

HIGHLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL



FIELD MONUMENTS

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORD

1 SITE CODE		NG 53 SW 010	
2 NGR	3 QUAL	NG 53 53070	
6 SITE NAME			
* TORRAMHICHAIG			
10 GENERIC TYPE			
ENCLOSURE + SHIELDING			
14 PERIOD/DATE		15 DATING METHOD	
18 SHAPE			
19 THREAT AND DATE			

4 DISTRICT		5 PARISH	
7 AREA STATUS	8 SITE STATUS	9 REGIONAL STATUS	
11 CONCORDANCE	12 FORM	13 DIMENSIONS	
OS			
NMR			
16 RELATIONSHIP OF ELEMENTS		17 CONDITION	

20 LAND USE	21 GEOLOGY
22 SOILS	23 VEGETATION
24 HYDROLOGY/DRAINAGE	25 RELIEF
26 ASPECT	27 ALTITUDE

28 EXCAVATION (EXCAVATOR: DATE: EXTENT: QUALITY)	
29 BIBLIOGRAPHY (AUTHOR: DATE: TITLE: JOURNAL OR PUBLISHER: VOLUME: DETAIL)	
30 GROUND PLAN NO.	31 GROUND PHOTO NO.
32 SLIDES NO.	33 HR. AP. NO.
34 NMR. AP. NO.	35 OTHER AP. NO.: SOURCE
36 ARCHIVE AND LOCATION	
37 GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY	38 SAMPLES
39 PALYNOLOGY	40 NUMERICAL DATES: RANGE: LAB NO.
41 SMALL FINDS	42 MUSEUM/LOCATION
43 OTHER	ASS DOCS

44 NAME & ADDRESS OF OWNER		45 ATTITUDE OF OWNER
46 NAME & ADDRESS OF TENANT		47 ATTITUDE OF TENANT
48 ACCESS & RESTRICTIONS		

49 NAME & ADDRESS OF FINDER/RECORDER: DATE	50 RECORDER: DATE	51 CHECK: DATE
--	-------------------	----------------

52 TEXT

Gleann-Torra-mhichaig, Sconser, Isle of Skye.

December 1989.

An archaeological survey of an area of proposed afforestation carried out after initial ploughing.

The new plantation at Sconser slipped through the consultation net, the result being that an archaeological survey of the area was not carried out prior to the commencement of ploughing.

It was therefore a good opportunity to observe the effect of ploughing on the archaeological sites lying within the proposed area of planting.

Prior to ploughing no archaeological sites were recorded for the area, the plough-man therefore was not forewarned of any areas of archaeological potential, a perfect test of driver awareness and site vulnerability.

During the survey, carried out over two days in November, 13 sites were located, these are listed below and their locations recorded on the enclosed map.

Site No.	Grid ref.	Comments.
53SW		
6.	NG5445 3521	No action needed

To the north side of the burn which runs down the west flank of Mealle Buidhe is a continuous revetment wall 1m. high. This wall runs from the 50m. contour to the 120m. contour where it leaves the burn in a NE direction, being clearly marked on the 1:25000 O.S. maps from this point.

7.	NG5445 3503	Spot site
----	-------------	-----------

On the west facing slope of Mealle Buidhe, on the east side of the corrie between Mealle Buidhe and Meallan a Bhealaich Bhric, at a height of 120m. O.D. is an oval structure. Built of surface stone the structure measures 4m. EW by 3.25m. NS over walls 1m. thick. A small burn lies close by to the north.

8.	NG5410 3505	Spot site
----	-------------	-----------

On a natural platform at the foot of the north flank of Meallan a Bhealaich Bhric, at a height of 90m. O.D. is a ruined shieling. It is of the twin cell type reduced to an earth mound with central depressions faced with stone-work now much fallen. This shieling partially overlies a ruinous circular structure with an internal diameter of 4m., the wall being too disturbed to measure.

9.	NG5403 3503	Area site
----	-------------	-----------

On the NW flank of Meallan a Bhealaich Bhric, overlooking the A850, at a height of 80m. O.D. is a group of 5/6 small platforms. All the platforms are scooped out of the hillside and measure between 2 and 2.5m in diameter. A number have the remains of circular structures upon them, perhaps taining pens.

10.	NG5395 3470	Spot site
-----	-------------	-----------

On top of a natural hillock which lies on the east side of the A 850, at a height of 80m. O.D. is a circular enclosure 8m. in diameter. To the rear or east side of the enclosure is a ruinous shieling of the twin cell or figure '8' type, now reduced to twin mounds with circular depressions in the top.

3. ff.	NG5405 3425	Area site
--------	-------------	-----------

On a natural platform which lies on the hillside to the east of the A850, but not visible from the road, at a height of 90m. O.D. is a ruined shieling. It is of the triple cell type, consisting of an earth mound with well preserved internal chambers. Small creeps 30cm. square are visible between the chambers.

A second very ruinous shieling lies 15m. to the west, and a taining pen lies 30m. down the slope to the west.

CONCLUSIONS DRAWN FROM THE SURVEY.

Of the 13 sites found during the survey 4 lay outside the area affected by ploughing, (5,6,7,12).

Of the 9 sites which fell within the area affected by ploughing 2 lay in positions which prevented the plough from passing over them, site 9 was on a steep, rocky, slope, site 16 was on a rocky knoll close to a burn.

The remaining 7 sites lay in positions with easy access, on level or sloping terrain.

At site 4 the plough passed between the two main features without damaging them. It did however turn up buried midden material.

Site 8 was ploughed right up to, but not over, the driver probably seeing it at the last moment.

Sites 10 and 11 are well preserved very obvious sites and the plough-man has lifted out and travelled around them before setting in again.

At site 13 the earth bank was not easily seen amongst the heather, the plough has destroyed much of this feature.

Sites 14 and 15 lie within an area left unploughed.

It can therefore be seen that archaeological sites in positions where the terrain makes access difficult are unlikely to be damaged.

However, sites which lie on level or easily accessible terrain, rely on the plough-man having a broad knowledge of the types of archaeological remains he is likely to be confronted with. He must also have the time to look for these sites, and the inclination to travel around them.

Of the two sites damaged at Sconser one (13) was not easily seen, and the other (4) suffered damage to archaeological levels hidden by the turf. Both these examples highlight the need for professional site identification, and protective zoning around sites.

Of the remaining 5 sites which the plough could have destroyed 3 appear to have been saved by pure chance alone, (8,14,15). This leaves 2 sites which were seen in time and purposely ploughed around.

Although at the Sconser plantation only 2 out of a possible 7 sites were damaged it could so easily have been 5 out of 7, leaving little doubt as to the value of survey before ploughing.

M. Wildgoose. December 1989.