

**PHASE 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT ON
PORTIONS OF THE FARM ALHEIT NEAR KAKAMAS, SIYANDA
DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY, NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE.**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to determine if any archaeological or other heritage sites were present on ~80 ha area of natural veld bordering the N14 on the farm Alheit, some 15 km west of Kakamas in the Siyanda District Municipality of the Northern Cape Province. This ground, transected by gullies draining to the NNE, is largely surfaced by gritty beige – red sand with patches of quartz rubble, and is either bereft of vegetation or sparsely covered by patches of grass and low bushes, with trees being absent. A foot survey over the full extent of the terrain on Tuesday 13 May 2008 produced ten amorphous cores and flakes, as also a possible handaxe roughout, but nowhere did I see any archaeological sites, palaeontological bones, or early structures / graves. These findings led me to conclude that the inspected farm portion has no heritage potential and that its proposed use for the expansion of existing vineyards and lemon orchards will have no impact on the heritage resources of the Northern Cape.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This report is part of an EIA that is being compiled by Marquerite Geldenhuys of MEG Environmental Impact Studies on behalf of the farm owner, Mr JH Retief, who runs a trucking firm in the Boland. The proposed development is an expansion of farming operations, under manager Johan van Aarde, onto adjacent natural veld, and does not involve re-zoning or subdivision. My terms of reference were to detail observations based on a field survey of the terrain and to assess the significance of heritage impacts, should the development go ahead. Such a report is required by the National Heritage Resources Act (no. 25 of 1999), which states that no development may take place without heritage assessment and approval.

REGIONAL ARCHAEOLOGY

The nearest known archaeological occurrences are a few kilometres to the east at Renosterkop, where two Ceramic LSA sites were located in the 1980's, the one, in a small shelter, overlying MSA (Morris & Beaumont 1991). And some 40 km to the north – west are two other ceramic LSA localities, Bokvasmaak 3 & 4, of which the former is a midden, with abundant fish bones and some iron beads, dated to ~120 years BP (Beaumont *et al.* 1995).

There are Acheulean sites near Upington, on the farms Droëhout and Ratel Draai (Beaumont *et al.* 1995), but Renosterkop shelter and Zoovoorbij Cave near Keimoes (Smith 1995) are, as yet, the only regional sites with stratified successions. Both of the latter indicate a MSA presence of likely early MIS 5 age, followed by a hiatus of glacial age, and then a LSA occupation, confined there, and at other localities in the broad vicinity, to mid – late Holocene times.

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

The inspected 80 ha area comprises portions of Kakamas South plots 1179, 1408 and 2081, bounded in the south by the N14 and to the east by the R359, some 15 km west of Kakamas, in the Siyanda District Municipality of the Northern Cape (Figs. 1 &

2). The terrain comprises a gentle slope to the north – east, drained by gullies that link up and deepen further downslope (Fig. 2), that is sparsely covered by grass and low bushes, with large patches that are bereft of any vegetation (Figs. 3 – 6).

Tuesday 13 May was spent, in the company of Marquerite Geldenhuys and botanist Noel van Rooyen, walking over the entire 50 ha upslope and 30 ha downslope portions of this ground, with co-ordinates being taken, when needed, with a Garmin GPS.

SUPERFICIAL SEDIMENTS

There is a minor outcrop near the N14 on the western portion and a low ridge in the southern sector of the western area, but elsewhere gully and other sections show 0 – 1.5 m of unconsolidated beige – brown sand with schist and quartz rubble on decomposed Precambrian schist bedrock. Also noted was a downslope increase in red sand patches, which suggests that all or much of the terrain had an initial cover of Hutton Sands, but that erosion has removed this red sand over beige sand stratification over time.

HERITAGE FINDINGS

My foot survey of the western area produced seven fairly fresh undiagnostic irregular flakes and cores, mainly based on quartzite cobbles, but including a core on a small banded ironstone pebble (Fig. 7). The find of the day, also from there, was what appears to be a handaxe roughout, 15 cm long, 5 cm thick, unabraded, and based on a brownish quartzite, at 28° 45' 49.6" S, 20° 31' 05.0" E (Fig. 8). The eastern area, on the other hand, yielded only three artefacts; a blade and two smaller irregular flakes, all with plain platforms and on banded ironstone, that are most possibly of LSA ascription (Fig. 9). The nearest source of these exotic raw materials is a regionally unique Older Gravel occurrence on the eastern flank of nearby Renosterkop that was investigated by the author in the late 1980's (Morris & Beaumont 1991). Nowhere did I see any archaeological sites, palaeontological bones or structures / graves of any age.

