

Case information

Case ID	300017307		
File Reference	AMJ/9317/1/1		
Name of Site	Broubster Village, prehistoric settlement 560m WSW of		
Local Authority	Highland Council		
National Grid Reference	ND 03200 59200		
Designation No. (if any)	SM13618		
Designation Type	Scheduled Monument	Current Category of Listing	N/A
Case Type	Designation		
Received/Start Date	26/04/2015		
Decision Date	12/05/2016		

1. Decision

The assessment against the scheduling criteria (Scottish Historic Environment Policy, Annex 1) demonstrates that the monument is of national importance. The decision is to add the monument to the schedule of nationally important monuments as **Broubster Village, prehistoric settlement 560m WSW of**.

2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

2.1 Designation Background

The monument is currently undesignated.

2.2 Development Proposals

There are no known development proposals.

3. Assessment

3.1 Assessment information

The site was considered for designation as part of 2015 Highland project and visited on 26/04/2015.

3.2 Assessment against designation criteria

An assessment of the cultural significance of the site has been carried out following the criteria set out in Scottish Historic Environment Policy (Annex 1 paras 3-6). Having assessed cultural significance, the site was found to meet (or continues to meet) the criteria for national importance as set out in Scottish Historic Environment Policy (Annex 1 para 10). Having considered the purpose and implications of designating, it has been concluded that scheduling is the most appropriate mechanism to protect the site. Please see Annex A of this document for further information of this assessment.

3.3 Other considerations

N/A

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ANNEX A – Assessment Against the Scheduling Criteria*

Broubster Village, prehistoric settlement 560m WSW of

1 Description

The monument is a prehistoric settlement, comprising the remains of roundhouses, clearance cairns and burial cairns, probably dating to the Bronze Age (between 2500 BC and 800 BC). The settlement is visible as the turf-covered upstanding remains of four roundhouses, at least six burial cairns and a number of smaller clearance cairns. The monument lies at 90m above sea level, on the west bank of the Forss Water.

The roundhouses measure between 4.5m and 7.4m in diameter within turf-covered banks up to 4.5m in width and 1m in height. Entrance gaps are visible on the southeast or south-southeast. There are at least six burial cairns visible as grass-covered mounds with the remains of kerbs and / or cists. Five are on average 7m in diameter and 0.6m in height, the sixth is much larger at 16m in diameter and 2m in height. A number of smaller turf covered mounds are likely to be field clearance cairns, though it is possible that some are additional burial cairns.

The scheduled area is irregular on plan, to include the remains described above and an area around them within which evidence relating to the monument's construction, use and abandonment is expected to survive as shown in red on the accompanying map. The scheduled area extends up to, but excludes, the post-and-wire fence to the south.

2 Assessment Against the Scheduling Criteria (Scottish Historic Environment Policy, 2011 pp71-73)

2.1 Intrinsic Characteristics

The monument consists of a group of well-preserved roundhouses, burial cairns and clearance cairns. Given the relatively undisturbed nature of the monument, there is good potential for the survival of archaeological deposits, including occupation and abandonment debris, artefacts and environmental remains such as charcoal and pollen within, beneath and around the roundhouses and cairns and burial remains within the burial mounds. The roundhouses and clearance cairns have the potential to add to our understanding of settlement, land-use and environment during later prehistory and provide information about the structure of contemporary society and economy, while the burial cairns can add to our understanding of ritual and funerary practice.

The roundhouses and clearance cairns are likely Bronze Age in date, representing settlement and associated agriculture. The burial cairns may also be broadly contemporary. While there is no clear indication whether the remains derive from an extended development sequence, the extensive nature of the remains and range of

features visible suggests an extended period of occupation and use. The likely Bronze Age date of this settlement places it comparatively early in the sequence of roundhouse settlement in northern Scotland. Scientific study of the roundhouses' form and construction would enhance our understanding of the development sequence of this site and of Bronze Age settlements and agriculture in general, while comparative study of the form and structure of the hut circles has the potential to provide information about the design, construction and development of later prehistoric settlement. Comparative study of the form and construction techniques of the burial cairns would enhance our understanding of their development sequence and of later prehistoric burial cairns in general.

2.2 Contextual Characteristics

Roundhouses, burial cairns and clearance cairns are found throughout Scotland, but these examples are of particular significance because of their good condition, likely early date, association and extent. They represent a rare group of differing prehistoric monuments in close spatial association and form one part of a larger cluster of later prehistoric sites in this area, including roundhouses and clearance cairns around 400m to the south (Canmore ID 7699), burnt mounds around 580m south (Canmore ID 7710) and 770m north-northwest (Canmore ID 7958), and a stone circle (Canmore ID 7705) and standing stones (Canmore ID 7947) about 1.4km and 1.7km east-northeast respectively. The proximity of these remains has the potential to enhance and broaden our understanding of prehistoric society and community and the development of later prehistoric settlement and economy. There is potential to study these sites together to understand their functions within the local communities, social status and settlement hierarchy in the area, the relationship of domestic settlement with burial practices and belief systems, and chronological development in the area.

2.3 Associative Characteristics

N/A

3 Purpose and implications of scheduling

The monument is in a stable condition and has few management issues apart from self-seeding conifer growth. Designation as a scheduled monument is the most appropriate mechanism to secure the preservation of the monument, and ensure the recognition of its national importance.

4 Assessment of national importance

The monument is of national importance because it can make a significant addition to our understanding of the past, in particular of Bronze Age society and agriculture in north Scotland. It is a good example of a later prehistoric settlement, with burial and clearance cairns, that retains its field characteristics. As a well preserved

example it can significantly expand our understanding of domestic buildings, agriculture and economy, burial practices and belief systems during the Bronze Age. The monument's importance is enhanced by its association with a wider cluster of later prehistoric remains. The loss or damage of the monument would diminish our ability to appreciate and understand the character of Bronze Age settlements, society and economy, as well as the meaning and importance of death and burial during the Bronze Age.

References

Historic Environment Scotland <http://www.canmore.org.uk> reference number CANMORE ID 7699 (accessed on 04/04/2016).

The Highland Council HER reference is MHG1547.

Mercer, R J 1985 *Archaeological field survey in Northern Scotland. Volume III. 1982-1983*. Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh, Department of Archaeology.

Pope, R E 2014 Bronze Age architectural traditions: dates and landscapes in Hunter, F and Ralston, I B M (eds) *The Later Bronze Age and Iron Age of Scotland from a European Perspective*. Oxbow: Oxford.

ScARF 2012 Downes, J (ed) *Bronze Age panel report*, Scottish Archaeological Research Framework: Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. Available at <http://www.scottishheritagehub.com/sites/default/files/u12/ScARF%20Bronze%20Age%20210612.pdf>.
