

**PHASE 1 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT ON SIX  
BORROW PITS ON COMMUNAL GROUND ALONG THE D320 ROAD  
FROM BATLHAROS TO TSINENG, NEAR KURUMAN, IN THE  
NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE**

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The purpose of this study was to establish if any significant heritage sites were present in or near six existing borrow pits along the D320 Road from Batlharos to Tsineng north – west of Kuruman. Two of these were cut into old gravels of the nearby Kuruman River, whereas the others had been used for the extraction of calcrete, which forms the normal subsurface in the region. A low density of lithics was noted in the gravels and on the calcrete surfaces, but nowhere within the investigated areas were there any archaeological sites, palaeontological bones or graves. The conclusion is therefore that the proposed extension of these borrow pits during the upgrading of the D320 Road from Batlharos to Tsineng will have no significant impact on the cultural heritage of the Northern Cape Province.

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## **1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The entire length of higher ground flanking the Kuruman River, from near its source to Tsineng, a distance of almost 50 km, is inhabited by a multitude of Tswana – speakers living on discrete ~25 x 25 m plots. About half of the road servicing this dense and extended settlement is already tarred, and work will soon commence on a further stretch to Tsineng, for which about 125 000 m<sup>3</sup> of crushed calcrete and stone will be required.

The visit by NSVT Consultants staff members (Maboee and Christiaan) and myself was directed at obtaining necessary permissions (from local chiefs) and examining the botany and cultural heritage of the borrow pits surrounds for compiling EMPs that will accompany applications for mining permits and rights.

## **2. LOCAL ARCHAEOLOGY**

The McGregor Museum, Kimberley, has a collection of ESA material from the Batlharos Mission and a hand axe from the Kuruman – Moshaweng junction north of Tsineng. Also in this region are sites with schematic engravings (Fock, 1984), while further west at Tswalu there are cupules and Acheulean occurrences.

## **3. DESCRIPTION**

The six borrow pits are all situated on communal ground and at distances of from 20 m – 1.55 km from the D320 Road between Ntsweng and Tsineng, as shown in the attached locality plan in Appendix B. Maboee and I spent some 30 minutes walking over and around each of them between 11:00 and 16:15 on Tuesday 27 February 2007. GPS readings for the borrow pits are as follows:

- BP 3: 1191 m elevation. 27° 15' 15.5" S, 23° 15' 41.2" E.
- BP 4: 1164 m elevation. 27° 13' 07.8" S, 23° 12' 17.3" E.
- BP 5: 1139 m elevation. 27° 11' 31.5" S, 23° 10' 13.8" E.
- BP 6: 1105 m elevation. 27° 08' 57.9" S, 23° 07' 47.6" E.
- BP 7: 1075 m elevation. 27° 05' 56.5" S, 23° 06' 01.1" E.
- BP 8: 1072 m elevation. 27° 06' 00.0" S, 23° 05' 09.3" E

#### **4. SUPERFICIAL GEOLOGY**

At BP 3 prior quarrying was directed at a ca. 1.5 m deep layer of sub angular – surrounded ironstone cobbles that represent an old channel way of the nearby, but now ~10 m lower Kuruman River. Later calcrete consolidated the upper reaches of the gravel and then accumulated for up to 5 m above it, and on this, in turn, is a 0.10 m coating of surface sand (Photo 1).

A similar deposit occurs at BP8, but there the calcrete is confined to the gravel, followed by its partial dissolution and the formation of 0.5 m of fine surface silt. As for the other borrow pits, those are all exclusively for calcrete, which, typically, shows a compact surface crust on ca. 1 – 1.5 m of a softer beige form resting on bedrock.

#### **5. HERITAGE FINDINGS**

BP3 only yielded three undiagnostic flakes, but at BP8 artifacts, seemingly from the gravels, were more common and included a refined prepared core and a rough laterally retouched point, both of which may refer to the Fauresmith. The surface around the other quarries all produced small flake and core samples (4 – 8 specimens), with those from BP4 and BP5 possibly late ESA, whereas the small silcrete and chert flakes at BP7 could be LSA (Photos 2 & 3). Nowhere did I see any actual sites, fossil bones, or early graves.

