

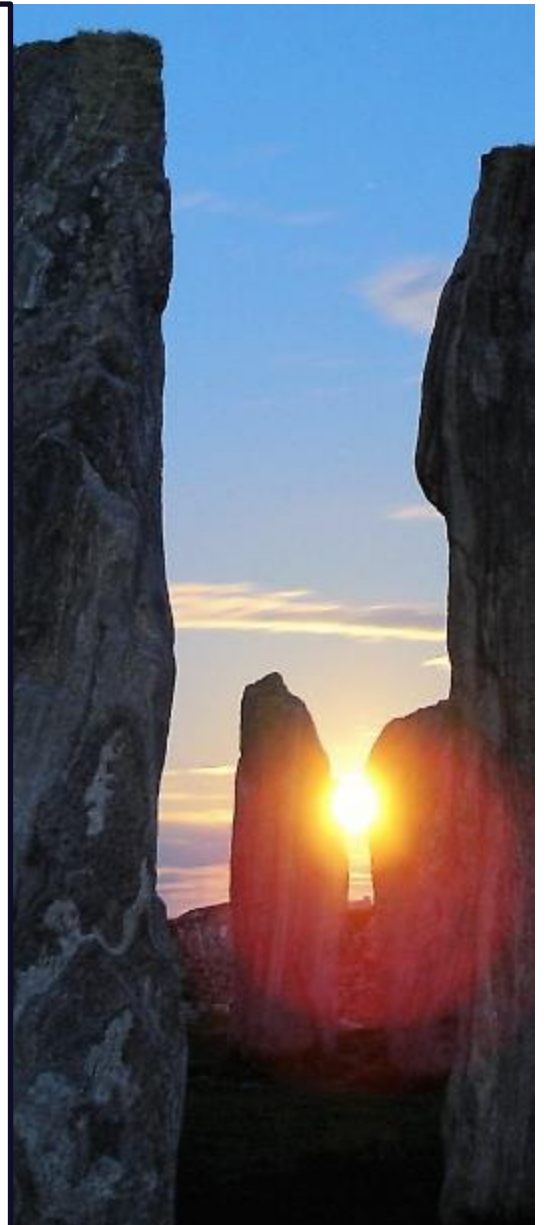
# **A Desk Based Assessment and Walkover Survey of Gallan Head, Uig, Isle of Lewis.**

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**JUNE 2019**

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**Authored by  
Ian Mchardy BSc (Hons), AIFA.**



# Contents

1.0 Non- Technical Summary .....	1
2.0 Site Location and Description.....	1
3.0 Context of Study.....	5
4.0 Geology and Soils .....	7
5.0 Archaeological and Historical Context .....	8
5.1 Map Regression.....	8
5.2 Historic Environment Records .....	11
5.2.1 Sites within MOD land – North area .....	12
5.2.2 Sites within MOD land – Middle area .....	16
5.2.3 Sites within MOD land – South area .....	17
5.2.4 Important sites nearby .....	20
5.3 Historic Land Use Assessment .....	22
5.4 Other Sources.....	23
6.0 Walkover Methodology .....	23
7.0 Results – Gazzatteer of sites from Walkover .....	24
6.1 Pre-historic sites.....	25
6.2 Historic era sites.....	46
5.2 Middle Sites .....	60
5.3 South Sites .....	61
5.0 Discussion .....	64
- Recommendations to inform planning and advice for future Interpretation.....	64
- Future work.....	69
12.0 Appendix 1: Drawing of Site 2.....	71
13.0 Appendix 2: Quartz Catalogue.....	71
14.0 Contacts details.....	75

## List of Figures

Figure 1; Location of Gallanhead.....	2
Figure 2; The three areas or 'sites' of MOD land to be surveyed.....	3
Figure 3; Plan of main Northern MOD area- within red line.....	4
Figure 4; 1 <sup>st</sup> edition OS map of area.....	9
Figure 5; 2 <sup>nd</sup> edition OS map of area.....	10
Figure 6; Map image from Canmore showing known sites in the area.....	11
Figure 7; Location of southern sites S1 –S5.....	17
Figure 8; Location of sites 6-10.....	25
Figure 9; Quartz vein # 1.....	26
Figure 10; Circular impact scars on Quartz vein # 1.....	27
Figure 11; Quartz vein # 2.....	28
Figure 12; Quartz flakes and possible scraper from Vein # 2.....	29
Figure 13; Location of sites 11-15.....	29
Figure 14; Quartz vein # 3 .....	31
Figure 15; Quartz vein # 4.....	32
Figure 16; Quartz vein # 5.....	33
Figure 17; Quartz vein # 6.....	34
Figure 18; Quartz vein # 7.....	35
Figure 19; Location of sites 2,4, 16-18.....	36
Figure 20; Site 16, eastern small cairn.....	37
Figure 21; Site 17, western small cairn.....	38
Figure 22; Site 24, Well.....	40
Figure 23; Site 24, Well.....	41
Figure 24; Northern section of wall of Site 2, facing west.....	43
Figure 25; Southern wall of Site 2, facing east.....	44
Figure 26; Eastern wall with remains of a chimney, facing east.....	45
Figure 27; Sites 1, 19-24.....	46
Figure 28; North side of Look out structure showing possible earlier wall....	47
Figure 29; South side of Look out structure showing possible earlier wall....	48
Figure 30; Second "look out" structure, Bru, West side, facing south.....	50
Figure 31; Second "look out" structure, Bru, West side, facing north.....	51
Figure 32; Orlit 'A' post.....	53
Figure 33; Plan and Elevation drawings of an Orlit 'B' post.....	54
Figure 34; Peat cutting below Site 2.....	56
Figure 35; Damn walls on Loch a' Rudha Chaoil.....	58
Figure 36; Water intake on Loch a Rudha Chaoil.....	59
Figure 37; MOD water intake rig at Loch Mheacleit.....	60
Figure 38; Remains of a Beehive Shieling, Loch Mheacleit.....	61
Figure 39; Location of Beehive Shieling, Site 25.....	62
Figure 40; Remains of possible Beehive Shieling near Taigh a' Bheannaich..	63
Figure 41; Table of Recommendations.....	65-68

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## 1.0 Non- Technical Summary

On the 29<sup>th</sup> January 2016, the Gallan Head Community Trust successfully completed the Community “Right to Buy” process and became the legal custodian of Gallan Head, a former RAF base in Uig on the west coast of the Isle of Lewis. The Trust has plans to redevelop the land, with a Dark Skies observatory and Whale-listening station being two of the most popular ideas. As a preliminary stage of this work the Gallan Head Community Trust (hereafter termed GHCT) requested an archaeological Desk Based Assessment and walk over survey of their land to provide a basis for future management plans.

## 2.0 Site Location and Description

Gallan Head is located on the west coast of the Isle of Lewis centred on NB 0493 3816. It is a high, windswept and exposed headland, skirted entirely by cliffs and often raging seas. Its position yields almost unparalleled views up and down the west coast of Lewis and into Loch Roag, with a view shed taking in almost 300 degrees of Ocean and islands. The view inland towards the Hills of Uig is also largely unobstructed.

The village of Aird is situated immediately to its southeast – see Figures 1 and 2 below. The present study concerns three areas formerly owned by the MOD - the main area within the red line in Figure 2, and also both smaller areas termed ‘Middle sites’ and ‘South Sites’ in figure 3, below.



**Figure 1: Location of Gallanhead**

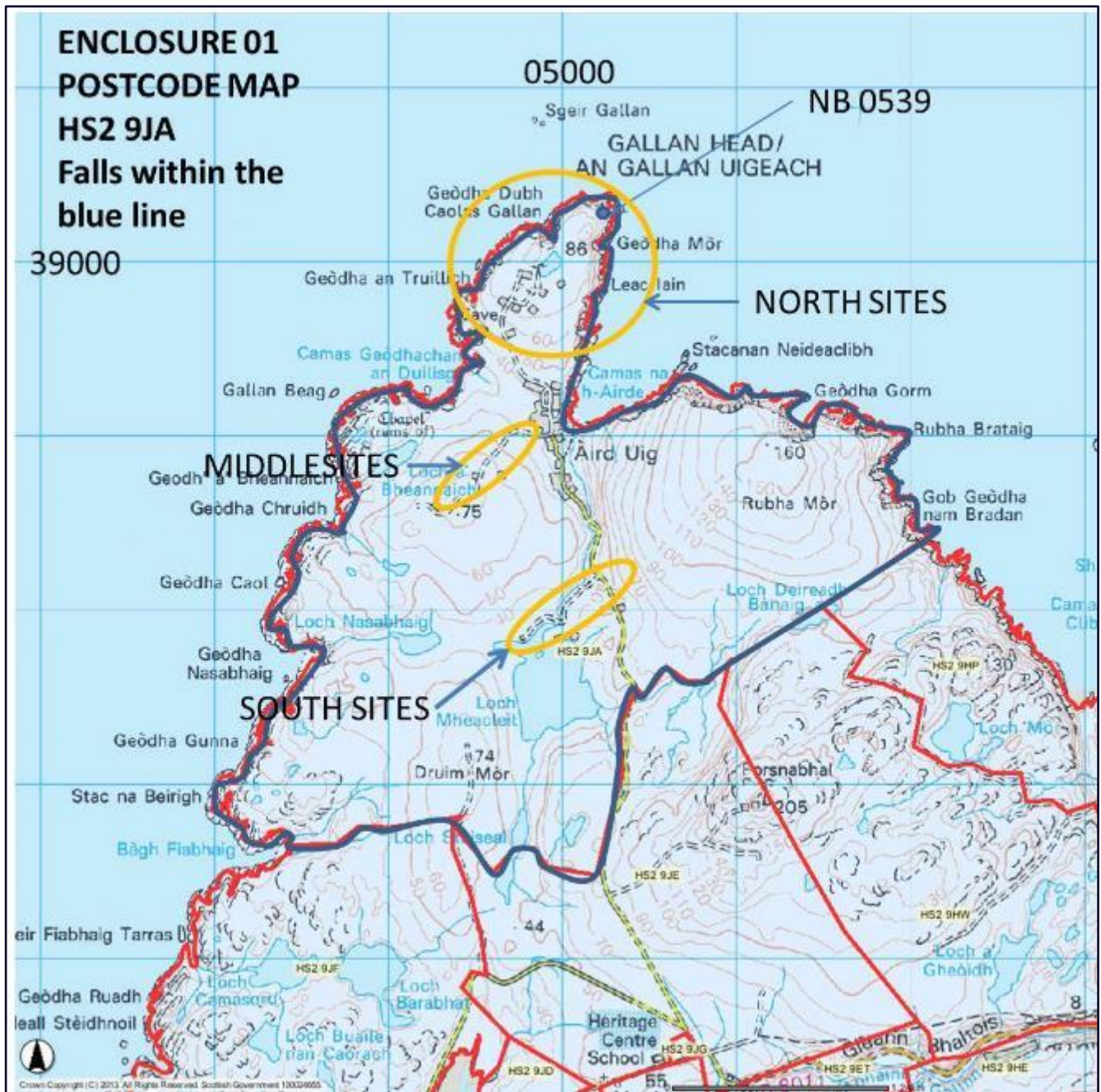


Figure 2: The three areas or 'sites' of MOD land to be surveyed on Gallan Head



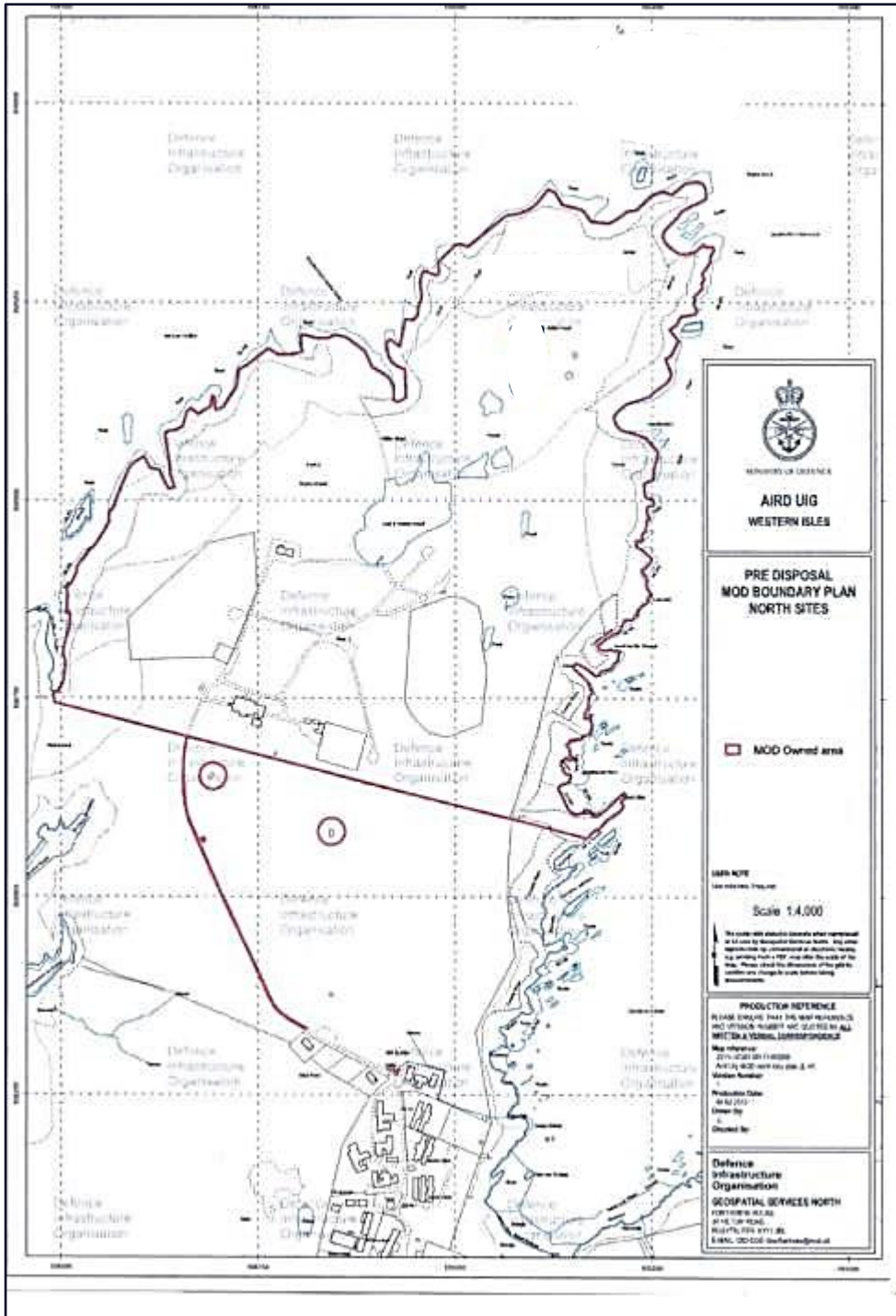


Figure 3: Plan of main Northern MOD area- within red line

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## 3.0 Context of Study

The context of the proposed study is drawn from the ideals and mission statements of the GHCT:

“GHCT wishes to develop the site in a sustainable manner in order to maintain the memory of past use, to create more employment opportunities and attract more people to live in the area. It hopes to develop visitor attractions while also maximising benefit and minimising disruption to the local community.”

