

Dun an Sticir – Iron Age Reconstruction

A North Uist Broch



Image: Exterior of the Dun an Sticir Broch (Credit: Open Virtual Worlds).

The site of Dun an Sticir on North Uist forms a reminder of how different societies adapted and reused structures over time. About 2000 years ago a broch was built on a man-made island in Loch an Sticir. Brochs were relatively tall circular buildings which were used as dwellings and defensive structures by the inhabitants of Northern and Western Scotland during the Iron Age. Dun an Sticir appears to have continued to be inhabited during the Viking period. In the High Middle Ages the (by then very ancient) broch was converted into a small hall or tower house.

The Open Virtual Worlds team and Smart History worked with Taigh Chearsabhagh Museum and Arts Centre to create a reconstruction of how Dun an Sticir may have appeared during the Iron Age.

How Did We Know What to Reconstruct?

The site at Dun an Sticir was studied by nineteenth and early twentieth-century antiquarians but has not received a modern excavation (although a measured survey was undertaken by RCAHMS in 2012). The reconstruction of Dun an Sticir is based on observation of the surviving ruins and comparison with other brochs in Western Scotland. The representation was informed by the research of Dr Tanja Romankiewicz from the University of Edinburgh.

How Was the Reconstruction Created?

A digital landscape was created using survey data and height map. Models were created in 3D modelling programs and imported into UNREAL (a cross-platform game engine for creating

virtual worlds). The models were then scaled, orientated and assembled. The landscapes were populated with flora and fauna. Where applicable, models of characters and animals were imported and animated.

How Has the Reconstruction Been Used?

The reconstruction is part of the [North Uist 360](#) project through the Heritage Lottery Fund. The video was included in an exhibit at the Museum at Taigh Chearsabhagh, Lochmaddy.

It is featured on the [Open Virtual Worlds website](#).

When Was the Reconstruction Published?

This version of the reconstruction was released to the public in 2015.

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How to Access the Reconstruction?


There is a video preview of the reconstruction on [Vimeo](#).

Discover More

You can view 20x 360° panoramas of the current site from the [North Uist 360](#) project, produced by a collaboration between Taigh Chearsabhagh Museum & Art Gallery and the University of St Andrews

Information held by Historic Environment Scotland about Dun an Sticir can be accessed via [Canmore](#). CANMORE

You can see how the site looks today on [Google Maps](#). 

The full history of Dun an Sticir can be read at [Wikipedia](#). 

Project Funding

This reconstruction was funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund.