

*Site J: NM39NW9, Harris, deserted settlement (NM334959)*

Visited 9/5/1995 by SB, SD and RH. This site is as described by the NMRS. There would appear to be at least 9 buildings of various sorts. The largest is 15m by 4m and has 3 compartments. Its walls are preserved to around 1.5m in height. The smallest building that is easily identifiable is about 7.2m by 4.5m. There would appear to be around 2 to 3 relatively long buildings (?houses) and 6 smaller structures. 2 of the buildings are too badly damaged to classify. There is also one small circular building which is around 3m diameter. The rigging is lazy bed cultivation. It has been dug straight through the remains of one building and over and around others.

This site is probably worthy of scheduling. It is unusual to find rigging crossing earlier buildings and this site may be comparatively early. Although the rigging will have caused some damage to archaeological deposits, this is an unusual and important site.

*Site K: NM39NW44, Harris, Gualann na Pairce 4 shielings (NM33289655)*

Visited 9/5/1995 by SB, SD and RH. A series of 6 corbeled stone shielings, entirely built with stone from a stone outcrop to the E. The E example has 2 chambers joined by a passageway and is a total of 7m long. The chamber to the E is 2.5m long by 2.4m, that to the W is 2.6m long by 2.2m. The walls survive to 0.8m in elevation. The next 2 shielings are small oval structures one of which survives to 1.1m in elevation. Shieling 4 retains its corbeled roof. It is 2.2m E-W by 2.2m N-S and the door with a lintel is 0.8m tall. The roof height is around 1m. There is an outer enclosure which is 3.8m E-W by 3.3m N-S. Shieling 5 is 5.2m E-W by 3.5m N-S and survives to 1m in elevation. It probably had a corbeled cell at its E end but this has collapsed. Shieling 6 at the W end of the row is oval; 3.1m E-W by 2.7m N-S with a W or SE entrance.

It is rare in Scotland for shielings to preserve their roofs and although only one of six in this group has a roof, the whole complex is very well preserved. JA Love (1982 'Shielings on the Isle of Rum', *Scottish Studies* 25 (1982), 39-63) records two shielings with roofs surviving on Rum and, although we did not have time to visit the second site, both complexes should be scheduled.

*Site L: NM39NW6, Sgorr Reidh, ?deer trap (NM312983)*

Visited 9/5/1995 by SB, SD and RH. As described by RCAHMS. The largest cell noted during our visit had much of its upper corbeled roof in place. It was 3.7m E-W by 3m N-S and the wall survives to 1.7m in elevation. The structure is partly subterranean, as are most of the chambers in these features.

JA Love (1980 'Deer traps on the Isle of Rhum' *Deer* 5 (1980), 131-2) refers to Hugh Miller, who visited Rum in 1847. Miller recorded 'along a distant hillside there ran what seemed the ruins of a grey stone fence erected, says tradition, in a remote age, to facilitate the hunting of deer'. However, Love feels that this structure does not make sense as a deer trap.

These so-called deer traps are of uncertain purpose but form a group. They are well preserved and certainly of national importance.

## RUM

### NOTES FROM SITE VISITS BY R HINGLEY, S BARDWELL AND S DICKINSON, 8th to 13th MAY 1995

This is a record of sites visited on Rum during an expedition which was intended to examine a number of sites on the island for scheduling under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. A number of factors should be borne in mind:

1. There was only enough time to visit around 20-30 sites and some site of possible national importance (as defined from a reading of the National Monuments Record) could not be visited.
2. Other monuments of national importance will not have been recognised during survey work on the island.
3. The archaeology of Rum is remarkable for the following reasons:
  - a) the possibility of a settlement system of Mesolithic sites, including the partly excavated site at Kinloch, the source of bloodstone on the beach close to Bloodstone Hill, the cave site at Bagh na-Uamha and other sites where bloodstone flakes have been discovered.
  - b) the so-called deer traps are, from my experience, unparalleled and are very well preserved.
  - c) on the whole the pre-Clearance archaeological evidence is brilliantly preserved as the populations who would have disturbed this information were removed from the island in the early 1800s.
  - d) the shieling system on Skye is very extensive and several sites are exceptionally well preserved. The conditions of preservation and nature of the island environment probably mean that Rum would be an excellent place for a detailed study of the working of the shieling system.
  - e) the remains of the post-Clearance management of the island are also excellently preserved. Sheep pens survive in several locations without a single stone having been dislodged.
  - f) the sites listed as of possible national importance (below) will be recommended for scheduling under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. They are listed as Sites A to R.