

**SUPPLEMENTARY ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
REPORT ON SITES NEAR OR ON THE FARM HARTNOLLS 458,
KGALAGADI DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY, NORTHERN CAPE
PROVINCE**

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In 1980 local resident Naas Viljoen discovered the Kathu Townlands site (Beaumont & Morris 1980) on the eastern outskirts of Kathu (Fig. 1). There, Kalahari Group calcrete almost entirely buried a hill of Precambrian jaspilite, leaving only its flat crest exposed flush with the modern surface over a ~11 ha area. Small excavations there in 1982 and 1990 established that this flint – like cryptocrystalline rock had been quarried and largely reduced on the site by Late Acheulean people over half a million years ago (Beaumont & Vogel 2006). Those activities eventually resulted in the entire exposure being covered by an artefact rubble made up of ~700 million artefacts, preponderantly (99.9%) debitage, but with a few handaxe roughouts and even scarcer formal tools. The rubble is currently covered by an up to 20 cm thick layer of wind blown Kalahari sands, but modest abrasion on artefacts from its surface shown that this was exposed to the elements at other times in the past.

These findings raised various questions, of which one would be the extent to which similar sites occurred on the far more extensive low hills of jaspilite further east of Kathu (Fig. 1). To investigate that possibility I spent a morning in the early 90's walking over the slopes between the Kathu cemetery and a nearby hilltop marked Kathu (Fig. 1). The lower slopes of this hill are covered by red sand, on which occasional artefacts, introduced from below by bioturbation, were seen, but further up, beyond a N – S fence, the underlying artefact – rich rubble is fully exposed. A 1 x 1 m test pit there, known as Uitkoms 1, yielded ~9000 artefacts above bedrock at ~0.8 m down, which is similar to densities encountered at Kathu Townlands. Also comparable was the proportion of debitage, but there were one or two flakes that almost qualify as Levallois points, which may indicate a younger phase of the Late Acheulean. A further foot recce, abandoned after an hour, showed that this material extended for hundreds of metres along high ground to the north – east (Fig. 1). The inference is that this site, which extends onto Hartnolls, is possibly larger than Kathu Townlands and may, if so, comprise over a billion artefacts.

More recently in mid – 2006, two road cuttings along the N14 further towards Kuruman were also seen to contain ESA artefacts in a thin rubble of jaspilite and below red sand. One of these, Uitkoms 3, suggests that the Uitkoms 1 site also extends over the north – western side of the Kathu hill (Fig. 1). The other, Uitkoms

2, could represent the extreme western limit of a site that may range over two upslope hills on Hartnolls (Fig. 1).

Latterly, on Friday 15 December 2006, I accompanied Cobus Dreyer to Kathu, where we first inspected a locality, here called Uitkoms 4, just east of the cemetery, that he had previously found (Fig. 1). There, a gently sloping zone of artefacts in red sand is overlain to the south by up to ~2 m of pure red sand that has been locally removed for reasons unknown (Photos 1 & 2). A brief search of this new site yielded 7 – 8 handaxes, a partially backed blade, and modest cores and flake numbers, thereby indicating artefact proportions quite unlike those in the quarry areas. Flaked surfaces are in all cases in pristine condition, down to very fine edge damage (Photos ⁴3 & ⁶4), which suggests that refitting and even microwear could be meaningfully studied with excavated samples from there. Two of the handaxes found are of quartzite that probably comes from the closest occurrences of this rock sort, in the Langeberge some 40 km or more km to the west. Supporting evidence in that region has been found at Nchwaneng north of Olifantshoek, where an assemblage with jaspilite handaxes clusters around a water source there. Also noteworthy is the distal retouch on a blade (Photo 5) which, if confirmed by a larger sample, would indicate a very early onset of this form in South Africa, before 0.5 Myr BP (Beaumont & Vogel 2006). The Uitkoms 4 or Cobus Dreyer site findings therefore point to other activities, perhaps final reduction of bifaces and / or their use, away from the quarries, on the lower slopes of a hill, perhaps then also shaded by *Acacia erioloba*.

