

2018

Nunatta Katersugaasivia
Allagaateqarfialu
The Greenland National
Museum & Archives

Mikkel Myrup



**[MORIUSAQ
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY
2018]**

Introduction

In the summer season of 2018 Nunatta Katersugaasivia Allagaateqarfialu (The Greenland National Museum, hereafter the NKA) was contracted to perform an archaeological survey relating to the activities of Dundas Titanium A/S (hereafter the Company) in the Moriusaq area (cf. mineral exploration license 2015/08).

The NKA survey team consisted of four employees (three curators and one student), and carried out the survey in the period 4-18 July 2018. The fieldwork was performed under the provisions of *Inatsisartutlov nr. 11 af 19. Maj 2010 om fredning og anden kulturarvsbeskyttelse af kulturminde* (hereafter, the Heritage Act).

The area of interest pertains to the Company's sonic drilling and field road proposal as described in "*Proposed Field Work Activities 2018*".

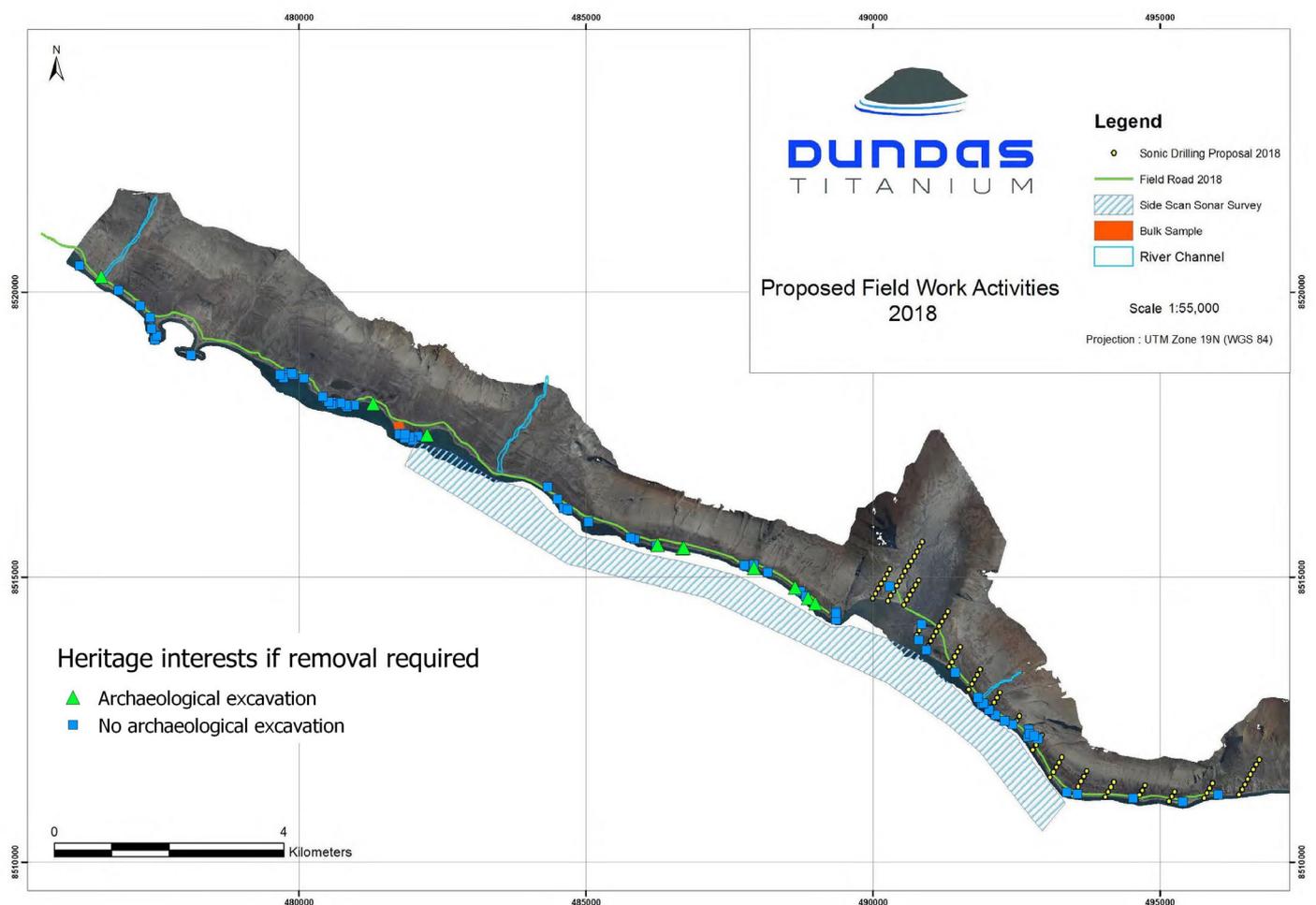
Exploration License 2015/08 is located in the southern "Gateway to Greenland" area. This area is well noted for its tremendous importance in understanding of prehistoric migrations from Canada and Alaska into Greenland. The area contains archaeological evidence of Paleo-Eskimo and Inuit peoples in Greenland, as well as the Norse (e.g. Sørensen 2010, Grønnow et al 2016).

The Survey

The map illustrates that all the archaeological structures recorded during the 2018 survey are situated in the immediate vicinity of the shoreline. Coastal proximity is a common trait of settlements that took advantage of ocean and littoral resources. A total of 89 sites and/or structures ($N=89$) were recorded during the survey. The majority of observed man-made features ($n=80$, 90%), were of recent origin (i.e. post 1900), and do not fall under the legal protection of the Heritage Act.