GHCT appointed the Urras Oigreachd Gabhsainn (hereafter UOG), a successful community ownership Trust from the north of Lewis, established in 2007, to carry out a feasibility study. GHCT identified two stages for the Study:

Stage 1: Site feasibility study and masterplan identifying suitable development areas and assessing re-use or rebuild of existing buildings leading to possible planning permission in principle application submitted to local authority

Stage 2: Design and costing of multi-purpose building and associated infrastructure through to full planning permission stage. It is expected that high levels of insulation and use of renewables will aim at a low carbon or carbon neutral development.

GHCT has further identified a list of “Deliverables” it wishes to flow from each stage of the study, as follows:

### **Stage 1 outcomes expected:**

- An archaeological report combining an assessment of existing assets and proposals for future archaeological work and developments \*
- An agreed site master plan with designated locations for the various agreed uses
- A main building design concept for which planning permission in principle is achieved, or planning officers advise that this is not required
- Identification of key development parameters to achieving the overall project including timescales, costs, development options, and required standards



- 
- Recommendation on future use of the R10 building with redevelopment options

**Stage 2 outcomes expected:**

- Develop outline building drawings into detailed proposals. As with Stage 1, a community consultation will be held following preparation of draft proposals, which will then be finalised following community feedback.
- Develop infrastructure design for servicing the site.
- Submit application(s) for full planning permission timeously as directed by the client.
- Provide comprehensive development costs and monthly cash flow forecasts for a

\* The archaeological work is further broken down into the following desirables:

- Provision of Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) or equivalent
- Walkover survey of agreed area
- Report with recommendations to inform site master planning
- Excavations if required and reporting on character, extent and significance of findings
- Desk-based assessment and research
- Advice for future interpretation
- Liaison with local authority archaeologist

The WSI has already been carried out and accepted. The present document aims to fullfill the other six desirable outcomes with the exception of any excavation element.

Excavation would be more properly addressed as a separate stage of work, after this report has established the base line record of sites present and their relative importance, threat level, and general interest.

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## 4.0 Geology and Soils

The Headland comprises two differing types of rock, both of which can be broadly classified as Lewisian Gneiss. The bulk of the headland is the same material as the Uig hills to the south:

***Uig Hills - Harris Igneous Complex: Vein Complex [marginal Zone] - Granite and porphyritic granite. Igneous bedrock formed between 2500 and 1600 million years ago between the Siderian and Statherian periods.***

However a thin strip along the West side of the headland is a different material:

***Lewisian Complex - Amphibolite. Metamorphic bedrock formed between 4000 and 541 million years ago between the Archean Eon and Ediacaran period.***

From the British Geological Survey<sup>1</sup>

Superficial or drift geology, or what material overlies the bedrock, also differs over the area. On the west, where it is exposed to the prevailing weather, the headland has only a thin soil which supports some grass but has large areas of bare, scoured rock, denuded of any soil. The east of the headland retains thicker soils, and a greater variety of plant life including Heather. It has areas of deep peat. The easternmost cliffs are covered in grass suitable for grazing with much fewer outcrops of bare rock.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain3d/index.html>

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## 5.0 Archaeological and Historical Context

In order to provide some archaeological and Historical context for the study area, a desk based assessment was carried out, and there now follows a presentation of existing records gleaned from a variety of sources. This is not an exhaustive study, and more information may come to light in due course. A general history of the Village and the MOD base can be found on the GHCT website (<http://www.gallanhead.org.uk>) and will not therefore be repeated here.

The following sources were investigated for any relevant information:

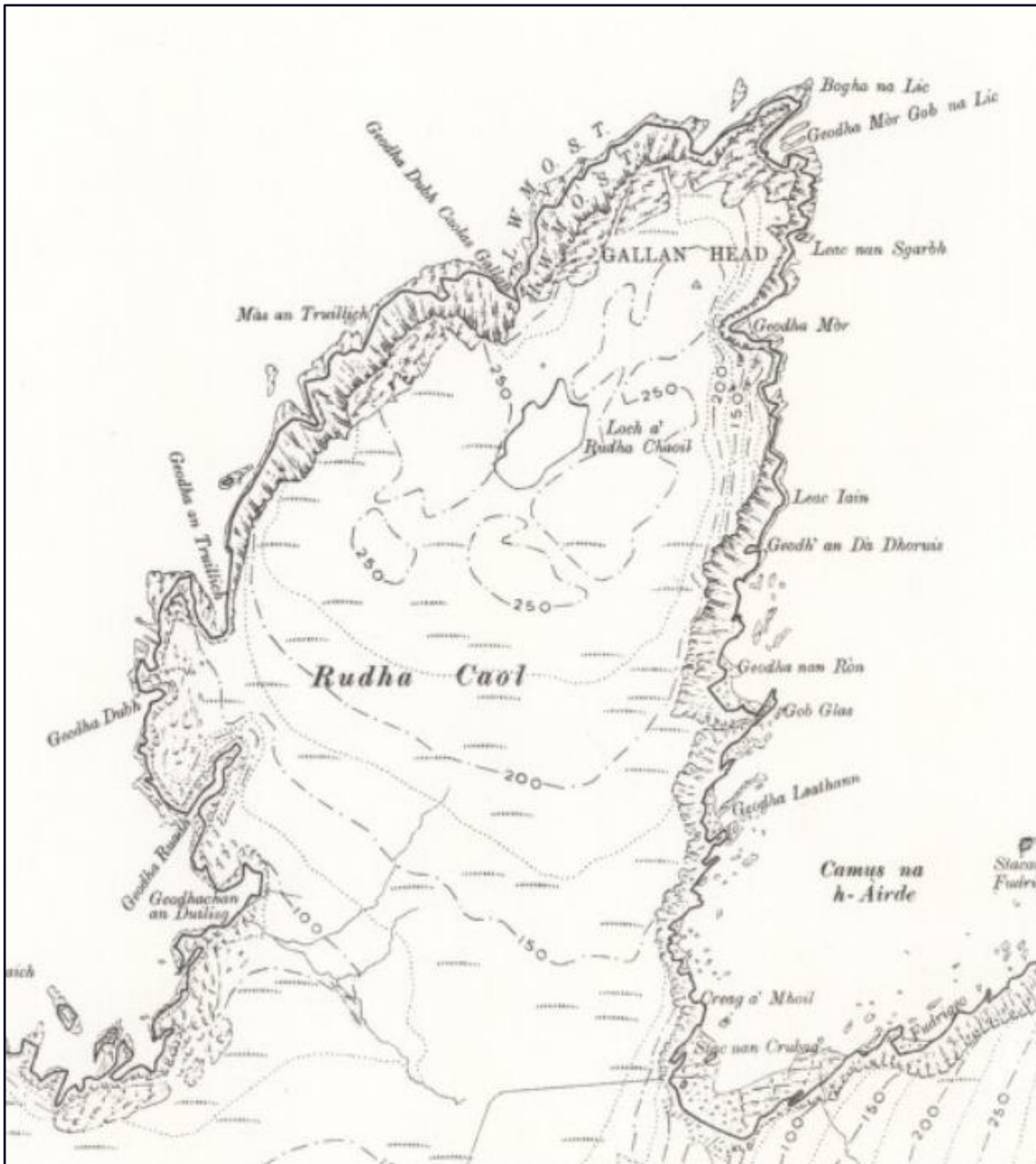
- OS 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> edition maps and name books;
- Historic Environment Records – the national ‘Canmore’ database
- Historic Land use Assessment database
- Old and new Statistical Accounts;
- The Napier Commission transcriptions;
- Museum nan Eilean archive/ Tasglann;
- Commun Eachdraidh Uig website\*
- Hebridean Connections website
- Satellite images

\*Further research into the records held at the Commun Eachdraidh Uig is still ongoing and information may be added to this report in a later draft.

### 5.1 Map Regression

The 1<sup>st</sup> edition, published in 1854, shows no structures on the headland. However it is not completely devoid of evidence of Human land use - the place names are interesting and some may relate to land use or settlement. Note the “Leac Iain” or “Iain’s flat stone” on the east of the headland. “Leac” can also mean door step, which may or may not relate to the nearby “Geodh’ an Da’ Dhoruis or Geo of the Doorway. “Bogha nan Lic” at the very end probably means “submerged flat rock which waves break over” and





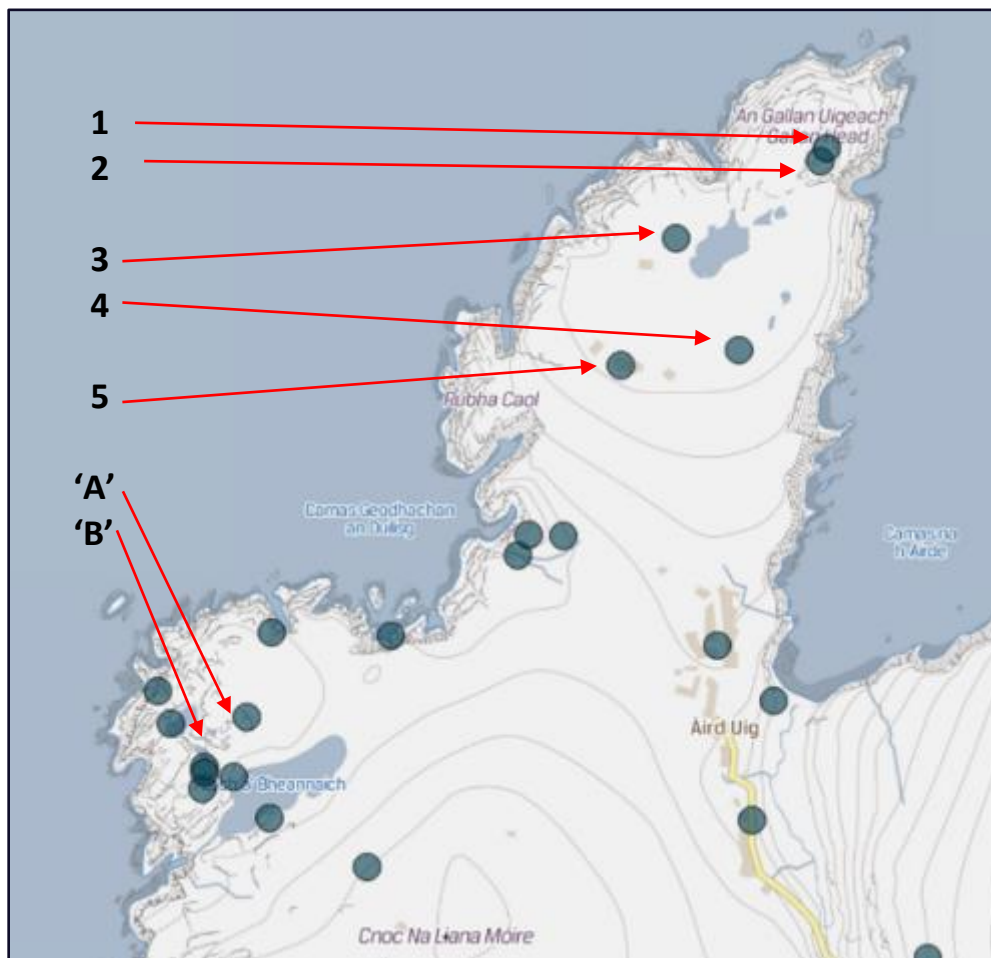
**Figure 5: 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (1895) OS map**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> edition map (Figure 4, above) shows no extra detail. The place names are not recorded in as great a number.