CONCLUSIONS

My conclusion is therefore that the inspected area contains no significant heritage material and that its proposed use for the expansion of existing vineyards and lemon groves will have no impact on the heritage resources of the Northern Cape Province.

REFERENCES

Beaumont, P.B., Smith, A.B. & Vogel, J.C. 1995. Before the Einiqua: The Archaeology of the Frontier Zone. In A.B. Smith (ed.) *Einiqualand*, pp. 236 – 264. Rondebosch, UCT Press.

Morris, D & Beaumont, P. 1991. !Nawabdanas: archaeological sites at Renosterkop, Kakamas District, northern Cape. *S. Afr. Archaeol. Bull.*, **46**: 115 – 124.

Smith, A.B. 1995. Archaeological Observations along the Orange River and its Hinterland. In A.B. Smith (ed.) *Einiqualand*, pp. 265 - 300. Rondebosch, UCT Press.

20°30'

28°45'

35'

DRIFTEILAND 499

ORANGE R

Kakamas-Suidkanaal

Truter

Alheit

Bakenskop

707.2

KAKAMAS SUID

Vaalgras

Pofadder 128 km

Angriemas 14 km

Harbessivier

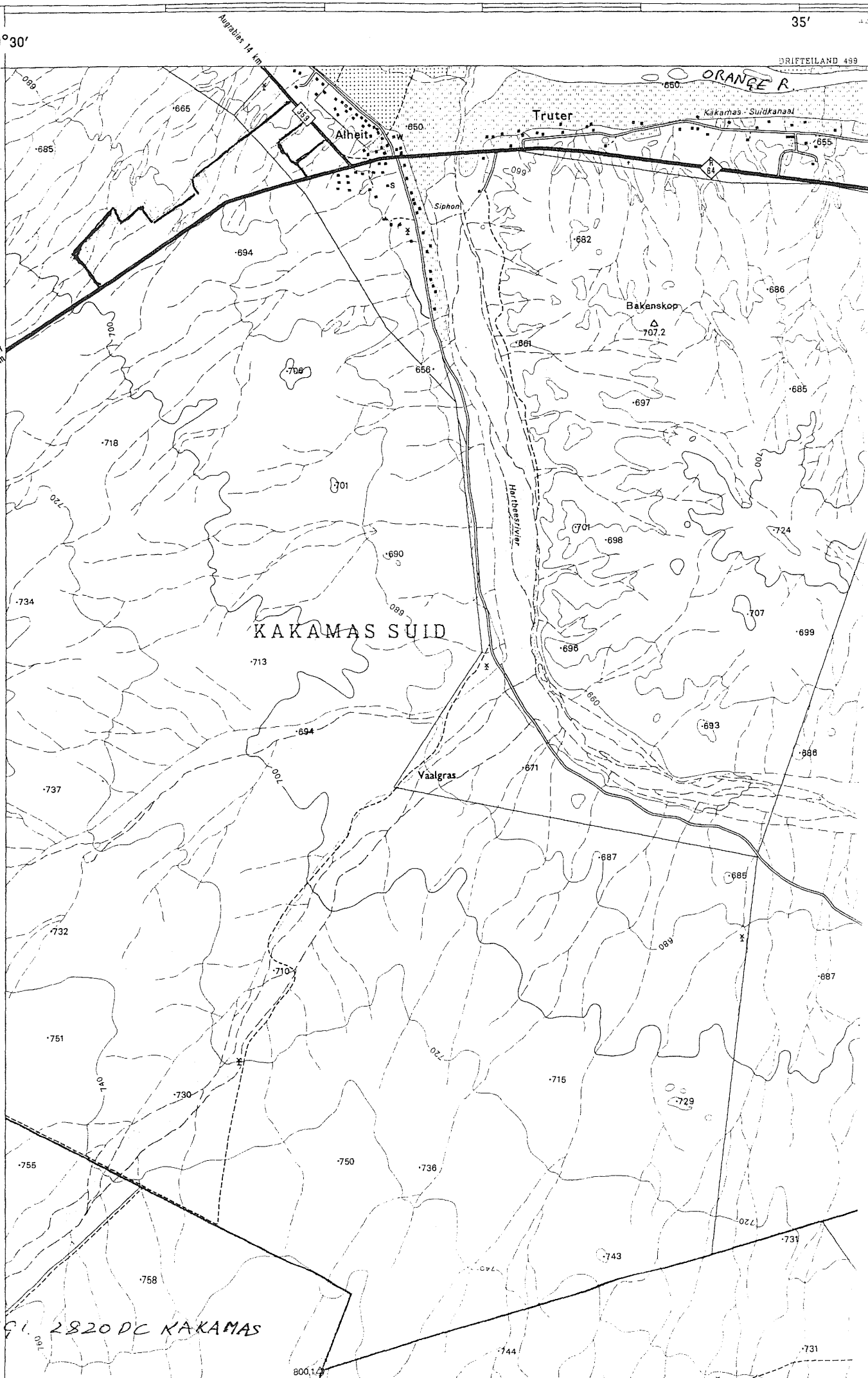
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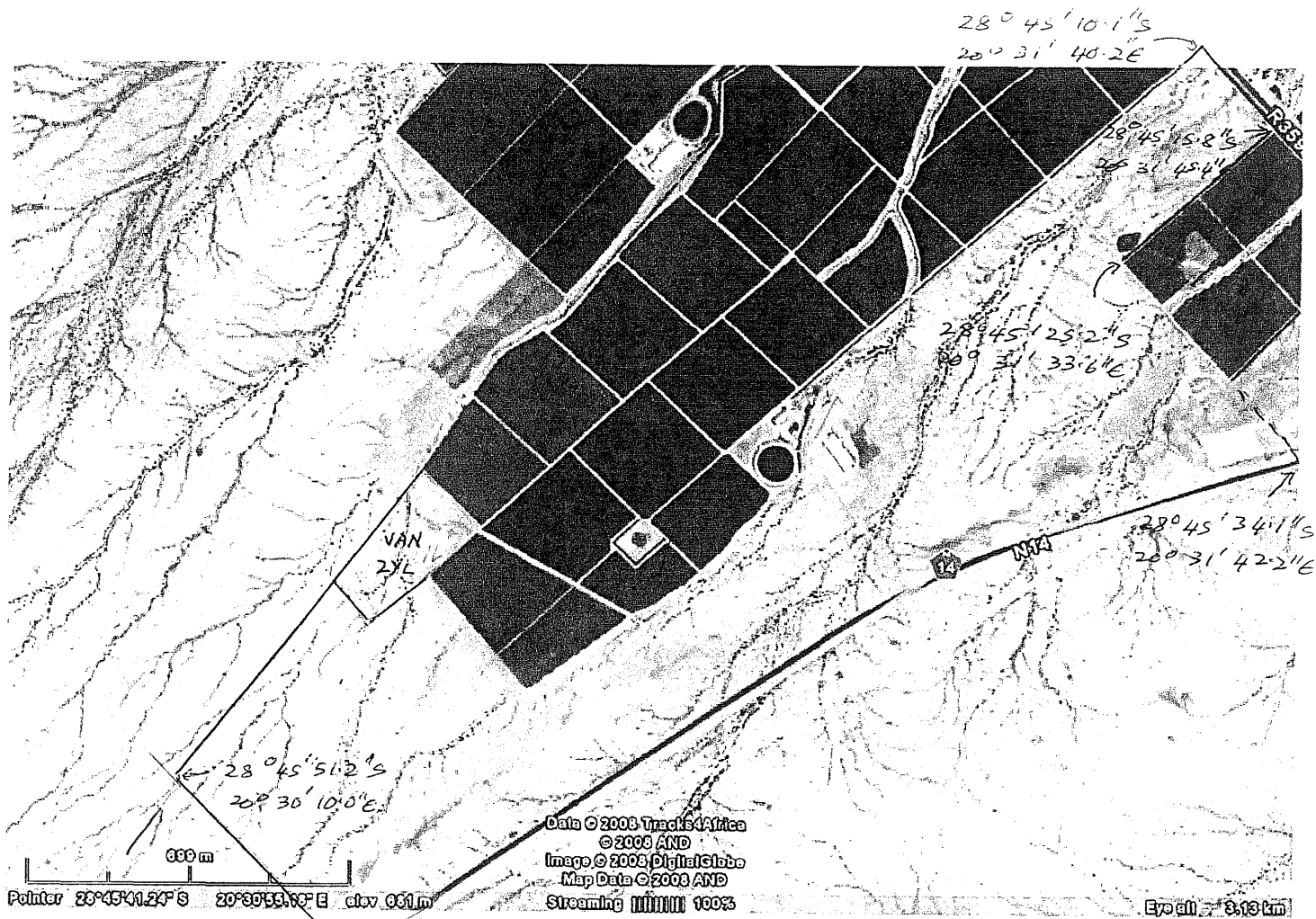
+319X