Along the N14 outside Kathu there is now a large signboard with the following wording about a proposed property development on Hartnolls:

“Kameeldoring Park game & eco – estates
Stands from R 540 000 vat incl. 6000 – 8000 m²
Live in your own Kalahari Big 5 game farm
Kalahari lion & cheetah camps”.

With this text is a map showing three strips of east – west trending estates, ~300 in all, between a lookout point on a hillcrest and a waterhole to the north (Fig. 1^b) To get a feel for the terrain I was taken on 15 December along the indicated stretch of road, which ran entirely below a power – line that straddles the farm (Fig. 1). It was noted that the red sand covering a flat – bottomed valley there is probably shallow,

given the lack of *Acacia erioloba* stands. Another observation was that higher ground was covered in part by rubble surfaces in which occasional artefacts were present.

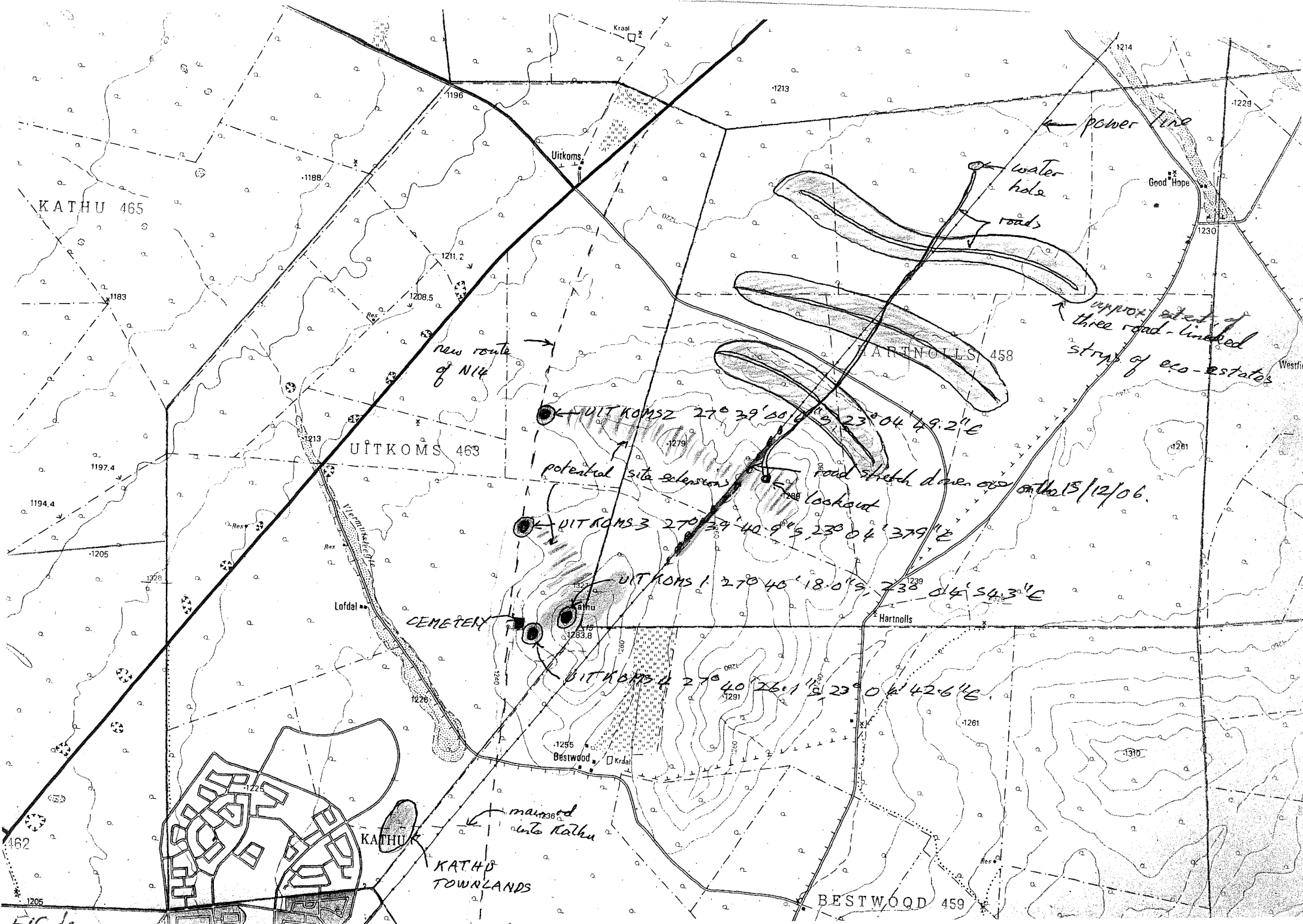
RECOMMENDATIONS

