African Water, Environmental & Mining Solutions

62 Kekewich Drive
Monument Heights
8301 Kimberley
Tel 053 – 831 5461
Fax 053 – 832 7944
e-mail watersolutions@absamail.co.za

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to establish if any heritage sites were present on a portion of the farm Kromaar 355 near Niekerkshoop, Karoo District Municipality, Northern Cape. Within the ca. 20 ha area that was examined, Precambrian jaspilite with Tigers Eye lenses was noted to be thinly and irregularly covered by reddish sand 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 Kromaar 355 it occurs in the form of thin and discontinuous lenses in banded ironstone or jaspilite beds that occur on the crest of low hills on its south - western side (Fig. 1). This study is part of an EMP that is being prepared by Adriaan du Toit for the farm owner, Mr. Steyn.

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 an extensive 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 ca. 20 ha area that was examined is on the farm Kromaar 355, in the Karoo District Municipality about 9 km due south of Niekerkshoop. It lies on the crest of flat – topped hills in the southern Asbesberge, at about 29° 23' 31" S, 22° 49' 30" E to 29° 24' 27" S, 22° 49' 31" E, as shown on the appended 1:50,000 map 2922 BD Niekerkshoop (Fig 1). Some 40 min was spent walking over this area on Thursday 16 November 2006 (Fig 2) together with Adriaan du Toit and Mr Steyn (Fig 2).

SUPERFICIAL GEOLOGY

The area was pocked by smallish (~10 – 20 m²) pits where thin discontinuous lenses of Tigers Eye in the jaspilite had been followed downwards by hand. Overlying the

jaspilite was a generally thin (0 – 10 cm) covering of rubble and / or reddish sand that forms the modern surface.

HERITAGE FINDINGS

My search within the inspected area produced 4 - 5 jaspilite artefacts with lightly smoothed surfaces, including a largish broken blade with re-touch along one edge (Fig. 3). A best guess is that these specimens lie late within the ESA. No actual sites, palaeontological bones or graves were seen.

CONCLUSIONS

The inspected area revealed a very sparse scatter of lithics, but no sign of a significant heritage occurrence. My conclusion is therefore that the further mining of Tigers Eye 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 Niekerskroop.

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.

Fig. 1 2922 BD Nickerhoop



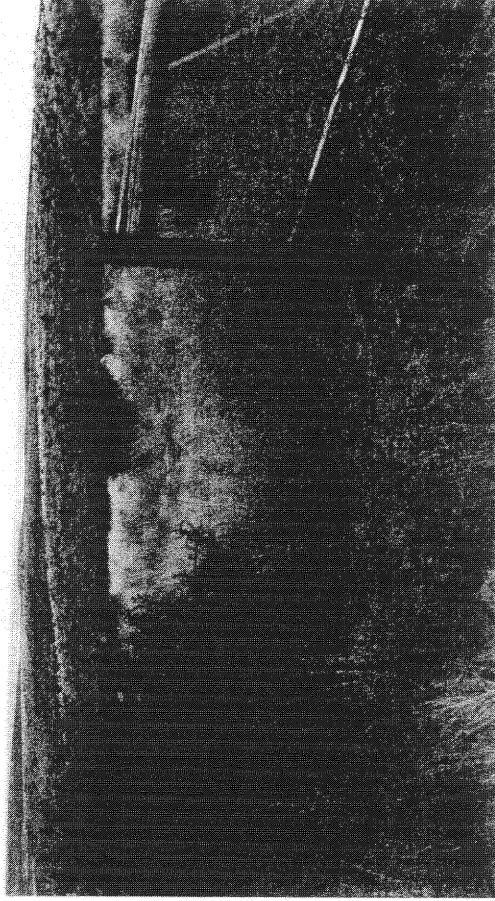


FIG 2.

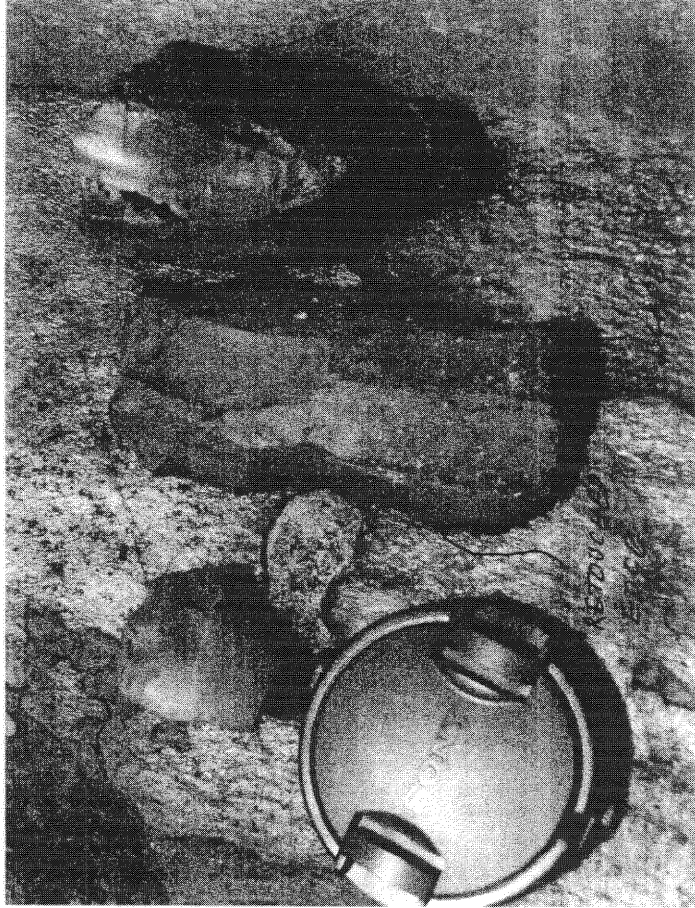


FIG 3

THE BEST OF THE
5 ARTEFACTS FOUND