
PART III: THE DUNASBROC EXCAVATION REPORT

18 INTRODUCTION

A full description of the site, its setting and history can be found with the access and survey results in [Section 9](#).

Dunasbroc was chosen over the other threatened stack sites for further investigation because of pragmatic reasons. The site was threatened by further erosion, and had already produced both Neolithic and Iron Age pottery ([Section 9.5](#)), but it was also relatively easy to access. As only two weeks of excavation were available, it was judged to be the site most likely to produce informative results in the limited period of time. A full discussion of the issues involved can be found in [Appendix 1](#).

The aims of the excavation were to characterise and record the site in as much detail as possible in the time available. This included the retrieval of stratigraphic and depositional evidence, dating evidence, artefactual evidence and environmental residues ([Barrowman & McHardy 2005](#)).

It was decided to position Trench 1, which measured 10 × 1.5m, across the main extant features, ie the plateau and walls, in order to achieve a cross-section through these deposits and to investigate and establish relationships between them. Trench 2, measuring 2 × 1m, was positioned over the eroding scar A ([Section 9.5](#)) from which Neolithic Hebridean

Ware pottery was discovered within a charcoal-rich context ([Appendix 3](#) and [illus 25](#)).

All excavation was undertaken using small hand tools. All archaeological deposits were recorded using written context descriptions on standard proforma sheets; drawings in plan at a scale of 1:20 and sections and elevations at a scale of 1:10; and photography in monochrome print, colour slide and digital images. Matrices were drawn for the understanding and interpretation of the site ([Appendix 2](#)).

Spoil was dry-sieved for stray finds ([Appendices 4](#) and [5](#)) with a 6mm (¼") riddle, and samples were taken of every excavated context (including the topsoil for comparison) for wet-sieving and environmental analysis ([Appendices 6](#) and [7](#)). Small Kubiena tin samples of Context 005 were also taken for micromorphological study ([Appendix 8](#)).

Surveying of all co-ordinates (including small finds, trench edges, sections) was undertaken using PENMAP 4.34b Series 1000:600 software (Strata Software and Consultancy Ltd) in conjunction with a Leica TCR 307 Electronic Total Station and mini prism. The data was logged on a hand-held Strata field computer and downloaded nightly. These co-ordinates were all added as layers of information to the pre-existing Digital Terrain Model produced by the survey in 2004.