- The hills on the south – western side of Hartnolls are certainly or probably covered by ESA spreads, as at Uitkoms 1 (Fig. 1). A foot survey to plot these should be undertaken, particularly in endangered areas, such as in the vicinity of the proposed road to the Lookout Point.
- The lower slopes of the hills on the south – western side of Hartnolls may also have handaxe finishing / flensing sites like Uitkoms 4. This should be checked out by way of a Phase 2 test pit centred in the uppermost row of proposed estates.
- Foundations in the two estate rows on the northern half of Hartnolls are unlikely to penetrate the red sands there. These are probably deep, 2 or more m on average, in view of the extension of the Kathu Forest that occurs there.

REFERENCES

Beaumont, P. & Morris, D. 1990. *Guide to the Archaeological Sites in the Northern Cape*. McGregor Museum, Kimberley.

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.



KATHU 465

UITKOMS 463

HARTNOLLS 458

CEMETERY

KATHU TOWNLANDS

BESTWOOD 459

new route of N14

potential site selection

road sketch down esc on the 15/12/06

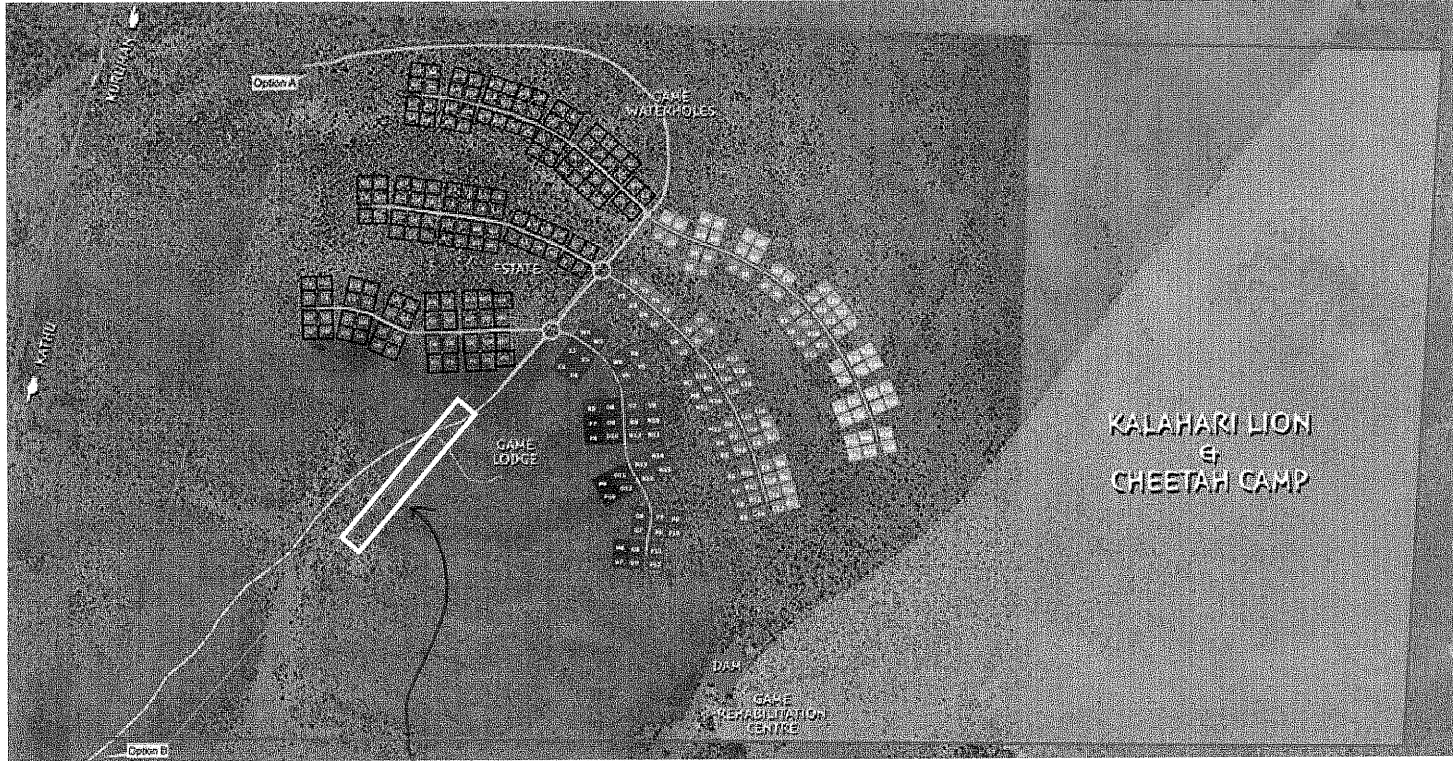
approx. sites of three road-linked strips of eco-estates

