CHAPTER S. SHALE HILLS

Field Note S5d. Mines at Verfheuwel

Clay mine at Verfheuwel.

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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 clay mines are described from west to east (Field Notes S5a to S5d), then the white clay (kaolin) mines (Field Note S5e) and the salt mines on the south bank of the Breede River (Field Note S5f). Two other mines are located outside the Study Area, on Witdam Farm (Field Note S5g).

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

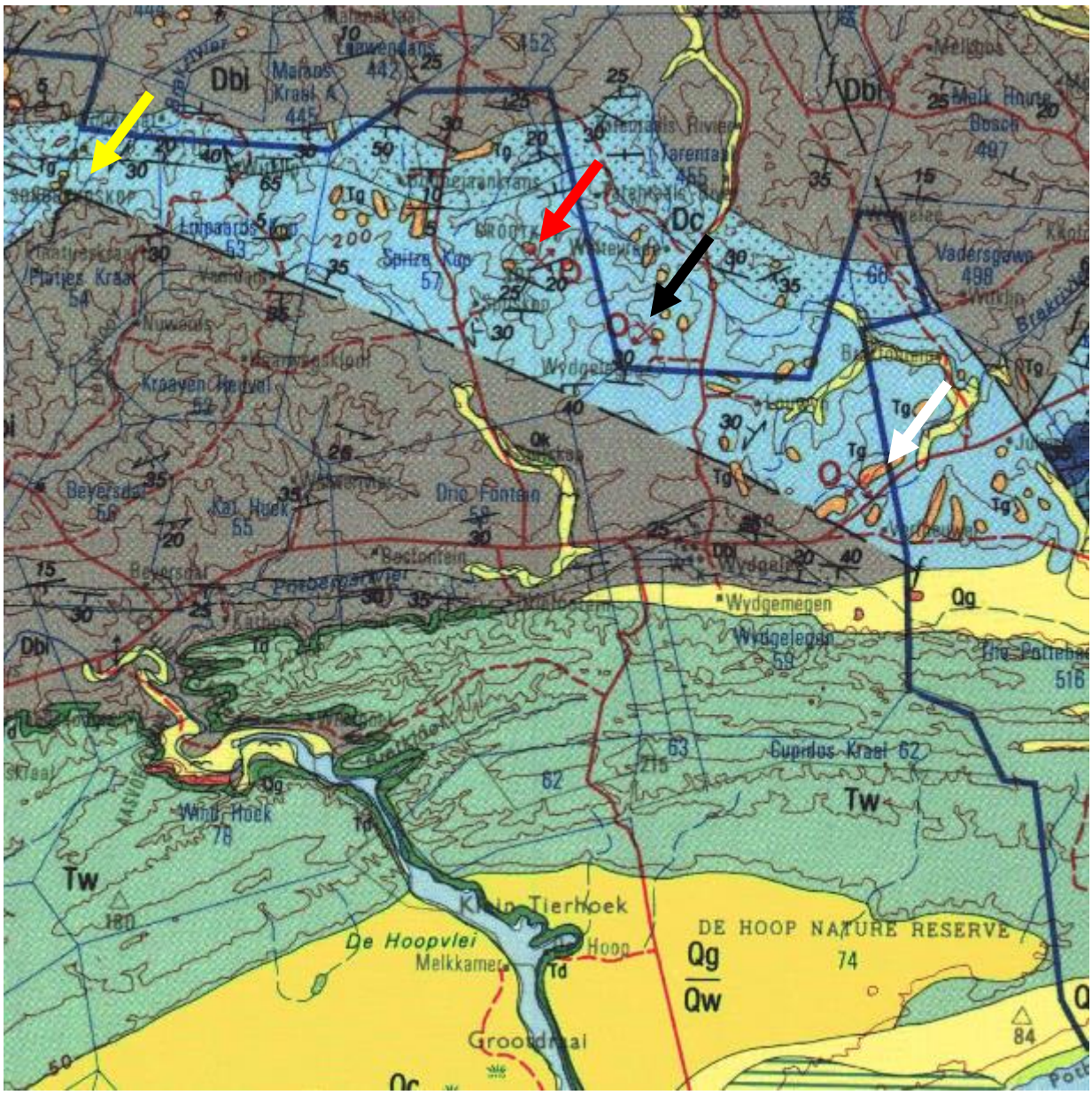

Figure 1. Geology map of part of the Shale Hills north of De Hoop Vlei, showing mine locations (arrows, from west to east): yellow – Sonderkoskop; red – Grootkop and Hill 288; black – Hill 254; white – Verfheuwel.

This Field Note is about the clay mines at Verfheuwel.

The mines at Verfheuwel are located ~4 km east of Wydgeleë (Ouplaas) (Figure 2).

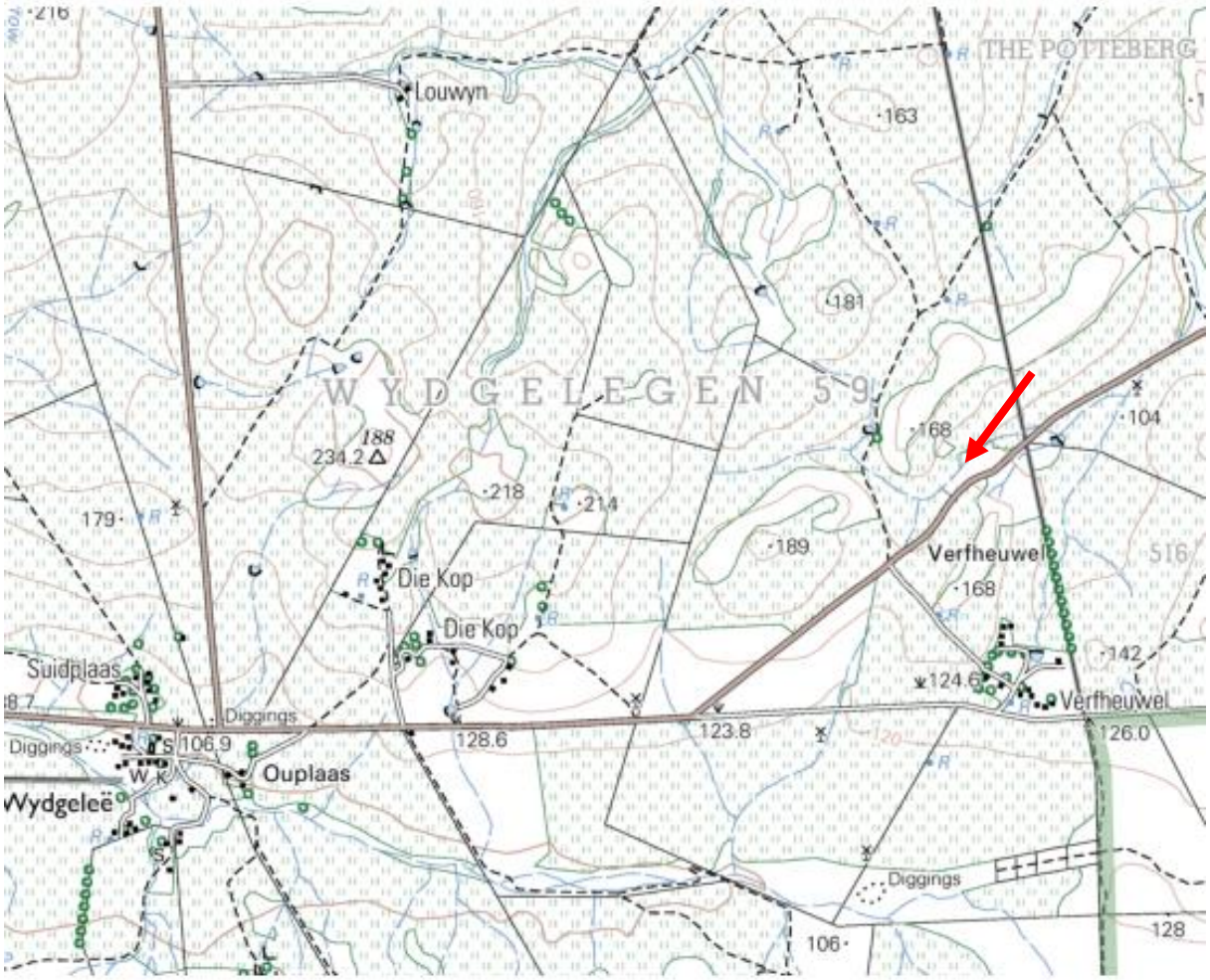

Figure 2. Topographical map of the area east of Wydgeleë, The red arrow points on the Verfheuwel Mines.

Verfheuwel (paint hill; the name may preserve the purpose of mining, namely the material used in the production of paints) is one of the hills in the area, which is capped with silcrete (Figures 3 and 4). (See Chapter C for silcrete).

Verfheuwel and the neighbouring hills are capped with silcrete (Figure 3). The mines (two sites) are of the open cast type (Figures 4 to 6).

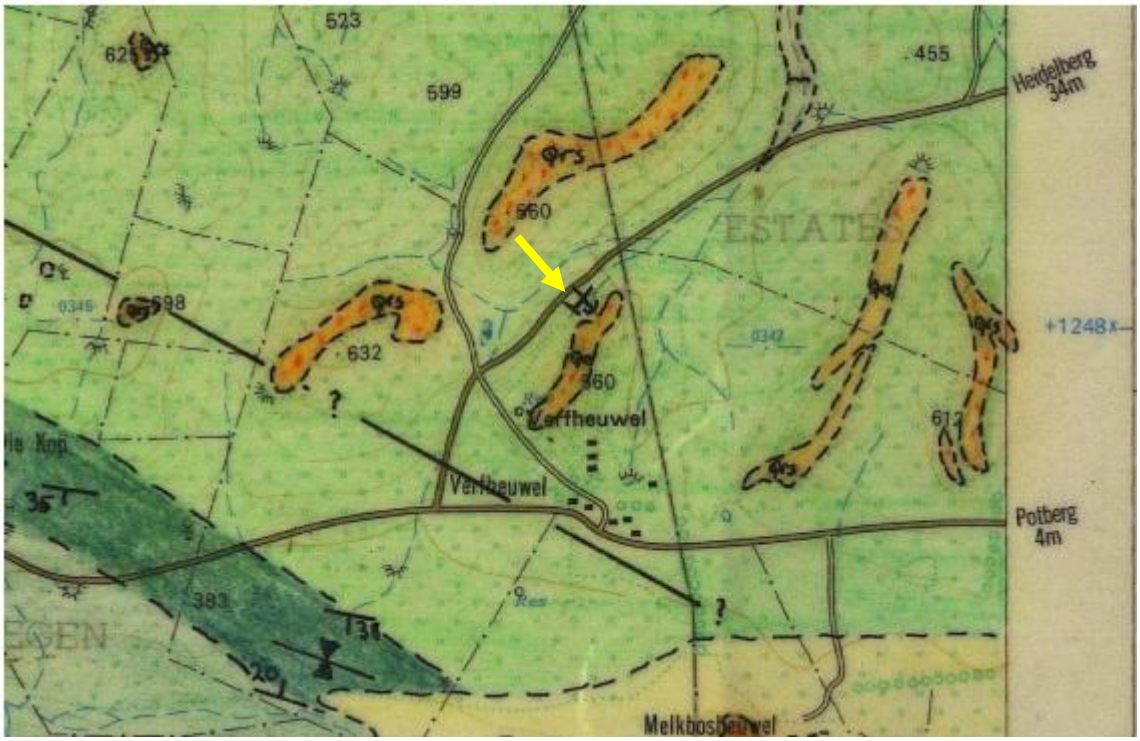

Figure 3. Section of the geology map (1984; elevations in feet) of the Vervheuwel area. The orange colour indicates silcrete capping. Green areas are shales. The yellow arrow points on Verfheuwel Mines. Note the mine symbol:

Mine not in production

Figure 4. View on the primary Verfheuwel Mine, from the Malgas – Ouplaas road. Note the silcrete capping (arrow).

Figure 5. Topography map of the Verfheuwel area. The arrows point on the mines: yellow – primary site; white - secondary site.

Figure 6. Satellite image of the Verfheuwel Mines. The arrows point on the mines: yellow – primary site; white - secondary site.

Ochre clay is the material, which was mined in Verfheuwel (Figures 7 to 10).

Figure 7. The Verfheuwel Mine primary site. View to the east. Note the silcrete capping at the top of the hill.

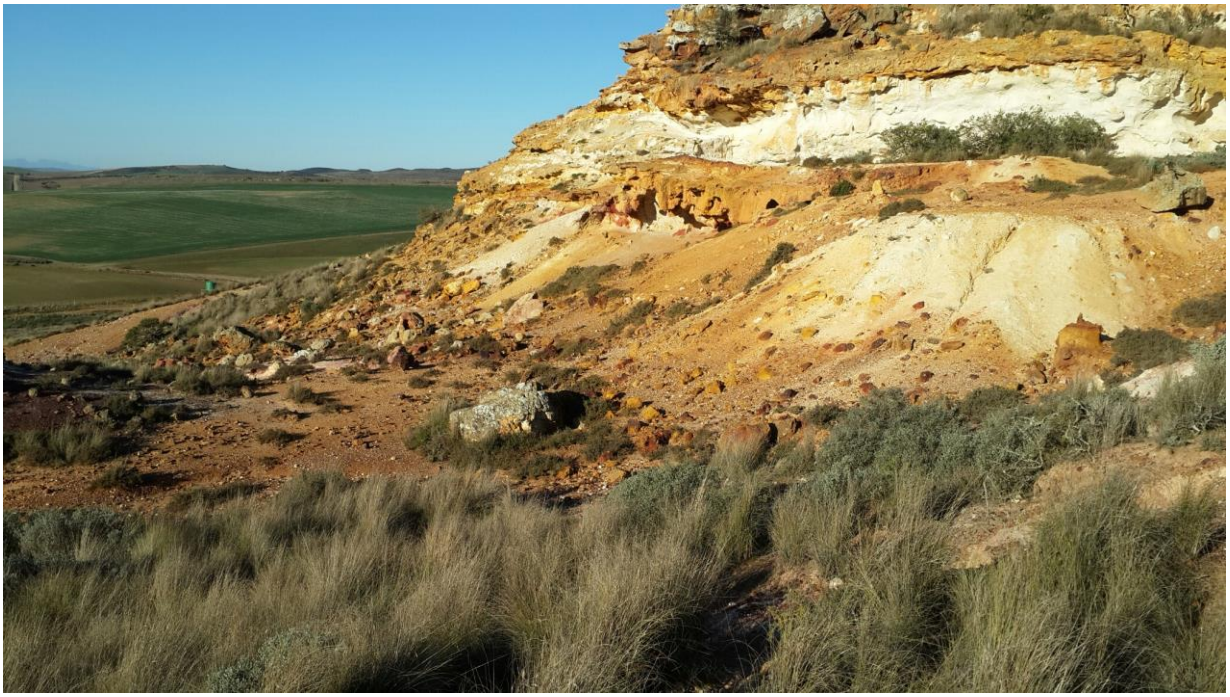

Figure 8. The Verfheuwel Mine primary site. View to the north. Ochre clay is dominant.

Figure 9. The ochre shales in the primary site.

The secondary, much smaller site, is located about 350 m south of the primary site (Figure 10),.

Figure 10. The Verfheuwel Mine secondary site (yellow arrow). View to the northeast. Note the ochre layer at the site and the ochre chunks in the foreground.