#### **6. CONCLUSIONS**

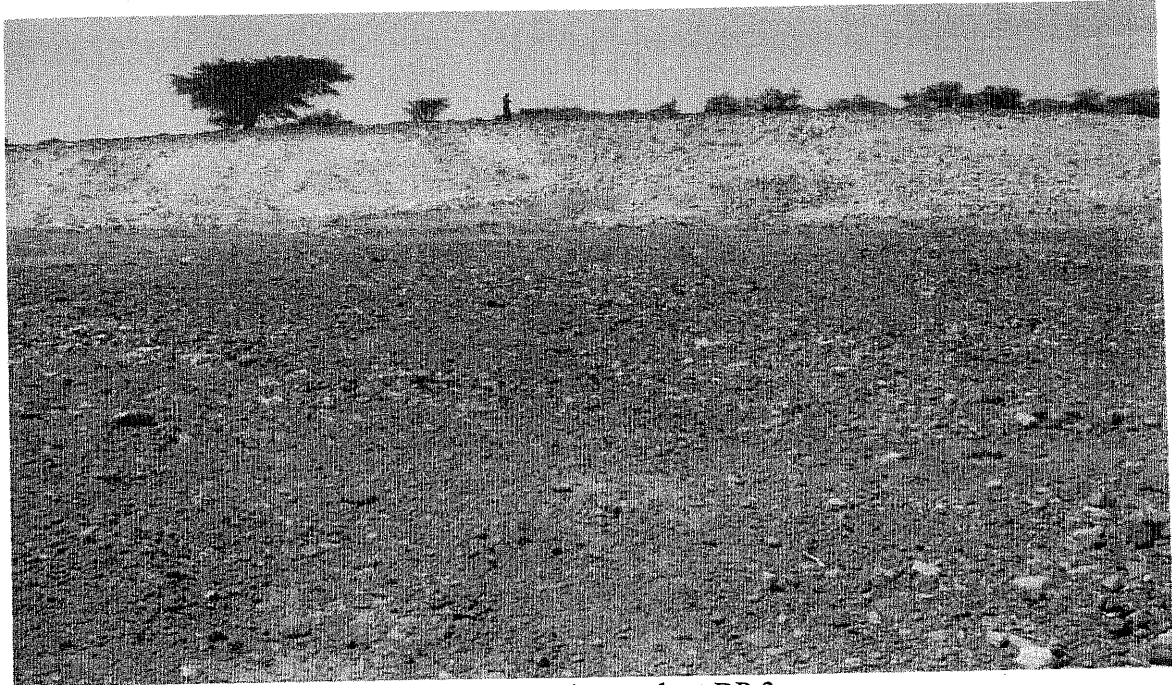
The investigated borrow pit surrounds are bereft of significant archaeological material and their further use, as a source of road – building aggregate will consequently have no impact on the heritage resources of the Northern Cape Province.

#### **7. REFERENCE**

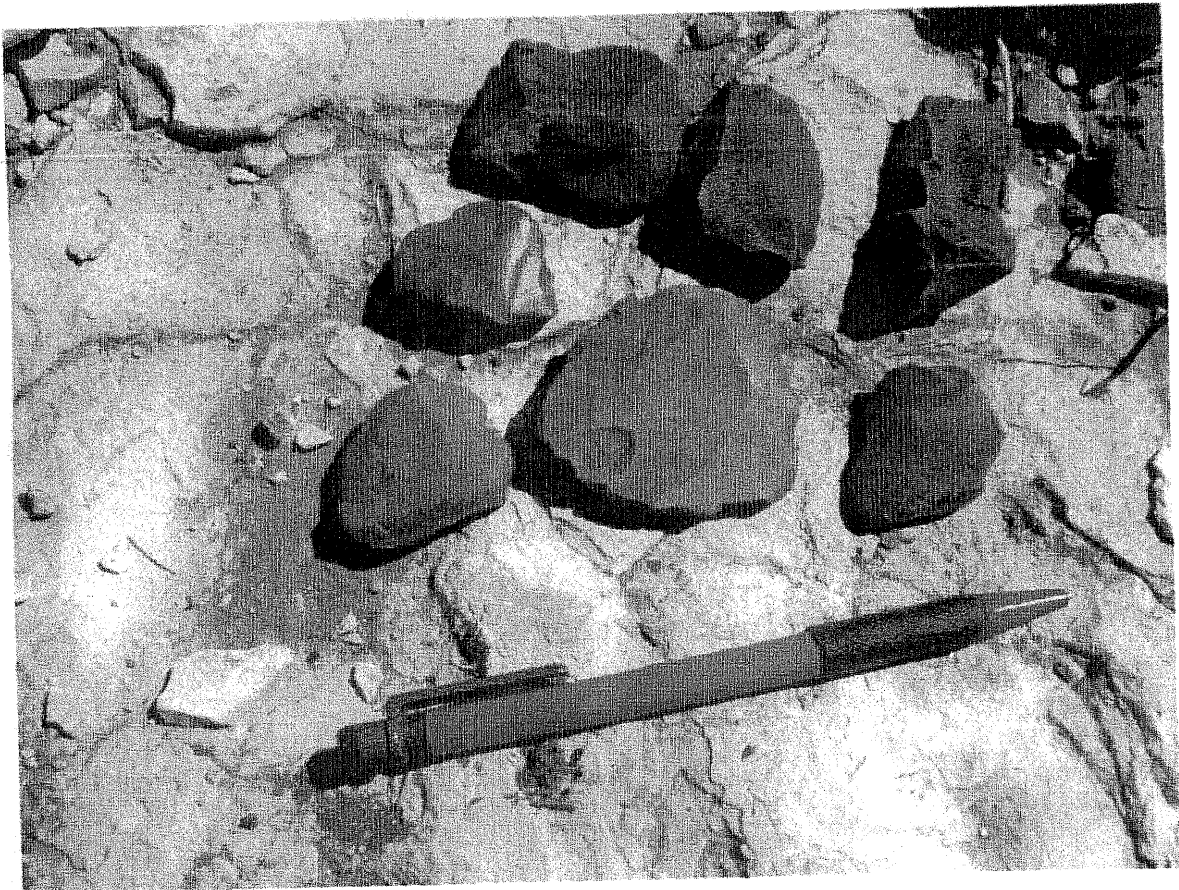
Fock, G.H. and Fock D., 1984. *Felsbilder in Südafrika. Kinderdam und Kalahari*. Böhlau Verlag, Köln.

## NOTES

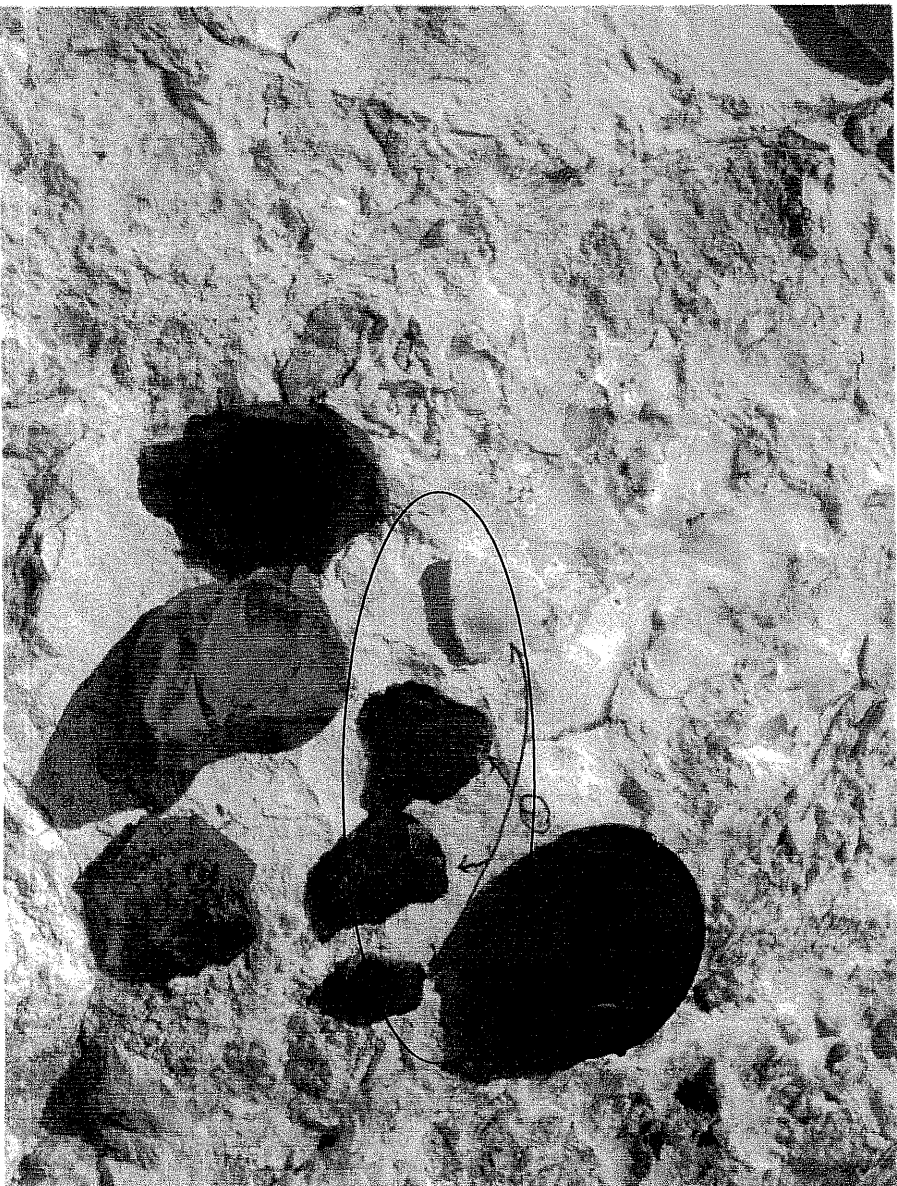
- A copy of the locality map and all surveyed borrow pit drawings must accompany this report to SAHRA.
- Applications to SAHRA will not be processed unless accompanied by a payment of R150 per application. SAHRA banking details are: ABSA, Branch Code: 312109; Current Account no.: 360 680 606.



**Photo 1:** Gravel with overlying calcrete to the north at BP 3.



**Photo 2:** ESA artefacts from BP 5.



**Photo 3:** Possible LSA flakes from BP 7 encircled.