A total of nine (9) structures were identified as being prehistoric and will require a complete archaeological excavation if the Company's project design and activities impact these locations.

The coordinates projection used in this report is WGS84 UTM zone 19N.



Map: Dundas Titanium A/S and NKA

The archaeological features

As mentioned above, the bulk of the recorded structures are of contemporary origin (post-1900), and many of these features may still be utilised as hunting camp in the present day. Prehistoric feature types are closely connected with the hunting activities that have taken place in this area (e.g. seal, walrus and small whale) over several millennia. Camp sites consisting of tent rings and meat caches are the most common types of archaeological features. Single meat caches or groups of meat caches in close proximity to camping areas are also frequently observed.

This southern portion of the “Gateway to Greenland” area contains several interesting remains of early peoples migrations into Greenland. A couple are representative of early Thule Culture settlement with a distinct architectural character that matches the nearby Thule site of Nuulliit (see Sørensen 2010, Grønnow et al 2015). Winter house structures at Nuulliit have been the subject of intense archaeological investigations (e.g. Holtved 1944), and ruins at sites like MRQ030 have the potential to reveal a plethora of information regarding early Thule Culture lifeways in Greenland.

Another remarkable recording in the area is the remains of a Late Dorset (c. 800-1200 CE) Triangular Midpassage (TMP). To date, only 52 TMPs are identified across the Late Dorset Arctic dispersal area of the High Arctic (Darwent et al 2018). Other archaeological features of importance, include several tent rings with Midpassage features stemming from the Arctic Small Tool tradition (ASTt) and possibly dating back c. 4000 years before present.

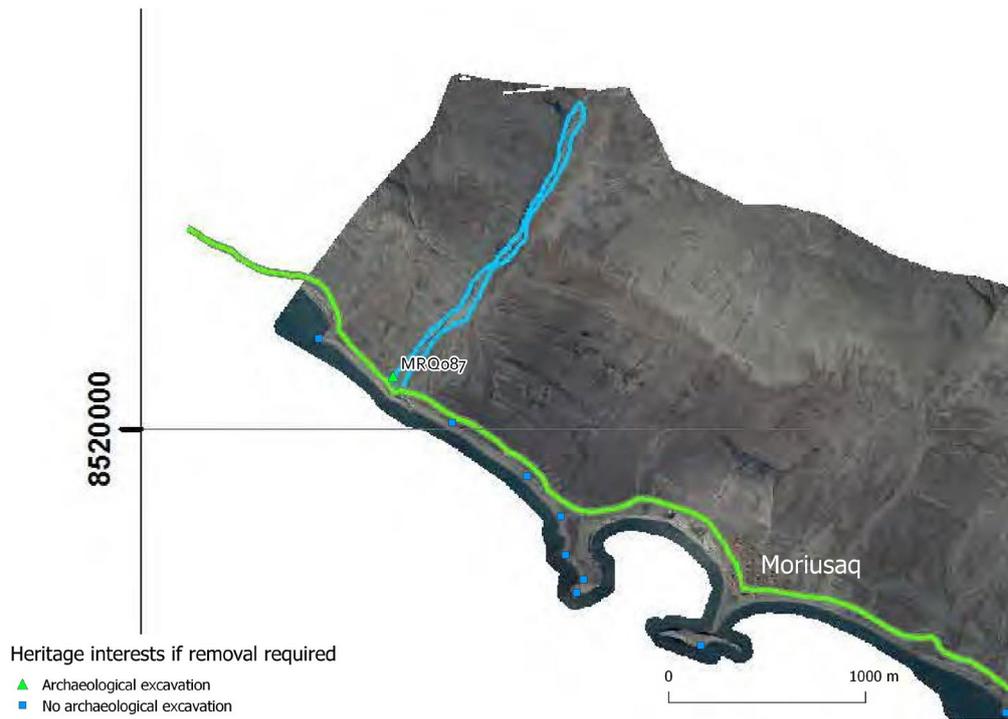
In the following pages you will find a description of the sites that will require full archaeological excavation if the project design demands use of the specific land that the structure/site sits on.

Recommendations

The NKA has identified 89 sites/structures of contemporary, historic and prehistoric significance within the Company’s license area. Out of these, nine (9) sites have been categorised as falling under the provisions of the Heritage Act. If the project activities are of a character, that damaging the archaeological features is considered unavoidable, these sites will need to be subjected to a complete archaeological investigation.

The NKA has received information about proposed field activities in the summer season of 2018 related to the exploratory phase of this project. Hence, it is not possible to assess how many and which of the sites mentioned below, will be directly impacted by the final project design. It is the impression of the NKA, that field road construction and sonic drilling activities can commence without physically disturbing many of the following archaeological sites and features. This, of course, requires that the Company incorporates the information of this report into all future activities and ensure that all disturbance to features and structures is avoided.

As soon as plans regarding the final project design are complete, the NKA and the Company should revisit the information contained in this report before determining if any further actions in related to the Heritage Act are necessary.