## 5.2 Historic Environment Records

The northern area of the headland already has a number of sites recorded on the “Canmore” national database of Historical Environment Records (HERs), and these records are reproduced below. There are also a number of sites very near to but just outside the study area which are important to consider for Archaeological context (A and B in Figure 4 below).



**Figure 6: Map image from Canmore showing known sites in the area with key to text**

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## 5.2.1 Sites within MOD land – North area

### Site 1: First World War look out post

The stone and mortar building at the North end of the Headland has the following record:

**Site Name:** Lewis, An Gallan Uigeach

**Classification:** Observation Post (First World War)(Possible)

**Alternative Name(s)** Gallan Head; Aird Uig

**Canmore ID:** 348397

**Site Number:** NB03NE 149

**NGR NB 05156 39188**

**Datum OSGB36 - NGR**

**Permalink** <http://canmore.org.uk/site/348397>

*At the north end of the Aird Uig Peninsula, within the boundary of the RAF base, and situated at the highest point is a building of stone and mortar construction. It measures c. 5m by 3.5m, it stands up to its original height of 2.5m. The entrance 0.9m wide, is in the NE wall beside the northmost corner. Internally it consists of two compartments of equal size. The first compartment measures 1.92m x 1.97m by 1.82m high appears to have always been open. An entrance 0.88m wide leading in to the second compartment, measuring 1.97m x 1.97m by 2.02m high, which may have been roofed when first built. According to information from M Briscoe to RCAHMS, the building is thought locally to be a coast watching station dating from the First World War.*

*A possible similar site has been recorded by Roger Thomas of Historic England at Garn Fawr near Strumble Head (NGR - SM 89530 38881) in Wales.*

***Information from RCAHMS (AKK) and M Briscoe 31 August 2015.***

Strangely, most other historical sources assert that the lookout building was made in the Second world war – see the local Historical Society's information at <http://www.ceuig.co.uk/places/villages/aird-uig/raf-aird-uig/> for example.

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## Site 2: Remains of drystone structure

Some twenty metres to the south of the “look out” there are the footings of a dry stone building. The base of a gable can be made out at one end, and the rough lines of walls. The Canmore record is as follows:

**Site Name: Aird Uig**

**Classification: Enclosure (Post Medieval)**

**Canmore ID: 334621**

**Site Number: NB03NE 65**

**NGR NB 05141 39159**

**Datum OSGB36 - NGR**

**Permalink <http://canmore.org.uk/site/334621>**

*This sub-rectilinear enclosure measures 5.5 x 5m and is of orthostatic drystone construction. ... There appears to be an earlier structure underneath, though it is difficult to define. It seems likely that this (earlier) structure is part of a wider complex including the earlier structure at monument 7364.*

(Note: There is no further information about Monument 7364 and what it might be, or indeed any evidence for the classification as post medieval).

This site will be re-visited in the walkover results section below.

## Site 3: Steps

The Canmore database contains the following record for some “Steps”, with the only note being *“found on RAF base”*.

**Site Name: Aird Uig**

**Classification: Steps (Period Unassigned)**

**Canmore ID: 334768**

**Site Number: NB03NW 39**

**NGR NB 04844 39002**

**Datum OSGB36 - NGR**

**Permalink <http://canmore.org.uk/site/33476>**

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#### Site 4: Cairn

The Canmore national database also records a “Cairn (Prehistoric)” within our study area, with the following entry:

**Site Name: Aird Uig**

**Classification: Cairn (Prehistoric)**

**Canmore ID: 334622**

**Site Number: NB03NW 38**

**NGR NB 04975 38771**

**Datum OSGB36 - NGR**

**Permalink <http://canmore.org.uk/site/33462>**

*“This cairn measures 3m by 2.5m and appears to have a bank running from it for 10m in a westerly direction. It stands up to 0.5m in height. Small stones can be seen to be eroding out from the top of the monument.”*

*This information was given by an archaeologist called Chris Burgess, who led a project called “The Uig Landscape Survey” in 1995/6, followed by a Coastal Zone Assessment of the Isle of Lewis in 1997. Unfortunately there is a discrepancy between the grid references given for the Cairn in these two studies, meaning that its precise location is now not clear.<sup>2</sup>*

The walkover survey will attempt to locate this feature.

#### Site 5: RADAR station

The Radar station has the following record:

**Site Name: Lewis, Aird Uig, Rotor Radar Site**

**Classification: Radar Station (20th Century)**

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<sup>2</sup> <https://canmore.org.uk/site/334622/aird-uig>

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**Alternative Name(s): Gallan Head**

**Canmore ID: 161858**

**Site Number NB03NW 14**

**NGR NB 04729 38739**

**NGR Description Centred NB 04729 38739**

**Datum OSGB36 - NGR**

**Permalink <http://canmore.org.uk/site/161858>**

NB03NW 14.00 centred 04729 38739

NB03NW 14.01 Centred NB 0493 3816 Military camp

Extends onto map sheet NB03NE.

*This Rotor Radar Station is situated on high ground to the N of the accommodation camp at Aird Uig. The site is still in use by the Ministry of Defence.*

*J Guy 2002; NMRS MS 810/12, 24-6*

*The World War II site is visible on vertical air photographs (CPE/Scot/UK 186, 2395-2396, flown 9 October 1946), situated on the high ground immediately SW of Loch a Rubha-Chaoil. One flat roofed structure is visible on the photographs at NB 04777 93837 and a further group of buildings can be seen at NB 04729 38739. The Ministry of Defence has, since the war, extensively developed this site.*

*Information from RCAHMS (DE), July 2005*

*A visit to this site by Mr Martin Briscoe ascertained that the transmit site for the ROTOR Station is at NB 04515 37761. Two buildings are extant, one with five rooms and the smaller is possibly the toilet/ablutions block. There is an engine house with tower base adjacent. The receive site is at NB 04274 37567, the building being slightly smaller and also has an engine house and tower base adjacent. There is a disused electricity generating sub-station is at c.NB 053 369, which possibly is of the same date as the ROTOR station and another at c. NB 049 368 which may be linked to the water supply.*

***Information to RCAHMS via e-mail from Mr M Briscoe, 12 June 2007***

*Aird JUig / Gallan Head*

*24-09-2011*



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*The Aird Uig RAF site seems to have been used as a communication site after the close of ROTOR. BT/GPO had Hebrides MF radio transmitting station at Gallan Head so this might have been on the same site. The MF receiving station was a few miles away at Forsnabhal.*

*There are earlier reports of a WT station at Gallan or Gallon Head pre-WWII and during WWII. Information is contradictory but it is thought this might have been at the Butt of Lewis.*

**Contributed by Martin Briscoe**

## 5.2.2 Sites within MOD land – Middle area

The middle area of MOD land is very small, only encompassing three buildings and an access track. It had no previously noted archaeological sites within it, although there is one site very close by:

**Site Name: Cnoc An Liana Moire, Aird, Uig, Lewis**

**Classification: Clearance Cairn (Period Unassigned)**

**Canmore ID: 337093**

**Site Number: NB03NW 42**

**NGR NB 04205 37705**

**Datum OSGB36 - NGR**

**Permalink <http://canmore.org.uk/site/337093>**

*Field Visit*

*Uig Landscape Survey*

*24: NB 0420 3770*

*Cairns*

*These two small clearance cairns are situated 3m apart; the southern one measures 0.6m and the northern one measures 1m in diameter. Burgess 1996, 28<sup>3</sup>*

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<sup>3</sup> Burgess, Church and Gilmour, C, M and S. (1998) 'Bereiro and Tigh a'Bheannaich (Uig parish), surveys', *Discovery Excav Scot*, 1998. Page(s): 105

### 5.2.3 Sites within MOD land – South area

The southern area of MOD land represents only a very small area upon which a water intake and pumping station was placed. However, five archaeological sites are recorded within the area – sites S1-S5 – two mills, a dyke, a circular enclosure, and a Crannog:

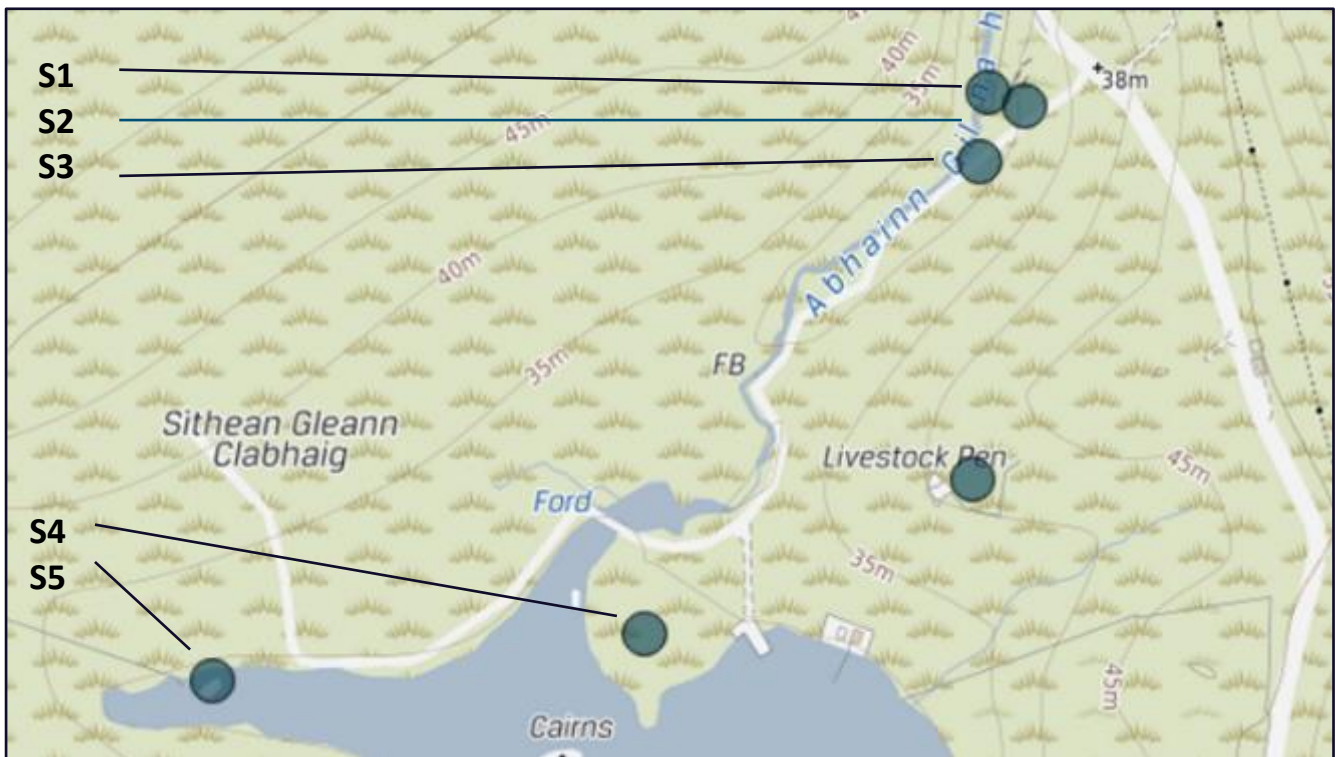


Figure 7: Sites S1 – S5 in Southern area

**S1:**

**Site Name:** Lewis, Gearraidh Mheacleit

**Classification:** Mill (Period Unassigned)

**Canmore ID:** 134980

**Site Number:** NB03NE 44

**NGR NB 0514 3718**

**Datum OSGB36 - NGR**

**Permalink** <http://canmore.org.uk/site/134980>

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First Edition Survey Project (FESP)

One unroofed building annotated as a 'Corn Mill (Ruin)' is depicted on the 1st edition of the OS 6-inch map (Island of Lewis, Ross-shire 1854, sheet 16), but it is not shown on the current edition of the OS 1:10000 map (1974).

Information from RCAHMS (AKK), 19 September 1997.

**S2:**

**Site Name: Gearraidh Mheacleit, Aird, Uig, Lewis**

**Classification: Mill (Period Unassigned)(Possible)**

**Canmore ID: 337100**

**Site Number: NB03NE 112**

**NGR NB 05134 37135**

**Datum OSGB36 - NGR**

**Permalink <http://canmore.org.uk/site/337100>**

Uig Landscape Survey

36: NB 0515 3720

cell/mill

Situated immediately up stream of smr 4248 is a small cell of rough construction and measuring 4 x 4m. It is possible, given this structure's proximity to the stream running from Loch Mheacleit to the sea, that this structure is a mill.

Burgess and Church 1996, 30

**S3:**

**Site Name: Gearraidh Mheacleit, Aird, Uig, Lewis**

**Classification: Dyke (Period Unassigned), Wall (Period Unassigned)**

**Canmore ID: 337101**

**Site Number: NB03NE 113**

**NGR NB 05164 37170**

**Datum OSGB36 - NGR**

**Permalink <http://canmore.org.uk/site/337101>**

Uig Landscape Survey37:NB 0515 3715

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Stone wall - this stretch of stone dyking stands up to 0.6m wide and one course high. It runs for only 18m starting and stopping with no apparent purpose. This wall is a vestige of a field boundary of some antiquity and is deeply embedded in the peat. Burgess and Church 1996, 31

**S4:**

**Site Name: Loch Mheacleit, Aird, Uig, Lewis**

**Classification: Enclosure (Period Unassigned)**

**Canmore ID: 337108**

**Site Number: NB03NW 46**

**NGR NB 04918 36830**

**Datum OSGB36 - NGR**

**Permalink <http://canmore.org.uk/site/337108>**

Uig Landscape Survey

45: NB 0488 3680

This sub-rectilinear enclosure measures 13m north - south and 11m west - east and is constructed of drystone up to 5 courses high. The remains of one internal division may be seen in the southwest corner of the structure. Running from the centre of the south wall for 27m to the edge of Loch Mheacleit is a similarly constructed wall

Burgess and Church 1996, 32

**S5:**

**Site Name: Lewis, Loch Mheacleit**

**Classification: Crannog (Period Unassigned)**

**Canmore ID: 133344**

**Site Number: NB03NW 13**

**NGR NB 0464 3680**

**Datum OSGB36 - NGR**

**Permalink <http://canmore.org.uk/site/133344>**

No further details of the Crannog are recorded. It should be noted that this site is on the edge of the boundary of the south area, and possibly just outside it.

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These sites could relate to or provide context for the sites on the main northern Gallanhead area, should there be any further research.

## 5.2.4 Important sites nearby

These sites are out with the study area but are of such importance that they have long characterized the vicinity and may well be relevant study of the structures within our study area.

### Site A:

There is an early Monastic site very nearby called “Taigh a’ Bheannaich”, which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM No 5390), the highest level of protection afforded in our planning system, only afforded to the most important sites. It is termed “Site A” in Figure 3 above to separate it from sites within the study area. The record states:

*“(NB 0388 3790) The ruins of a small chapel lie on the promontory 'Am Bheannachadh' (Gaelic: 'The Blessing' - a name commonly applied to places which a saint had blessed, or had his church. W J Watson 1926.) The promontory has always been considered a holy place. (Detail shown on OS 6"map but not named). The 'Teampull', known as 'Tigh a Bheannaich', stands to an average height of about 4ft, with the fallen upper part of the wall filling up the interior to a considerably depth. It measures 18' 1" by 10' 8" internally within walls 2' 7" to 3' 6" thick, constructed of stone bonded with clay. A spring showing slight evidence of building around it lies about 32' SW of the church.*

**Sources: D MacGibbon and T Ross 1896-7; W J Watson 1926; RCAHMS 1928, visited 1914.**

*NB 0386 3791 Monastic settlement, Tigh a'Bheannaich. A fieldwalking and mapping exercise was executed around the chapel of Tigh a'Bheannaich (House of the Blessed) (NMRS [NB03NW 1](#), [NB03NW 2](#), [NB03NW 3](#), [NB03NW 5](#)) located to the W of the township of Aird Uig. The stone-built chapel is enclosed on a broad promontory by a large wall that runs from the southern cliffs to an inland loch and from there to the northern sea cliffs. This wall survives as well-built drystone coursing up to 2m in height at its S end, but continues N of the loch as a mainly earth bank with small stones and turf. Surrounding the chapel are 10-12 cellular structures with diameters ranging from 2-3m.*



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*Many of these structures are located amongst bare rock on W-facing sea cliffs and have suffered extensive erosion. To the N of the chapel are six cairns of varying sizes (2-4m in diameter). Two of these cairns are kerbed and may be prehistoric.*

***Sponsors: Historic Scotland, University of Edinburgh, Dept of Archaeology.  
C Burgess, M Church and S Gilmour 1998."***

There are also prehistoric structures in the area:

**Site B:**

**Site Name: Bheannich**

**Classification: Stone Setting (Prehistoric)**

**Canmore ID: 334614**

**Site Number: NB03NW 31**

**NGR NB 03956 38014**

**Datum OSGB36 - NGR**

**Permalink <http://canmore.org.uk/site/334614>**

No other information is recorded about this setting.

It is clear that a lot of activity went on in this area, both within the study area and more generally in the district. This activity spanned from prehistory into the early historic – Christian – era and through to the modern day.

This concludes the list of sites already recorded by the CANMORE National Historic Environment Record within the area.

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## 5.3 Historic Land Use Assessment

In 2015, the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS) in partnership with Historic Scotland (HS) published the Historic Land Use Assessment map. The HLA map is a Scotland-wide view of land use in modern and past times, and includes information that has been checked against a wide variety of sources.<sup>4</sup>

The classifications recorded on the map for our study areas are as follows:

The northern MOD area is classified as -

**Military Site:** Modern military barracks and training grounds, communications sites and radar stations are located across the country. Military airfields are recorded separately as HLA data.

The area around the middle and southern sites is classified as -

**Rough Grazing:** Hill ground or lower-lying land that shows no evidence of recent agricultural improvement can be used for rough grazing. Such areas are largely heather moorland or rough grassland.

The southern site is very close to a

**Medieval/Post-medieval Settlement and Agriculture:** The remains of settlements and field systems that pre-date the agricultural improvements of the 18th or 19th century survive in marginal areas, with ruinous buildings, small kilns, curvilinear boundaries, and rig cultivation.

The area around Taigh a' Bheannaich, just outside of the study area but still relevant to its study, is classified as - **Later Prehistoric Settlement and Agriculture:** Groups of ruinous round houses or hut circles, dating to c1600BC to 400AD, with associated field systems and/or field clearance cairns of stones, survive in rough grazing and moorland.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://hlamap.org.uk/>

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And also as **Medieval/Post-medieval Shielings**: The ruins of groups of small medieval or post-medieval summer huts associated with hill grazings (shielings) are usually located close to running water on patches of enriched grass.

## 5.4 Other Sources

The Hebridean Connections website has gathered *“thousands of records relating to the genealogy, history, traditions, culture and archaeology of the Western Isles. The material is drawn mostly from the archives of local historical societies (Comainn Eachdraidh) and other member organisations, with valuable input from Hebrideans and their descendants around the world.”*<sup>5</sup>

With its combination of different types of knowledge of the past this database is often a valuable source of information when researching the archaeology of any area of the Western Isles. However on this occasion an extensive trawl of search terms related to Aird and Gallan Head did not provide any new information.

Satellite images of the area were studied and aided the walkover but did not provide any further sites.

With this we conclude the desk based assessment part of the work, and it is now time to turn to the results from field walking and what has actually been found on the ground.

## 6.0 Walkover Methodology

The walkover methodology involved walking transects across the study area (within the red line in Figure 2) every 5-10m, such as terrain would allow. If an interesting feature was picked up, the area around it would be examined in greater detail. Cliffs were also investigated, but only where safe access allowed and often by use of binoculars from vantage points. Anything of interest was recorded by photography, GPS coordinate and written description. Where these were not sufficient to record all significant detail, a scale plan drawing was produced.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.hebrideanconnections.com/home-page>

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Unfortunately it was clear that the MOD radar base and masts had comprehensively disturbed the ground on the headland over much of the central area. Vast quantities of concrete fencepost bases and anchor points for Mast Stays still remain, as well as spoil heaps from bulldozing roads and trenching for drains, services and other activities. This has consequently destroyed any pre-existing archaeology over the entire central area.

To record all of these lumps of concrete would take weeks, and would tell us nothing. Therefore all such features have not been recorded. Also, the four MOD buildings within the area have been recorded by other parties involved in the overall development and will therefore not therefore be dealt with here.

## 7.0 Results – Gazetteer of sites from Walkover

A total of 25 sites were discovered and the details presented below. The sites from the desk based work are numbered 1-5, and were also included in the walk over in case of any further evidence coming to light. New sites found on the walkover were numbered in the order of discovery and are similarly presented here, although the sites have been split up into the chronological periods of Pre-historic and Historic.

## 6.1 – Pre-historic sites

Site No.

10

8

9

6

7

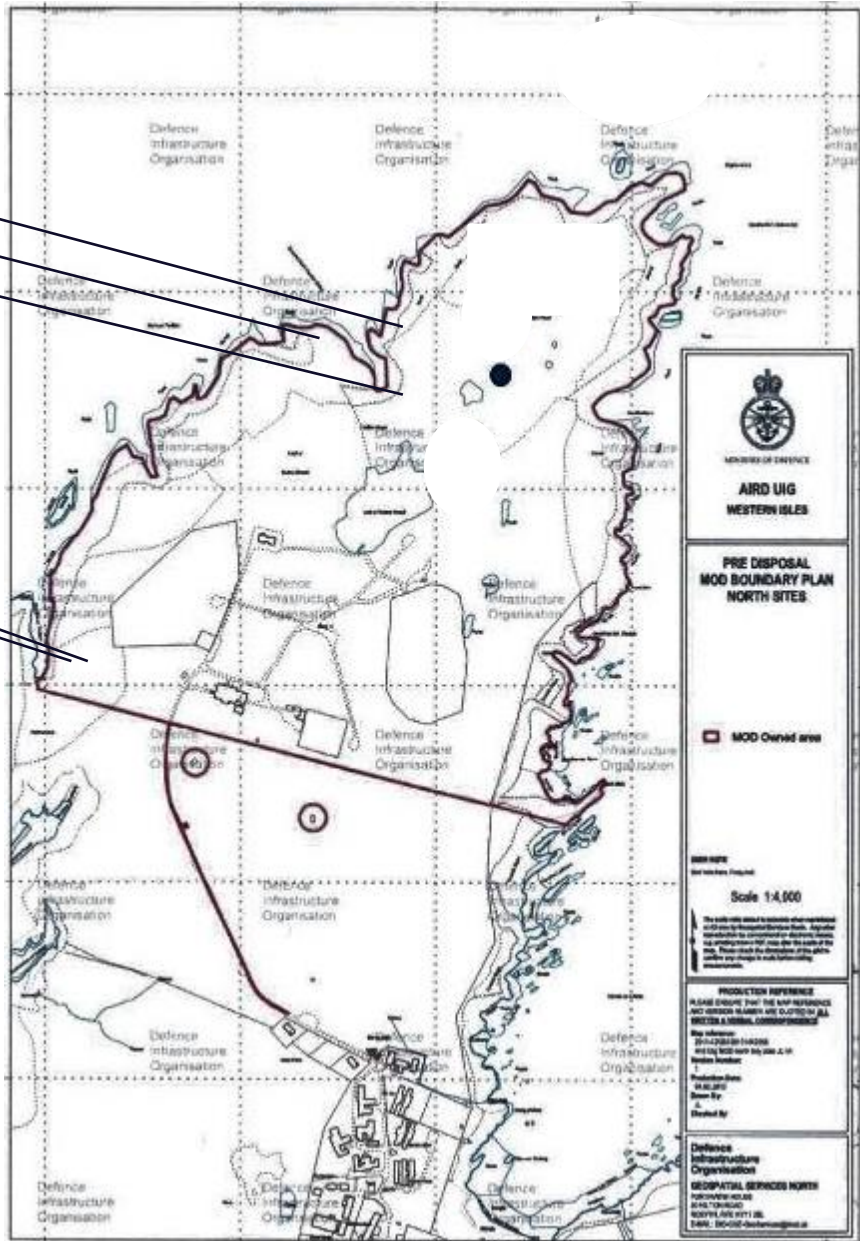


Figure 8: Location of sites 6-10



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### **Site # 6: Quartz Scatter**

At the west end of the fence delineating the ex-MOD land, a c100m<sup>2</sup> area, centred around NB 04483 38748, contained a lot of quartz flakes. There was no outcropping quartz vein, but the flakes were of good quality quartz and some seemed to have been worked.

### **Site # 7: Stone tool**

A stone implement which could be described as an “Ard” or plough, a digging implement, or a “Hoe” - as in the many similar implements found on St Kilda - was found within the area of the Quartz scatter.

### **Site # 8: Quartz Vein # 1**

This was an outcropping vein of milky white quartz for around 5-10m at NB 04799 39132, on a small headland just south the Geodh Dhubh Caolas a Ghallain (Black Geo of the Gallan straits). The quartz was of high quality with few fractures or cracks. There were marks which resemble circular impact scars, a type of quarry mark from prehistoric quarrying. There seemed to be a platform or ledge immediately beneath it, also as if from quarrying activity.



*Figure 9: Quartz vein # 1*



*Figure 10: Circular impact scars on quartz vein # 1*

### **Site 9: Coarse stone tool – find spot**

A stone implement which could be described as an “Ard” or plough, a digging implement, or a “Hoe” - as in the many similar implements found on St Kilda – was found just to the north of the Loch an Rudha Chaoil, at NB 04955 39069.



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### Site 10: Quartz vein # 2

On the north flank of Geodha Dhubh Caolas a Ghallain, NB 04949 39129, another vein of pure white Quartz outcrops through a grassy slope. No circular impact scars were seen, but the vein had other less diagnostic signs of quarrying and some flakes were recovered which looked worked, including a possible thumbnail Scraper.



Figure 11: Quartz vein # 2





**Figure 12: Quartz flakes and possible scraper from Vein # 2**

Site No.

