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**FINAL REPORT ON THE RECORDING OF AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE
(KNP2017-1), KRUGER NATIONAL PARK 2331AD (DZOMBO)**

For:

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And

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Field Work conducted: *September 2017* Report: 2

by:

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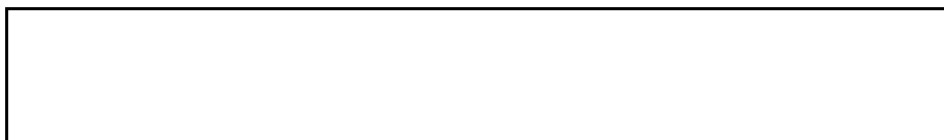
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SUMMARY

The African Conservation Trust (ACT) received funding from the National Heritage Council to digitally document three significant heritage sites within the Kruger National Park in August and September 2017. ACT used this opportunity to explore for previously undocumented sites. This area is in the northern part of the Park lies approximately 25km up stream of the Shingwedzi River (south-west) from the Shingwedzi Rest Camp. This survey project had the following aim:

- Identify all sites, occurrences and structures of an archaeological nature, based on GIS Modelling.

During this project it was also decided to revisit a known site situated approximately 8km from Mopani Rest Camp towards Shingwedzi Rest Camp, close to the tourist road.

This report is a discussion of the results of the investigations at this site and provides recommendations regarding the way forward.

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INTRODUCTION

In September 2017, the African Conservation Trust conducted archaeological (as defined by Section 2 of the National Heritage Resources Act, No 5 of 1999) reconnaissance in the broader Shingwedzi River Valley based on GIS modelling. This area is in the northern part of the Park lies approximately 25km up stream of the Shingwedzi River (south-west) from the Shingwedzi Rest Camp in the Kruger National Park. During this project it was also decided to revisit a known site situated approximately 8km from Mopani Rest Camp towards Shingwedzi Rest Camp, close to the tourist road.

The site's archaeological identity was evaluated and the site was found to carry a significant heritage significance.

AIMS

The aims of the visit to the site (designated the code KNP2017-1) were as follows:

- (a) To provide an identification of the archaeology within the site.
- (b) To provide coordinate information of the site and produce a map showing the location of the site.
- (c) To provide clear and detailed photographs of all features identified.
- (d) To provide a reference list of all research and publications related to the area and used for the site visit.
- (e) To provide a set of management recommendations related to the site.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology comprised the following:

Background Research – This included background research on the area where the survey was focused on.

Photographic - Photographs of the site and features identified and recorded on the site were taken, while individual objects were also photographed for recording purposes.

Mapping

GPS coordinates of the site and was taken in order to put it on a map, using a handheld Garmin GPS 60.

Site Visit

The site was surveyed on foot.

Legislation

The following legislation is applicable when conducting an archaeological fieldwork/survey in a protected area:

- National Environmental Management Act, Act No. 107 of 1998
- National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act, Act No. 57 of 2003
- National Heritage Resources Act, Act No.
- Regulations, Strategies, Norms and Standards

Although published after the survey (December 2017), the survey and this report adheres to the spirit of the Cultural Heritage Survey Guidelines and Assessment Tools for Protected Areas in South Africa.

BACKGROUND

The author first visited a petroglyph site (8km from Mopani Rest Camp towards Shingwedzi Rest Camp, close to the tourist road- Figure 1) in 2010 accompanied by Vanessa Strydom (SANParks) and subsequently again in 2011. In 2012 the African Conservation Trust obtained permission from SANParks to 3D scan these petroglyph (Figs 2, 3, 4 & 5). During this visit we investigated an Iron Age site that is in close proximity to the petroglyphs. (Fig 6)

The following link shows a video of the 3D scanning:

<https://sketchfab.com/models/33edc01357154d5baa297f9897a423b9>

Several Iron Age sites are located in the KNP, but not much research has been conducted at these sites, and as such it was decided to revisit this site to see if an assessment of its archaeological presence/identity.

RESULTS

The site visit was conducted during a day in September 2017.

Site KNP2017 – 1

Site Coordinates – S31.285121
E23.479426

The site is located 8km from Mopani Rest Camp towards Shingwedzi Rest Camp, close to the tourist road.

Immediately to the left of the site is a rocky area that contains petroglyphs and, according to the attending ranger, a hill towards the south east of the site is still visited by descendants of those who resided there in the past. The relationship and association between all these sites is still to be investigated and as such the possibility remains that this site might be part of a larger cultural landscape.