MRQ087 (N76,76076°/W069,91932°)

MRQ087 seen from W. Moriusaq can be seen in the distance. (Photo: Mikkel Myrup)

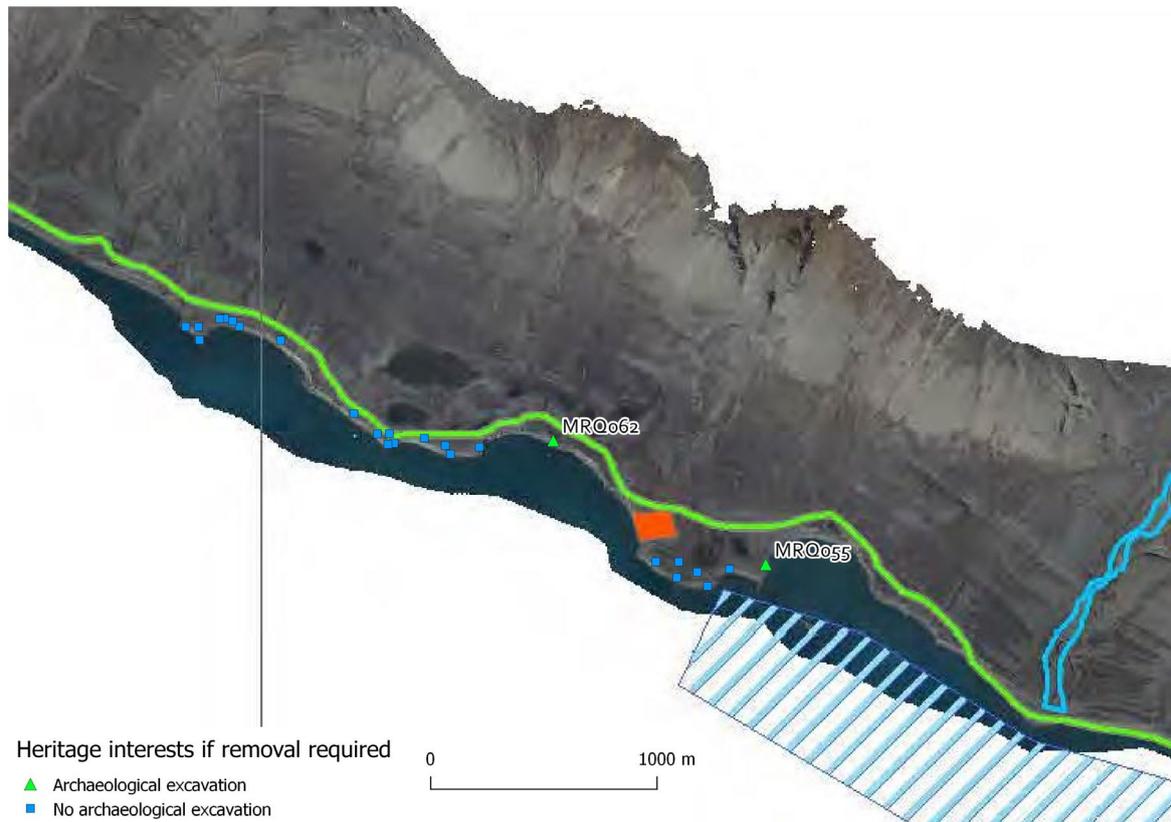
MRQ087 is a settlement consisting of a suite of several winter house ruins spanning several phases of occupation. The latest phase of occupation has left five ($n=5$) very well preserved winter houses with complete stone wall and roofing structures, partly built with large whale bones. This type of structure is very rarely seen in a preservation state as good as this. Due to its unique properties, the NKA would need to do a full archaeological excavation of all the structures on this site, if the project design should demand it.



MRQ087. One of the houses situated close to the eroding bank of the stream. (Photo: Mikkel Myrup)



MRQ087 house construction detail. Large whale bones have been used in the construction of roof and walls. (Photo: Mikkel Myrup)

MRQ062 (N76,74151°/W069,73082°)

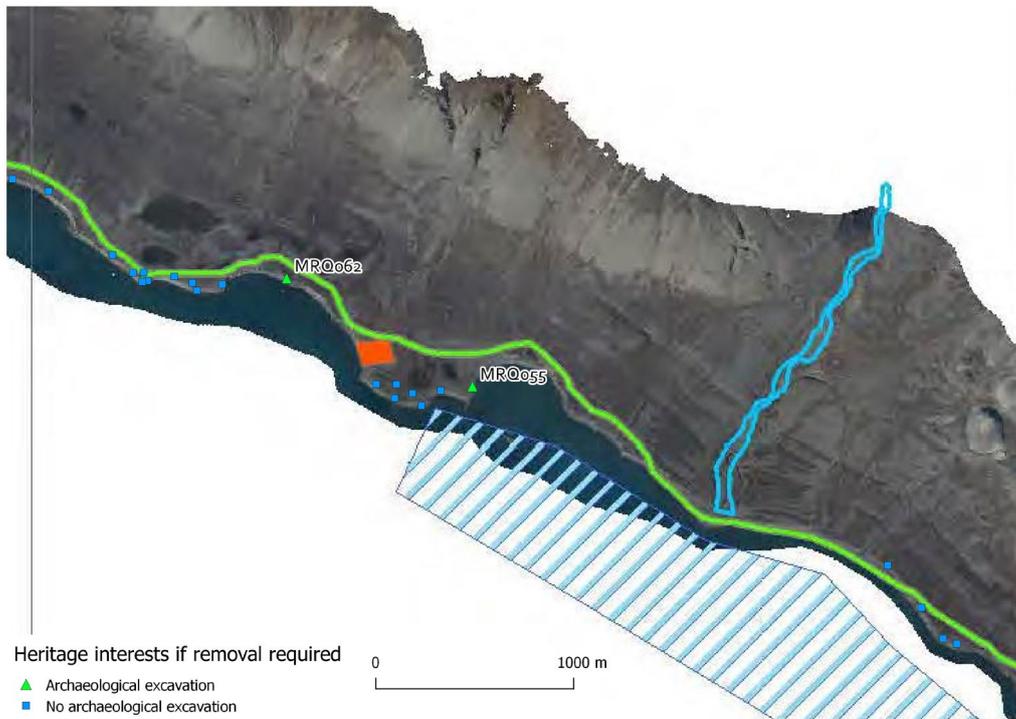
MRQ062 is a Late Dorset (c. 800-1200 CE) Triangular Midpassage (TMP) dwelling. Only 52 other TMPs are known throughout the Arctic. The TMP is situated in an area which the Company has designated as its project port area. This leaves the TMP extremely vulnerable and at risk of sustaining irreversible damage. The NKA therefore recommends, that a full archaeological excavation be conducted if the project proceeds under the current plan.



