

## CHAPTER S. SHALE HILLS

### Field Note S5a. Mines at Sonderkoskop

The clays in the Shale Hills were mined decades ago, in open-cast and underground mines. Some of the mines are marked on the geology map. All the mines have been abandoned. The red clay mines are described from west to east (Field Notes S5a to S5d), then the white clay (kaolin) mines (Field Note S5e) and lastly the salt mines on the south bank of the Breede River (Field Note S5f).

There are four red clay mines in the Shale Hills area (within the Study Area) (Figure 1).

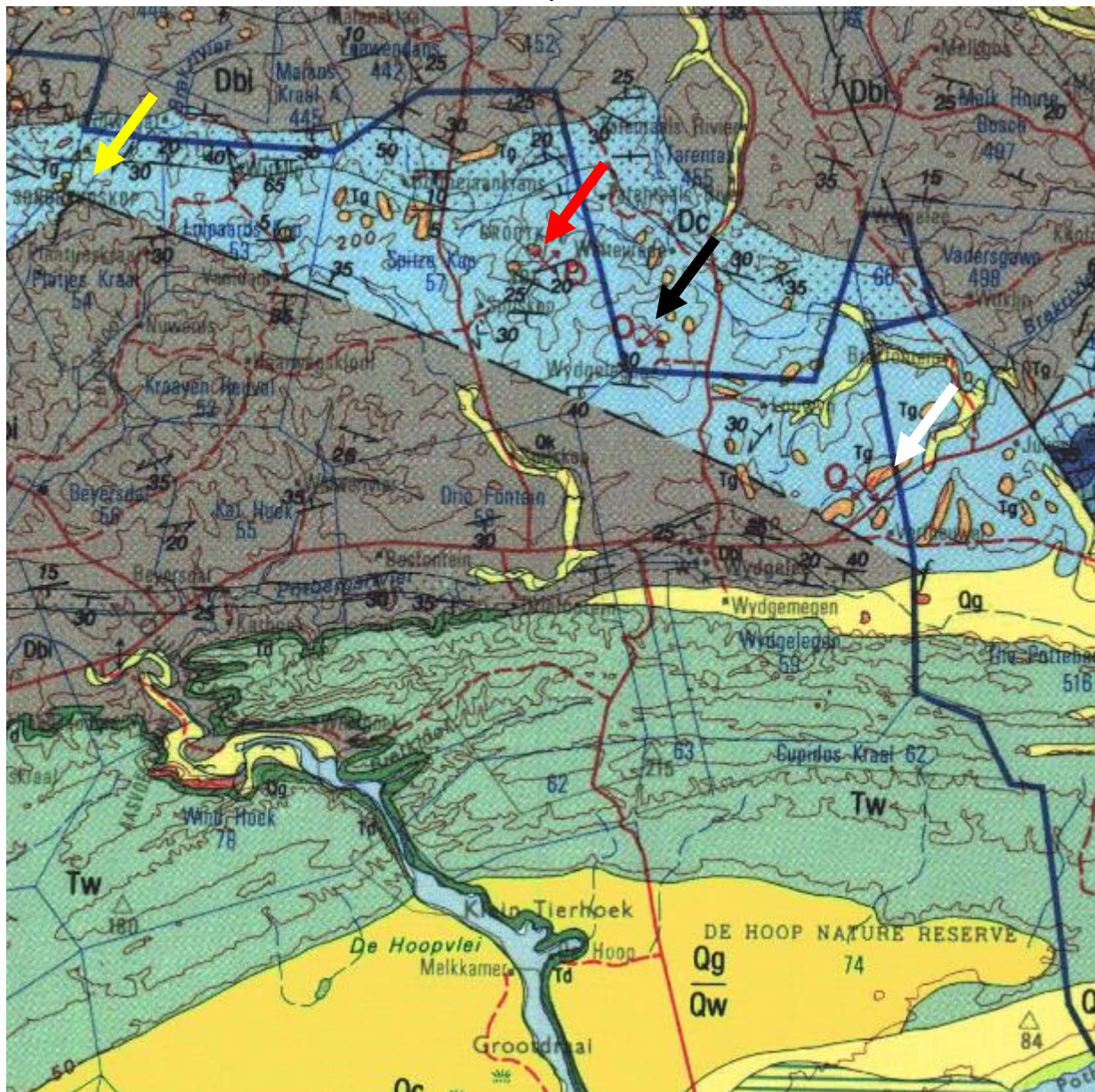
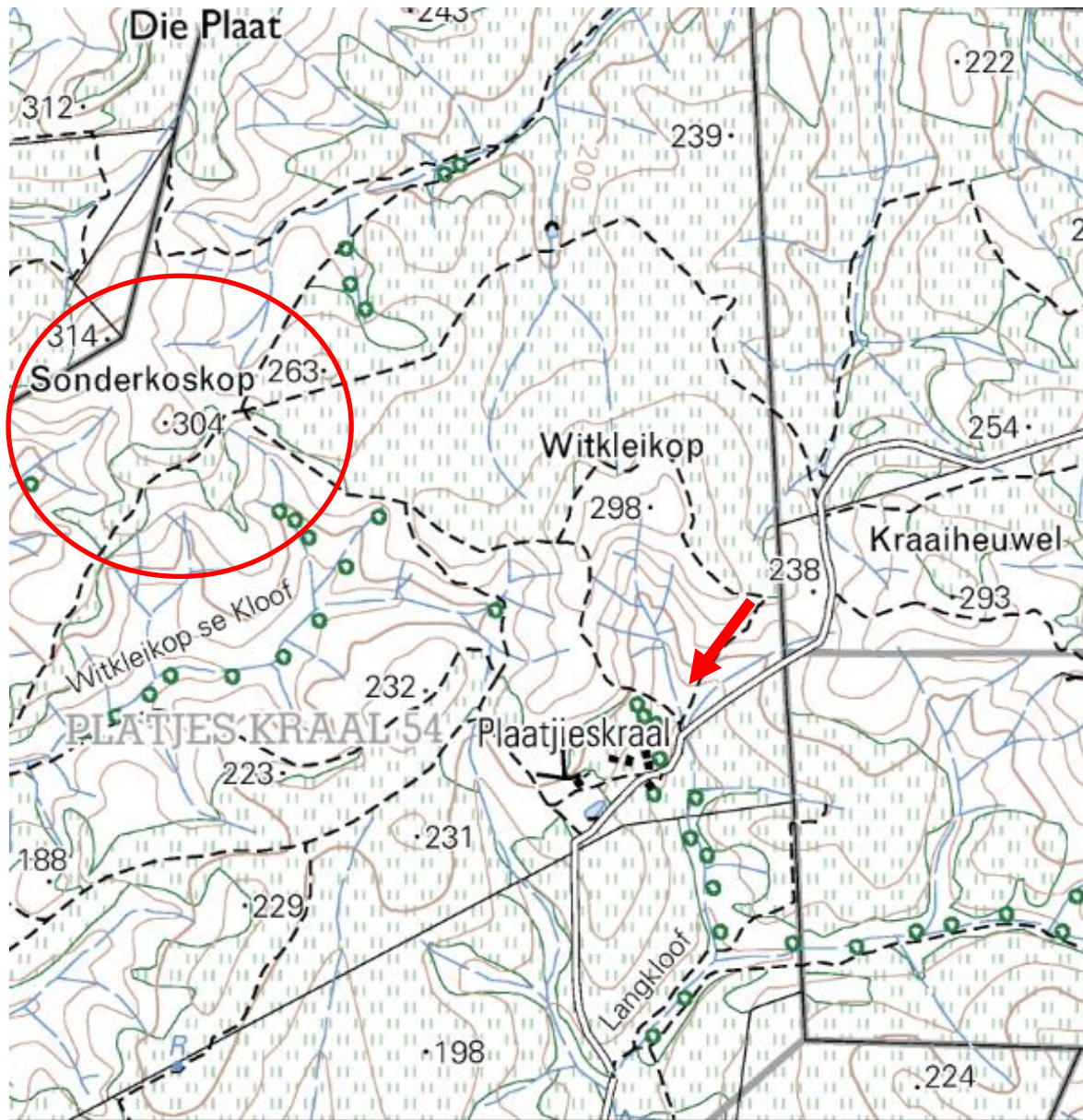