50'

FIG. 2820 DC KAKAMAS

800.14





Alheit
50ha
+ 30ha

JH Retif

FIG 2.

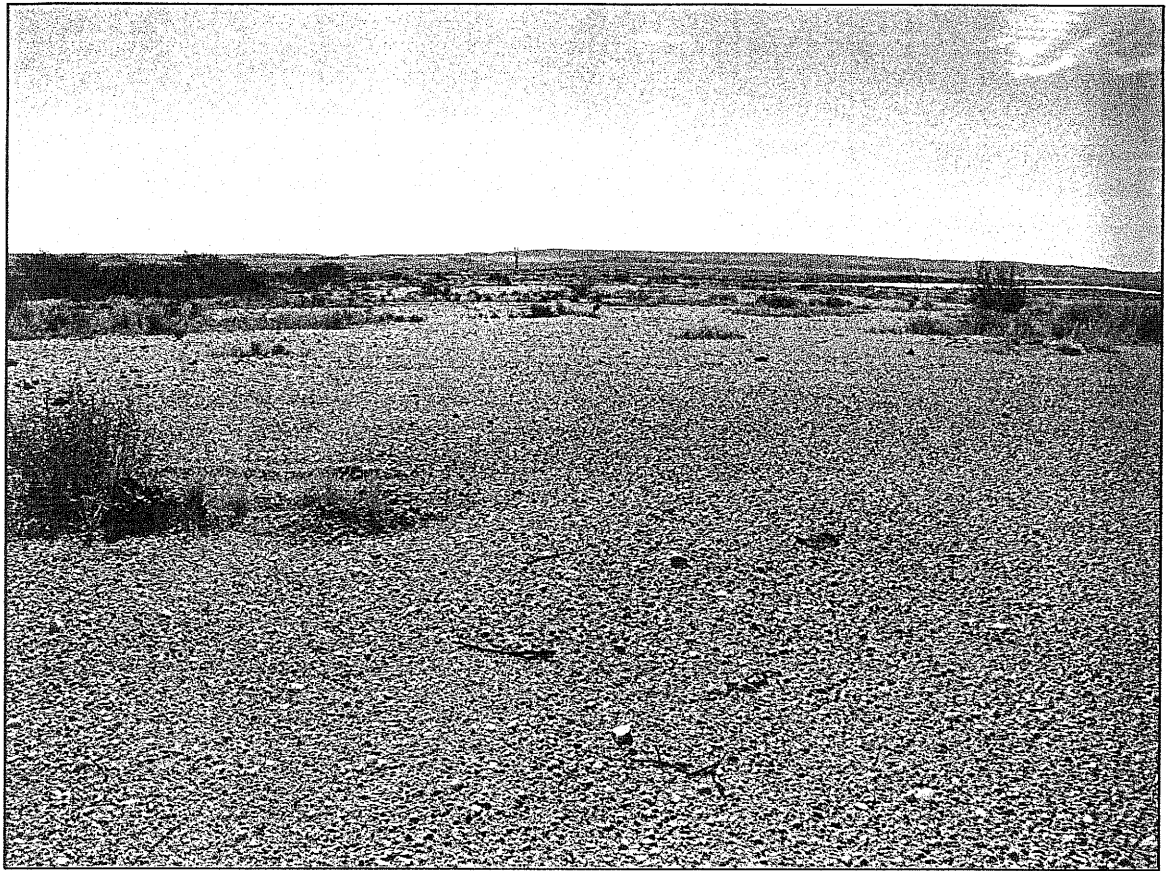


FIG 3. VIEW IN WESTERN PORTION



