Designations
Report of Handling

Case information

Case ID	300066077
Name of Site	Hermitage, Twae Rings Settlement

Local Authority	Scottish Borders
National Grid Reference	NY 51511 96549
Designation Type	Scheduled monument
Designation No.	SM13775
Case Type	Designation
Received/Start Date	25/05/2023
Decision Date	22/11/2023

1. Decision

Scheduled monument name (including designation number)	**Action**
Scooped settlement, 1025m NW of Roughley (SM13775)	Add to the schedule of monuments (designate)

Our assessment using the selection guidance shows that the monument meets the criterion of national importance. The decision is to add the monument to the schedule of nationally important monuments as **Scooped settlement, 1025m NW of Roughley (SM13775)**.

2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

2.1 Designation Background

This site has not been designated previously.

2.2 Development Proposals

We are unaware of any development proposals affecting this site.

3. Assessment

3.1 Assessment information

We received a proposal to designate this site on 25/05/2023. We visited the site on 12/07/2023.

3.2 Assessment of national importance

We carried out an assessment using the selection guidance to decide whether a site or place is of national importance (see Annex A). We found that the site meets the criterion of national importance.

The designation selection guidance for scheduling is published in the Historic Environment Scotland Designations Policy and Selection Guidance 2019, Annex 1, pp 9-10, https://www.historicenvironment.scot/designation-policy.

3.3 Policy considerations

Designation as a scheduled monument is the most appropriate mechanism to secure the preservation of the monument. This designation ensures the recognition of the monument's national importance.

Scheduled monuments are subject to a control of works through a consent process called scheduled monument consent (https://www.historicenvironment.scot/advice-and-support/applying-forconsents/scheduled-monument-consent/).

Certain agricultural activities such as ploughing where already established are deemed to have consent https://www.historicenvironment.scot/advice-and-support/applying-forconsents/scheduled-monument-consent/class-consent/

4. Consultation

4.1 Consultation information

Consultation period: 30/10/2023 to 20/11/2023.

The consultation report of handling is published on our portal for comment. We specifically consult with the owner, occupier and/or tenant and the planning authority.

4.2 Consultation summary

No comments were received during the consultation period.

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ANNEX A – Assessment of national importance
Scooped settlement, 1025m NW of Roughley

1) Description

The monument comprises the remains of a scooped settlement, likely to date to the Iron Age period (around 800BC to 400AD). It survives as a pair of conjoined oval enclosures with upstanding turf covered stone walls. The northern enclosure has entrances on the east and west sides, while the southern enclosure has entrances on the east and north-northwest sides. The settlement in located in rough pasture on the southern flank of Ninestone Rig at around 235m above sea level.

The scooped settlement comprises two contiguous oval enclosures lying on a north-south axis. The walls of both are of boulder-faced rubble but are reduced to mounds no more than 0.6m high and spread to an average thickness of 2.4m. The north enclosure, measures 44m north to south by 36m east to west, has two entrances roughly in the centres of its eastern and western sides. The southern enclosure, which lies at a slightly lower elevation, measures 35m north to south by 31m east to west and has one entrance in the centre of its eastern side and another at the point of a junction with the north enclosure on the north north-western side. Neither enclosure contains any visible evidence of structures, although the interior of the south enclosure has been slightly hollowed out below the natural surface-level.

The scheduled area is circular, measuring 115m in diameter. It includes the remains described above and an area around within which evidence relating to the monument's construction, use and abandonment is expected to survive, as shown in red on the accompanying map.

2) Statement of National Importance

The national importance of the monument is demonstrated in the following way(s) (see Designations Policy and Selection Guidance, Annex 1, para 17):

a. The monument is of national importance because it makes a significant contribution to our understanding of the past as a scooped settlement dating to the Iron Age. In particular, it adds to our understanding of Iron Age society in southern Scotland and the construction, use and development of later prehistoric settlements.

b. The monument retains structural and other physical attributes which make a significant contribution to our understanding of the past. The monument survives as upstanding turf covered stone walls. There is also a significant likelihood for the survival of buried archaeological deposits within and around the settlement.

d. The monument is a particularly good example of a scooped settlement. It has an external wall, clear entrances and some internal features. It is therefore an important representative of this monument type.

e. The monument has research potential which could significantly contribute to our understanding of the past. In particular it can tell us about the character and development of Iron Age settlement in southern Scotland as well as society and economy.

f. The monument makes a significant contribution to our understanding of the historic landscape by its association with a wider cluster of later prehistoric remains.

