

## A. INTRODUCTION

### Field Note A5. The Study Area – Archaeology

Archaeological sites and artefacts in the Study Area are mainly from three periods and groups of people: the prehistoric peoples of the Stone Age, the KhoiKhoi people and the colonising, European people.

Some archaeological sites are described in detail in several chapters of the website. The following is just a short introduction to the archaeology of the Study Area.

#### *The Stone Age people*

The southern Cape of South Africa hosts Stone Age archaeological record. Silcrete (Figures 1 and 2) (see Chapter C), which is abundant on the hills north of the Hard Dunes, was used by the Stone Age people, due to its knapping properties for tool production.



Figure 1. Silcrete at the top of a shale hill north of the Hard Dunes.



Figure 2. Blocks of silcrete pushed to the margin of a field for farming.

They Stone Age people used coastal caves as shelters and dwellings (Figure 3).



**Figure 3. Coastal caves used by the Stone Age people.**

*Source: CS Henshilwood et al, 2014. Klipdrift Shelter, Southern Cape, South Africa.*

**The KhoiKhoi**

The Khoekhoe are the traditionally nomadic, pastoralist indigenous population of south western Africa. They are grouped with the hunter-gatherer San (literally "foragers") peoples.

The Arrival of the Khoikhoi in South-western Africa, about 2,000 years ago (Figure 4), changed significantly the life in the area. These herders brought with them a different way of life. They were the first to domesticate animals (Figure 5).



**Figure 4. The migration routes of the KhoiKhoi.**



**Figure 5. A low stone wall which could be one side of a KhoiKhoi kraal (in Koleskloof).**

Small and large artificial stone heaps were noted in a valley in the area (Figures 6 and 7) . They are still to be investigated.



**Figure 6. Small stone heap.**



**Figure 7. Large stone heap.**

### ***The European colonisers***

The colonisation of South Africa started in the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The settlers brought a dramatic change to the life in the south-western Cape. They built houses, stone walls, roads and causeways, and later also used some of the hilltops north of the Hard Dunes (the Shale Hills) to mine clay (Figures 8 to 17).



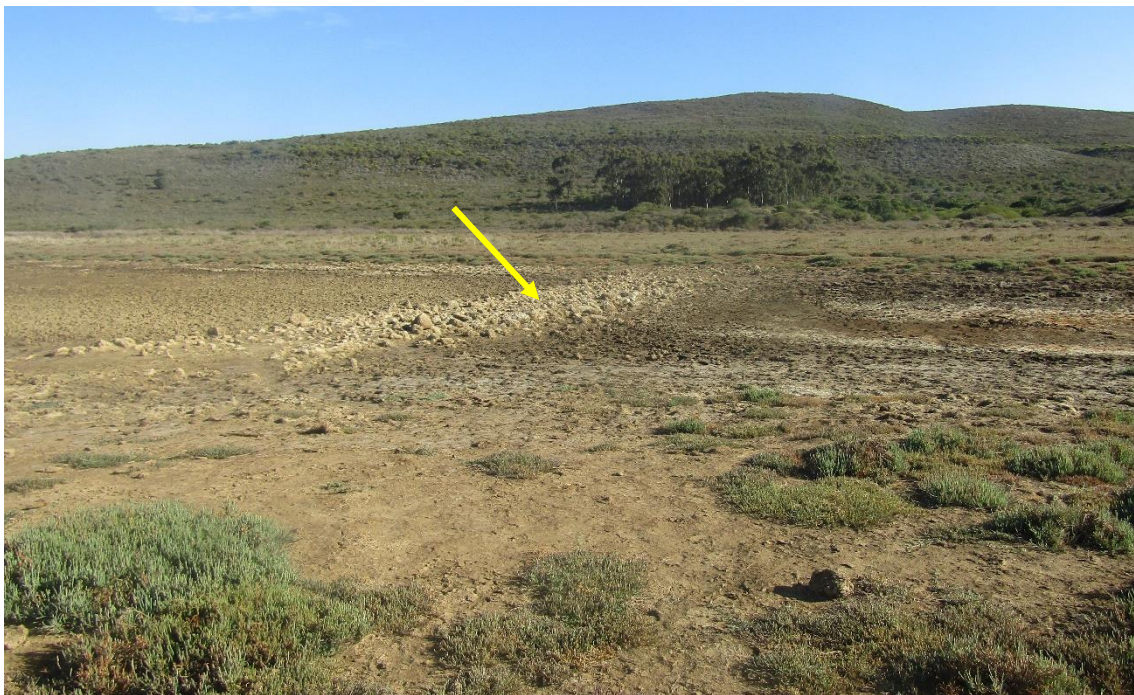
**Figure 8. Some of the ruins of the Ou Werf Farm, in the Ou Werf Valley.**



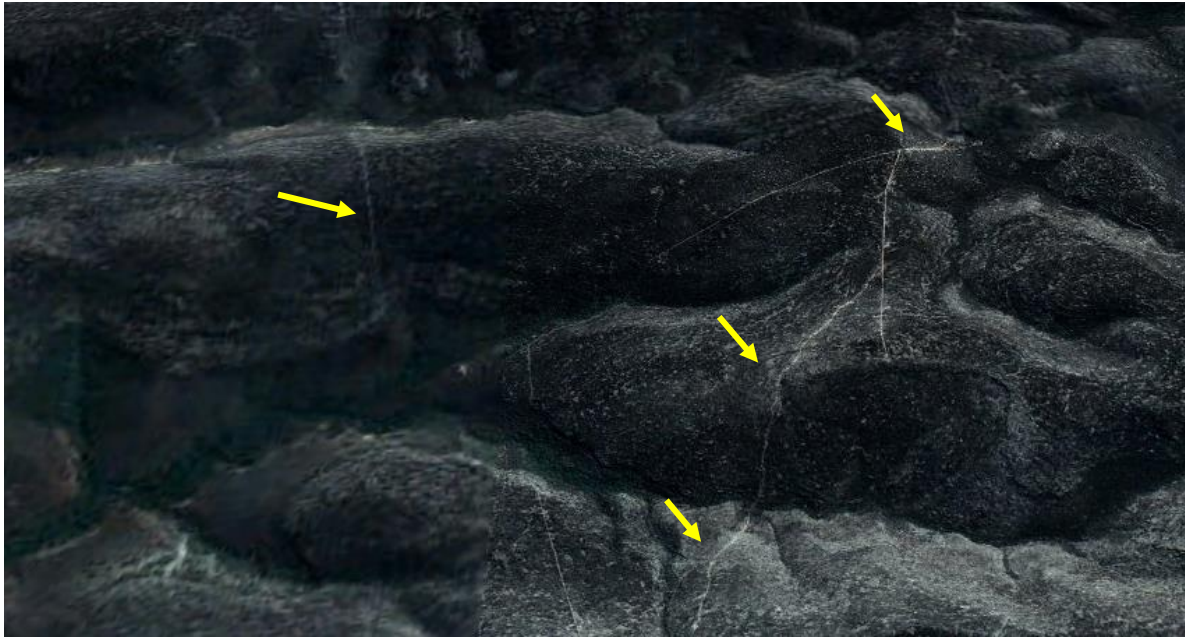
**Figure 9. The ruins of a cottage (arrow) on the Windhoek Farm, in the Salt River Gorge.**



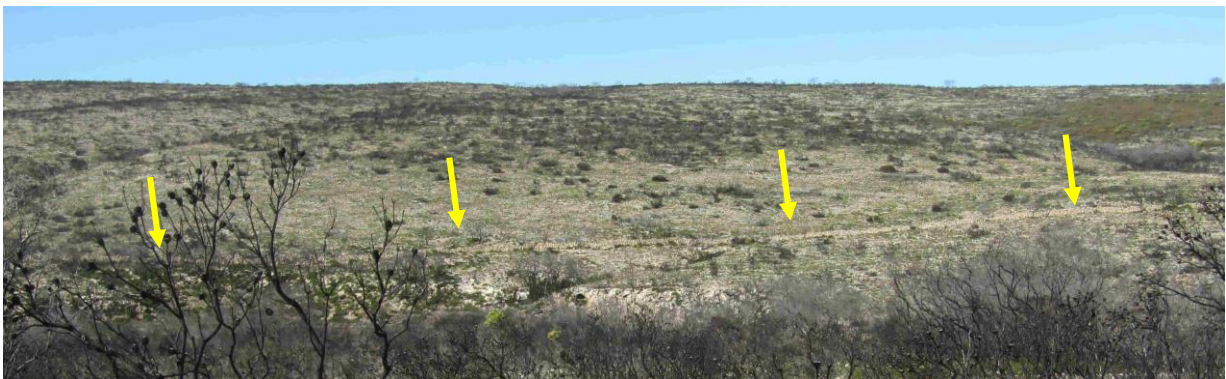
**Figure 10. The ruins of a road along the east bank the De Hoop Vlei Gorge.**



**Figure 11. Rock causeway (arrow) across the Salt River (dry at the time of photography).**



**Figure 12. Satellite image showing stone walls (arrows), demarcating farm boundaries, on the Hard Dunes.**



**Figure 13. Stone walls (arrows) are kilometres long in places.**



**Figure 14. Opening in a stone wall.**



**Figure 15. Open cast clay mine.**



**Figure 16. The entrance to a clay mine. Inside there is a central chamber, surrounded by several compartments.**



**Figure 17. Clay tailings from the mine shown above.**

The European settlers built stone-walled fish traps in the intertidal zone (Figures 18 and 19).



**Figure 18. Satellite image of intertidal stone-walled fish traps along the shore of the OTR. Archaeologists claim that these traps are not pre-colonial.**



**Figure 19. Intertidal stone-walled fish traps at low tide.**

Many wrecks of ships that sailed along the coast litter the seabed (and the rocks) off the Study Area (Figures 20 to 22).