12

11

14

15

13

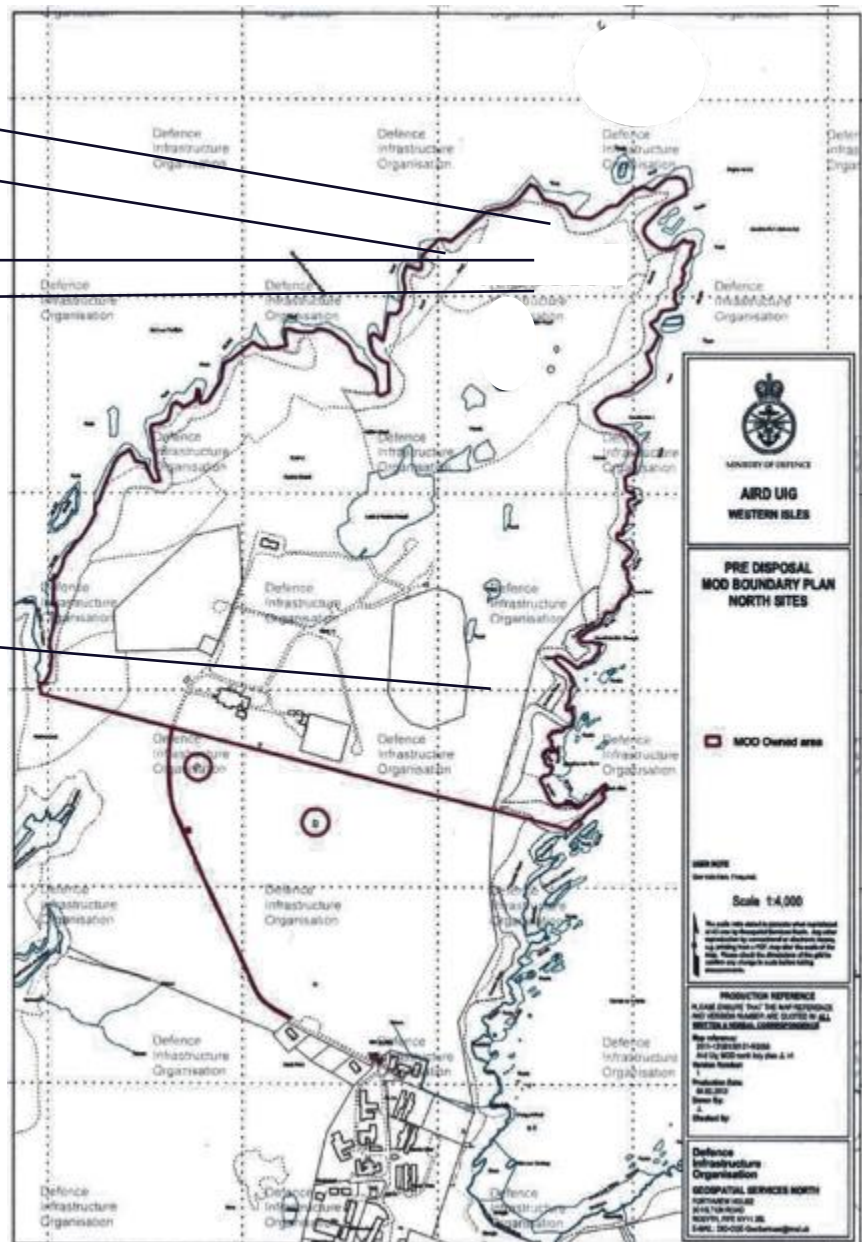


Figure 13: Location of sites 11-15



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### Site 11: Quartz Vein # 3

If you follow the series of ledges north around the cliff from Site 6, another large vein of quartz can be seen snaking its way up through the bedrock for 20-30m at NB 05008 39270. The quartz is stained an orange colour, perhaps from iron pan in the area. Circular impact scars were discovered on this vein.



*Figure 14: Quartz vein # 3 showing evidence of quarrying*



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## Site 12: Quartz vein # 4

Carrying on round to the north, the headland is split by another Geo, this one unnamed. To its east lies a finger of rock jutting NE to a rock called Bogha na Lic. To its west, at NB 05114 39351, was another Quartz vein with evidence of working. It was of white quartz, had circular impact scars upon it and also had worked looking flakes scattered around it.



*Figure 15: Quartz vein # 4, facing west*

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### Site 13: Quartz vein # 5

Another quartz vein of quality milky white quartz was discovered near the south east boundary at NB 05069 38610. It was smaller than the others but also demonstrated evidence of working.



*Figure 16: Quartz vein # 5, facing south*



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## Site 14: Quartz Vein # 6

On a subsequent visit, a smaller yet more centrally located vein was discovered, running from the Lochan along the top of a low ridge, straight up to the highest point of the Headland, very near NB 05144 39192. There was evidence of quarrying along its length, and even at the top of the hill, just metres from the First World War lookout.



*Figure 17: Quartz vein # 6*

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### Site 15: Quartz vein # 7

This small vein is just under the Site 2 at the top of the hill, at NB 05106 39163. A flake with conchoidal fractures was recovered from its surface.



Figure 18: Quartz vein # 7, just below Site 2.

Site No

2

16, 17

4

18

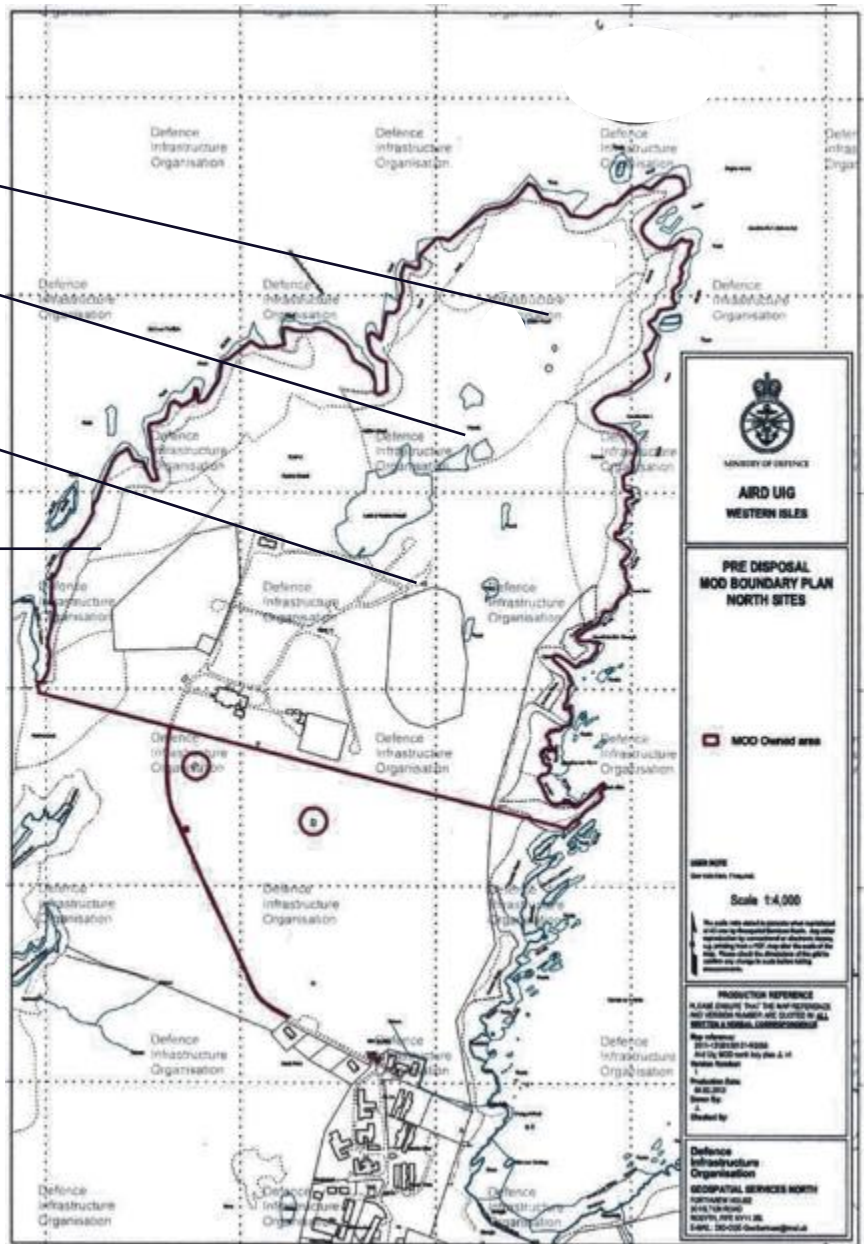


Figure 19: Location of sites 2,4, 16-18



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## Site 2: The Drystone Structure

The drystone structure was clearly not one simple build – the northern part of the wall was circular, whilst the southern part was almost linear and had a right angle corner with the eastern wall which had what looked like the remnants of a gable. As Burgess had suggested (See section 4.0, above) it looks like an earlier, circular building has had a rectilinear building superimposed upon it.



*Figure 20: Northern section of wall of Site 2, facing west*



*Figure 21: Southern wall of Site 2, facing east*





***Figure 22: Eastern wall with remains of a chimney, facing east***

This would strongly imply two completely different phases of building, with the earlier, circular structure being rebuilt into one of rectangular form. What was the rectangular building? Might it be the original look out post, or could it be even earlier than that?

Circular structures of c10m diameter could conceivably be some sort of medieval or post medieval agricultural enclosure (either to pen animals in or to keep them out so that crops could be grown) but this would not seem appropriate for the location. The other alternative is that it dates from the pre-historic era, in which Iron Age roundhouses and even Bronze Age Hut circles could be potential candidates. The evidence on the ground would certainly not be adequately covered by the official record (section 4.0 above) as a “post medieval enclosure”. A photographic record was made and can be found on the CD ROM attached to the end of the report, however there was a lot of detail which could not be captured adequately. Therefore a scale drawing was made of the structures, which can be found at Appendix 1.

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In an effort to interpret the structure, site visits were made to the Taigh a' Bheannaich monastery just to the south – mentioned in section 3.0 above. Intriguingly, the actual Chapel there seems to also have been built upon an earlier circular structure, of similar dimensions. This is quite clear when visiting but doesn't come out well in photographs. It is quite possible that this is a more sensible interpretation for the structure we see at Gallan head, and that the rectilinear building superimposed upon the circular structure was in fact a Teampuill associated with the Monastery, similar to the Taigh a' Bheannaich.

This theory may be supported by the observation that a substantial dry stone wall (just outside of the study area) once cut this northern headland off in a similar way to the one found at the Taigh a' Bheannaich, and there considered to be a "Vallum Monastarie" or spiritual demarcation of the monastic area or sanctuary. The wall is extant to the west of the headland, disappearing towards the middle. Its line can be followed however and runs through and parallel with the "Edge" Café's front garden. Presumably the stone from it has been robbed over the years to help build the village and/or the camp.

#### **Site 4: Cairn**

The desk based assessment of preexisting records for the headland detailed a possibly prehistoric cairn somewhere in the central area – see section 4.1, above. However no trace of this Cairn could be found.

As mentioned in the Methodology section, the central area of the headland had been so disturbed by heavy earth moving machinery as to destroy any earlier archaeology, or at best make it very difficult to prove any given feature was in fact earlier. The Cairn was recorded in 1996, but the MOD operated the Base until 2000, after which NATO took over until 2010. Therefore there may have been earthworks in these intervening years which have destroyed this Cairn.

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### Site 16 and 17: Small Cairns

Two small cairns, roughly 1m x 2m, can be made out in an area which looks to have been formerly covered by a smaller lochan to the NE of Loch a Rudha Chaoil, at NB 05084 39046. It is possible that they are burials. A POSSIBLE quartz arrowhead was found just west of the westernmost cairn.