*Late Dorset Triangular Midpassage (TMP) dwelling (MRQ062). A wooden marker was established by the dwelling ruins by the NKA as vehicular tracks were observed 2 metres from the structure.
(Photo: Mikkel Myrup)*

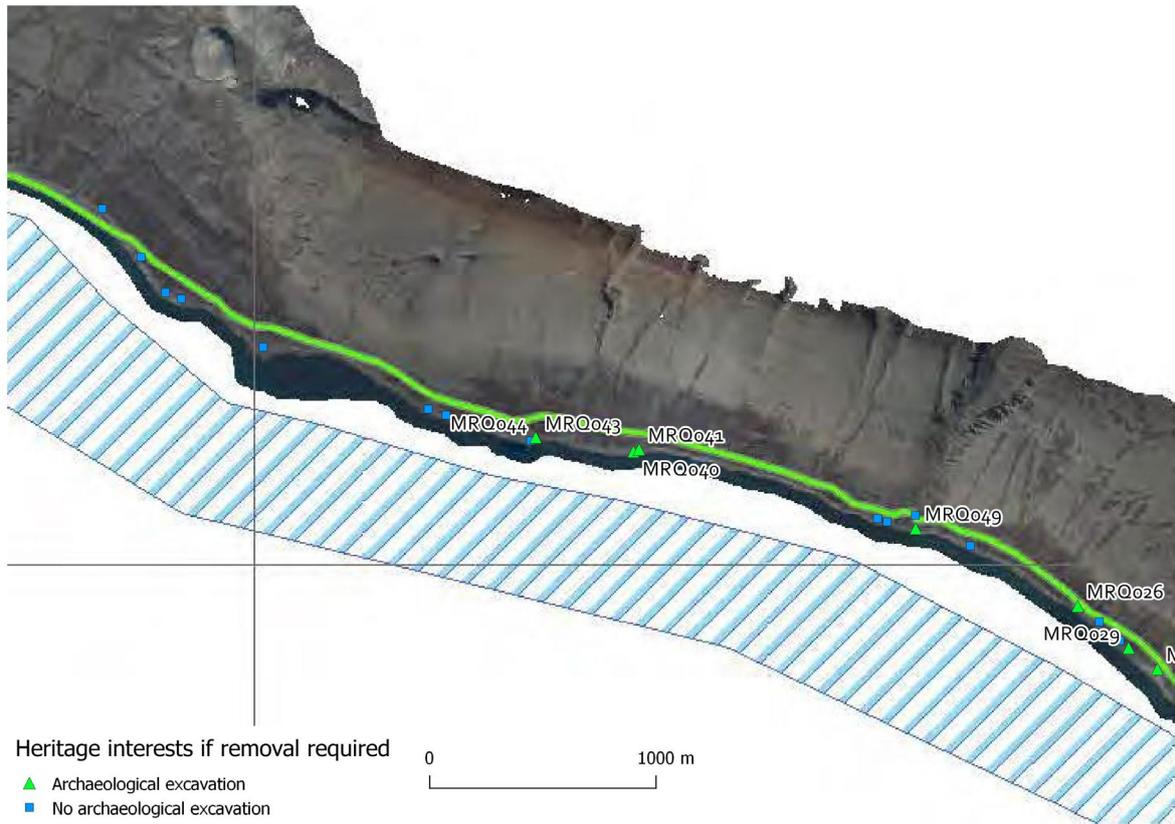
MRQ055 (N76,73667°/W069,69389°)

A tent ring with a Midpassage feature, probably of Arctic Small Tool tradition (ASTt) origin. These types of structures are relatively rare, and it is the recommendation of the NKA the site be subjected to a full archaeological excavation if the project design will impact the immediate vicinity.

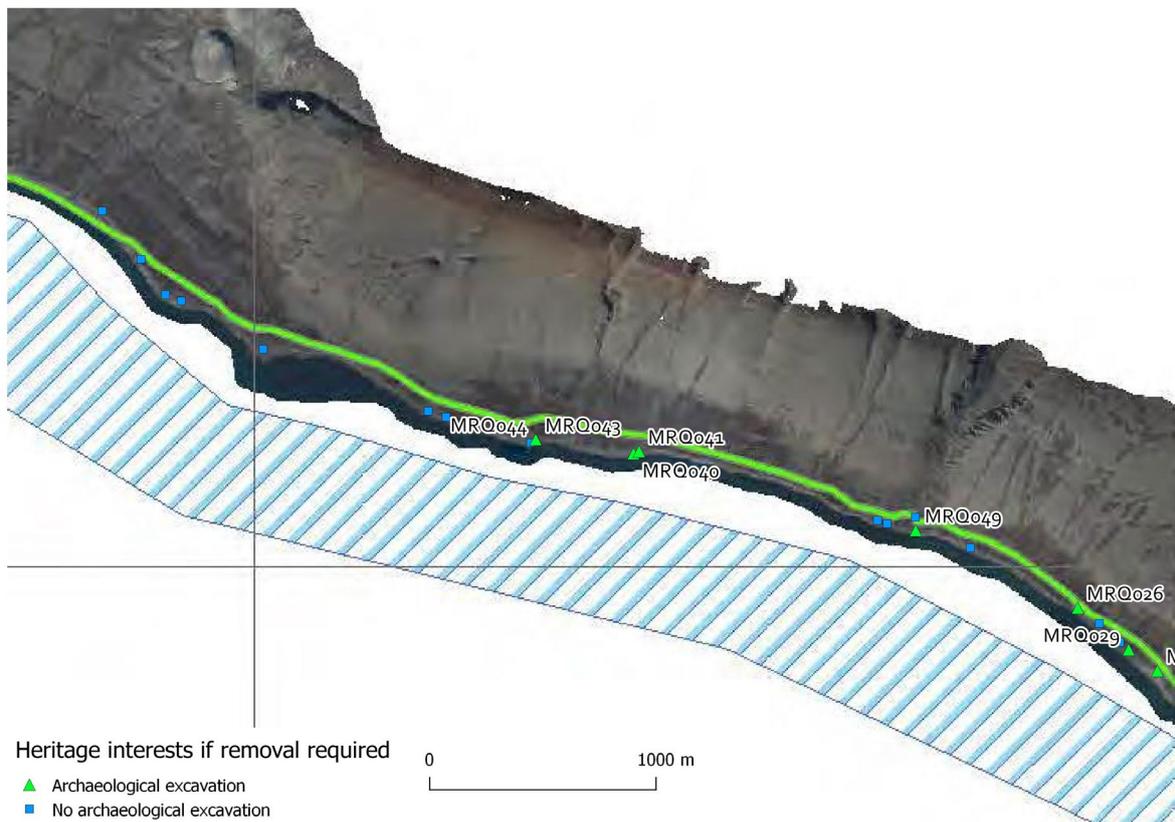


MRQ055. Tent ring with Midpassage structure. (Photo: Mikkel Myrup)

MRQ043, 044 (N76,71976°/W069,53634°)



MRQ040, 041 (N76,71934°/W069,51860°)

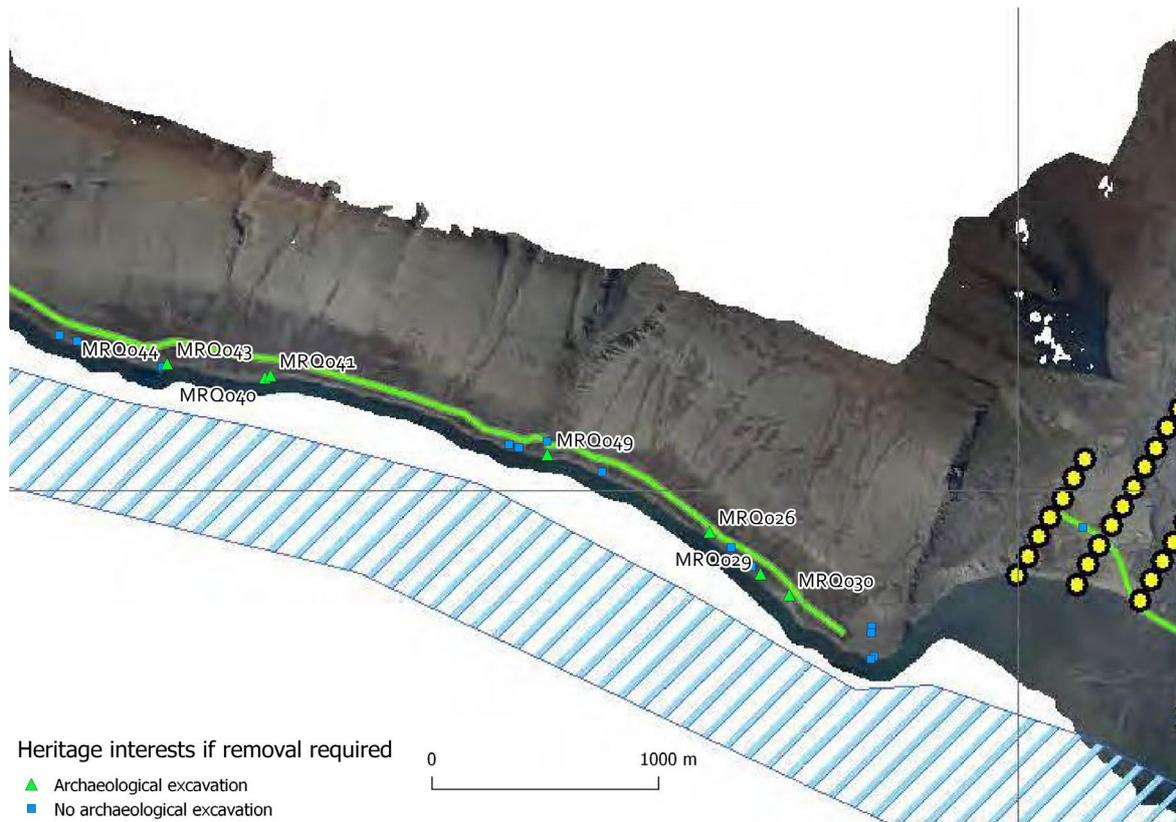


Two pairs of tent rings with midpassage features probably of ASTt origin. These types of structures are relatively rare, it is the recommendation of the NKA the be subjected to a full archaeological excavation if project will impact the immediate vicinity.