UITKOMS 2 $27^{\circ} 39' 00.1'' S, 23^{\circ} 04' 49.2'' E$

UITKOMS 3 $27^{\circ} 39' 40.9'' S, 23^{\circ} 04' 37.9'' E$

UITKOMS 1 $27^{\circ} 40' 18.0'' S, 23^{\circ} 04' 54.3'' E$

UITKOMS 4 $27^{\circ} 40' 26.1'' S, 23^{\circ} 04' 42.6'' E$



area examined on 15th Dec 2006

Fig 16. Extent of eco-estates on Hartbees according to the Rameedlongpark web-page

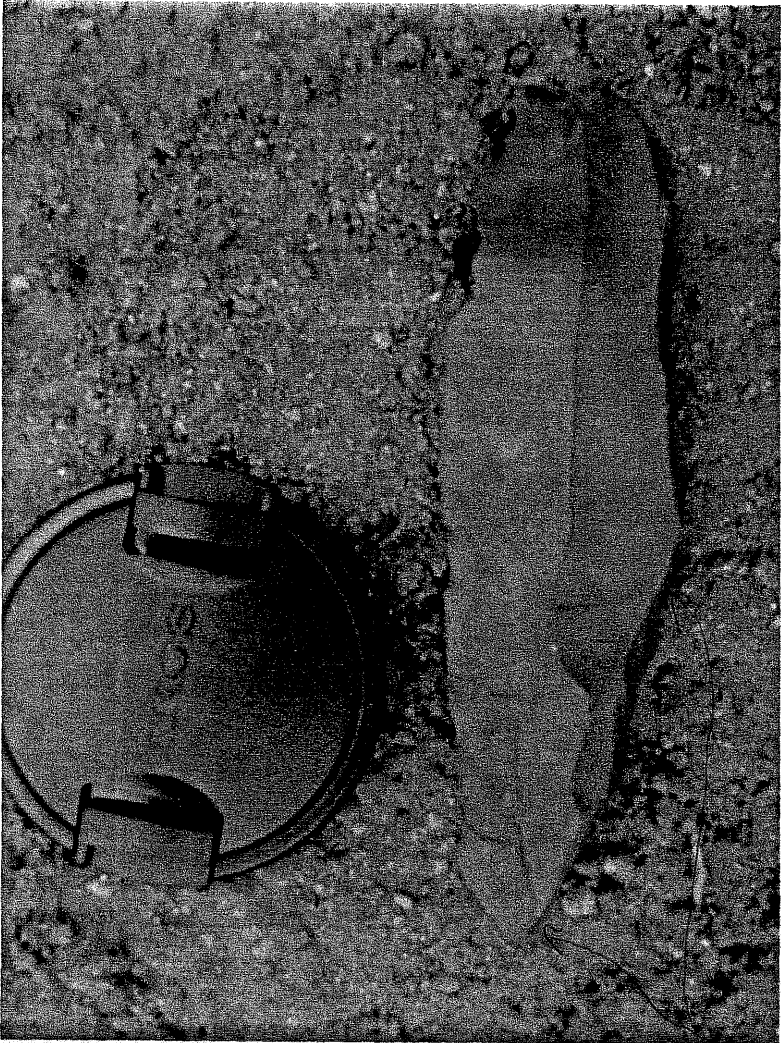


Photo 5: 716
boxed block.

distal edge of blade
with beveling.

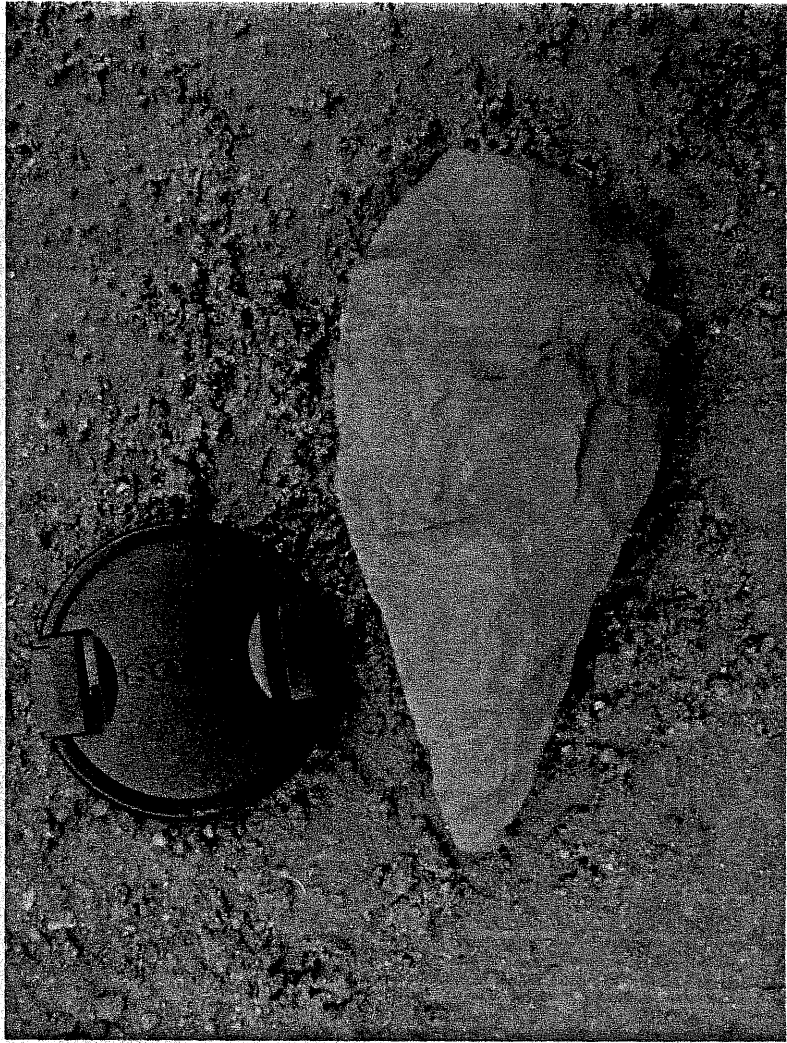


Photo 4: One of
the handles.