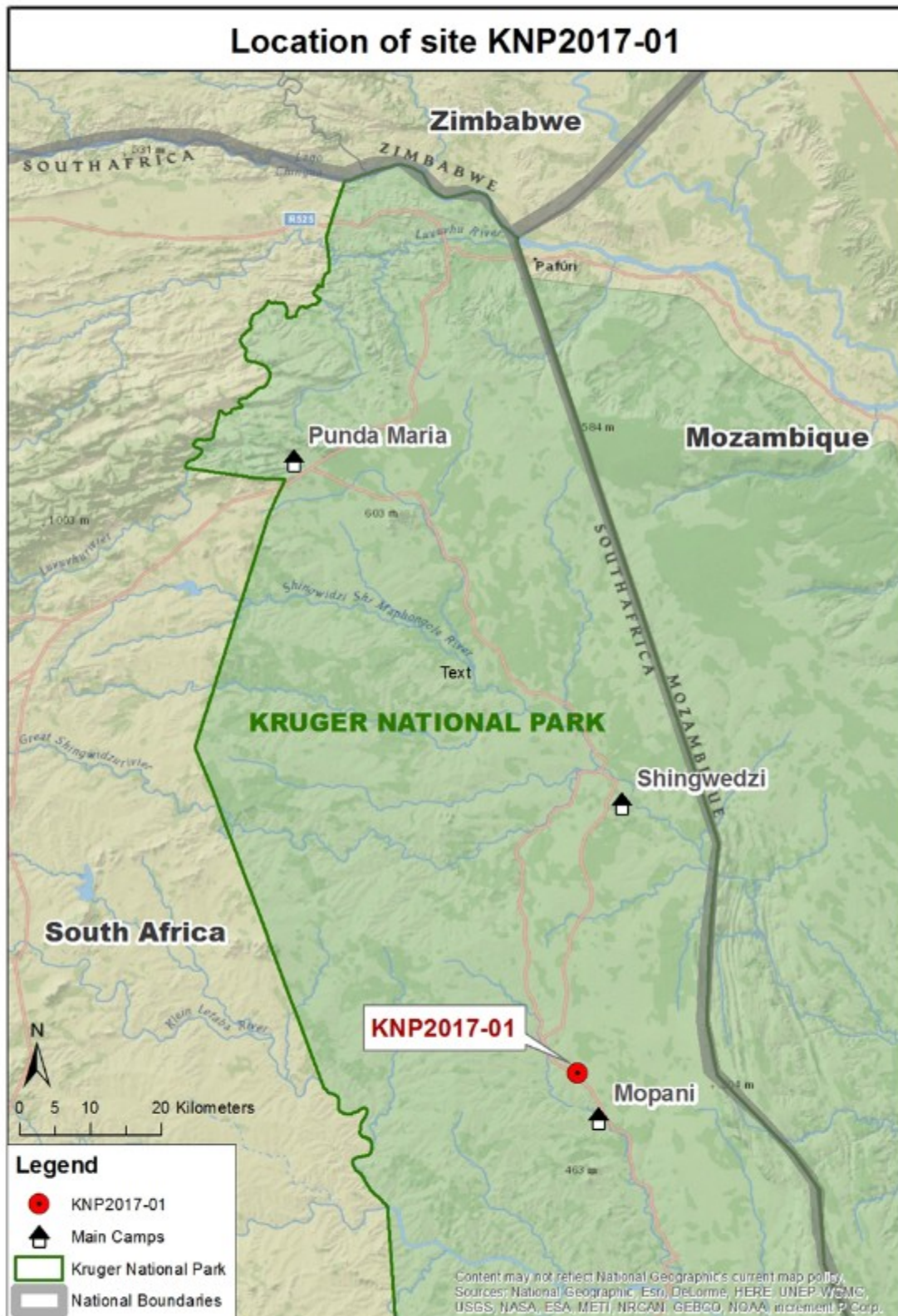


FIGURE 1 LOCATION OF THE SITE

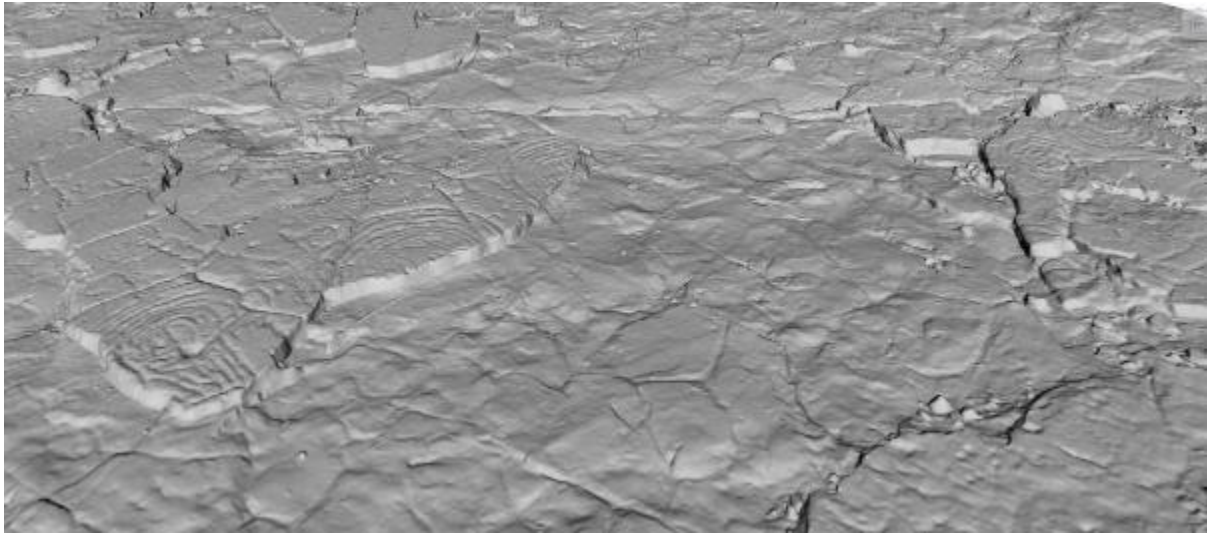


FIGURE 2 RESULT OF THE 3D SCANNING OF THE MOPANI PETROGLYTHS

The site is identified by the presence of stonewalling (Figs 7 & 8), at the top, on the west facing side of the hill, some occupation areas (distinct clearings) and surface finds of potsherds.

Prior to the field visit an animal (probably an aardvark) dug a hole (Fig 9) in the northern section of site, exposing several potsherds in the excavated soil. Among these one in particular proved to be of interest. Although not in situ its diagnostic patterns could prove valuable. The motives on the potsherd resembles that of Mapungubwe Type pottery and images of it have been sent to an Iron Age Specialist for confirmation.

Site Significance

The site would be of importance if confirmed to be of Mapungubwe Type, as this area does not currently fall within the distribution area of Mapungubwe type sites. Further indication of this site and the area's potential link with Mapungubwe is the presence of similar Mapungubwe Type pottery at Shilowas Poort (Verhoef, Pers Comm 2018). Verhoef found this pottery in lower layers when he did initial test pit sampling at the Baobab section of Shilowas Poort. Verhoef has also mentioned that he would support any future archaeological fieldwork at KNP2017-1 and Shilowas Poort as he, as myself, is of the strong opinion that there is much potential in these two sites in assisting in answering the following questions applicable to the broader region:

- Did Mapungubwe pottery arrive at these sites as trade objects? Both sites are on or near known prehistoric trade routes.
- Or were these sites associated and part of the Mapungubwe Culture/Kingdom?

The following can be stated regarding its significance:

Heritage Significance in terms of (a) Scientific value: Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of natural or cultural history or is important in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement of a period.



FIGURE 3 CLOSE-UP PHOTO OF A SECTION OF THE PETROGLYTHS



FIGURE 4 A WIDER-ANGLE PHOTO OF THE PETROGLYTHS



FIGURE 5 FIELD WORK IN PROGRESS

Finally, recommendations on the way forward in terms of the site's conservation, utilization and possible archaeological excavations are also made.

The following is recommended:

- that the site be mapped in detail, archaeologically and historically investigated and be preserved for future generations
- that a detailed Heritage Survey of the surrounding area be undertaken
- that a Cultural Heritage Management Plan for the site be drafted and implemented as a matter of urgency



FIGURE 6 THE LOCATION OF THE SITE IN RELATION TO THE PETROGLYPHS



FIGURE 7 STONEWALLING AT KNP 2017-1



FIGURE 8 CLOSE-UP OF A SECTION OF STONE WALLING



FIGURE 9 INVESTIGATING POTTERY FRAGMENTS EXPOSED BY ANIMAL ACTIVITY