One of the ASTt tent rings with a Midpassage feature. No diagnostic lithics were observed on the site's surface. (Photo: Mikkel Myrup)

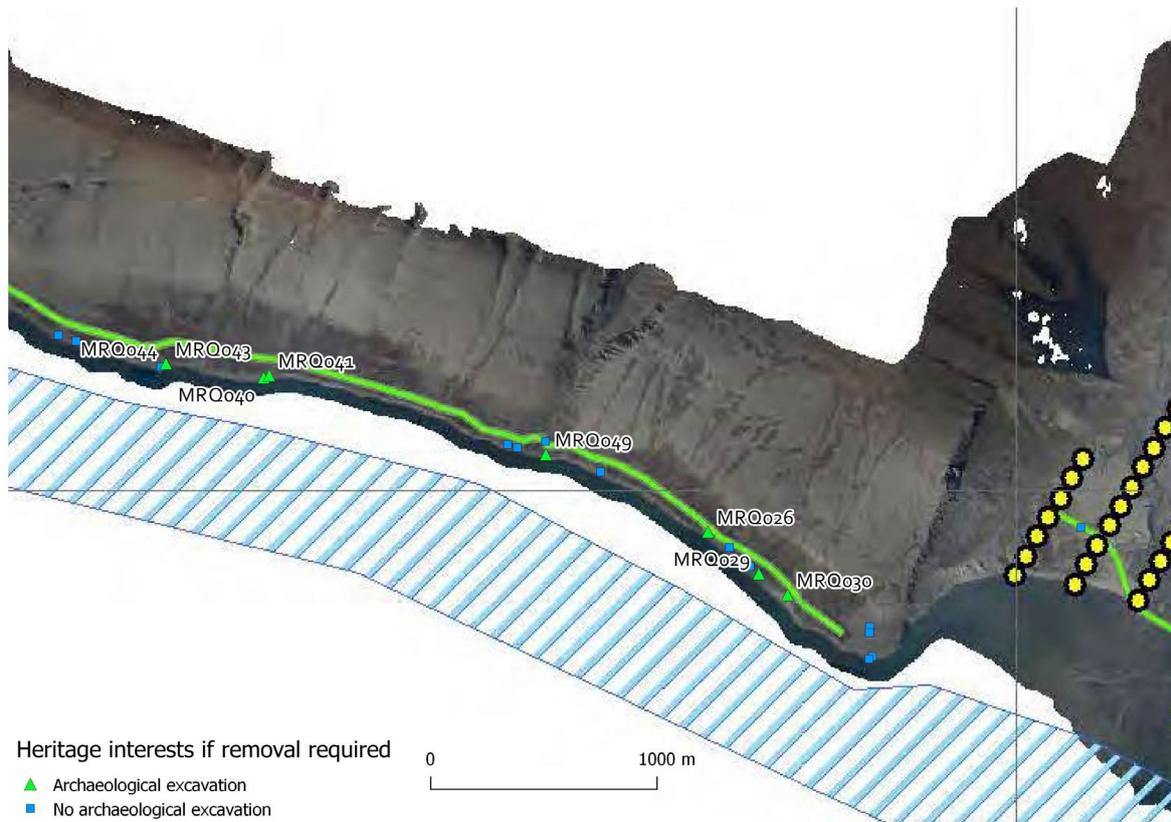
MRQ049 (N76,71627°/W069,47083°)



MRQ049 consists of three tent rings interpreted as belonging to the early phase of the Thule Culture.



MRQ049 with Appat/Saunders Island in the background. (Photo: Mikkel Myrup)

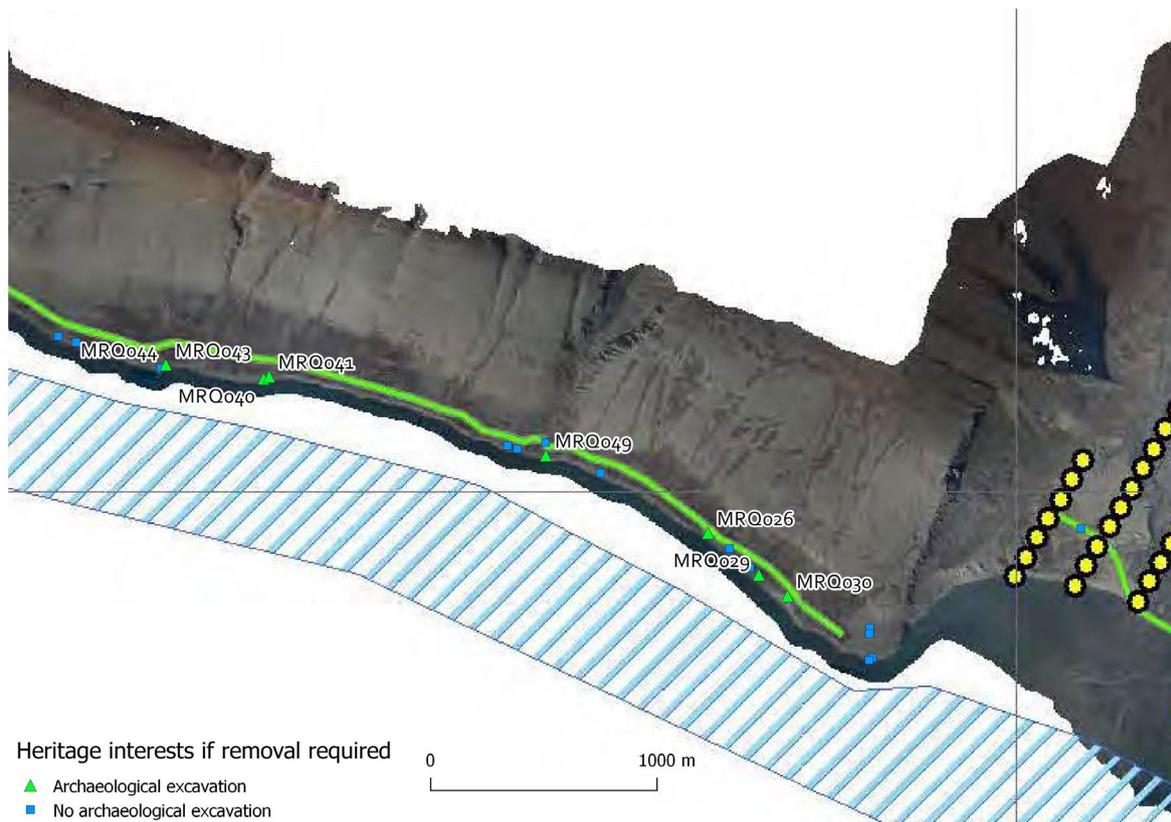
MRQ026 (N76,71324°/W069,44280°)