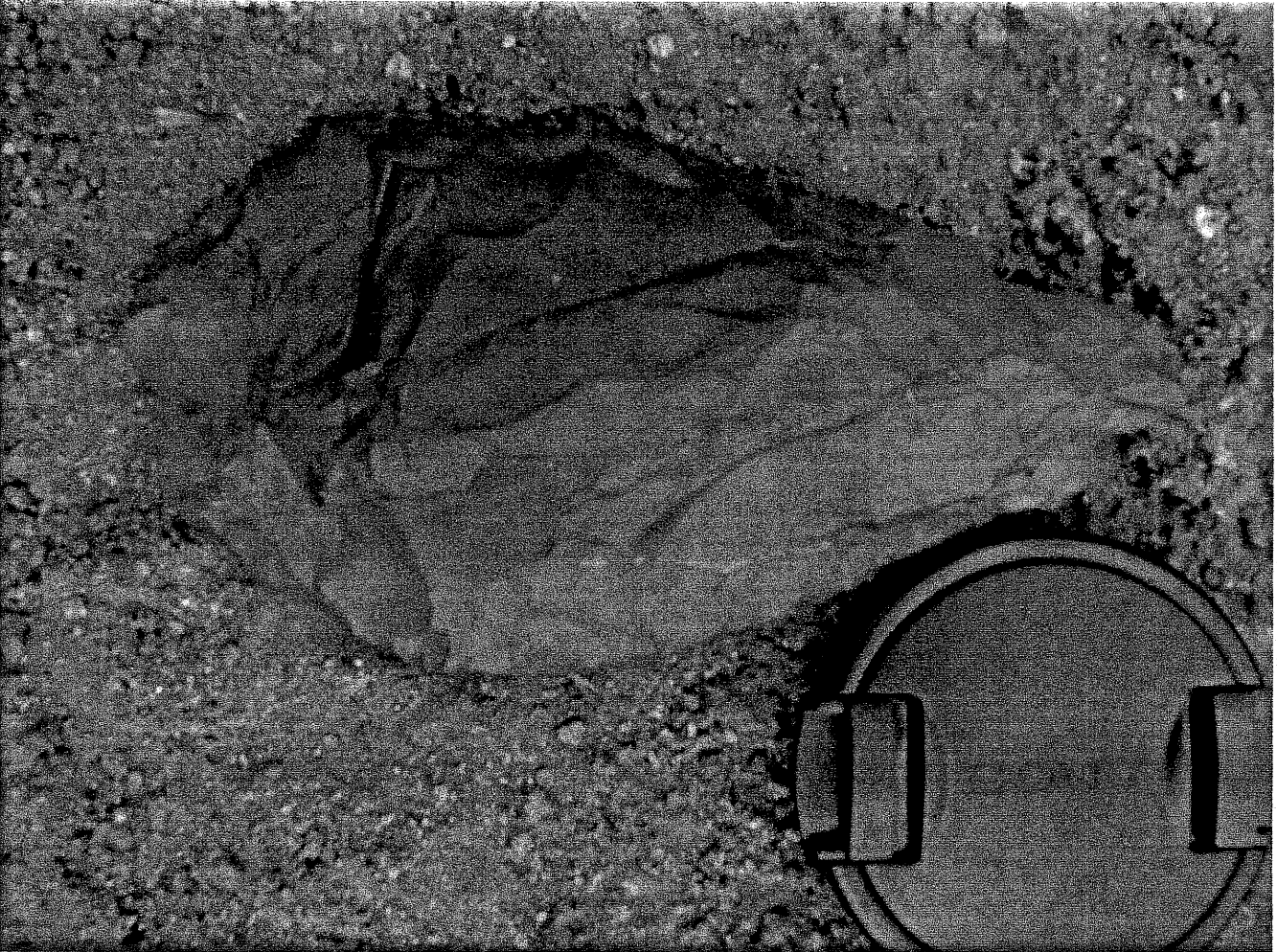


Photo 6 : Another one of the perfectly fresh bylaws

1 Feb 2007

received: July 2007

9/2/055/0002

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Mary Leslie

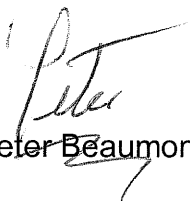
22 January 2007

SAHRA

Dear Mary

Herewith a copy of my report on a recent visit with Cobus Dreyer to sites near Kathu. It is likely that there are hundreds of millions, if not billions, of artefacts in the hills of Hartnolls. These probably span the same interval as the jaspilite – based assemblages at Kathu Pan, namely ~0.5 – 1.0 Myr ago. My own opinion is that developers should not be given a free hand to damage this unique (albeit neglected) heritage.

Yours sincerely


Peter Beaumont