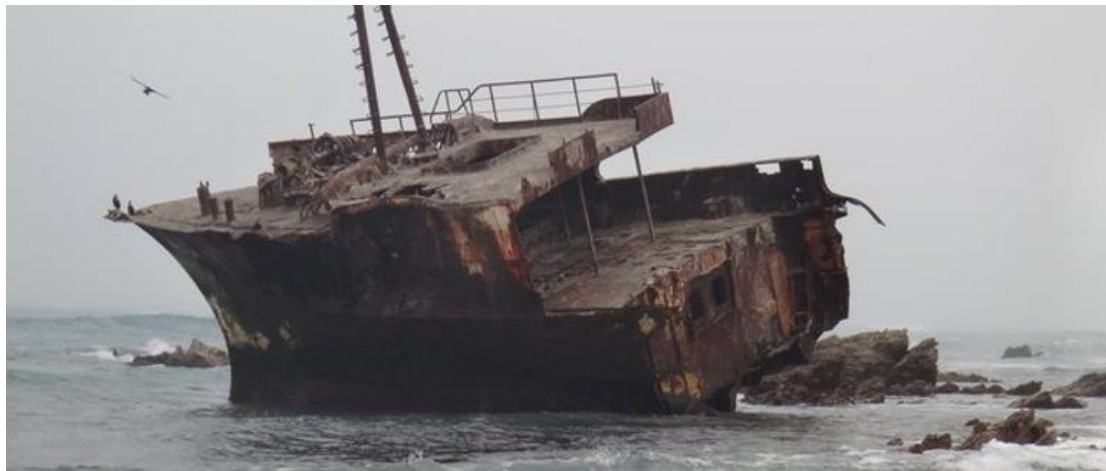


Figure 20. Shipwreck on the rocks.

① Zoetendal	1673	④② Osprey	1853	⑥④ River Plate	1878
② Joanna	1682	④③ Barbara Gordon	1853	⑥⑤ Racer	1879
③ Jupiter	1686	④④ Chancellor	1854	⑥⑥ Eagle Wind	1879
④ Nostra Signora de los Milagros	1696	④⑤ Equator	1856	⑥⑦ Clyde	1879
⑤ Schonenburg	1722	④⑥ Albert	1857	⑥⑧ Elise	1879
⑥ Saxenberg	1729	④⑦ Peacock	1857	⑥⑨ Contest	1879
⑦ Centaur	1750	④⑧ Onward	1858	⑦⑩ Bales Family	1880
⑧ Meermin	1766	④⑨ Atlas	1859	⑦⑪ Teuton	1881
		④⑩ Otto	1860	⑦⑫ Gloria Deo	1882
		④⑪ Scotland	1860		

Figure 21. Part of a shipwreck list.

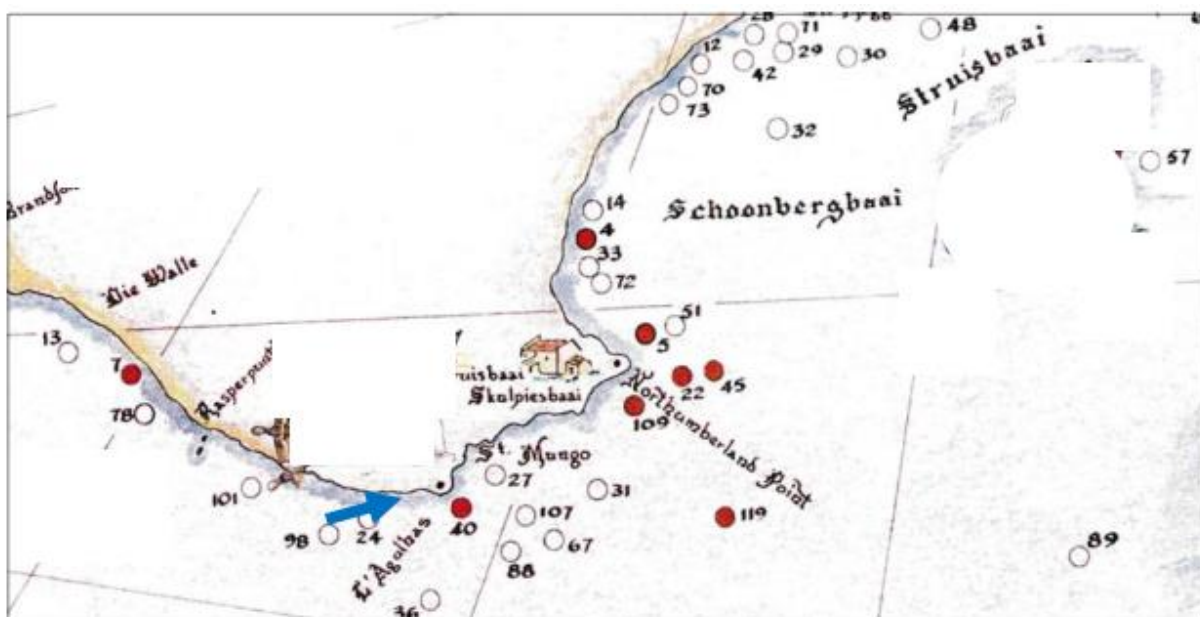


Figure 22. Shipwreck map of the Agulhas area. Arrow points to the wreck shown above.