MRQ026 consists of two early Thule Culture winter house ruins. The ruins are situated right next to the coastal erosion zone near the beach. These structures appear to be of an early Thule type and are potentially important archaeological sites due to their rarity.



One of the MRQ026 ruins situated on the brink of the coastal erosion zone. (Photo: Hans Lange)

MRQ029 (N76,71159°/069,43398°)

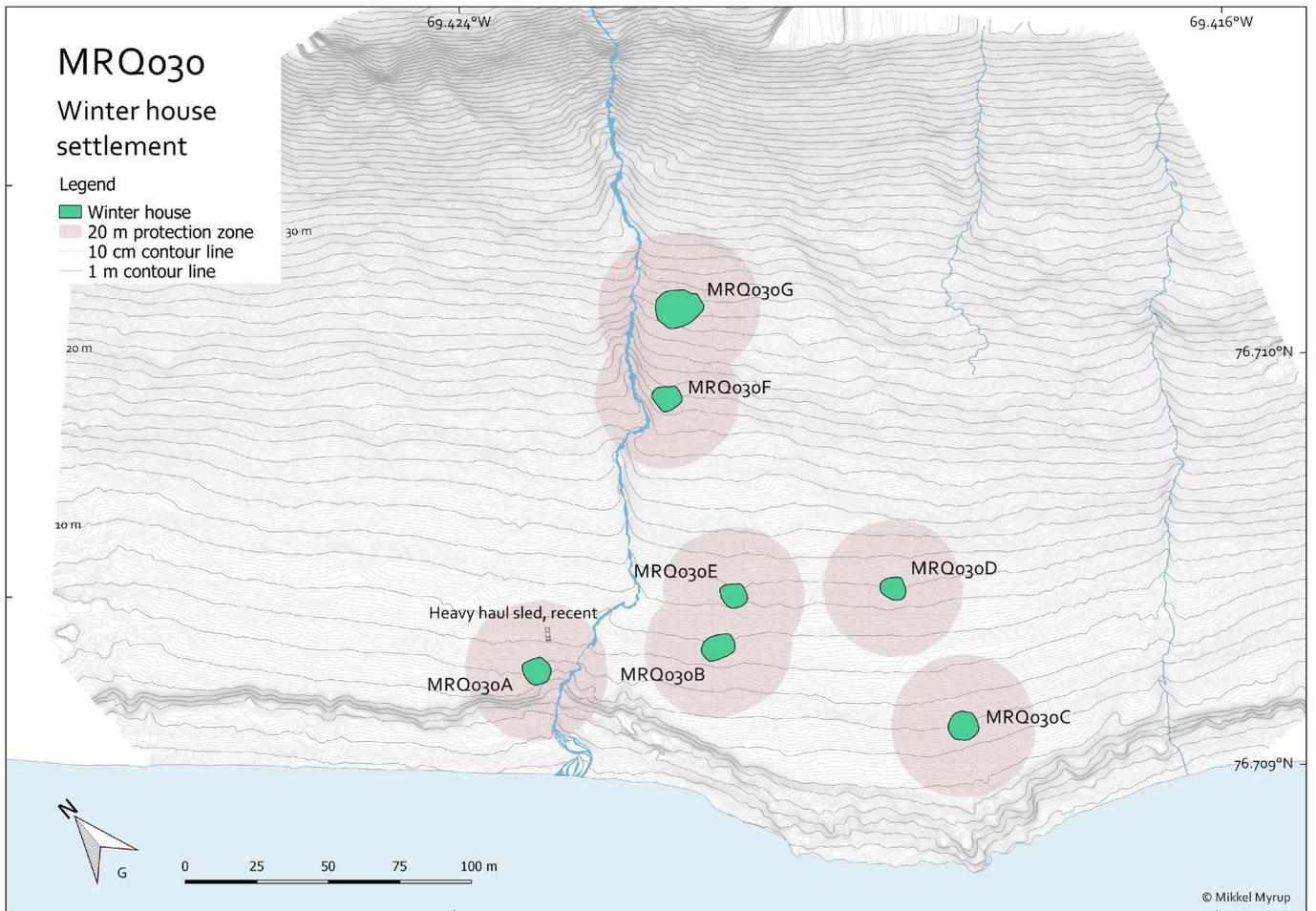
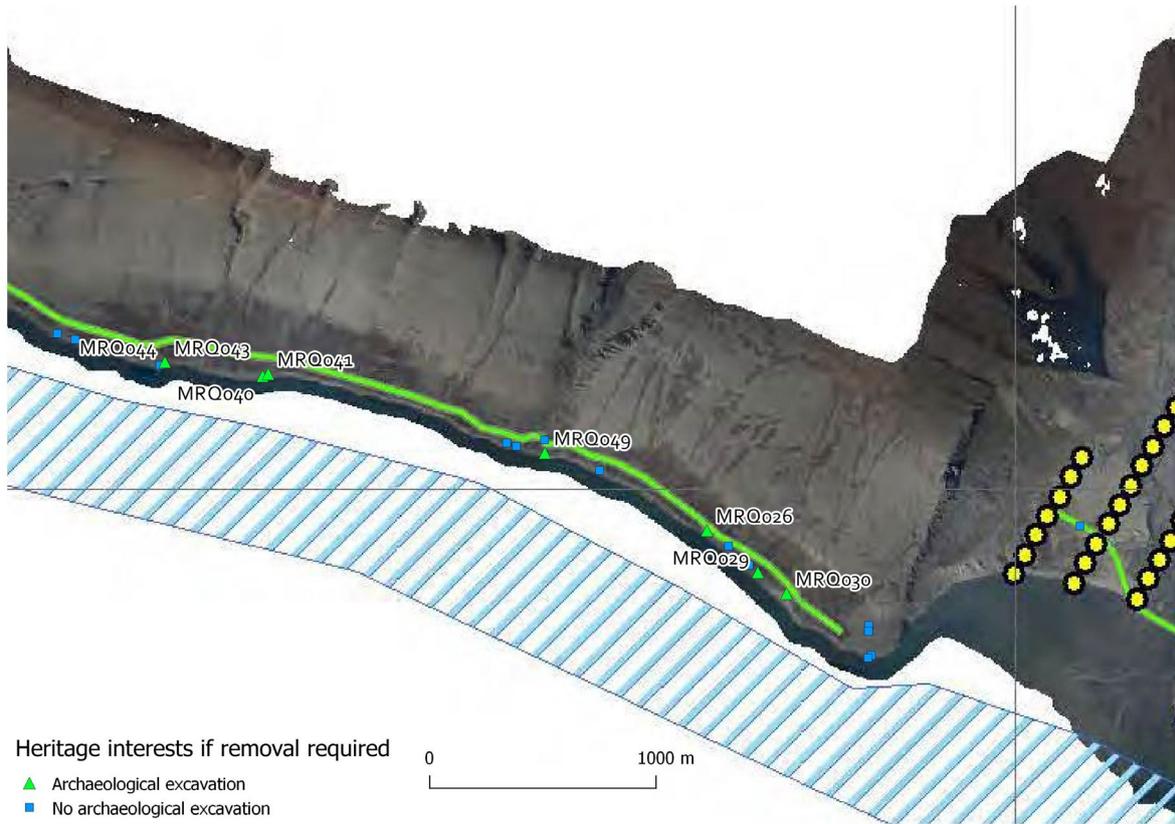


