

**PHASE 1 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT ON A
PORTION OF THE FARM SCHUITDRIFT-WEST 5, WNW OF
KAKAMAS, SIYANDA DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY, NORTHERN CAPE
PROVINCE.**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to establish if any heritage sites were present on a 200 ha portion of the farm Schuitdrift-West 5 on the southern flank of the Orange River, some 80 km WNW of Kakamas, in the Siyanda District Municipality of the Northern Cape Province. A morning – long inspection of a sloping gritty reddish – beige sand surface with a sparse cover of grass and melkbos, but with occasional other bushes along shallow drainage lines, produced no artefacts, fossil bones, or graves of any age. It is consequently considered that this terrain has no heritage potential and that its possible use for the growing of *Hoodia gordonii*, depending on the Unilever contribution, will have no impact on the heritage resources of the Northern Cape.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Southern Farms, the holding company, is a sophisticated operation which pioneered the production of very early table grapes for the European Union market along the lower Orange River, downstream of Augrabies, based on an ideal combination of aridity, extreme seasonality and irrigation water there. They are currently considering diversifying into the growing of *Hoodia*, which is being promoted by Unilever, by way of a proposed Upington factory to extract the active ingredient, as a panacea for the overweight problems that presently afflict some portions of humanity. The farm portion in question is currently part of a game farm on which a number of species, including giraffe, range freely, but, given the paucity of the regional vegetation cover, in general, their numbers must be very low.

This report is part of an EIA that is being compiled by Marquerite Geldenhuys of MEG Environmental Impact Studies at the request of the farm manager Louis Hanekom.

REGIONAL ARCHAEOLOGY

About 30 km to the east, on the north bank of the Orange River at Riemvasmaak, the author located a number of LSA (Doomfontein) occurrences, of which the most interesting was Bokvasmaak, a midden with fish bones and iron objects dated to ~120 years BP (Beaumont *et al.* 1995). And a further 30 km to the ESE, on the farm Waterval, now a part of the Augrabies National Park, sampling by Andy Smith in 1984 revealed a superficial scatter of similar material, including a copper ring, with an age, on a hearth sample, of ~760 years ago (Smith 1995).

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

The investigated c 200 ha portion of the farm Schuifdrift-West 5 is situated on the southern slopes of the Orange River valley, about 80 km WNW of Kakamas, in the Siyanda District Municipality of the Northern Cape (Figs. 1 & 2). The terrain surface is predominantly of reddish beige gritty sand, sparsely covered in the main by grass

and melkbos, but the vegetation on adjacent rocky hillsides included a few quiver trees and the karee corkwood, a rare endemic (Figs. 3 – 6). Slope is slightly westward, from 569 m down to about 532 m, and co-ordinates for points near its eastern and western extremities are 28° 32' 57.2" S, 19° 44' 30.8" E and 28° 32' 50.1" S, 19° 43' 29.3" E, respectively. I spent a morning investigating the full extent of this ground, by driving and walking over it, on Wednesday 23 January 2008, together with botanists Noel and Gretel van Rooyen, Agnes Mogorosi of the Dept. Tourism, Environment and Conservation (Upington) and Marquerite Geldenhuys.

SUPERFICIAL GEOLOGY

Examined pits dug by Southern Farms show that weathered gneiss belonging to the Namaqualand Metamorphic Complex (Kent 1980) is invariably directly overlain by 0 – c. 3m of unstratified gritty reddish – beige sand with some quartz rubble. Those sediments seem to have built up by way of bedrock decomposition, together with a variable admixture of Kalahari Sand, vestiges of which occur on some nearby hillsides. The farm manager informed me that, beyond the investigated area, there were sections which also show a calcrete zone lying ~2 m down.

