



## The paleolithic component of the lithic assemblage from Silly-Rue Haute (Belgium)

Nick VAN LIEFFERINGE

The surface site of Silly-Rue Haute (province of Hainaut, Belgium)<sup>1</sup> was found during a fieldwalking survey on ploughed farmland. Situated on a promontory in the hilly landscape - at an altitude of 95 m above sea level - the location offers a magnificent view over a small valley east of the findspot (fig. 1). The topsoil containing the archaeological information consists of a mixture of Pleistocene (loam) and Tertiary (sand) sediments. So far, a group of 50 lithic artefacts (weight: 0,581 kg) were discerned from the rest of the assemblage on the basis of similar raw material characteristics. Most remarkable is the presence of a heavy white porcelain patina covering the artefacts from this group (fig. 2).

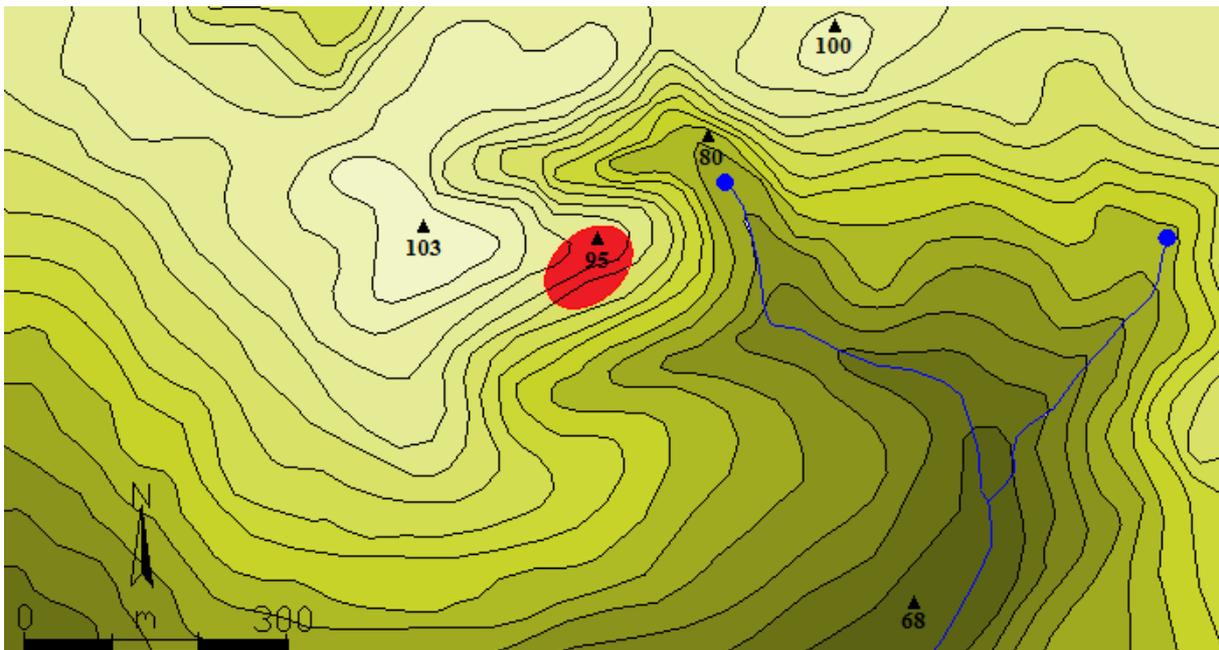


Fig. 1: Location of the findspot (red oval) on a promontory in the landscape.

<sup>1</sup> Lambert-coordinates: X110954 / Y146969.



Fig. 2: Group of artefacts (n= 50) with distinctive white porcelain patina.

***Raw material characteristics (fig. 3)***

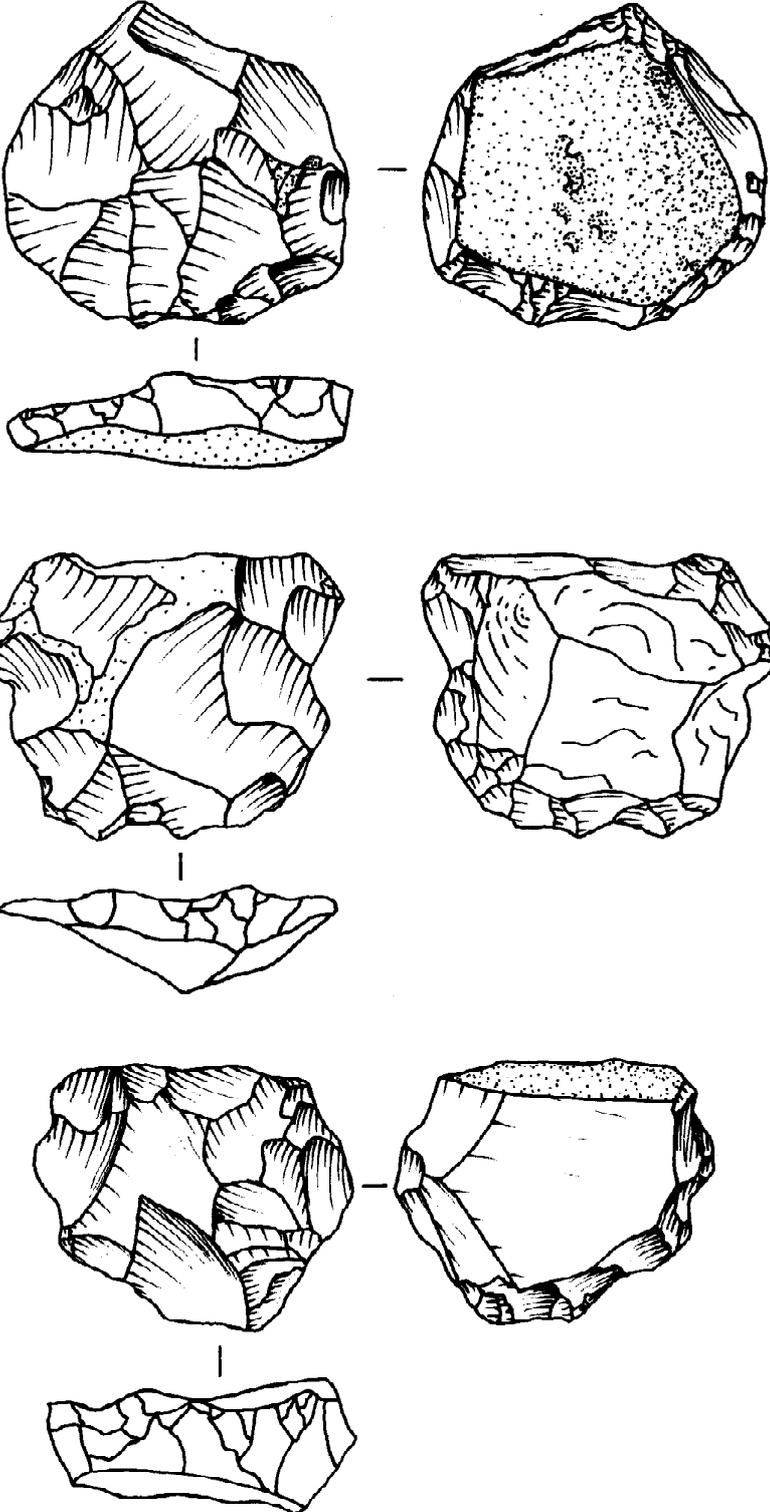
An approximately 1 mm thick porcelain patina (1) covers a dark grey fine-grained flint type (2). The glossy, white patina has been subjected to post-depositional abrasion, which locally resulted in a cortex-like surface (3). One can suppose a procurement of relatively small flint nodules on the basis of the irregular shape of some cortical pieces (4). The assemblage has also been affected by extreme cold temperatures and cryoturbation, respectively resulting in frost fractures (5) and scratches (7). The presence of orange-red spots (6) is the result of contact with iron ploughshares.



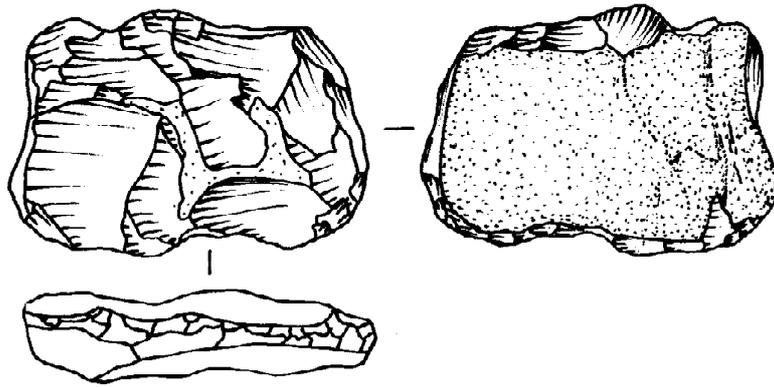
Fig. 3: Raw material characteristics.

**Typology**

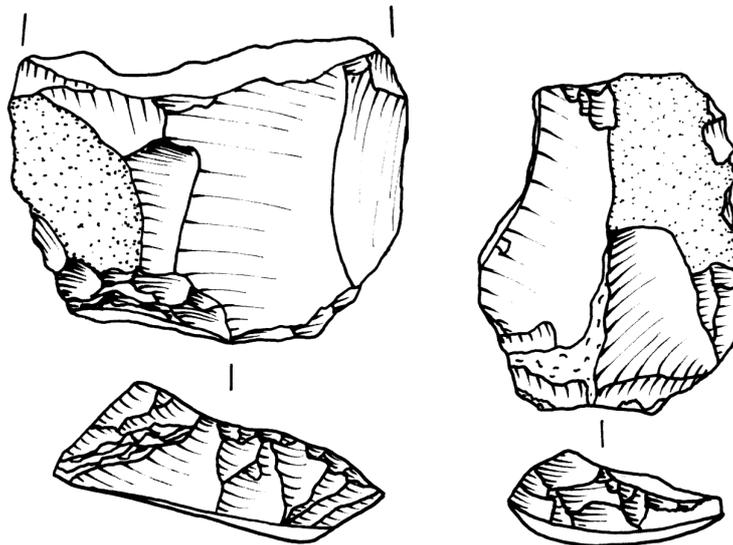
A. Small and/or exhausted levallois cores<sup>2</sup>



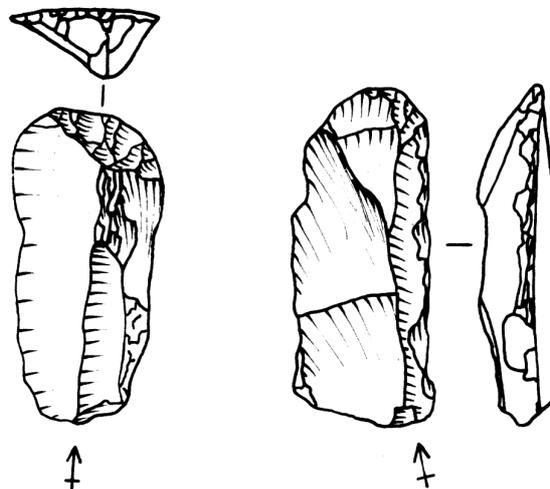
<sup>2</sup> Drawing scale 1:1.



B. Flakes with faceted striking-platforms



C. Blade tools



***Date***

The assemblage with distinctive white porcelain patina encompasses both middle paleolithic (levallois core reduction) and late paleolithic (blade tools) influences.