3) Assessment of Cultural Significance

This statement of national importance has been informed by the following assessment of cultural significance:

- **Intrinsic characteristics** (how the remains of a site or place contribute to our knowledge of the past)

The monument is a scooped settlement with a hut platform, a small courtyard and a larger yard. It survives as upstanding turf covered stone walls and buried deposits. Scooped settlements were most likely farmsteads wholly or partly scooped into a slope, often with hut platforms providing foundations for roundhouses. This settlement may have accommodated an extended family and at certain times, their livestock. Scooped settlements date to the Iron Age (c.800BC - AD400).

Excavations of similar monuments elsewhere for example Boonies (Canmore ID 67818), Long Knowe (scheduled monument SM3819; Canmore ID 67287), Fourmerklandhill (Canmore ID 66774) and Hetha Burn I (Northumberland) demonstrate that such settlements were built and used between around 800 BC and 400 AD. They represent enclosed farmsteads that could have accommodated an extended family.

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 remains of the settlement. For example, a large stone located on the west side of the enclosure bank with an oval hollow within it may be a knocking stone used to process grains. Such remains and deposits can help us understand more about prehistoric domestic and agricultural practice, and the significance of materials, technology and craft in a domestic-agricultural context. This monument has the potential to add to our understanding of settlement, land-use and environment during later prehistory. It can provide information about the economy, diet and social status of the occupants and the structure of contemporary society.

- **Contextual characteristics** (how a site or place relates to its surroundings and/or to our existing knowledge of the past)

Scooped settlements are primarily found in the uplands of eastern Dumfriesshire and the Scottish Borders, as well as the north of England. They comprise settlements that are wholly or partly scooped into the slope. Around 300 such monuments have been recorded in Scotland. This example is of particular significance because of its good preservation and large size.

It forms part of wider cluster of scooped settlements in the area, including Ewelees (scheduled monument SM4506), Blackhall (Canmore ID 67749), Unthank (Canmore ID 67759), Lady's Knowe (Canmore ID 161972) and Garage Cottage (SM12738;

Canmore ID 92446). There is potential to study these sites together to better understand their functions within the local communities, settlement hierarchy and possible chronological development in the area. The monument has the potential to enhance and broaden our understanding of prehistoric society and community as well as social organisation, land division and land use.

- **Associative characteristics** (how a site or place relates to people, events, and/or historic and social movements)

There are no known associative characteristics that contribute to this monument's national importance.

4) References

Historic Environment Scotland http://www.canmore.org.uk reference number CANMORE ID 67990 (accessed on 04/09/2023).

Burgess, C. B. (1970) Excavations at the scooped settlement Hetha Burn 1, Hethpool, Northumberland. Transactions of the Architectural and Archaeological Society of Durham and Northumberland, 2. Pp. 1-23.

Jobey, G. (1975) Excavations at Boonies, Westerkirk, and the nature of Romano-British settlement in eastern Dumfriesshire. Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland 105 (1972-4). Pp. 119-140.

Mercer, R. (1981) The excavation of an earthwork enclosure at Long Knowe, Eskdale, Dumfriesshire, 1976. Transactions of the Dumfriesshire and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society, 56. Pp. 38-72.

RCAHMS (1920) The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments and Constructions of Scotland. Seventh report with inventory of monuments and constructions in the county of Dumfries. Edinburgh. Pp. 81-2.

RCAHMS (1997) Eastern Dumfriesshire: an archaeological landscape. Edinburgh.

Terry, J. (1993) Excavation of a farmstead enclosure, Uppercleuch, in Annandale, Dumfries and Galloway. Transactions of the Dumfriesshire and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society, 68. Pp 53-86.