HERITAGE FINDINGS

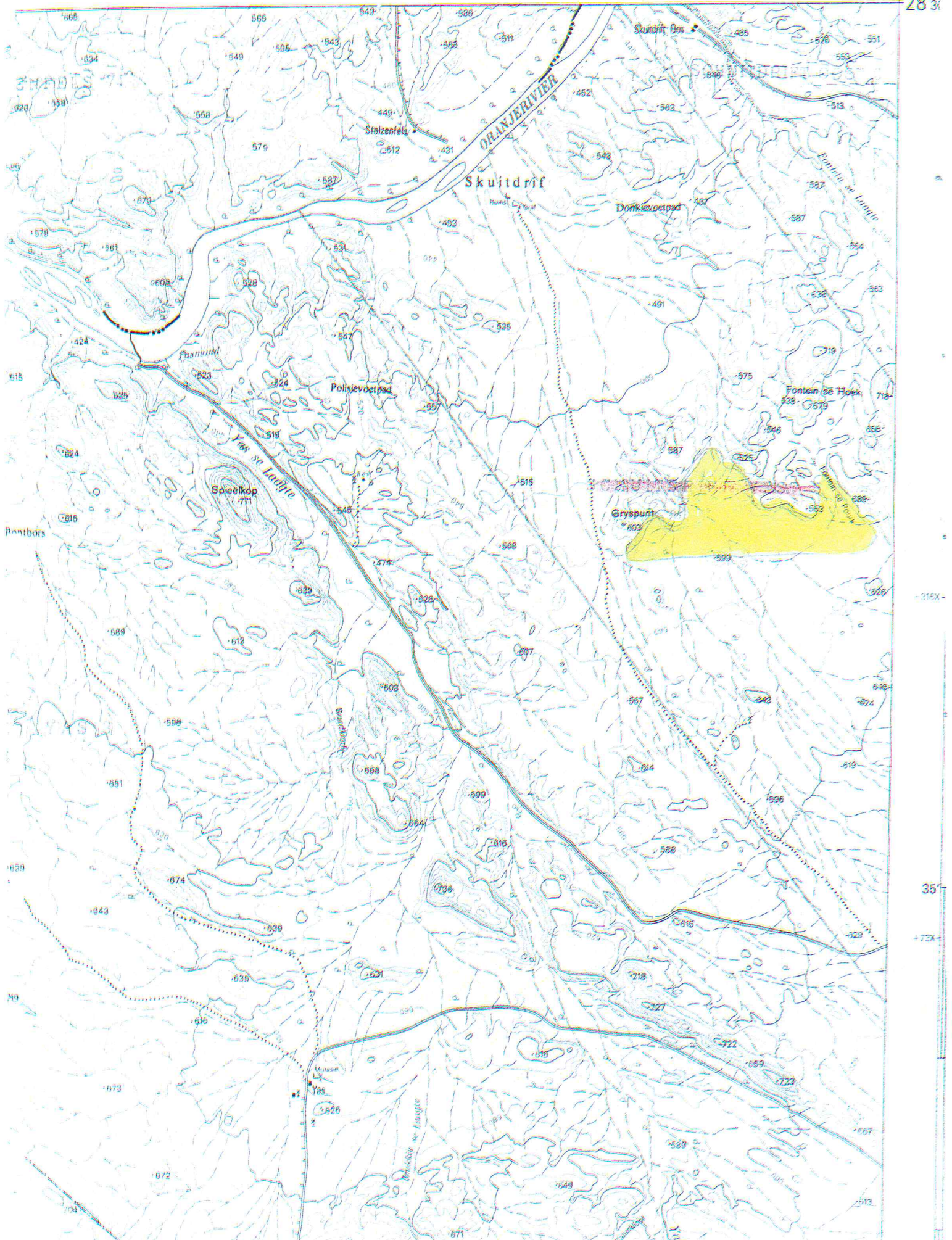
A careful search, which included quartz vein outcrops, nearby overhangs, and a small ~4 m wide shelter next to an old earth dam, produced no artefacts, fossil bones, or graves. This last – mentioned finding was supported by the farm manager, who mentioned that both marked and unmarked burials were known from near the river.

CONCLUSIONS

My conclusion is therefore that this farm portion contains no heritage material and that its possible use for *Hoodia* production will have no perceptible impact on the heritage resources of the Northern Cape Province.