Figure 23: Site 16, Eastern Small Cairn



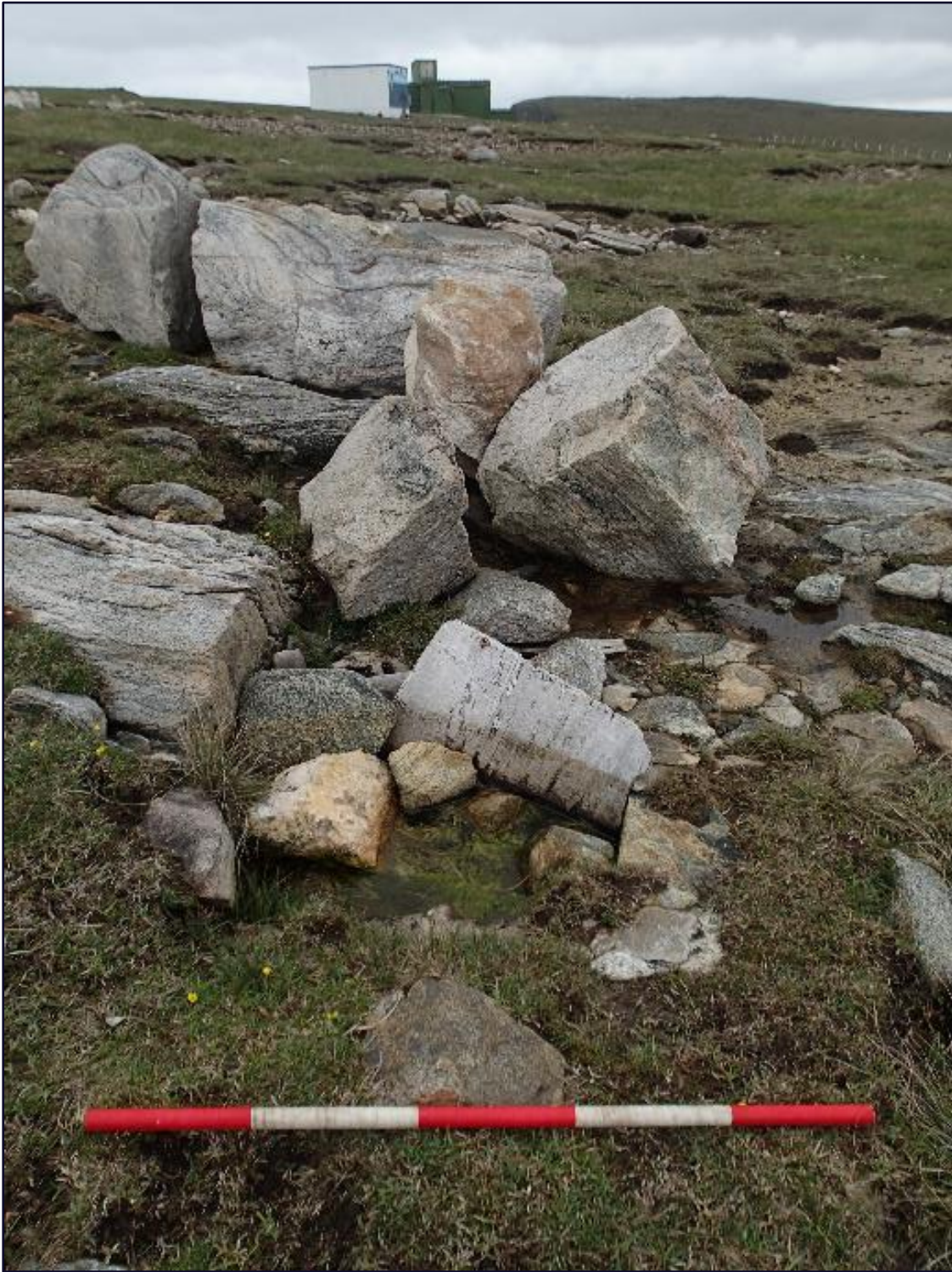


**Figure 24: Site 17, Western Small Cairn**

### **Site 18: Well**

A beautiful stone and mortar built well was discovered at NB 04574 38784, not far from the main access road. It was sub rectangular with stone sides around 500mm long and a flagstone and mortar surround area. The mortar was yellow in colour and quite unlike MOD concrete, or the mortar used on the Look-out, Site 1. It was clear that the well had been covered over with a plywood board with stones on top, which had rotted and slumped. The arrangement of large boulders immediately uphill of the well also obscured it from sight, and do not look naturally placed. Together these things would imply that this well had been purposefully hidden. Reasons for this could range from crofters trying to avoid livestock falling in or using the well to the MOD trying to stop anyone using the well, perhaps because of possible chemical contaminants.





*Figure 25: Site 24, Well, facing east*





*Figure 26: Site 24, Well showing mortar and flagstone surround*

## 6.2 Historic era sites

As described in the methodology section, the upstanding concrete MOD buildings have not been part of this study as they have already been recorded elsewhere. The other Historic era sites found were as follows:

Site No.:

21

1

19

23

24

20

22

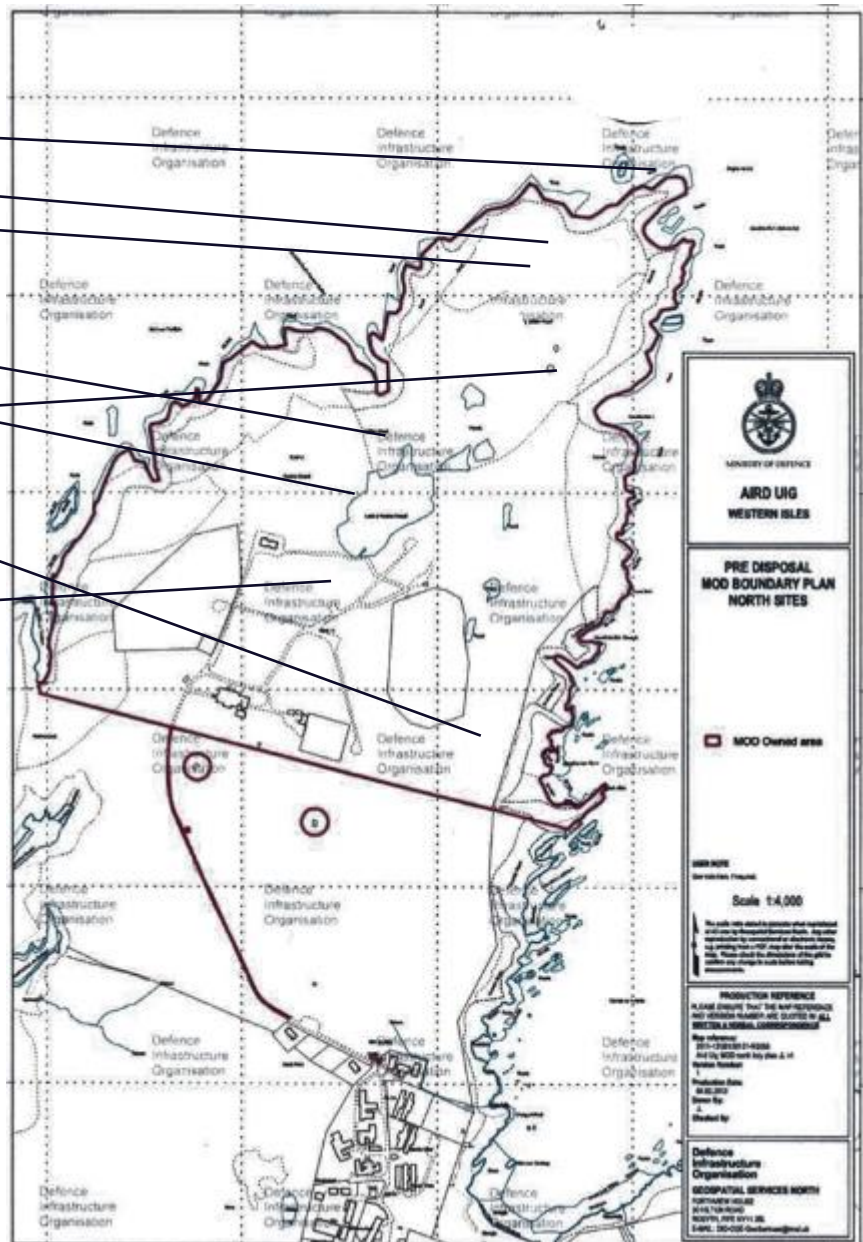


Figure 27: Sites 1, 19-24



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## Site 1: The First/Second world war Look out

As detailed in Section 3.0, above, there is some confusion as to when this structure was built. A photographic record was made of both inside and outside which can be found on the attached CD-ROM at the end of the report.

However some previously unrecorded observations were also made. Firstly, the mortared structure looks to have been constructed on top of an earlier structure. Sections of what look very like wall footings can be seen at the base of the north and south sides of the building, running on a different alignment – see Figure 27 and 28, below.



*Figure 28: North side of Look out structure showing possible earlier wall at base*



**Figure 29: South side of Look out structure showing possible earlier wall at base**

The second observation was that from a functional perspective, it is difficult to imagine how this building worked as a look out. There are no windows. If it was roofed there is little structural evidence of how, as although there are one or two wooden wedges holes inserted into the mortar around the doorways to indicate it had doorframes and doors, there are no holes for rafters or sign of a wall plate to fix a roof down. One rusty iron peg found on the floor may be the remnants of a method of tying a roof down but this would not seem to be substantial enough for such an exposed location. The dimensions of the building are also puzzling – there is barely enough room for any kind of dwelling space in the footprint, but then it seems much taller than would have been required. Could there have been a wooden structure placed on top of this structure, like a watch tower? Surely if there had been then some trace of it, or at least of its method of fixture to the stone structure, would remain.

These observations led to questioning the buildings interpretation as a look out. Could it have been something else? Perhaps it was only ever meant for show, i.e. to *look* like a look out from out at Sea. Perhaps it was for some other, as yet unknown purpose?

With this in mind it is worth investigating the other example mentioned in the record by “M. Briscoe” – who seems to have been an MOD employee – “*A possible similar site has*

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*been recorded by Roger Thomas of Historic England at Garn Fawr near Strumble Head (NGR - SM 89530 38881) in Wales.”*

However, very little information about this building could be found. The grid reference refers to Garn Fawr hilltop with no buildings upon it. The National Historic Environment Record of Wales has this to say about Garn Fawr:

*Garn Fawr is a relatively small historic landscape character area covering the highest point of the Pen Caer/Strumble Head peninsula. It consists of several, small, interconnected pockets of rough, craggy moorland, interspersed with a few fields of improved pasture, on the crest of an east – west ridge. The highest point at over 210m lies at the western end close to the sea and is occupied by the iron age forts of Garn Fawr, Garn Fechan and Ysgubor Fawr (all are Scheduled Ancient Monuments). The massive rubble and earth ramparts of the forts are a prominent landscape feature. Low walls and stony banks radiating out from these forts divide the moorland into small fields and represent one of the few pieces of evidence for prehistoric fields directly related to settlement sites in southwest Wales. At lower levels in the neighbouring landscape character area bordering the moorland these ancient boundaries are perpetuated in the modern field system. On the lower moorland to the east of the forts, further collapsing dry-stone walls and rubble banks testify that this too was divided into fields, perhaps in the historic period, and was perhaps more highly cultivated than today. Some wire fences now run across the area. Apart from a few small fields of improved pasture all is now rough ground. **There are no inhabited buildings in the area, and the only standing structures are what are probably World War 2 brick buildings in the saddle between Garn Fawr and Garn Fechan.** In addition to the hillforts, there are several chambered tombs, standing stones and round barrows in this area. Carn Fawr is a popular visitor attraction, and several paths wind their way up to its summit.<sup>6</sup>*

No pictures of these look outs could be found, but more information may yet come to light.

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.dyfedarchaeology.org.uk/HLC/pencaer/garnfawr.htm>



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A completely unexpected but hugely important piece of evidence *has* come to light since writing the first draft of this report. A second structure which is very similar to our so called “look out” (site 1) has been found somewhere else on the island - at NB 33263 48441, near the village of Bru on the west side, on the top of a hill near a water treatment plant – see figure 30, below.



**Figure 30: Second “look out” structure, Bru, West side, Lewis, facing south**

It has the same foot print and dimensions. An entrance into the first square cell leads through to a second square cell – only here the division between the cells was a wooden partition, as you can see wedge holes in the mortar to support this. The top of the second square’s wall is also sloped away from the first square in a very similar manner. The stone work is also strangely similar – the walls are faced quite well but the ballast or

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packing in the middle of the two faces has eroded away weakening the wall – this too has happened at Gallan. At Bru we can see that is because sand has been used as packing, and has just dried and blown away. The main difference between the two buildings is that this one has a window, facing south.



**Figure 31: Second “look out” structure, Bru, facing north**

The structures are so similar overall as to make it very likely they were built by the same people at around the same time and for the same reason. That the new example is also situated in an excellent vantage point to watch the Ocean would seem to point towards the structures indeed being look out posts from one or both world wars.

A little bit research has indicated a likely explanation of the structure - it seems to have been a Hebridean version of an “Orlit post”.

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The following was taken from the Royal Observer Corps (ROC) website:

## **POST-WAR OBSERVATION POSTS**

**Experience from during WW2 identified that there would be a need for increased protection from enemy aircraft if the UK was ever faced at being at war again. Although the ROC was finding that aircraft monitoring was becoming increasingly difficult to plot with the development of new faster aircraft; new aircraft monitoring posts were developed to assist observers to monitor aircraft.**

**The idea for these new posts originated in 1947, however it was only during 1951/52 as part of the programme to update the air defences through the 'Rotor Plan' that more substantial buildings were built to offer at least some level of protection from the elements or attack. Although some of these new structures were built of brick; many sites received pre-cast concrete panelled structures known as "Orlit" posts, after the manufacturers of the structures Messrs Orlit Ltd.**

**These Orlit structures were split into two sections, the entrance door led into the smaller roofed section which was used as a shelter and store with a sliding door into the open section which housed the post instrument and chart on top of a wooden mounting. Two types of Orlit posts existed; the Orlit 'A' was at ground level and the Orlit 'B' was raised on four 6'0" legs with a ladder for access.<sup>7</sup>**

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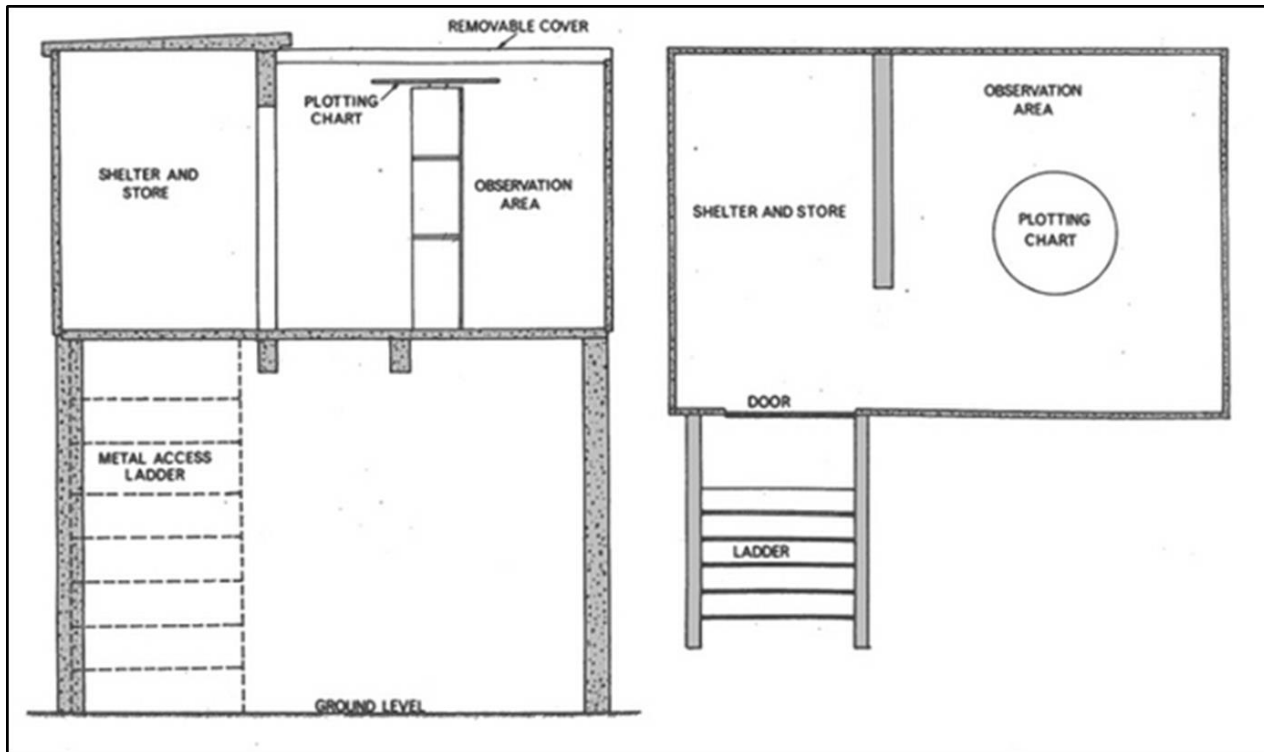
• <sup>7</sup> <http://www.roc-heritage.co.uk/orlit-posts.html>





*Figure 32: An Orlit 'A' post*





**Figure 33: Plan and Elevation drawings of an Orlit 'B' post**

Note that one side is roofed and pitched and not the other, and that it has similar proportions and dimensions to Site 1 at Gallanhead, and the site at Bru.

According to the ROC website, these buildings did not come into use until 1951/2, although the idea had been around since 1947. They continued in use in some parts right into the 70's and beginning of the Cold War period. But when were our local Lewis versions in use? I decided to ask around to see if anyone could remember them.

Eventually I came to speak with Angus Macleod, of No 25 Bru. Angus is the second oldest person in the village, at 85 years old. Angus gave me the following eye witness account of the Bru look out in operation.

“We did the ‘home’ peats up there, and the military men helped us with the peats. In return the villagers gave the Military men eggs and other trades - they liked the fresh eggs, he said. There were rations on. It was during the war.”

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Angus was born in 1935 and he was between 5 and 10 when he remembers the look out in operation. In our conversation he went on to say that there was always one man on duty, round the clock, 24/7, all year round. They were looking mainly for planes, also for ships but not so much. There were 10-12 of them living on site, in Corrugated Iron Nissan huts, the concrete bases of which can still be seen. They were there fairly soon after war broke out, and left soon after the war..

When asked if he knew of any more on the island he replied “Well I was only 10 years old so I didn’t do a lot of travelling”.

This is first class information. And gives us a great idea of what was going on at the “Look out” at the end of Gallanhead - both are so similar, and military architecture so formal and consistent, that it is very likely that the two were built and used in exactly the same way at the same time.

However, if we are correct in suggesting that they were a Hebridean form of Orlit post, our eye witness account puts them right at the earliest possible date for these structures – possibly indicating that they are some kind of precursor to the Orlit, or even the original proto-type. Further research is underway and hopefully there will be a more complete understanding of these distinctive structures in due course.

### **Site 19: Peat Banks**

A number of classically U- shaped Peat cutting banks can be seen surrounding the hill upon which Site 1 and 2 are located. It was thought at first that MOD servicemen would have been unlikely to have cut peats, meaning that this feature was pre- MOD. However it was discovered during the course of this study that MOD personnel did indeed cut peat during their stay on the headland, and so these may date from either before or during that period.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Dr Finlay Macleod, Shawbost, pers comm.



*Figure 34: Peat cutting below Site 2*

### **Site 20: Drained peat hags**

The eastern flank of the MOD area from here to the south has been extensively drained. The area has deep peat deposits which must have formerly contained water in distinct ponds. All of these have been drained towards the east, by trenching through the peat. The scale of the work involved is large; many 100's of metres of trenching has been undertaken to a depth of up to 1m.

Such a scale of effort would imply that this was the work of the MOD, possibly done by machine. The open faces of peat may have been cut once the ponds were drained.

### **Site 21: Bogha Na lic**

This place, NB 05311 39396, is one of only two places on the whole headland where it is possible to easily and safely get down to the water's edge. The other is at Geodh Dubh Caolas a Ghallain at NB 04946 39166 (near site 8, quartz vein #2). Such places, where

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land meets deep water, were probably known as prized locations for Rod- fishing. As such this place may have been known and used by generations of people.

### **Site 3: Steps**

The steps mentioned in the Historic Environment Record were not found, despite spending quite some time scouring the hill where they were supposed to be.

It is obvious that at some point a program of trying to reinstate turf over some of the smaller concrete remains has taken place on the headland, as many of these attempts have failed and are quite obvious. It therefore remains possible that these Steps have been covered up, and the turf has taken.

### **Site 22: Peat cuttings**

Yet more classic peat banks can be seen at NB 04849 38744, just north of the main R10 building. As mentioned above (site 17), it is known that MOD service personnel did actually cut peats during their stay, so we cannot attribute these to any particular period.

### **Site 23: Dams on Loch a Rudha Chaoil**

There are two obvious walls on the west side of this Lochan, restricting its outflow to the west and therefore raising its level somewhat. A further, less massive alignment of stones may have been an earlier version.





*Figure 35: Damn walls on Loch a' Rudha Chaoil*

#### **Site 24: "Jetty" On Loch a Rudha Chaoil**

A stone built "jetty" extends from the south Lochan shore, north into the Lochan for around 10m, at NB 04904 38926. The Lochan is very shallow, even with the Dams of Site 5, and it was at first hard to imagine what this feature was used for.



*Figure 36: Water intake on Loch a Rudha Chaoil*

These last two sites around the Lochan a Rudha Chaoil were puzzling until a meeting with the Gallanhead Community Trust. Local knowledge from Aird resident **Norman Regler**<sup>9</sup> suggested that this Lochan was used as a Fire Pool, ie an emergency source of water in case of fire. The MOD site on St Kilda has a similar arrangement. This would explain why they were trying to raise the level of the Lochan, to provide as much water as possible. Further, the “Jetty” feature can now be understood as a support for the water intake pipe – see Figure 30, below, a picture taken at the base’s main water supply at Loch Mheacleit, circa 1 km to the south, for comparison.

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<sup>9</sup> Personal communication at meeting of Gallanhead Community Trust at the Edge Cafe on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2019



*Figure 37: MOD water intake rig at Loch Mheacleit, c 1km to the south, for comparison with Site 6, above.*

## 5.2 Middle Sites

The area marked “Middle Sites” on figure 3 comprises two MOD buildings on top of a hill to the south of the headland, overlooking it. Apparently they were pump houses for pumping water from Loch a’ Bheannaich to the base. No other structures or archaeological evidence could be found upon walkover.



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### 5.3 South Sites

The area marked “South Sites” in Figure 3 was also the site of a pump house and water intake for the MOD (see also Figure 32 above). As detailed in section 5.2.3 above, the Desk based assessment showed five sites in this area – two possible Mills, a Dyke, an enclosure and a Crannog.

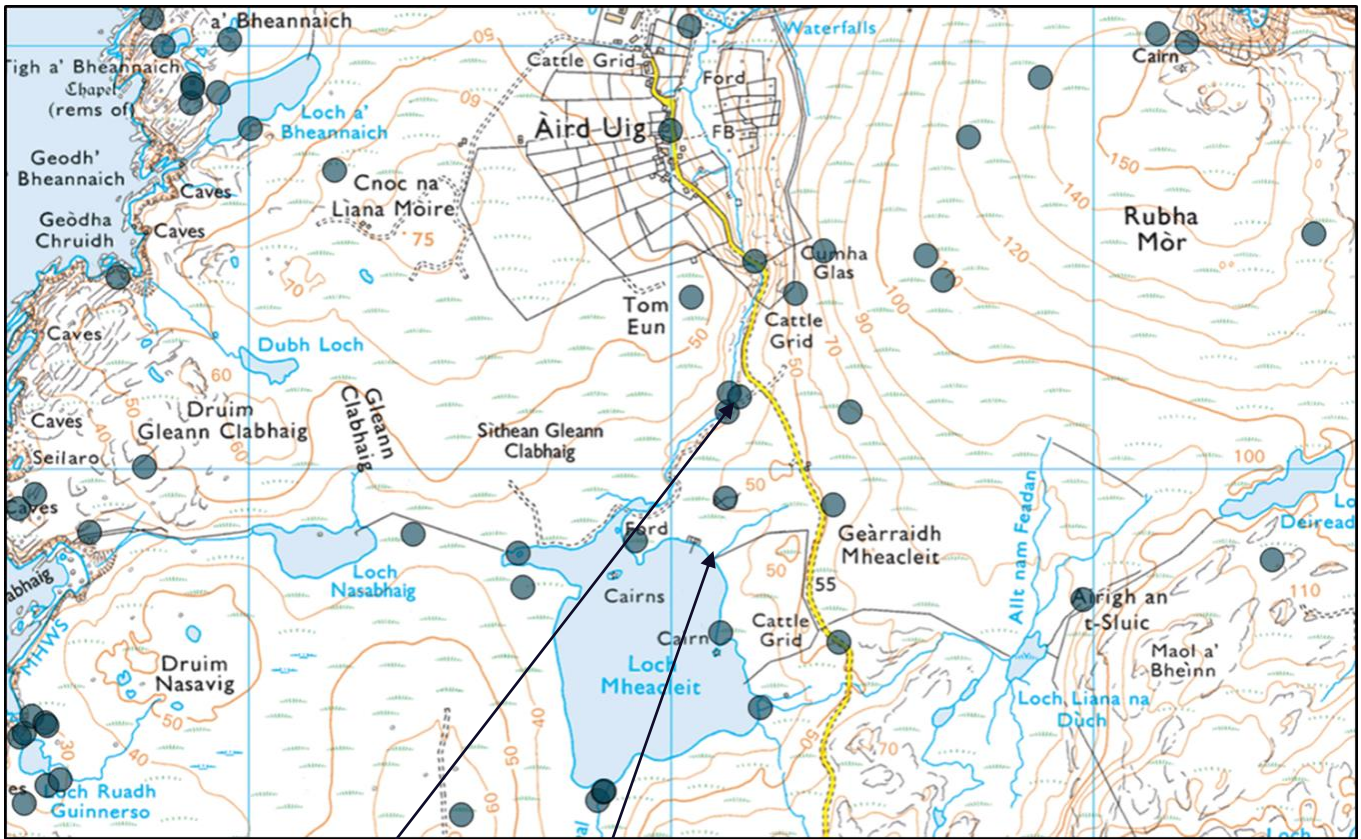
The walkover survey discovered one additional site, termed Site 25, which has not been previously recorded – what looks to be the remains of a beehive shieling was found on its eastern edge, near the fence line – see Figure 38, below. This structure is at NB 05086 36794.



*Figure 38: Remains of a Beehive Shieling, Loch Mheacleit.*



It is interesting to look back at the nearby sites which came up in the Desk based Assessment, section 5.2.3. Two of them were classified as “Mills”, S1 and S2, but S1 has disappeared and S2 is a circular cell with no associated mill structures such as a mill race or laid. S2 therefore is very similar to Site 25. Further to this, there are many very similar sites around Taigh a’ Bheannaich, thought to be associated with the Teampuill and monastery, possibly as beehive shielings.



**Figure 39: Location of S1, S2 and Site 25**



*Figure 40: Remains of possible Beehive Shieling near Taigh a' Bheannaich*

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## 5.0 Discussion

A much richer and more varied archaeological record has been uncovered than was thought to exist on the Headland. This is a resource which can be drawn upon by the Trust, and will hopefully will be to their benefit in the coming years.

Many questions remain however, not least as to the importance of the new sites which have been found – the prehistoric quartz quarrying in particular could be of national importance. There are also important questions about the upstanding structures which were already known but are here argued to be misunderstood, and require further research and probably re-interpretation. The drystone structure Site 2 bears particular similarity to the Taigh a’ Bheanaich which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument, and the small circular structures around Taigh a’ Bheannaich (eg Figure 34) may be the same as other circular structures in the Southern area (S2 and Site 25). The mortared structure known as a Look out, Site 1, is an intriguing structure, possibly a precursor of the “Orlit Posts” operated throughout the country by the Royal Observatory Corps, and will be the subject of further research.

## Recommendations to inform site master planning and Advice for future interpretation

The sites described above offer good opportunities for the creation of interpretative materials which could feed into the GHCT’s future plans. Their physical locations would make them fairly easy to include in a walking route which circumnavigates the whole headland, for example. This walk could be ‘guided’ by means of pamphlet, interpretation boards/ signage or even through modern mobile phone technologies.