Figure 1. Geology map of part of the Shale Hills north of De Hoop Vlei, showing mine locations (arrows, from west to east): yellow – Sonderkoskop; red – Grootkop and Hill 288; black – Hill 254; white - Verfheuwel.

This Field Note is about the clay mines at Sonderkoskop.



Sonderkoskop is located ~2 km northwest of Plaatjieskraal Farm (Figures 2 and 3).



**Figure 2. Topography map of the area around the farm Plaatjieskraal (arrow). Sonderkoskop is within the circle.**



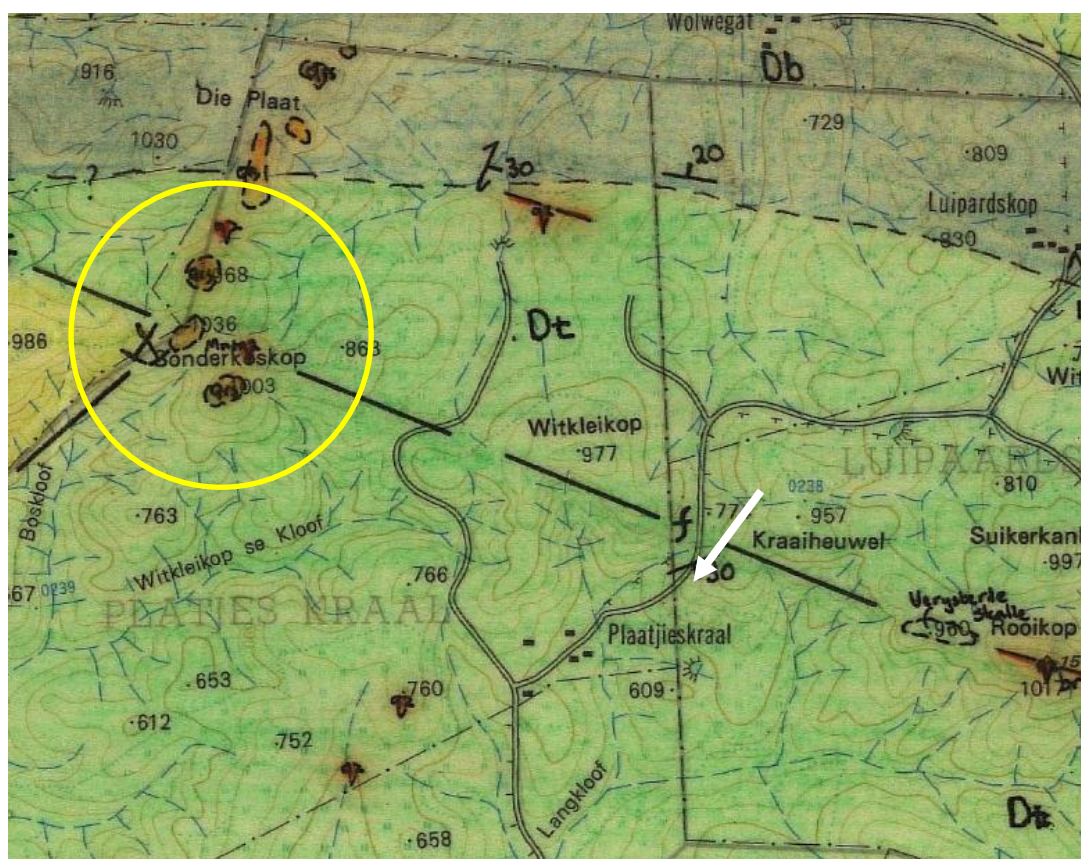


Figure 3. Geology map (1984; elevations in feet) of the area shown in Figure 2. Sonderkopskop is within the circle. Arrow points on Plaatjieskraal. Green areas are shales. The orange patches are silcrete (and in places ferricrete) capping. The Qz symbol is for quartz outcrops.

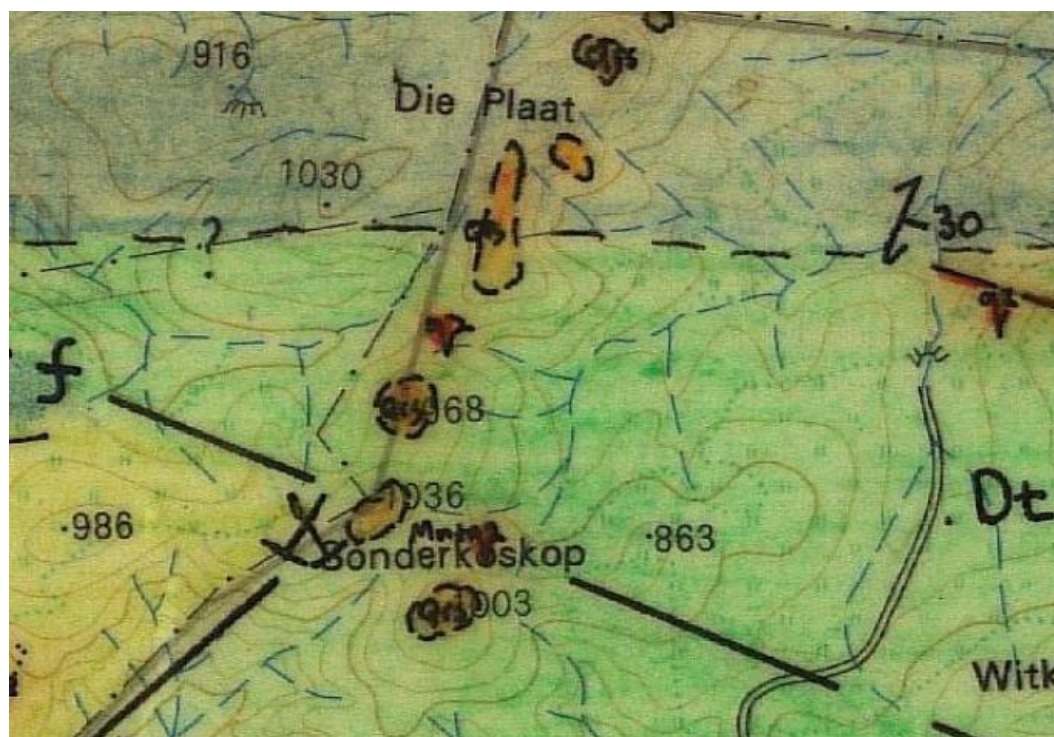


Figure 4. Enlargement of the area encircled in Figures 2 and 3. Note the mine symbol:

Mine not in production X



Sonderkoskop has two peaks at 304 m and 314 m above sealevel (Figures 5, 6 and 7).



**Figure 5. Topography map of Sonderkoskop. The northern peak is 10 m higher than the southern peak.**



**Figure 6. Satellite image of Sonderkoskop. Arrow points to the mine site.**





**Figure 7. The road to Sonderkoskop. View from the east.**

Sonderkoskop and some of the adjacent hills are capped with silcrete (Figure 8) (see Chapter C for silcrete).



**Figure 8. Silcrete on the east slope of Sonderkoskop.**  
(The person on the left is J Groenewald, of the Renosterveld Research Centre)



Manganese veins are present within the silcrete (Figures 9 and 10).



**Figure 9. Manganese within the silcrete.**



**Figure 10. Manganese veins.**



The open-cast mines are shown in Figures 11 and 12.



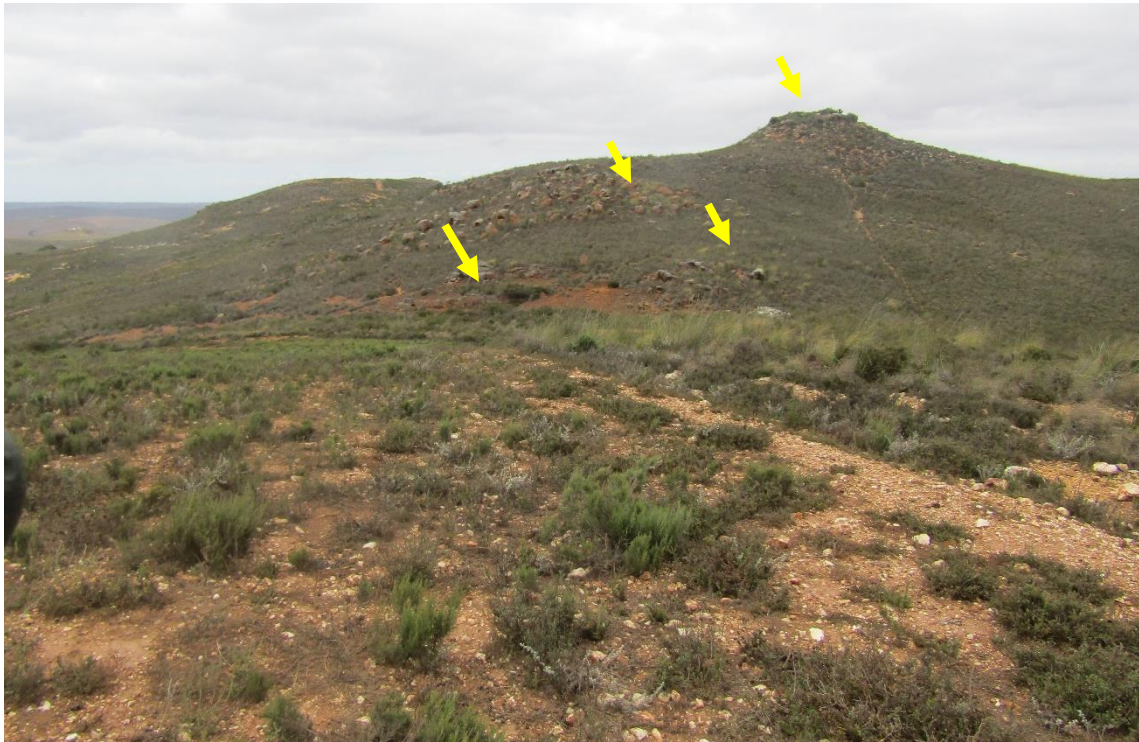
**Figure 11. White clay was mined on the southern slope.**



**Figure 12. Red clay was mined on the western slope.**  
(The person on the right is J Groenewald, of the Renosterveld Research Centre)



Silcrete outcrops are situated on the saddle between the two peaks (Figures 13 and 14).



**Figure 13. View from the southeast of the higher peak of Sonderkoskop. Arrows point to silcrete outcrops.**



**Figure 14. Silcrete caps the higher peak of Sonderkoskop.**