REFERENCES

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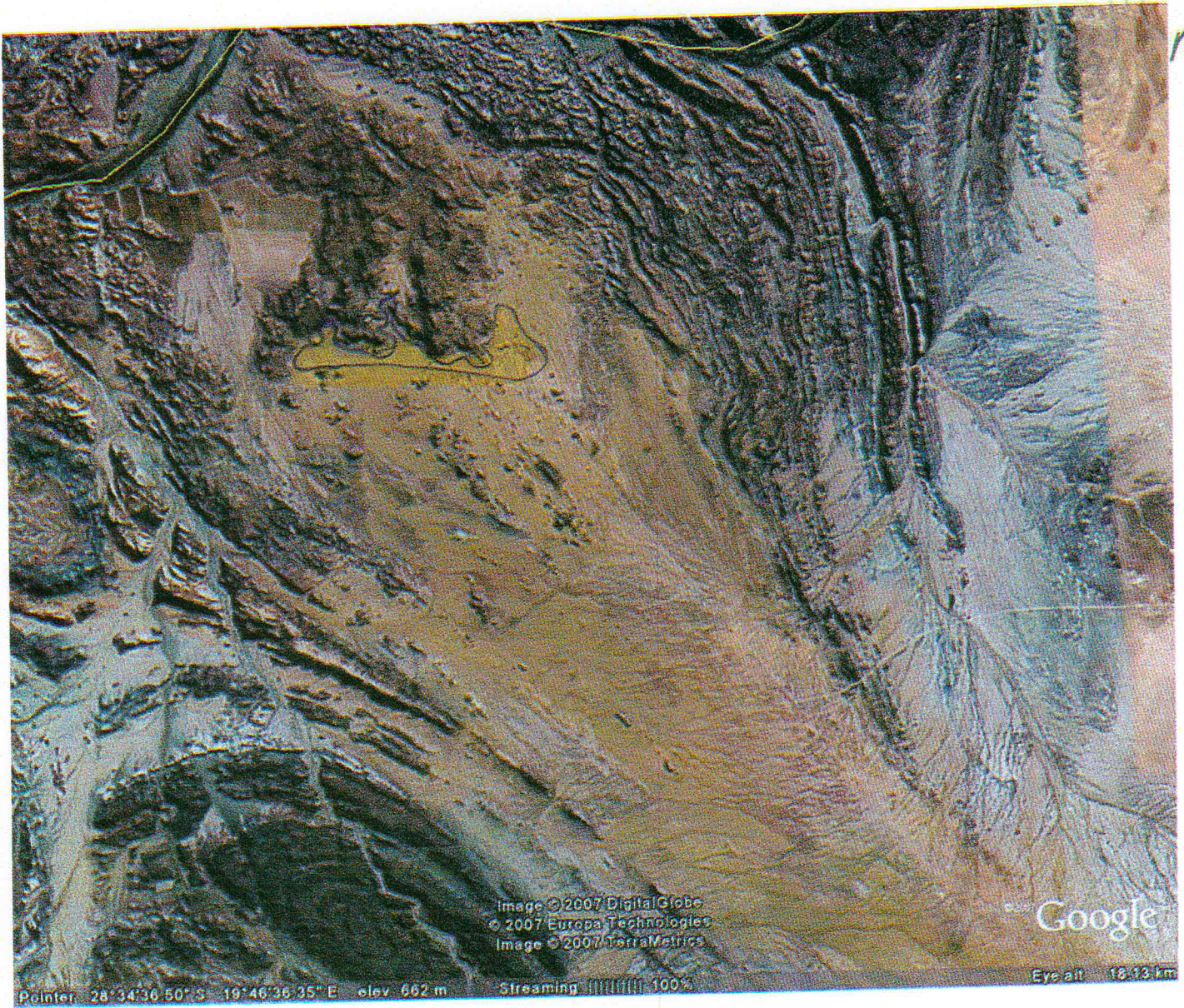


FIG 2.



FIG 3. QUARTZ OUTCROP



FIG 4. VIEW



FIG 5. VIEW.



FIG 6. VIEW TO W