MRQ029 is interpreted as an early Thule Culture tent platform. The structure is situated on the escarpment in close proximity to the coastal erosion zone.



MRQ029 seen from E. (Photo: Hans Lange)

MRQ030 (N76,71075°/W069,42902°)



MRQ030 is a remarkable site consisting of a cluster of seven ($n=7$) early Thule Culture winter house ruins. Each house ruin share traits with the classical *Qassi* house type (i.e. men's house) also observed in Nuullit (cf. Grønnow et al 2015) in the sense that they are fitted with an elongated erected rock in one end of the structure (see photos below).

The NKA recommends a full archaeological excavation of all seven winter houses if necessitated by the project design. If however, this particular area's only involvement in the project will be the construction of a road, traffic could be directed between the protected boundary zones of MRQ030E and MRQ030F or above the protected boundary zone of MRQ030G (cf. map above).



MRQ030A seen from N. (Photo: Mikkel Myrup)



MRQ030F seen from NW. An elongated erected stone is seen in the distant end of the ruin, and a light coloured slab is seen in the proximal end. These elements (elongated stone and light coloured slab) were observed in nearly all of the structures at MRQ030. (Photo: Mikkel Myrup)

Literature

Sørensen, Mikkel

2010: The Archaeology of Old Nuullit. *Monographs on Greenland, Man & Society*, Vol. 39.

Holtved, Erik

1944: Archaeological Investigations in the Thule District I. *Meddelelser om Grønland*, Bd. 141(1): 308 sider + 49 plancher.

John Darwent, James M. Savelle, Christyann M. Darwent, Arthur S. Dyke, Hans Lange, Genevieve M. LeMoine, and Claude Pinard

2018: Report. Late Dorset Triangular Midpassages in the Canadian Arctic and North West Greenland: Origins and Dispersal. *American Antiquity* 2018

Bjarne Grønnow, Martin Appelt, Anne Birgitte Gotfredsen & Mikkel Myrup

2016: Arkæologiske og arkæo-zoologiske undersøgelser på bopladserne Nuullit og Uummanaq (Avanersuaq) – en del af NOW-projektet, 2015. Sila – Arktisk Center Ved Etnografisk Samling, Nationalmuseet, 2016.

Site/structure coordinates in WGS84 UTM zone 19N

Name	North	West
MRQ087	76,76076	69,91932
MRQ062	76,74151	69,73082
MRQ055	76,73667	69,69389
MRQ043, 044	76,71976	69,53634
MRQ040, 041	76,71934	69,5186
MRQ049	76,71627	69,47083
MRQ026	76,71324	69,4428
MRQ029	76,71159	69,43398
MRQ030	76,71075	69,42902