FIG 4. VIEW IN WESTERN PORTION

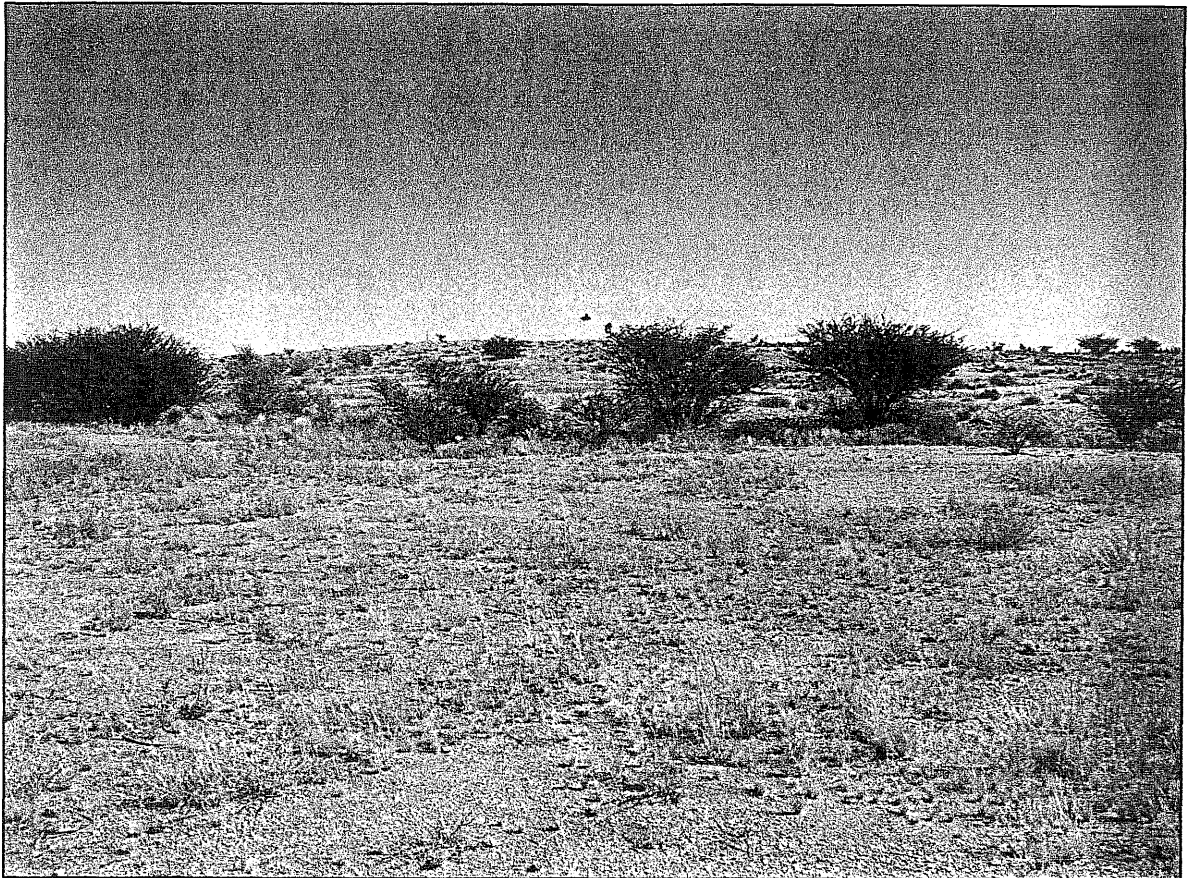


FIG 5. VIEW IN EASTERN PORTION

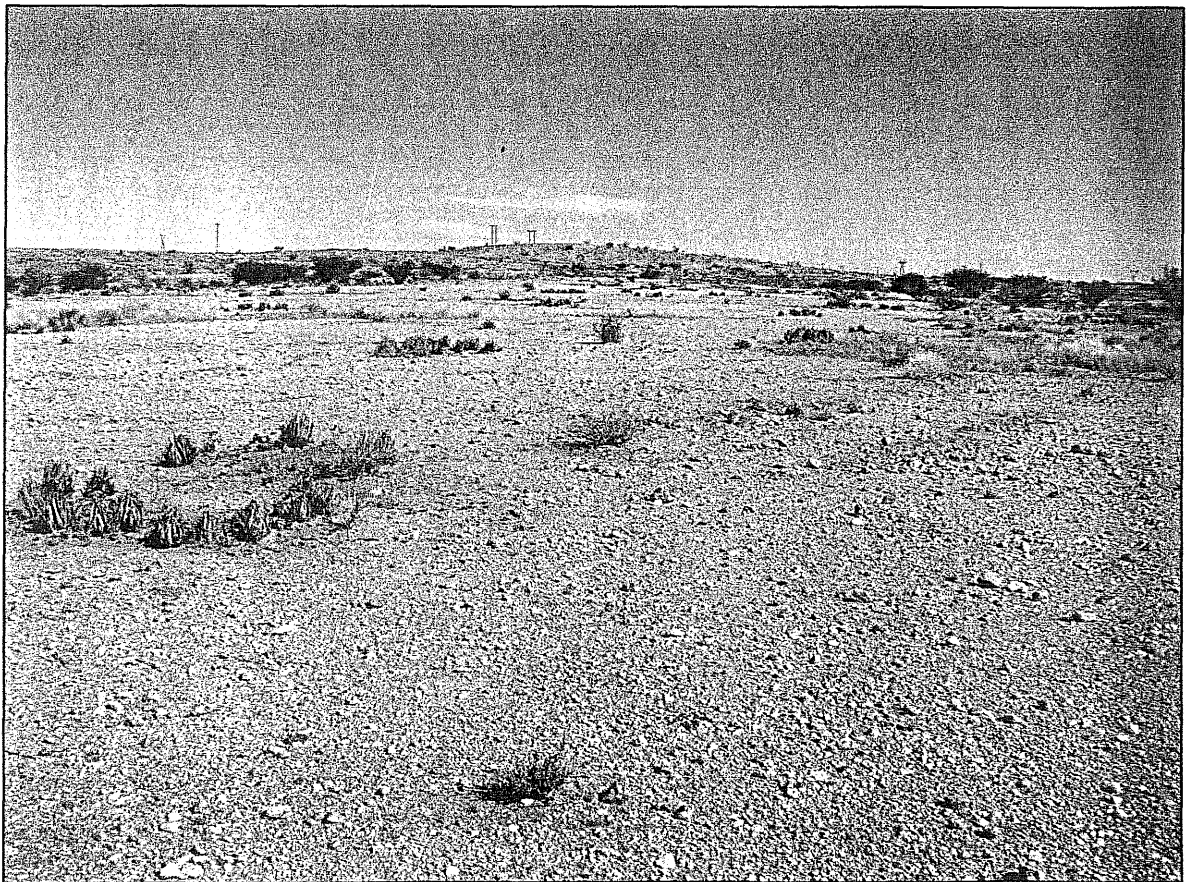


FIG 6. VIEW IN EASTERN PORTION



FIG 7. ARTEFACTS FROM WESTERN PORTION



FIG 8. UNABRADED HANDAXE ROUGHOUT?

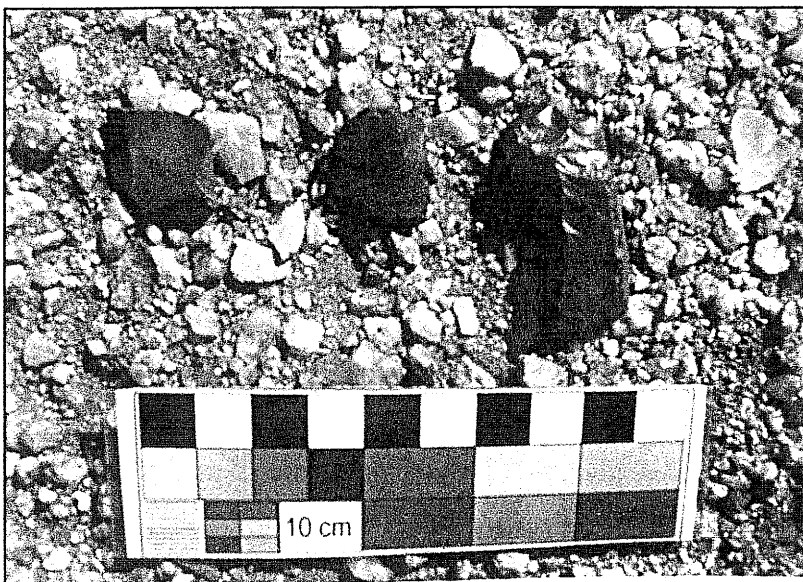


FIG 9. ARTEFACTS FROM EASTERN AREA