In order to help GHCT manage the sites a table has been made detailing each site and six fields of classification, intended as an aide for future discussion rather than a final summation of the resource. The six fields or columns include an “accepted or proposed interpretation”, where the “accepted” interpretation applies to preexisting sites found through the DBA and “proposed” interpretation to sites found during walkover. On some occasion’s the accepted interpretation or indeed my own interpretation is questionable



and therefore the next column gives a rating of confidence in the interpretation. The confidence level in these interpretations has been estimated as either high, medium or low; indicating which sites and poorly understood or still have major questions to be answered; next, a “Relative importance” is estimated, again in terms of high, medium or low. This is conceived of as the importance of a site from the point of view of GHCTs stated outcomes as described in section 3.0 above. It should probably be noted that it is usual to ascribe a “Local, Regional or National” level of importance to sites in a desk based assessment where a development might impact upon them negatively. In our case the concerns are slightly different, however the sites classified as of ‘High’ importance could certainly be argued to be of national interest – particularly the quartz veins of which only two others are known. Finally, we have a column classifying the need for any future research work and what kind of work that would be. Usually there would also be a column with “Threat” level, again, probably not relevant here. A small discussion of future work can be found after the table.

<b>Site No.</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Accepted or proposed Interpretation</b>	<b>Confidence level in interpretation</b>	<b>Relative Importance</b>	<b>Further work required/usefull?</b>
1	North	NB 05156 39188	Look out post	High	High	Further research
2	North	NB 05141 39159	“Enclosure”	Low - Queried	High	Further research. Excavation would help greatly
3	North	NB 04844 39002	Steps	Not found	Low	No
4	North	NB 04975 38771	Cairn (prehistoric)	Not found	High	No
5	North	NB 04729 38739	Radar station	High	High	No



6	North	NB 04483 38748	Quartz scatter	Medium	Medium	No
7	North	NB 04483 38748	Stone tool	Medium	Medium	Recover and display
8	North	NB 04799 39132	Quartz vein # 1	High	High	Create interpretative materials
9	North	NB 04955 39069	Stone tool	Medium	High	Recover and display
10	North	NB 04949 39129	Quartz vein # 2	High	High	Create interpretative materials
11	North	NB 05008 39270	Quartz vein # 3	High	High	Create interpretative materials
12	North	NB 05114 39351	Quartz vein # 4	High	High	Create interpretative materials
13	North	NB 05069 38610	Quartz vein # 5	High	High	Create interpretative materials
14	North	NB 05144 39192	Quartz vein # 6	High	High	Create interpretative materials
15	North	NB 05106 39163	Quartz vein # 7	High	High	Create interpretative materials
16	North	NB 05084 39046	Small cairn	Medium	Medium/ High	Excavation?

17	North	NB 05084 39046	Small cairn	Medium	Medium/ High	Excavation?
18	North	NB 04574 38784	Well spring	High	High	Research name. Clean and test for chemical contaminants.
19	North	NB 05117 39174	Peat banks	High	Low	No
20	North	East side of headl and	Drained peat hags	High	Low	No
21	North	NB 05313 39398	Fishing spot	High	Not tried it yet!	No
22	North	NB 04849 38744	Peat cuttings	High	Low	No
23	North	NB 04943 39033	Damns	High	Medium	No
24	North	NB 04904 38926	Jetty	High	Medium	No
S1	South	NB 0514 3718	Mill	Low	Medium	No
S2	South	NB 05134 37135	Mill	Low	Medium	Research – was it a mill? Or a Bee hive?

S3	South	NB 05164 37170	Dyke	High	Medium	Potentially ancient field system. Small scale Excavation?
S4	South	NB 04918 36830	Enclosure – purpose unknown	Medium	Medium	Excavation would help interpret this
S5	South	NB 0464 3680	Crannog	High	High	Excavation would help interpret this
25	South	NB 05086 36794	Beehive	Medium	High	Excavation would help interpret this

**Figure 41: Table of Recommendations**

## Future work

This being the happy situation of a Community Trust who wishes to look after and curate their archaeological resource, none of the sites detailed here are threatened, and there is also therefore no great urgency to record them before they are destroyed.

However, questions remain about many of the sites as described and future research could greatly move our understanding of them forward. This research can be of three forms – collection of or research into Gaelic place names and Oral traditions, further desk based work, and excavations. All of these would need to be separately planned and carried out, however we could here make suggestions for the relative costs and benefits.

First of all it would be the author’s opinion that one of the most pressing issues is the recovery of the Gaelic name for the well, and any associated information. Wells were very important to islanders and given the special treatment given to this one (mortar surround and basin) it is sure to have traditions associated with it. There are also many interesting place names around the headland, not least the name “Gallan” itself. A place

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name study and survey of recorded oral traditions would be relatively economic to produce and should be the first line of future research.

The quartz veins are potentially of national importance and great interest. It would be worth contracting a specialist expert on the subject to research and produce written interpretation of the vein sites which could be used on pamphlets, websites and/or Interpretation boards on the headland. Pamphlets would be cheap to produce but it would be difficult to direct tourists to exactly the right spots – quite a challenge. Interpretation boards on a path or route way would be another option. Two A0 size boards produced by the main UK supplier of such boards ([www.shelleysigns.co.uk](http://www.shelleysigns.co.uk)) for the Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn/ Galson Trust in 2014 cost £768, excluding the design and text. Modern mobile phone technology may also be able to achieve similar results using each handsets' GPS.

Of the sites where excavation would be beneficial, the two small cairns are small enough that we could achieve with local volunteers and on a relatively small budget. The actual excavation could be done over a maximum of 5 days. The most expensive part of the work would be the specialist reports – of which, assuming they are burial cairns or similar and not just modern clearance cairns, we would definitely need an environmental report, estimated to cost around £800- £1000, and probably at least 4 Radio carbon dates, at around £3-400 each. Should we come across them, we would also require a Lithics report, a Bone report and a Pottery report, each estimated at slightly less than the environmental report. However, if the cairns were modern or not archaeological this would become clear very quickly and the exercise would be virtually free. The other main site which would be really interesting to excavate would be site 2, the dry stone multi-period construction on the end of the headland. Its potential to be contemporary with the Taigh a' Bheannaich would be of great interest to scholars of early Christianity on the island. However this site would require a lot more work, probably 15 days excavation with volunteers, a lot more RC dates, and also more costs for the bigger specialist reports.

I hope this report will be of use to the GHCT in their management of this enigmatic and beautiful place.



Appendix 1: Site 2 plan drawing



## 12.0 Appendix 2: Quartz

A table of information about 24 pieces of quartz found on the walk over of Gallanhead is presented below. Actual quartz tools are in **Bold**, flakes made by prehistoric humans in the production of tools or in testing quartz veins for quality are in *italics*, and the other entries are natural flakes.

Site ID	Context	Find No	Length	Width	Depth	Blank	Sub-blank	Name	Description	Material
Aird Uig North Sites	Sent in small tupperware box	1	38	21	13	Flake	irregular	Non-diagnostic	Non-diagnostic irregular flake	Grainy quartz
Aird Uig North Sites	Scatter 1 Area	2	52	26	22	Flake	Broad, irregular	Non-diagnostic	Non-diagnostic irregular flake	Fine-grained quartz
Aird Uig North Sites	Scatter 1 Area	3	37	29	14	Flake	Broad, tabular	possible natural	Natural tabular chunk	Fine grained quartz
Aird Uig North Sites	Scatter 1 Area	4	52	17	9	Blade	regular	Regular crested blade	This blade has two previous removal scars on dorsal, nice conchoidal fracture on ventral with possible pointed platform, slight bulb. Previous step fracture on dorsal side.	Very good quality fine-grained quartz.
Aird Uig North Sites	Scatter 1 Area	5	38	19	8	Flake	regular	Regular flake	Possible bulb but very grainy quartz	Grainy quartz
Aird Uig North Sites	Scatter 1 Area	6	33	17	11	Flake	irregular thick	Irregular thick flake	Possible natural	Grainy quartz

<i>Aird Uig North Sites</i>	<i>Scatter 1 Area</i>	7	20	15	7	<i>Flake</i>	<i>Regular</i>	<i>Waste flake</i>	<i>Scars on dorsal surface show conchoidal fracture, large platform crushed impact scare on ventral, probably due to bipolar knapping by crushing.</i>	<i>Fine grained quartz</i>
<i>Aird Uig North Sites</i>	<i>Scatter 1 Area</i>	8	20	13	3	<i>Flake</i>	<i>Regular</i>	<i>Regular flake</i>	<i>Undiagnostic regular flake</i>	<i>Grainy quartz</i>
<i>Aird Uig North Sites</i>	<i>Scatter 1 Area</i>	9	19	14	5	<i>Flake</i>	<i>Regular</i>	<i>Regular flake</i>	<i>Undiagnostic</i>	<i>Grainy quartz</i>
<i>Aird Uig North Sites</i>	<i>Quartz vein 2</i>	10	69	32	45	<i>Chunk</i>	<i>Irregular</i>	<i>Irregular chunk</i>	<i>Possibly one face has scar showing conchoidal fracture, which would suggest this could have been worked as a core, or tested as a core and then discarded. Heavy impact scars throughout.</i>	<i>Mixed quality of quartz</i>
<i>Aird Uig North Sites</i>	<i>Quartz vein 2</i>	11	20	24	9	<i>Flake</i>	<i>Irregular</i>	<i>Broad irregular flake</i>	<i>Possibly result of bipolar working, deep platform, heavy impact scars and premature detachment from parent.</i>	<i>Grainy quartz</i>
<b>Aird Uig North Sites</b>	<b>Quartz vein 2</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Blade</b>	<b>irregular</b>	<b>Irregular blade</b>	<b>Possibly a prepared platform so would have been removed with a punch, ie indirect percussion, but</b>	<b>Semi-translucent quartz, but poor quality</b>

									<b>irregular because the quartz is not good quality despite being semi-translucent.</b>	
<i>Aird Uig North Sites</i>	<i>Quartz vein 2</i>	13	17	12	5	<i>Flake</i>	<i>Irregular</i>	<i>Irregular flake</i>	<i>Waste flake</i>	<i>Semi-translucent quartz</i>
<i>Aird Uig North Sites</i>	<i>Quartz vein 2</i>	14	15	14	7	<i>Flake</i>	<i>Irregular</i>	<i>Irregular flake</i>	<i>Irregular waste flake, impact scar on dorsal surface.</i>	<i>Grey quartz</i>
<i>Aird Uig North Sites</i>	<i>Quartz vein 4</i>	15	35	24	10	<i>Flake</i>	<i>Irregular</i>	<i>Irregular flake</i>	<i>Possible broad platform but more likely irregular random flake.</i>	<i>Opaque fine grained quartz</i>
<b><i>Aird Uig North Sites</i></b>	<b><i>Quartz vein 4</i></b>	<b>16</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>10</b>	<b><i>Flake</i></b>	<b><i>Regular</i></b>	<b><i>Regular flake, possibly utilized</i></b>	<b><i>This flake may have been utilized as a tool - edge damage but no obvious retouch. It is a broad regular flake with a distinct platform, bulb of percussion, conchoidal fracture on ventral surface, on medium grained quartz.</i></b>	<b><i>Medium grained quartz.</i></b>
<i>Aird Uig North Sites</i>	<i>Quartz vein 4</i>	17	32	33	14	<i>Flake</i>	<i>Regular</i>	<i>Regular flake</i>	<i>Non-diagnostic</i>	<i>Medium grained quartz.</i>
<i>Aird Uig North Sites</i>	<i>Quartz vein 4</i>	18	26	22	6	<i>Flake</i>	<i>Regular</i>	<i>Regular flake</i>	<i>Possible small platform although no other diagnostic features, waste flake</i>	<i>Grainy quartz</i>
<i>Aird Uig</i>	<i>Quartz vein 4</i>	19	24	16	9	<i>Flake</i>	<i>Irregular</i>	<i>Irregular flake</i>	<i>Possibly natural</i>	<i>Grainy quartz</i>



North Sites										
Aird Uig North Sites	Quartz vein 4	20	24	16	7	Flake	Irregular	Irregular flake	Irregular flake	Grainy quartz
Aird Uig North Sites	Quartz vein 4	21	17	10	7	Flake	Irregular	Waste flake	Waste flake	Fine grained quartz
Aird Uig North Sites	Quartz vein 4	22	18	7	4	Blade	Regular	Waste chip	Probably not a diagnostic piece, more likely a waste chip as no obvious retouch or embellishment.	Translucent quartz
Aird Uig North Sites	Quartz vein 4	23	8	5	3	Chip	Regular	Waste chip	Waste chip from knapping	Fine-grained quartz
Aird Uig North Sites	Quartz vein 7 Look out	24	29	13	8	Blade	Irregular	Irregular blade	Knapped blade on translucent quartz, Stepped platform from opposed previous removal on dorsal surface, ventral shows conchoidal fracture and pronounced bulb. Thick piece. No obvious edge working.	Translucent quartz.

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## 13.0 Appendix 3: Contacts

Client: Gallanhead Community Trust

c/o Neil Mackinnon

Renewables Officer

Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn (Galson Estate Trust)

Business Centre

Galson

Isle of Lewis

HS2 0SH

Tel. 01851 850393

Email: [neil@uogltd.com](mailto:neil@uogltd.com)

Web [www.galsontrust.com](http://www.galsontrust.com)

Archaeological contractor:

Mr Ian Mchardy

70 Seaforth Road,

Stornoway

Isle of Lewis.

HS2 0DS

Tel: 07788 556758

E-mail: [irmchardy@gmail.com](mailto:irmchardy@gmail.com)

Local Authority Archaeological Officer:

Mr Kevin Murphy

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Archaeology Service

6 Kenneth Street

Stornoway

Isle of Lewis

HS1 2DP

Tel: 01851 822758

E-mail: [kevin.murphy@cne-siar.gov.uk](mailto:kevin.murphy@cne-siar.gov.uk)

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13.0 CD-ROM of photographs:

